

**BUSITEMA
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Pursuing Excellence

**PROJECT MONITORING, INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE OF
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGO): A CASE OF BUSIA
DISTRICT - UGANDA**

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PLAN A

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DECLARATION

I the undersigned, declare that this dissertation is my original work, except where due acknowledgement has been made. I declare that this work has never been submitted to this University or to any other institution for funding/for partial fulfilment for any award.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents who encouraged me throughout my life and made education a priority and enforced the saying, “*it is a long-term investment that leads one to prosperity in life*”. Besides, I also dedicate this work to my wife and children.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
SUPERVISORS' APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	3
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	4
1.4 Research Objectives	4
1.5 Study Hypotheses	4
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	4
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	5
1.8 Conceptual Framework	7
1.9 Explanation of the conceptual Model.....	7
CHAPTER TWO	8
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Theoretical framework	8
2.3 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).....	9
2.4 Project Monitoring	10
2.5 Innovation.....	10
2.6 Relationship between Project Monitoring and NGO Performance	11
2.7 Relationship between Innovation and NGO Performance	12
2.8 Project Monitoring and Innovation in NGO Sector.....	13
2.9 Chapter Summary.....	14
CHAPTER THREE	15

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	15
3.1 Introduction	15
3.2 Research Design	15
3.3 Study Population	15
3.4 Sample Size Selection and Sampling Technique	15
3.5 Data Sources	16
3.6 Data Collection.....	17
3.7 Measurement of Variables.....	17
3.8 Reliability and Validity	18
3.9 Data Processing and Analysis	19
3.10 Ethical Considerations.....	19
CHAPTER FOUR.....	21
PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS.....	21
4.1 Introduction	21
4.2 Demographic Characteristics.....	21
4.3 Correlation Analysis.....	22
4.4 Regression Analysis	23
4.5 Summary of Tested Hypotheses.....	25
CHAPTER FIVE.....	26
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	26
5.1 Introduction	26
5.2 Discussion of Findings	26
5.3 Conclusion.....	28
5.4 Recommendations	28
5.5 Limitation of the Study.....	29
REFERENCES.....	31
APPENDICES	35
Appendix 1: Questionnaire.....	35
Appendix 2: Krejcie and Morgan’s Table for Sample Size Determination.....	39
Appendix 3: List of NGOs and CBOs in Busia District by 2018.....	40
Appendix 4: Research Introductory Letter	46

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual framework.....	6
Figure 2: Final Model.....	23

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Population...	15
Table 3.2: Reliability Statistics.....	17
Table 4.1: Respondents' Characteristics	19
Table 4.2: Correlation Analysis.....	20
Table 4.3: Regression between Project Monitoring and NGO Performance	21
Table 4.4: Regression between Innovation and NGO Performance.....	21
Table 4.5: Regression between Project Monitoring and Innovation	22
Table 4.6: Summary of Tested Hypotheses.....	23

ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationships between project monitoring, innovation and NGO performance in Busia district. We sought to test the following objectives: to find out the relationship between project monitoring and NGO performance in Busia district - Uganda; to determine the relationship between innovation and NGO performance in Busia district - Uganda, and to find out the effect of project monitoring on innovation in NGO sector in Busia district - Uganda. Data were collected using a survey instrument from 85 Non-Governmental Organisations. Correlation and regression analyses were used to test the research objectives and hypotheses. At the level of objective testing, findings showed that: (a) there was a positive and significant relationship between project monitoring and NGO performance; (b) innovation, was positively and significantly related to NGO performance; and (c) project monitoring was equally positively and significantly related to innovation in NGO sector. By design, all the study hypotheses were directional and were all supported. These findings contribute to understanding why project monitoring, and innovation acting independently lead to NGO performance. In conclusion, both project monitoring and innovation are relevant for NGO performance; just as monitoring drive innovation. It is therefore recommended that NGO managers should strive to provide a conducive environment underpinned by employee support in their innovative effort in order to aid improved NGO performance

Keywords: Project Monitoring, Innovation, NGO Performance, Busia District

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CVI	Content Validity Index
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PM	Project Monitoring

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

It is a general consensus that Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) play a significant role in the development of any country (Oguta, 2016). Significantly, they lead to the socio-economic development and transformation of any country as they act as agents of change in the country's development process. Also, they fill gaps left by the public sector, succeed in reaching the poor, hold government accountable, promote transparency and provide employment among others (Oguta, 2016). Globally, billions of dollars have been spent on community to enhance and strengthen the living condition of people through the NGO sector (Ochieng, 2017). In view of their contributions, and the funding they attract, NGOs throughout the world are under immense pressure to improve on their performance through ensuring value for money, customer satisfaction, timely project implementation and delivery of quality services (Ochieng, 2017).

