Stakeholder Collaboration Strategy and Implementation of Girls' Educational Empowerment Projects in Homa-Bay County, Kenya

Ennet Salma Jerald, Abuya Isaac Odhiambo & Kidombo Harriet
Department of Open Learning Programmes
University of Nairobi

Abstract: Vulnerable and at-risk adolescent girls have poor education outcomes compared to their non-vulnerable peers. These girls face intractable challenges including frequent exposure to forced sex, teenage pregnancies, poor health among other challenges. In response to the poor education outcomes among vulnerable and at risk adolescent girls, a number of community based organizations are designing and implementing girls' educational empowerment projects to address the poor educational outcomes and other challenges that vulnerable and at risk adolescent girls face. However, available evidence suggests that these interventions face a number of implementation challenges, arising mainly from differing stakeholders' interests and differences. To mitigate the implementation challenges, a number of girls' educational empowerment projects have started actively to collaborate with and engage stakeholders with interest and stakes in these projects. Whereas anecdotal evidence suggest that active stakeholder collaboration may be an effective strategy for reducing tensions and conflicts surrounding girls' educational empowerment projects, there few empirical studies that have established a relationship between stakeholder collaboration strategy and implementation effectiveness of these projects. The objective of this study was to examine the extent to which stakeholder collaboration strategy influence implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The target population was 150 composed of project staff and Ministry of Education officials. A sample size of 108 was computed using Krecjie and Morgan (1970) sample size estimation. simple random sampling and stratified random sampling procedures were used. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were analysed using SPPS. Descriptive statistics included frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Inferential statistics included correlation and regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between stakeholder collaboration strategy and implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects. The study found a statistically significant relationship between stakeholder collaboration and implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects. Collaborative stakeholders showed higher levels of commitments to the girls' educational empowerment. It is recommended that community based organizations designing and implementing girls' educational empowerment projects should strengthen stakeholder collaboration and actively involve stakeholders in the design and implementation of these initiatives.
Keywords: Stakeholder collaboration strategy, Girls' educational empowerment, vulnerable and at-risk adolescent girls, poor educational outcomes.

I. INTRODUCTION

Stakeholder engagement strategies is increasingly becoming a part of project practice in order to deliver excellent project outcomes (Karlsen, Graee and Massaoud, 2008). A well-managed stakeholder engagement process helps the project stakeholders to work together to increase quality of life, while decreasing negative environmental impacts and increasing the economic sustainability of the project. Stakeholder engagement practices should therefore be taken as a core element of any "sustainable development" plan (Bal, Bryde, Fearon and Ochieng, 2013). The issue of sustainability relating to implemented development activities started to become important to government, donors and development theorists from the 1980s (Scoones, 2007).

Report by UNDP (2007) emphasized that stakeholder engagement strategies should be gender sensitive and include women throughout the project cycle. Women should be a special target group as they critically contribute to economic development. Having stakeholders set vision and prioritize results brings out great ideas during planning in the best way and how the results would continue to remain relevant to them. Stakeholders must therefore be involved in identifying the information that is needed during implementation. Inadequate

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stakeholder involvement hinders beneficiaries' participation and weakens their capacity to influence project outcomes hence poor implementation/performance. The involvement of stakeholders in project initiation, project planning, project implementation and monitoring and evaluation is critical for better project performance (Ogawa, 2004).

Stakeholder participative engagement strategies are seen as solutions to the problem of sustainability of girls' educational empowerment projects among other projects. Not only would participatory approaches assist successful project implementation but it is also argued that the stakeholder participative engagement strategies would make projects more efficient and effective (McGee, 2002). Since the 1980s, stakeholder engagement has been seen as an antidote to the failure of development assistance, but it was only in the 1990s that multilateral agencies such as the World Bank placed greater emphasis on stakeholder engagement as a way to ensure successful implementation of development-led projects hence their sustainability (Gonzales, 1998).

It is believed that stakeholder empowerment strategies engagement would lead to empowerment through capacity-building, skills, and training (Lyons, Smuts and Stephens 2001)). By increasing the ability of people, projects (girls' educational empowerment projects), and/or communities to be self-reliant and contribute towards the successful implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects; which in turn could contribute to the broader notion of sustainable national development. Stakeholder empowerment strategies engagement has many forms and can take place in different stages of a project cycle and at different levels of society along a continuum from contribution of input to a predetermined project; to information sharing; consultation; decision making; partnering and empowerment (Karl, 2000).

