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Community Participation and Implementation of Water Projects Under Devolved Governance the Case of County Government of Meru, Kenya

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Abstract

The devolved implementation of water projects continues to face a myriad of challenges and is derailed by various factors. This despite bringing services closer consequently denies citizenry access to safe domestic use and drinking water. This study investigated the influence of community participation on implementation of water projects under devolved governance; case of Meru County Government. The study is guided by one theory; Community Participation theory. The study is further supported by the community management model. The study employed Descriptive survey research design. Target population was constituted of 126 Ministry of Water and Natural resources employees, 108 *Ward Administrators and 69 Members of County Assembly. A sample size of 170 participants was used and respondents selected using Stratified and Simple random sampling. An interview guide and one questionnaire were used for primary data collection. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was reported in form of narratives guided by themes under study. The study established that better planning of water projects, access to raw materials and labour, reduced projects' wages cost and agricultural productivity were all enhanced by community participation in water projects. The study concluded that community participation influenced the implementation of water projects by County Government of Meru. The study recommends that county governments should integrate public participation in their development plans for social service projects as stipulated by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Additionally to enhance sustainability, local beneficiaries must be involved in all stages in the implementation process of county government water projects.*

Key terms: ***Community Participation, Devolved Governance, Sustainable Water Projects, Project Labor***

1.0 Background Information: Globally, access to clean water for drinking and other domestic purposes remains an insurmountable challenge for 783 million people especially the rural populace mainly due to the unsustainable management of natural water resources and poor public service delivery strategies by governments (Giupponi, *et al.,* 2006; Onda, LoBuglio and Bartram, 2012). Embedded in the belief of improving this situation through efficient service delivery and implementation of water projects, governments adopted devolution of the water delivery function (Cheema and Rondinelli, 2007).

This proved by the earnest governments' desire to improve access to safe drinking water in several European countries including; Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Moldova, Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Poland and United Kingdom have been reported to have informed decision to devolve this public service provision function (Cheema, 2007). The immediate need to achieve better public service delivery and in particular access to water did inform devolved governance of this function in Papua New Guinea (May, 2006). In Africa, the continued need for better public service delivery including access to clean water did inform the devolution of water administration by the governments of: South Africa, Uganda and Rwanda (Kauzya, 2007)

In Europe, devolution has had a mixture of results in terms of implementation of water projects. Devolved water governance has Calamai (2009) been faced with a myriad of financial resources challenges with disparities in financial disbursements for water projects under devolution to enhance access in the different regional governments of Italy resulting to 15% of regions facing water challenges while others enjoying sufficient supply. However, devolution of water management to improve access was successful with 95% of Autonomous Communities (A.C) in Spain having implemented water projects (Solé-Ollé and Alejandro, 2005). Access to clean water improved with 75% in the Czech Republic under devolution, this resulting from the implementation of better fiscal decentralization structures leading to timely funding of water projects by municipalities (Hemmings, 2006). Strong fiscal decentralization structures Barankay and Ben (2006) to different Cantons did enhance access to clean water emanating also from the successful implementation of water projects in Switzerland.

Devolution did according to White and Smoke, (2005) created new aspirations among citizens in East Asia on better delivery of public services including an enhanced access to clean water. However, weak fiscal decentralization structures according to Malik (2008) in Asian countries did adversely influence the implementation of public service projects such as water projects under a devolved system of governance negatively influencing access to clean water. A good example is a report by the World Bank on Indonesia through which it is argued that water projects are left at the appraisal and due diligence stage due to delayed disbursement of project funds negatively influencing access to water (World Bank, 2007). However, community participation according to Widianingsih (2005) did significantly influence the implementation of water projects under devolution and consequently access to

water in Indonesia. In Cambodia, failure to effectively involve communities and delayed financial disbursements derailed the implementation of water projects by Commune Councils adversely influencing access to water meant for irrigation and domestic use in the country (Chea, 2010 ; Pak, 2011). Budgetary reforms undertaken by the 20 provincial governments operating under devolution positively influenced the implementation of water projects consequently improving access to clean drinking water in Papua New Guinea (Kua, 2006).

