

**EFFECTS OF STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION ON POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:  
CASE OF ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY KENYA.**

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**ABSTRACT**

The journal examines the effects of stakeholder interaction on policy implementation in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya. The Elgeyo Marakwet people occupy North rift part of Kenya, and total about 390,000, as per 2009 census. The community is faced with a problem of mass policy failure leading to many stalled projects, which has exposed the people to poverty, conflict, illicit brew menace and generally poor life. The study sought to find how public participation affected policy implementation and effects of stakeholder interaction was one objective that informed the journal. Research question was “What is the effect of stakeholder interaction on policy implementation”? This was backed by a null hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) that stakeholder does not affect policy implementation. The variables at play were policy implementation on the dependent variable and stakeholder interaction on the independent variable, regulated by environmental factors. The researcher used cross sectional approach to make a case study in which descriptive statistics was used to analyze data that was gotten via open and closed ended questionnaires that were responded to by 41, randomly selected respondents. Multiple regression was used to establish the relationship between the variables involved and statistical package for social sciences version 20 (SPSS) was used to compute and process data. The findings were that actual interaction of stakeholder took place and stakeholder interaction had positive effects on policy implementation with 36.6% stating that they were involved in interaction and 58.5% attesting to have been aware of policy implementation taking place. Stakeholder interaction actually reduced the cost of policy implementation, reduced conflict, built consensus and led to better decision implemented without any objections.

**Key Words**

**Public Policy Implementation:** Is actualization of government plans and programmes as solutions to existing societal problems.

**Public Policy:** Is a bottom-up approach in which the public deliberate, discuss, debate and decide on solutions to problems that are affecting them, which the government transforms to policies.

**Stakeholder Interaction:** Means intermingling of parties who are of interest or affected.

## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Stakeholder is any individual, group or party that can affect or be affected by implementation or participation in policy actualization. Stakeholder interaction refers to intermingling of different parties involved in policy implementation process. This is referred to as stakeholder participation. Stakeholder participation denotes a range of practice in which organizations take structured approach in connecting with each other. The journal is on effects of stakeholder's interaction on policy implementation, and illustrates positive effects or benefits accruable from active, democratic and genuine interaction of parties involved in implementation of a public policy. Stakeholder interaction as parties participate in policy implementation is crucial for successful implementation. Stakeholders actively interact from formation, to implementation as observed by theorists **Michael Lipsky** (2010). **Ojha, Ghimire, Nightingale and Dhungana** (2016) all agree that stakeholder's interaction is actually necessary and significantly vital in policy formation, (bottom up approach) and implementation (up- bottom approaches mainly done by civil servants as they interact with other stakeholders).

**Perry and Christen** (2015) postulate that to enhance development, governments need to involve people in problem solving policies and programs which puts stakeholders interaction fundamentally sacrosanct in any successful policy implementation. There cannot be effective stakeholder participation without free democratic and informed stakeholder interaction by all parties. This observation is common to most researchers on the stakeholder interaction. Researchers, Administrators, project officers, or development agencies on the ground, commonly referred to as street bureaucrats by **Lipsky** (2010) need to find how to improve stakeholder interaction as they participate in implementing development agenda of the government or organizations whether public or private.

The journal emphasizes the importance of stakeholder interaction in any public policy implementation. The basic reason for research, is to improve on stakeholder interaction as they participate in policy implementation. How to reap the best advantage of interaction to benefit the policy implementation is a major concern to governments and development agents of all organizations (**Henry**, 2017). The concern is whether stakeholder interaction could ease participation and create favorable and friendly environment for stakeholders to produce best solutions to problems affecting them, ease tension, tone down tempers, bring about consensus and synergies needed for successful stakeholder interaction, and public policy implementation. Stakeholder interaction is a way of communication amongst interested parties in a collaborative problem solving setting to achieve better and more acceptable decisions (International Association for Public Participation, (2009).