However, despite their contribution to the overall growth of global economies, since 1990's, most NGOs have continued to grapple with performance related challenges. They have undergone hard times characterised by low financial sustainability, poor quality service delivery, customer dissatisfaction and poor timely project implementation (Ochieng, 2017; Oguta, 2016). The compound effect of this has been NGO ineffectiveness, lack of standardised measures of their achievements and limited community impact in areas of their operations (Oguta, 2016). As a result, several NGOs around the world have closed their operations (Ochieng, 2017). For instance, in communist countries like Russia, by 2017, approximately 6,700 ceased operations; while Asia, Africa, and Latin America record thousand closures annually (Stuart, 2013).

Interestingly, African countries appear to have the biggest percentage of the poorly performing NGOs across the globe with South Africa leading with about 3000 NGOs closing out of 10,000 registered NGOs (Stuart, 2013). In Kenya for example, 510 out of 10,000 registered NGO since 2014 closed their operations due to performance problems. (Stuart, 2013; Agere, 2014). Uganda is not exception either as many NGOs' projects continue to fall short of expected performance parameters (ICNL, 2019; Ochieng, 2017).

Recently of the 13,000 registered NGOs by 2017, 25 closed their operations in the same year due to poor project performance (UBOS, 2018). Overall, statistics show that many NGOs in Uganda close within the first two years of their operations and from those that survive, a few remain active and functional, with the majority getting de-registered and terminated due to poor performance (Fafchamps & Owens, 2009; Ochieng, 2017). The situation is no better in Busia District. Several NGOs herein, are grappling with project performance challenges. For instance, from 2015 to the time of filing this report, *Happy Childhood Foundation* remains closed due to poor project performance arising out of misuse of funds and lack of project monitoring. Further, *Youth Environment Service* has ceased operations (BDNMTR, 2018).

This study is underpinned by two theories: the control theory and creative destruction theory. According to Barrows and Neely (2012), the control theory, the performance of an organisations is defined by forms of control between the organisation and the systems within. The control theory further argues that actions of all systems should be aligned to the overall goals and objectives of any organisation (Barrows & Neely, 2012). The theory focuses on control mechanism which should be imposed at all levels of the organisation. Philip, Anton, Bonjean, Bromley, Cox, Smits, Sullivan, Niekerk, Chonguica, Mongo, Nyagwambo, Pule, Berraondo (2008) and Taylor (2008) note that monitoring is one of the forms of control which an organisation can use to achieve desired results.

The second theory of central focus is creative destruction theory originally developed by an Austrian economist called Joseph Schumpeter in 1942 (Schubert, 2013). He believed that change is a function of innovation. According to Schumpeter, when creative destruction takes place, something new often replaces the old one leading to improved performance. To survive in a dynamic environment, organisations must be able to cope with increasing complexity and high-speed of change. In such contexts, organisations with the capability to innovate will be able to respond to the challenges faster, manufacture improved new products, and better exploit existing opportunities hence improved performance (Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle, 2011).

Studies show that project monitoring and innovation drive organisation performance respectively (Ochieng, 2017; Damanpour, Walker, & Avellaneda, Combinative effects of innovation types and organizational performance: A longitudinal study of service organizations, 2009). Project monitoring defines the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going

projects, programme or policy (Oguta, 2016). Through project monitoring approaches, it is possible to ensure that implementation of the different projects is in line with the action plan (Philip, et al., 2008; Oguta, 2016). Project monitoring therefore determines the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and overall NGO performance. On the other hand, innovation is found to be associated with NGO performance (Walker, Damanpour, & Devece, 2010). Defined as the generation (development) or adoption of new ideas or practices, and involves three phases of: initiation, adoption and implementation (Damanpour, Walker, & Avellaneda, 2009). Innovation can play a central role in the process of changing projects, facilitating project adaptation to the external environment and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of internal processes (Walker, Damanpour, & Devece, 2010).