In Mexico, poor water systems according to Rivas (2012) emanating from poor funding of most local governments by the national government and the failure to embrace community participation in some areas had derailed implementation of water projects due to resistance by the community adversely influencing clean water access. In Peru, participatory development according to Brinkerhoff *et al.,* (2007) in all the 25 regional governments did significantly influence the implementation of water projects initiated by regional governments and access to water. However, poor fiscal management according to Ahmad and Mercedes (2007) under devolution did adversely influence the implementation of water projects in Peru. In Nicaragua, community involvement by 9 out of the 15 departmental governments was an important factor in the implementation of water projects consequently improving access (Bay, 2011). Further, in Bolivia poor access to water according to Inchauste (2008) emanated from high debts incurred by the 9 departmental governments which had negatively influenced availability of financial resources adversely influencing the implementation of water projects in the country.

In Africa, Forje (2006) did contend that devolution promises better delivery of public services to citizens in the continent, key among these being access to clean water. However, in Nigeria poor access to clean water Nkwocha (2009) notes was as a result of poor funding of water projects, which had adversely influenced their implementation process in the Niger delta region. In South Africa, local government's failure to involve local communities did influence access to local labour adversely influencing the implementation of water projects and access to clean water (Thwala, 2007). In Namibia, community participation according to Nekwaya (2007) did expedite the implementation of water supply projects at the Omusati Regional Council consequently improving water access. In Tanzania, access to clean water according to Liviga (2011) had gradually improved under devolution this emanating from the successful implementation of water projects in rural areas attributed to: embracing of community participation, timely transfer of projects' funds from the central government and cordial intergovernmental relations. In Kenya, it is the aspiration of the citizenery access to water would improve under the devolved system of governance (Burugu, 2010). In Meru County, access to safe water remains a challenge despite The County government of Meru having allocated millions of shillings for the implementation of water projects (Kimathi, 2014).

1.1.1 Concept of Community Participation : According to Mansuri and Rao (2011) community participation refers to the process that embraces the involvement of people from

various social backgrounds and economic strengths in community projects affecting their lives for example water projects. It lays emphasis on the participation of all project beneficiaries; women and men in all stages of projects implementation; design, construction and operation of water projects that meet their own needs. Further, the involvement of community has also been found to lead to the identification of local resources, the tapping into local strengths and creativity (Smits, Rojas and Tamayo, 2013; Thwala, 2010). To enhance project sustainability, the participation of beneficiary communities is also considered to be of vital importance as this has been found to create a sense of ownership. This is because when communities are involved in the planning, building and managing of water projects they have a better understanding, readily accept and use systems they developed themselves (Thwala, 2010).

2.0 Statement of the Problem : In many developing countries, governance of the water sector as a whole is in a state of confusion and dysfunction with little responsiveness or accountability to citizens (Tropp, 2005). This can be attributed to the inefficient delivery of public services that has been impeded by the highly centralized government bureaucracies (Mwabu, *et al.,* 2001).In Kenya, the non-essential layers of government under the centralized system of government had hindered the efficient provision of water resulting to slightly less than half of the rural population not able to access water, as opposed to the urban population where 85 percent have access to safe water (World Bank, 2011).