Its thorough stakeholder interaction that consultations, debates, compromise, consensus and peaceful solutions to societal challenge are achieved or realized. **Gamedia and Stagl** (2010) observed that for good scientific decisions to be made, scientists need to interact with the society, hence the need to have free open and democratic interaction of stakeholders in any undertaking. A conducive environment has to be availed for free interactive involvement of stakeholders. Favorable legal regime, rules, democratic space, resources and informed stakeholders are vital for successful stakeholder interaction, for meaningful results. **Mburu** (2011) observed that challenges like cultural barriers; economic social, political, ecological and technological handles are blocks to successful stakeholder interaction and could negatively impact on policy implementation and therefore have to be removed. Government should strive to minimize these challenge by providing an enabling environment for free, peaceful and democratic stakeholder interaction as manifested in Kenya Constitution 2010, through recognition of public participation as a requirement to all public policy, and a right in the constitution.

## **Elegeyo Marakwet**

The residents of Elegeyo Marakwet County are faced by many development challenges, mainly massive policy failure leading to many project failure in the region, subjecting the residents to poverty among other social vices. The research sought to establish whether interaction between stake holders could reduce misunderstanding, conflicts, mistrust and complains that led to collapse of projects and policies that are meant to alleviate the poverty levels in the area.

### **Problem Statement**

The people of Elegeyo Marakwet County faced massive policy failure, manifested by high number of failed projects that was caused by disagreements between various stakeholders, leading to abandonment of government projects mid-way. These projects were never complete to help the community and therefore exposed the community to poverty and the associated vices, like conflicts, cattle rustling, competition over resources, excess alcoholism, particularly illicit brews, and under development. This motivated the researcher to find ways of improving implementation by involving public in implementation through interactive participation where all parties would interact, debate, consult, build consensus and seek solutions to problems affecting them mutually and in one accord.

## **CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW**

Concerns on how to increase adaptive capacities of populations to changes, programmes and policies have necessitated the need to allow and improve on stakeholder interactions during participation sessions. **Li, et al** (2013), **Chen, et al** (2014). **Mugwagwa J, et al** (2015) observed that environmental challenges hampered quality stakeholder interaction during public participation, which negatively affected policy implementation, lack of enabling laws, rules, strict regulations, lack of democratic, space, opaque and in accountable institutions discouraged stakeholder interaction and undermine policy implementation.

**Onyango, O.T. et al** (2018) in a study of influence of participation on policy implementation in Kenya found that public participation where stakeholders interact freely had influence in successful policy implementations. In support of above view, **Hooghe, et al** (2009) posits that consensus is achieved when groups or individuals with dissenting views reach a common ground where their ideas and views agree. This can be achieved only through stakeholder interaction. Stakeholder interaction therefore is an active, creative and dynamic way of reaching an agreement in opinions of all stakeholders. **Z Master, et al** (2013) posited that to gain public support and acceptance on any policy public trust is fundamental. This is a virtue built and achieved through stakeholder interaction. Further, **Mikiko Nishimura** (2017) notes that community interaction through participation in school management improves performance in school management by removing mistrust and suspicion between the community and school management. This nurtures transparency, mutual response and joint goals achieved through team work.

By recognizing and allowing stakeholder interaction and participation in policy implementation, the government or organization acknowledges the significance of beneficiaries to a policy. **Gladys Kibera**, (2013). In the same study, she found that stakeholder participation and interaction was crucial from identification, formulation to implementation stage of any policy. Researchers like **Mugwagwa J**, (2015) **Li et al** (2013) **L. Hooghe, et al** (2009), among others accept a common position that policy implementation is positively affected by stakeholder participation which is possible by way of interaction.

