

FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF CONTRACTORS OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED BUILDING PROJECTS IN KIRINYAGA COUNTY, KENYA.

Degree Programme: [MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT](#) [1]

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Building projects, a component of infrastructure development, are key drivers of economic growth of a country. Governments globally thus invest heavily in this sector. Their contribution however, can only be determined by their performance, with the ultimate goal being project success. The concept of project success has remained ambiguously defined in the building industry although time, cost and quality are considered to be the predominant criteria. In Kenya, government-funded building projects are implemented through a tri-party endeavour consisting of the financier/client, the project manager, and the contractor, who must work harmoniously to ensure project success. The implementing entity that carries out the actual construction is the contractor. This study focuses on this third party. Whereas the performance of contractors undertaking such projects in Kirinyaga County and in Kenya in general, is influenced by specific factors that impact on project success, very little reliable information is available on what these factors are and their influence. As such, this study sought to investigate the influences of the factors identified as financial issues, human resources conditions, site characteristics and design quality aspects, derived from relevant literature review and as conceptualized. The research design of choice was descriptive survey, which utilizes elements of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies thereby addressing the objectives and research questions, and ensuring coherence and rigour. Data was gathered through written questionnaires having closed and open-ended structured questions; the latter to give deeper insight into the study problem. Respondents for the study were contractors undertaking government-funded building projects in Kirinyaga County. The study was a census with the resultant descriptive statistics presenting inferential findings on the target population of contractors who are considered to be a homogeneous group. A pilot study was carried out to test reliability and ascertain validity of the data collection instrument. Data was analyzed with reference to the research objectives through use of SPSS. Major findings of the research reflect the propositions contained in various studies and models as reviewed from literature sources that basically, the factors identified influence project performance. The study further reveals the relative influence of each of the factors, of greatest significance being human resources conditions and design quality aspects. A key derivative of this study is the distinctive emergence of the human resources element as the prime factor influencing the performance of contractors of government-funded building projects in Kirinyaga County. Essentially, the research findings suggest that addressing all the factors identified, with particular focus on the human resources and design quality elements, would enhance the contractors' performance of the projects and ensure higher rates of projects success. Suggestions are put forth for further study on interest areas that may have a significant influence on building projects performance.

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