However, with the introduction of devolution, Kenyans expected institutional responsiveness to service delivery especially in the water sector that would solve water scarcity in their counties. Notwithstanding, the implementation of water projects in the many counties is influenced by a multiplicity of factors. Oyugi and Kibua, (2008) observed, where a decentralized system of government exists without leading to the realization of improved quality of service delivery, a question is often asked: what is the problem? .The Meru County Government allocated Ksh.430 million in the financial year 2014/2015 for the implementation of water projects, but only 20% of people in Meru County have access to clean and safe drinking (Kimathi, 2014). Most of these projects have stalled due to issues such as; lack of technical personnel, conflicts with the national government, late disbursement of projects' funds, lack of community participation which has resulted to lack of project ownership and project sustainability. The situation further complicates the lives of constituents in some sub-counties forcing them to both walk for long distances in search of water and spend huge sums of money. For instance, it has been reported that constituents of Igembe North spend KSh.64 million annually on purchasing water from commercial water vendors (Kimathi, 2014). All these has resulted to the continued reporting of high occurrence of water borne diseases, stagnation of agricultural productivity due to climate change and economic disempowerment of the people of Meru County.

3.0 Research Hypothesis:

H_0: Community Participation does not have a significant relationship with the implementation of water projects by county governments.

H_1: Community Participation has a significant relationship with the implementation of water projects by county governments.

4.0 Implementation of Water Projects : In their study, Jaramillo and Alcázar, (2013) observed community participation in the form of participatory budgeting (P.B) had an insignificant relationship with the number of water projects implemented by regional governments in Peru. This they noted that was as a result of poor policy strategies of enhancing collaboration between citizens, regional governments and other stakeholders in the P.B process (Jaramillo and Alcázar, 2013). In a study, Faguet (2012) found evidence on a significant relationship between devolved water governance and improved agricultural productivity in some municipalities in Bolivia. Further, he observed financial investment in water infrastructure by municipal governments significantly increased crop yields positively influencing the economic empowerment of residents (Faguet, 2012).

In their study, Cazcarro et al., (2015) observed the funding of water projects by Autonomous Communities (A.C) governments led to the expedited implementation of water projects resulting to improved agricultural productivity in these devolved governance levels in Spain. Further, they note this had significantly improved agricultural incomes earned by rural farmers leading to their economic empowerment (Cazcarro et al., 2015). Similar evidence Shygonskyj and Shygonska, (2016) who observed the availability of financial resources did significantly influence the implementation of water projects by Oblasts in Ukraine. They noted that this was important in the reduction of reported cases of water borne diseases in public hospitals under the management of these devolved units of governance (Shygonskyj and Shygonska, 2016).

In a study, Machete (2011) noted failure by a provincial government to implement water projects did have a significant negative influence on the health and economic empowerment of citizens residing in the province in South Africa. This he contends did in particular have adverse effects on crop yields of rural farmers negatively influencing incomes from agriculture and the overall livelihoods province (Machete, 2011). Further, in a study Bemspång and Segerström (2009) found evidence failure to fund water projects by regional governments adversely influenced access to safe drinking and clean water in these devolved units of governance in Tanzania. They observed this resulted to an increase in reported cases of water borne diseases and adversely influenced income levels among women as they spend most of their time fetching water (Bemspång and Segerström, 2009). In their study, Kiprono and Wanyoike (2016) noted a county government had funded the implementation of water projects. Further, they observed these projects did improve agricultural productivity in the county resulting to the economic empowerment of its residents (Kiprono and Wanyoike, 2016).

5.0 Community Participation and Implementation of Water Projects: Citizen participation is a process by which people act in response to public concerns, voice their opinions about decisions that affect them, and take responsibility for changes to their community. Their support results in the sustainability of community project (Armitage *et*

al., 2007). In addition, community involvement in projects is celebrated by different scholars (González Rivas, 2014; van Koppen, Cossio Rojas, and Skielboe, 2012, Kiogora, 2013;) as an important aspect that positively influences the implementation of such projects because it creates avenues for the community to provide labor, raw materials and also demand for transparency in funds management.