Stakeholder interaction inculcates sense of ownership, trust, understanding reduce resistance strengthen voice of the poor, improve acceptance and increase the likelihood of a successful policy implementation. Free interaction in a democratic space, allow stakeholders exchange ideas, way and originate attractive solutions and make better decisions. **Robinson, et al** (2010), actively engaged the Gabra in water management

meetings, discussion sessions, site visits in which he concluded that stakeholder interactive participation addressed community complains and made implementation easier, less costly and policy ownership and affiliation became stronger rather or improved.

### **Stakeholder Interaction**

The beneficiaries who are mostly from the host community has to interact with other stakeholders, in most cases implementing agency, government officials, experts, financiers, land owners, etc. to create an understanding, working rapport and team work needed for a successful policy implementation. **Miriam et al** (2011) found that interaction between stakeholders acted as “enablers” by removing barriers between stakeholders evidently as deductions from the study on improving cross agency collaboration in New Zealand. In interaction process, community liaison officers who act as mediators between various stakeholders are very vital in stakeholder interaction. They create and maintain good relationship between the host community, and government, implementers and others. **Clare Bebbington, et al** (2017). **Amy DeGroft and Margret Cargo** (2009) concluded that stakeholders must interact at all stages for successful policy implementation. They further noted that meaningful dialogues, debates, and negotiations among diverse parties in a democratic secure environment improved policy implementation by encouraging knowledge transfer, utilization, diffusion and actualization of policies.

## **2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Social Exchange Theory (SET)**

It's a Socio-psychological and sociological paradigm that posits that human beings in a society are constantly involved in a series of interactions that generate obligations. These interactions are interdependent and contingent on the actions of another person. **Emerson** (1976), **Blan** (1964). Members of community exchange valuable assets in that they tend to weigh what they gain in giving concessions against what they give out as foregone opportunities. These independent interactions transact valuables and are able to generate relationships though on certain circumstances. **Geroge Homans** (1961) noted that in this value laden interaction the community is able to weigh gains against opportunity foregone by entering into any venture with the government. The relevance of this theory is that people make decisions to support government policy or not based on what benefit they anticipate to get or what they anticipate to loose.

### **2.2 New Public Management Theory (NPM)**

This is a departure from old rigid and dictatorial style of management characterized by top bottom approaches, military style of management to more open, democratic and humane style that recognize the importance of stakeholders in decision making. The new public management theory envisioned the private sector management style where stakeholders are viewed as customers and government could view customers, citizens as clients and seek to satisfy their demands. The focus in new public management is how it can be used to bring new management techniques in managing public programs to build support and catalyze synergy needed in successfully implementing public policy to improve societal living standards.

New public management theory can be used by public administrators, policy implementers, county governments and other organizations to allow more democratic space to stakeholders to debate, deliberate, build consensus on dissenting issues and conflicting opinions so as to bring peace, calmness, harmony and support to government policy implementation. New public management theory became relevant due to citizens continued dependence on government service, socio political and economic challenges that delivered the society. Before introduction of new public management, governments had taken citizens for granted and their input on participation leave a lone stakeholder interaction was not given any consideration. (**Osborne** 1993). However a critique that this theory has many interpretation and different implementation due to diversity in intellectual roots of the theory, **Sahlin Anderson** (2011), and **Smallan** (2007).

**Pollit** and **Bouchaert**, (2004) as cited in **Paliulis** and **Chliviadas** (2004) observed that new public management is more consensual, facilitates stakeholder's interaction and participation in large numbers, especially ordinary citizens. New public management allows more freedom, active role in decision making and recognize the improvement of stakeholder interaction in generating ideas better decisions, ironing out contentious issues and team building.

### **CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deal with research design, study area, study population, sample size, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, and analysis and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

It's a cross-sectional case study that employ descriptive design to analyze data on target population and interpret the findings to find out how stakeholder interaction (interactive participation) can affect policy implementation. Does the effect positively impute the policy implementation or not? This will answered by the findings. **Njoroge, et al** (2015) observed that descriptive research design offers a clarification as to how and why there is a relationship between various aspects in a phenomenon. Both descriptive research design and consideration approach as most opt for this study as it is the best in information collection responsible to questions, and can investigate and explain underlying issues.