The lifespan of NGOs in Uganda is generally short as most, close within the first two years of birth (Fafchamps & Owens, 2009; Ochieng, 2017). In the case of Busia district, out of 180 major NGOs and CBOs that were registered by December 2017, 10 closed their operations as donors withdrew their funding due to poor project performance (Busia District, 2018). These challenges could be attributed to inadequate project monitoring and weak innovation culture of NGOs at different levels.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

NGOs Performance has continuously declined over the recent years (Fafchamps & Owens, 2009; Ochieng, 2017). This situation persists despite a series of interventions such as increased donor funding, enabling good political environment, enabling legal regime and existence of better structures such as NGO Board (Ochieng, 2017). Recent statistics show that many NGOs in Uganda close within the first two years of their operations and those that survive, a few remain active and functional with the majority de-registered and terminated due to poor performance (Fafchamps & Owens, 2009; Ochieng, 2017). In Busia district, out of 180 major NGOs that were registered by December 2017, 10 closed operations as donors withdrew funding due to poor project performance (BDLGNMTR, 2018). Partly as a result of this, there has been rising un-employment, poor service delivery and slowed social economic development (UBOS, 2018). This performance related challenges may be attributed to inadequate project monitoring and weak NGO innovation culture at different levels in Uganda in general and Busia district in particular. It is this that stirs interest for further analysis.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study examined the relationship between project monitoring, innovation and NGO performance in Busia district.

1.4 Research Objectives

- i.** To establish the relationship between project monitoring and NGO performance in Busia district - Uganda.
- ii.** To determine the relationship between innovation and NGO performance in Busia district - Uganda.
- iii.** To examine the effect of project monitoring on innovation in NGO sector in Busia district - Uganda.

1.5 Study Hypotheses

H₁: Project monitoring is positively and significantly related to NGO performance in Busia district - Uganda.

H₂: Innovation is positively and significantly related to NGO performance in Busia district – Uganda.

H₃: Project monitoring is positively and significantly related to innovation in NGO sector in Busia district – Uganda.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study includes the content, geographical and time scope.

1.6.1 Content Scope

Three variables of project monitoring, innovation and NGO performance were of special interest in this investigation. Project monitoring and innovation were the independent variables, while NGO performance was the dependent variable. The focus was on identifying the direct relationship between the independent variables (project monitoring and innovation) on the dependent variable (NGO performance). The effect of project monitoring on innovation was also examined.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

All NGOs and CBOs within Busia district in eastern Uganda were targeted due to the fact that they are facing a lot of performance related challenges such as poor financial sustainability, poor service delivery, and customer dissatisfaction among others (Uganda National NGO Forum, 2013). CBO's are considered within the NGO investigation framework because they provide similar project related activities aimed at improving quality, only that their area of operation are limited.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study targets the period between 2002 and 2018 because, it was the time when massive closure of registered NGOs arising from unchecked performance challenges occurred.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is likely to be important to a number of stakeholders as explained below:

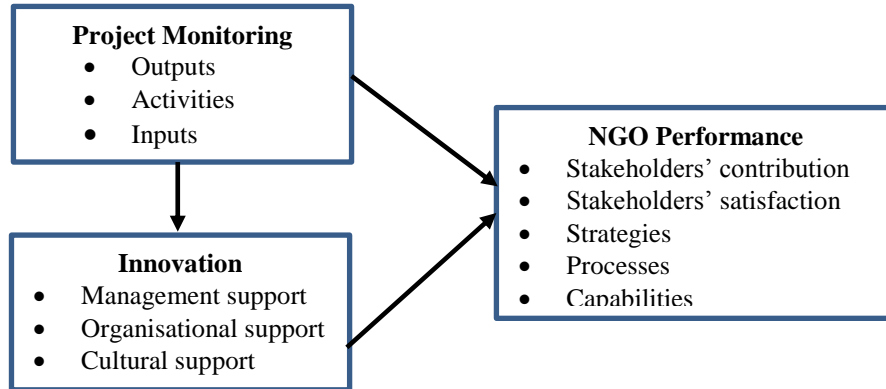
First, the study may help NGOs to understand the importance of project monitoring and innovation. This knowledge is very vital for the stirring up inter NGO competition and for their overall performance improvement.

Secondly, the current study may have implications in policy development. It is likely to lead to evolution of policies necessary in streamlining NGO management process. The study may benefit managers of NGOs as they may use the findings of the study to improve the performance of their respective NGOs.

Finally, the study is likely to add value to the existing body of existing knowledge on NGO Performance literature. The study may provide useful insights for planning, assessing, monitoring and evaluating NGO performance.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Fig 1 Conceptual Framework



Sources: (IFRC&RCS, 2011; Lukes & Stephan, 2017; Neely, Adams, & Crowe, 2001)

1.9 Explanation of the Conceptual Model

From the above conceptual frame work, NGO performance is dependent upon project monitoring and innovation. Project monitoring has been conceptualised in terms of three main parameters practiced in project monitoring in organisations today and most importantly suitable for NGO performance that include outputs, activities and inputs (IFRCS, 2011). Innovation has been viewed in terms of three dimensions comprising of management support, organisational support and cultural support (Lukes & Stephan, 2017).

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