In a study, McNeill (2008) revealed that water projects implemented by regional councils that involved local communities exhibited high rates of completion and sustainability in New Zealand. This he notes was because the communities owned the projects and therefore provided raw materials and labour for the projects (McNeill, 2008). Similar evidence by Lennox, Proctor and Russell (2011) who observed that stakeholder involvement by regional councils in the implementation of water projects expedites the implementation process. They argued that because involving the community does reduce project's costs as the beneficiary or host community does provide raw materials needed at low prices and provides cheap labour and at times volunteers (Lennox *et. al.,* 2011). In a study by, Esonu and Kavanamur (2011) stakeholders' participation did positively influence the successful implementation of water projects implemented by the Wampar Local-Level Government in Morobe provincial government in Papua New Guinea. Further, they postulated this was because the host communities had provided; raw materials at affordable prices, labor at cheap wage rates and owned the projects thereby enhancing projects' sustainability (Esonu and Kavanamur, 2011).

In Europe community participation was found to be an important factor in the successful implementation of water projects. In a study, Juuti, Katako and Rajala (2005) who observed that regional governments had discovered that failure to involve the beneficiary communities in water supply projects, had adverse influence on the implementation of these projects in Finland. This resulted to project teams' inaccessibility to locally available raw materials and the host communities charging high wages for their labor due to the non-existence of community consultation from the initial stages of project formulation (Juuti *et al.,* 2005). Similar evidence by Albiac, Hanemann, Calatrava, Uche and Tapia (2006) who observed that failure to involve the community had resulted to the failure of The Ebro Water point (EWP) project in Spain. This they contend led to the failure by host communities to support the project (Albiac *et. al.,* 2006). In a study, Morris and Morris (2005) who observed The Ythan water catchment project (YWC) was more sustainable due to an effective process adopted by project teams on community involvement in Scotland. They further, argue that community participation in the The Ythan water catchment project did make the project more sustainable because project teams acquired labour and raw materials for project implementation from the local beneficiary community leading to project completion (Morris and Morris, 2005).

The prerequisite for community involvement in the successful implementation of water projects under devolution is not unique to Europe; similar findings have been reported in South America (Whittington *et al.,* 2009). In a study, Bow (2002) found evidence on the importance of community participation for successful implementation of water projects

under devolution is in Chile. He contends that regional governments that involved local communities in the implementation of water projects, reported positive results than those that did not (Bow, 2002). Further, in a study Larson (2002) observed that failure by the local governments to involve local communities in the implementations of water affected the access to local materials in Nicaragua. This she observed was because of community resistance resulting to inflated projects implementation leading to derailed water projects in rural Nicaragua (Larson, 2002).

In study, Carias (2007) observed that the provision of local raw materials and demand for transparency in the utilization of funds positively correlated to the implementation of water projects in Colombia. This he further notes that these were only achieved in water projects that embraced community participation in the implementation process (Carias, 2007). In a study, Rodríguez-Pose and Bwire (2004) noted that failure to involve beneficiary community for the implementation of water supply projects under devolution resulted to project failure. This they contend resulted from failure to access labor at affordable rates and raw materials for the projects from beneficiary communities in Mexico, (Rodríguez-Pose and Bwire 2004).

Studies in Asian countries with a devolved system of governance emphasize the importance of community involvement in the implementation of water projects. In a study, Arriens and Alejandiro (2003) found that community participation was an important factor in the successful implementation of water projects in rural Philippines. They contend regional governments and municipalities that embraced community involvement reported the successful identification and implementation of water projects (Arriens and Alejandiro, 2003). Further, Yuerlita and Saptom (2008) observed that community participation in the implementation of water projects determined the success of these projects by provincial governments in Indonesia. He argued this was because community participation provided avenues to access raw materials, demand for transparency in the utilization of funds and provision of cheap labour (Yuerlita and Saptom, 2008). In a study, Hoedeman *et al.,* (2005) observed that community participation influenced the successful of water supply projects implemented by local governments running under 47 prefectures in Japan. Further, they argued that prefectures that fully involved community in the implementation of water projects enjoyed advantages such as; access to raw materials and cheap labor (Hoedeman, *et al.,* 2005).