#### **3.2 The area of study in which this journal is based is Elgeyo Marakwet County in North Rift region of Kenya.**

The study was conducted among the locals of Kabiemit ward and target population was uniformly spread across the entire Elgeyo Marakwet County. Population character was uniform, use style, culture economy and history all reflected the true people of Elgeyo Marakwet. National census of Kenya, (2009).

#### **3.3 Target Population**

The study targeted the Elgeiyo Marakwet spread across the county. The County has about 390,000 as per 2009 National census and the study dealt with 410 target population with 41 being the sample. These are people whose population was uniform character. They face similar problems and all exhibit vagaries of policy failure.

#### **3.4 sampling techniques and sample size**

A population of 410 people across the area was deleted by simple random sampling. These are people who regularly attended interactive barazas, seminars, development briefs, public consultations and any stakeholder's interactive sessions held by NG-CDF, Administrators, KVDA (Kerio valley development Authority), Ministry of water, Ministry of education among others. A 10% of 410 was used as respondents to a questionnaire. The researcher preferred simple random sampling because it's simple and suitable to any respondent under a defined criterion. The criteria here was accessibility, availability, geographical proximity and willingness to participate **Ilker Etikam, et al** (2016).

#### **3.5 Data collection instruments**

Questionnaire were used to collect information in this study. The questionnaire as a tool was found to be simple, clear, and easy to compare and analyze data.

### 3.5.1 Primary and secondary Data

Primary data was collected using open and closed ended questionnaires responded by 41 respondents selected through simple random sampling from diverse backgrounds spread across government departments, the society and across wide range of occupation. Secondary data was gotten through data mining from past participation forums like attendant list, indicating attendance lists, stakeholder participation session records, national government administrators attendance list on barazas, county government consultations , Kerio Valley Development Authority Participation records (KVDA) and school management meeting records.

### 3.6. Data Collection

The researcher got all required authority and permit to collect data. In this case they were Elgeyo Marakwet County, KVDA, KU, and NACOSTI.

### 3.7. Reliability of research instrument

The coefficient of internal consistency was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient and attained 0.8268, greater than 0.7, which was qualification.

### 3.8. Data Analysis

The population was stratified into males, females, professionals, level of education and occupation. The researcher sought to establish the number of respondents that regularly attended interaction sessions, gender, quality of attendees, and their social status. The level of education of stakeholder was important to determine the quality of stakeholders and also quality of results from stakeholder interaction. The researcher analyzed the quality of stakeholder interaction in this case participation by determining the level of education of participants, occupation and social status of stakeholders. After receiving well filled questionnaires, the researcher coded, and edited them to make sure they are complete and consistent. Recognition of responses and correction of errors were done, the quantitative values allocated using Linkert scale. The data was processed using SPSS version 20, and spearman's coefficient used to explain the relationship between participation which is stakeholder interaction and policy implementation.

#### Regression mode

$$y = a + b_1x_1 + e$$

y= Policy implementation

$b_1$  = beta coefficient

$x_1$  = stakeholder interaction

$\varepsilon$  = error term



## CHAPTER FOUR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter indicate findings of the study which is organized as flows: Descriptive, statistics showing respondents, profiles and characteristics to show the degree to which the data represents population of interest. Pre- estimation diagnostic tests are represented as well as testing of hypothesis presented thematically as per each objective. The objective significant for this journal is objective no. 3, in study, which is stakeholder interaction.

### 4.2. Descriptive Statistics

A total of 41 questionnaires were administered, all of them correctly filled and returned, making it 100% response.

**Table. 4.1. Response Rate**

Target respondents	Successful respondents	Response rate %
41	41	100

Source: Researcher 2018.

The response rate of 100% made it excellent. **Mugenda** and **Mugenda** (2003) and **Saunders, et al** (2007) observed that 50% response rate was adequate, 60% good and 70% very good.