The importance of community participation in the implementation of water projects is not unique to Asia but it is also vital in Africa. In a study, Akinbile *et al.,* (2006) observed that water projects that embraced community participation in Oyun local government in Kwara state were more sustainable than those that did involve the community in Nigeria. They further contend that this was because these projects enjoyed provision of labor at lower wage rates and access to rural materials needed in the construction of such projects and better planning of projects which meant that the projects were located in a sustainable area (Akinbile, *et al.,* 2006). In a study, Nduo (2012) found evidence that failure by a provincial government to embrace the involvement of community adversely influenced the

implementation of water projects in rural South Africa. He contends that lack of community involvement water projects led to poor transparency in the management of project's funds and ineffective monitoring and evaluation leading to the collapse of these projects (Nduo, 2012).

Studies in Eastern Africa also emphasize the need for community participation in the implementation of water projects. In a study, Mwakila (2008) also found that regional governments embraced the involvement of beneficiaries' communities in the implementation of water projects in Tanzania. He argued that this enhanced project ownership by the beneficiary community which led to successful implementation of water projects because the community provided; raw materials needed, security and cheap labour (Mwakila, 2008). However, in a study, Mukakalisa and Mukasine (2009) observed that failure to involve local communities in the design and implementation of water projects under devolved governance in rural Rwanda resulted to derailed implementation of water supply projects. Further, they contend that this emanated from failure by local governments' project teams to access cheap labor and raw materials from the community adversely influencing the implementation process (Mukakalisa and Mukasine, 2009).

Community participation Ngile (2015) played a significant role in the implementation of water projects by a devolved unit of governance whose main goal was to improve access to water in a sub-county in Kenya. This he noted was mainly through Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Water Resource Users Associations (WRUAs) which provided affordable labour and raw materials positively influencing the implementation of water projects (Ngile, 2015). In a study, Miruka (2016) observed that failure to adopt community participation did adversely influence the implementation of water projects under a county government in Kenya. This he notes did result to lack of community monitoring and evaluation of water projects adversely influencing the implementation of these projects leading to poor access to water in this county (Miruka, 2016). Similar evidence by, Mutwiri (2016) indicated that lack of awareness among the community did inhibit its participation on the planning process of development projects such as water projects in Meru County. This he noted did influence the county government's projects prioritization strategy consequently derailing the implementation of water projects and negatively influencing access to water in Meru County (Mutwiri, 2016).

6.0 Theoretical Perspective: The study is guided by one theory: Community Participation theory. Windle and Chibulka (1981) proponents of the Community participation theory did argue that the participation of the community in development projects is better achieved through five stages; programme evaluation, service giving, governing, planning, enabling and authorizing. None of the stages should be left out (Windle and Chibulka,1981). Wilcox, (1999) another proponent of community participation theory did also put forward five interconnected levels of community participation; information, consultation, deciding together, acting together and supporting individual community initiatives for the successful implementation of projects in a

decentralized system. Therefore, community participation theory assumes that the higher the community participation in a decision, the less the likelihood of interferences of external organizations on that decision. In this theory focus is given on the participation of beneficiaries and not that of personnel from the implementing agencies (in this case the county government of Meru) in water projects. Community participation is attained through collaborative or joint involvement of project beneficiaries and the implementing agencies (Khwaja, 2006).

Further, the study is guided by the Community Management Model (CMM). The model is used to explain the importance of involving the community in the; design, planning, building and managing of community projects. The model aids the understanding of the role played by community participation in ensuring water projects; empower intended beneficiaries, are efficient and sustainable (Lockwood, 2004). The model also places great value in the participation of the community through control in the decision making process which eventually creates a sense of ownership (Lockwood, 2004).

7.0 Research Methodology: The study employed the descriptive survey research design to investigate the relationship between community participation and the implementation of county government funded water projects in Meru County. Descriptive survey research design enabled the gathering of both qualitative and quantitative data on the relationship between community participation and implementation of county government funded water projects in the study locale. Survey design was also instrumental in establishing the link between study variable and study problem. This was made possible by the inherent features of survey design which facilitated the collection of data from samples representing large populations and provided the researcher with the opportunity to examine respondents'; understanding and perspectives in relation to the problem under research. The study used a sample size of 170 participants which composed of; Ministry of Water and Natural resources employees, Ward Administrators and Members of County Assembly. Participants were selected through the use of Stratified and Simple Random sampling. Questionnaires were self-administered to Ministry of Water and Natural resources employees and Ward Administrators while face to face interviews conducted for Members of County Assembly. The primary data collected was edited, examined for integrity and finally coded. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0. Study findings were presented in frequency and percentage tables to make valid inference on the topic of study. Qualitative data were analyzed making use of content analyses by organizing data into themes, patterns and sub-topics guided by the objectives of the study.

8.0 Findings and Interpretation: The study sought to determine the influence of community participation on implementation of water projects by County government of Meru.

Better Planning of County Government Funded Water Projects : The research sought to establish whether the involvement or failure to involve the community in the

implementation of water projects funded by the county government lead to better planning. The findings are as presented in Table 1.

Table-1: Community involvement for Better Planning in the implementation of county funded water projects

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	69	56.0
No	54	44.0
Total	**123**	**100.0**

Based on the research findings, majority of the study's respondents as shown by 56.0% were of the opinion that involvement of community in the implementation of county government's funded water projects lead to better planning of the projects, whereas 44.0% were of the contrary opinion. This was important because it showed that majority of the study's respondents believed that for better planning of these projects, greater value had to be placed in the involvement of community in the implementation of county funded water projects. It also implies that involvement of community in the implementation of county funded water projects helps to shape the project to their specific needs in ways that outside planners cannot and that participation increased the sense of immediate responsibility and ownership by beneficiaries.

Community Participation for Sustainability of County Government Funded Water Projects

The study also sought to determine whether community participation in the implementation of county government's funded water projects makes them more sustainable.
Results are shown in Table-2.

Table-2: Community participation for sustainable County Government's funded water projects

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	76	62.0
No	47	38.0
Total	**123**	**100.0**

From the research findings, majority of the respondent as shown by 62.0% were of the opinion that community participation in the implementation of water projects funded by the county government promoted the sustainability of water projects, whereas 38.0% were of the contrary opinion. The findings were significant because they showed that majority of the study's respondents attached great value in community involvement in the implementation of county funded water projects for the achievement of projects' sustainability. From these findings, it was also deduced that community participation in the implementation of water projects funded by the county government of Meru promoted the sustainability of water projects in Meru County.

Relationship between community participation and access of raw materials of water projects: The research also sought to determine whether embracing of community participation by devolved units of governance in the implementation of water projects facilitates access to raw materials needed for the implementation of these projects.
The findings are as shown in Table-3.

Table-3: Relationship between community participation and access to raw materials for implementation of water projects

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	74	60.16
No	49	39.84
Total	**123**	**100.0**

From the research findings, majority of the study's respondents as shown by 60.16% agreed that embracing of community participation by devolved units of governance in the implementation of water projects facilitates access to raw materials needed in the implementation of these projects, whereas 39.84% were of the contrary opinion. Based on these findings, it was deduced that majority of the study's respondents attached great significance in community involvement for access to raw materials needed in the implementation of county government's funded water projects in Meru County.