Response of both gender was determined and males responded 63%, Females 37% and they were males 26 and female 15 in number, making them 41 respondents.

### 4.3. Stakeholder interaction in policy implementation

Above table shows that stakeholders actively do interact during policy implementation and that there is a positive effect on implementation. It also indicates strongly 58% that minutes of interaction are taken by implementing agency or the organization after each interaction session. Agenda for interaction is jointly developed by both stakeholders and implementing agency as well as other positives. It's also evident that the results of interaction are adapted and included in final decision of the implementation.

**Table 4. 2b: Stakeholder interaction in Policy Implementation**

Characteristics	n (%)
Community do interact with implementing agency regularly	
Strongly agree	6(14.6%)
Agree	8(19.5%)
Neutral	7(17.1%)
Disagree	10(24.4%)
Strongly disagree	10(24.4%)

Community lead Agency relation improve after each interaction session		
Strongly agree		8(19.5%)
Agree		9(22.0%)
Neutral		3(7.3%)
Disagree		17(41.5%)
Strongly disagree		4(9.8%)
Agenda for interaction is jointly developed by the stakeholder		
Strongly agree		12(29.3%)
Agree		7(17.1%)
Neutral		7(17.1%)
Disagree		10(24.4%)
Strongly disagree		5(12.2%)
Minutes and resolutions are recorded and taken by implementing Agency after each session for future reference		
Strongly agree		24(58.5%)
Agree		8(19.5%)
Neutral		0(0%)
Disagree		6(14.6%)
Strongly disagree		3(7.3%)
The Agency make use of minutes and resolutions to improve on policy implementation		
Strongly agree		7(17.1%)
Agree		8(19.5%)
Neutral		14(34.1%)
Disagree		8(19.5%)
Strongly disagree		4(9.8%)
What difficulties do you face during information exchange sections in your area?		
Language barrier	2	4.9
Shortage of information materials	13	31.7
Knowledge gap	26	63.4
None of the above	0	0
A, B, and C.	0	0
Do you meet to discuss and learn more about participation in policy implementation in your ward?		
Yes	27	65.9
No	14	34.1



Is information exchange among stakeholders important for policy implementation? Yes No	30 11	73.2 26.8
Are you periodically updated on policy implementation progress in your area? Yes No	16 25	39.0 61.0
Do you discuss progress, challenges and solutions facing policy implementation in your area? Yes No	22 19	53.7 46.3
What would you like to be included in the information agenda? Current calendar for meetings Purpose, objectives and venue for meetings Distributing information to the public	23 15 3	56.1 36.6 7.3
What facilitation would you like to be provided to participants to enhance information exchange? Informing the public of ongoing activities through publications Consulting with the public on specific issues through workshops Preparing and distributing reports to assist public in evaluating follow-up	18 12 11	43.9 29.3 26.8

**Table 4. 9: ANOVA Table**

ANOVA						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	74.507	3	19.309	17.919	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	109.113	112	0.976		
	Total	183.62	115			

Source: Researcher, 2018

**ANOVA table (test using alpha = 0.05)**

The overall model was significant  $F(3,112) = 17.919$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $R^2 = 0.653$

P-value (Sig.) = .000 which is less than .05 therefore R-square is significantly greater than zero. The independent variables account for a significant amount of variance in dependent variable, thus the regression model is significant.

**Table 4. 10: Regression Output**

Model	Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
(Constant)	9.824	13.495	0.000
Stakeholder	0.768	6.350	0.017

**Source:** Research Data (2018)

The regression model below was computed using regression results in the table above.

Where:-

$$Y=9.824+0.768+ \epsilon$$

Y = is the Dependent Variable (Policy implementation)

$X_1$  = Stakeholder interaction

$\epsilon$  = Error term

#### 4.4. Testing hypothesis

The study used regression to test the null analysis: Stakeholder does not affect policy implementation.