Influence of Community Participation on project Labour and wages cost: Respondents were further asked whether community participation in the implementation of county government's funded water projects influenced the wages charged for labor provided in the implementation of these projects.
Results are presented in Table 4

Table-4: Influence of community participation on project labour and wages cost

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	84	68.3
No	39	31.7
Total	**123**	**100.0**

Results obtained showed that majority of the respondents as shown by 68.3% agreed that community participation in the implementation of water projects funded by county government of Meru influenced the wages charged for labor provided in the implementation of these projects, whereas 31.7% were of the contrary opinion. Based on these findings, it was deduced that community participation in the implementation of water projects under the county government of Meru does influence the wages charged for labor provided in the implementation of these projects in Meru County. It also implies that community involvement in the implementation of county government's water projects helped to tap low cost labour that reduced the cost of project implementation.

Influence of Community Participation on Water Projects Implementation: The respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements on community participation and government funded building projects.
Results are as shown in Table 5.

Table-5: Influence of community participation on Water projects implementation

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std deviation
Wages charged for labor provided by the community in the implementation of water projects under devolution do influence the implementation of these projects.	0%	0%	4.7%	54.7%	40.6%	4.36	.576
The failure to access raw materials by devolved governments from the beneficiary community does not influence the implementation of water projects.	46.9 %	39.1%	14.1%	0%	0%	1.67	0.71
The involvement of the community in water projects implementation by the county government makes these projects sustainable.	0%	0%	0%	64.1%	35.9%	4.36	0.48
The failure by the county government to embrace community participation in the implementation of water projects does not influence the better planning process for the implementation of these projects.	54.7 %	34.4%	10.9%	0%	0%	1.56	0.69

From the research findings, majority of the respondents as shown by a mean of 4.36 agreed that; wages charged for labor provided by the community in the implementation of

water projects under devolution do influence the implementation of these projects; the involvement of the community in water projects implementation by the county government of Meru makes these projects sustainable as shown by a mean of 4.36 in each case.

Further the, respondents disagreed that to the statements that the failure by the county government to embrace community participation in the implementation of water projects does not influence the better planning process for the implementation of these projects as shown by a mean of 1.56 and that the failure to access raw materials by devolved governments from the beneficiary community does not influence the implementation of water projects as shown by a mean of 1.67.

Regression Analysis

Table-6: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.819[a]	.671	.653	.37290

The Adjusted R squared was used as the coefficient of determination to inform the variation in the dependent variable due to changes in the independent variable (community participation). From the findings in the above table the value of adjusted R squared was 0.653 an indication that there was variation of 65.3 percent on implementation of county government funded water projects due to community participation at 95 percent confidence interval. From these results it was infered 65.3 percent improvement in the number of county government funded water projects was as a result of community participation.

The research also used a coefficient table to determine the study model. Results are presented in the Table 7.

Table-7: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.176	.327		-.538	.592
	Community Participation	.517	.096	.397	5.375	.016

From the data in table 7, the established regression equation was:

Y= -0.176+ (0.517)

Based on the regression equation above, it was deduced, that unit increase in community participation would lead to an improvement in the implementation of county government funded water projects by a factor of 0.517. Specifically this means that lack of community participation would adversely influence the implementation of county government's funded water projects. It was also observed that this was at a significance value of 0.000 which is < 0.05 which meant community participation to a great extent influenced the implementation of county government's funded water projects. The Null hypothesis that community participation does not have a significant relationships with the implementation of county

government funded water projects is rejected and the Alternative hypothesis; community participation has a significant relationship with the implementation of county government funded water projects is accepted.

9.0 Conclusions: The study concluded that community participation had a significant relationship with implementation of water projects by County Government of Meru County. It was also concluded that embracing of participation of beneficiary communities by this devolved unit of governance facilitated the access of raw materials needed in the implementation of these projects and it also helped to build on local strengths and creativity. That community participation also helped to align project needs to beneficiaries' specific needs that outside planners cannot and it also promoted the sustainability of water projects community.

10.0 Recommendations: The study recommends that county governments should integrate public participation in their development plans for social service projects as stipulated by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Additionally to enhance sustainability, local beneficiaries must be involved in all stages in the implementation process of county government funded water projects.

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