The coefficient of stakeholder interaction is positive and significant at 0.768 and P value = 0.017 < 0.05, at 5% level of significance, the study rejected the hypothesis. The study further revealed an increase in stakeholder interaction by one unit, had a corresponding increase in policy implementation by 0.768 units. **Tiankai** (2012) supported this view, when he noted that there was reduced costs, improved patient safety, easy and efficient access to more timely interventions and availability of surveillance data for the medical facility. **DeGroft**, and **Cargo** (2009) noted that policy implementation being a complex change process that involved many players at multiple levels in unstable environment that was in constant change, stakeholder interaction was fundamentally essential.

## CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter, consists of major findings in summary form that has been derived from objectives which is stakeholder interaction effects on policy implementation and recommendations drawn from conclusions of this study, and citations from the researchers cited in the study. The study sought to establish effects of public participation on policy implementation in Elgeyo Marakwet County and the third objective, was to establish effects of stakeholder interaction on policy implementation which forms the title of this journal. A target of 410 people drawn from various fields, were sampled and 41 which is 10% of the target population responded to questionnaires. Data collected from 26 males and 15 females was analysed using statistical package for social sciences, version 20V, and descriptive inferential statistic applied to establish the relationship between variables and effects the independent variables had on dependent variable. In this case, assessment of stakeholder interaction referred to as stakeholder participation had positive effects on policy implementation.

## **5.2. Summary**

Stakeholder interaction (participation) was being influenced by resource availability, poverty, illiteracy, age barriers, public awareness, time, corruption, and inefficiency among some stake holders. Political bias, poor coordination, inefficient monitoring and inaccurate evaluation were cited as some managerial factors that affected implementation, and stakeholder interaction. Actual stakeholder interaction was impeded by unaccountable leadership, inaccessibility of leaders for consultation, suspicion, mistrust, clannism, nepotism and insecurity in the region.

The study concluded that insufficient resources negatively affected policy implementation, and resources ranged from finances, materials, knowledge, secure environment and safety. It was also deduced that stakeholder interaction enhanced participation, during policy implementation for instance 36.6% of participants on respondents indicated that they were involved in policy implementation and stakeholders attended most functions on policy implementation and the decisions they made actually influenced and affected policy implementation as indicated by majority of 58.5%.

## **5.3. Conclusions**

Stakeholder interaction during participation sessions required a facilitative forward policy and a legal regime that availed the necessary democratic space to exchange free speech information flow, knowledge, and built general capacity, to have a well-informed stakeholder interaction forum that can identify and generate better decisions. The stakeholder interaction forums and sessions should be designed in a gender friendly manner that accommodates both males and females, disabled, Special interests, and youths, for a sustainable policy implementation. Participants in any stakeholder interaction should be drawn from a wide region, considering content, extent, and inclusively. Timely well planned, well constituted and facilitated stakeholder interaction contributes to a successful policy implementation. In general, Elgeyo Marakwet County had weak decision making process, with inadequate accountability, secrecy, and political biasness that negatively influenced policy implementation in some situations, though the study included that stakeholder interaction positively affected policy implementation.

## **5.4. Recommendations**

The government should conduct intensive and extensive civic education to inform the citizens of their rights to public participation stakeholder interaction and be aware of policies getting implemented and their schedule. This is their basic rights as enshrined in constitution of Kenya. (2010). The County government should demonstrate effective traumas, strength, and good communication and engage public in consultation over projects and policies in Elgeyo Marakwet. The youths should be mobilized to develop interest in public matters, particularly development policy and use local languages together with English and Kiswahili to cater for all participants in the stakeholder interaction process. Further, the government should diversify media in announcing interactive sessions. Radio particularly vernacular in radios, should back up print media and television.

## **5.5. Suggestions for further research**

Further study on how to constitute, regulate and standardize stakeholders interactions should be carried out in other places of the country and use the findings to improve on policy implementation.

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