In Bolivia, the study by Christine Gervais, titled "On their own and in their own words: Bolivian adolescent girls' empowerment through non-governmental human rights education" presents an experiential account of how Bolivian adolescent indigenous girls discover, articulate, experience, and advocate human rights. This study further explores adolescent girls' demonstrations of empowerment, agency, resistance, and solidarity as part of their initiatives within non-governmentally based human rights workshops. By featuring their voices, this study demonstrates how young Bolivian females are able to shape their own expectations and experiences of human rights that is attributed to stakeholder empowerment strategies through capacity-building, skills, and training. This study further emphasizes how a supportive and interactive educational introduction to the conventions, declarations, and constitutions by different stakeholders intended to safeguard human rights can open up possibilities for comfort, self-realization, and liberation among adolescent girls amidst endemic patriarchal constraints and ongoing political and economic instability exploiting the use of stakeholder collaborative strategies in achieving this while stakeholder communication strategies widely used in enriching international debates and to move beyond state centered views on children's rights by framing its analysis through a lens that emphasizes individual experiences and personal impressions of human rights, (Kaiser 2005).

In the Philippines, an evaluation of a World Bank project, found out that during a ten-year period, the National Irrigation Administration shifted from a top down government approach to heavy reliance on the local farmers in the design, operation and maintenance of local irrigation systems. It was discovered that the canals and structures worked better, rice yields were 20% higher and the irrigated area 35% greater than in control groups without participation (Vos 2005) and World Bank, 1991). Ei-Gohary, Osman, and Ei-Diraby. (2006)) stated that major public private partnership (PPP) initiatives in the United States has reportedly failed due to stakeholder opposition. As a result, it reveals that stakeholder s' collaborative engagement strategies in project is key to project success and without collaborative stakeholder's input the outcome may not be favorable. In essence, different stakeholders have different levels and types of investments and interests in the project (Yang, Shen,.and Ho 2009), which sometimes results to conflicts among the stakeholders.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the Community and District Empowerment for Scale-up (CODES) project implemented in a comprehensive district management and community empowerment intervention in five districts in Uganda adopted the proposed UNICEF tools and developed district health operational work plans that were evidence-based. Stakeholders communicated the approach introduced by the CODES project as a more systematic planning process and very much appreciated it. Districts were also empowered on some of the priority activities included in their work plans but limited financial resources and fiscal decision space constrained the implementation of some activities that were prioritized. Community participation based on Citizen Report Cards (CRC) increased community awareness of available health care services, their utilization and led to discussions on service delivery, barriers to service utilization and processes for improvement bringing together service users, providers and leaders to discuss problems and find solutions, (Katahoire, Henriksson, Ssegujja, Waiswa, Ayebare, Bagenda, Mbonye and Peterson, 2015).

A study by the (UNCF, 2004) established that, in girl empowerment related projects, children can offer unique perspectives and opinions about their experiences and, in certain scenarios, have the knowledge or facts that derive from their direct experiences. Depending on the issue and need for collaborative engagement, business assessments and decisions that are informed by children's opinions can be more relevant, more effective and more sustainable.

In communication with the key stakeholders who were children, established was a peer education programme by a Canadian gold mining company to maintain its social license to operate in Côte d'Ivoire that spread awareness on key health messages, as well as obtain input on the impacts of its operations. Peer educators, chosen by and for their communities, participated in training on health education to reach out to young people in their villages. Youth were also encouraged to share their perspectives on how mining construction impacted their lives and community, (UNCF, 2004). To ensure that youth voices were part of community outreach, the company developed a non-traditional form of engagement building on the strengths of local customs, for example, incorporating singing and dancing. On-the-ground staff received training in basic participatory research methods.

Golicha (2010) conducted a study in Garissa and found out that the level of engagement of the stakeholders was not adequate as collaborative, participation, empowerment and communication strategies were not employed in the important stages of project formulation, design and implementation. A Country Programme Progress Review evaluation by Plan international in 2014 revealed that community projects are hardly sustainable beyond six months when funding ceases, the study attributes the poor sustainability to weak stakeholder engagement. The evaluation used a qualitative approach and did not establish the relationship between the various levels of stakeholder engagement and sustainability of community development projects. The researcher did come across any other study on Stakeholders engagement strategies and implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa-Bay County, Kenya, (Plan Kenya, 2014). The present study therefore seeks to establish the influence of stakeholder engagement strategies on implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa-Bay County, Kenya.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Implementation of Girls Educational Empowerment Projects

In recognition of the profound benefits of children's engagement with their rights, the study by Christine Gervais, titled "On their own and in their own words: Bolivian adolescent girls' empowerment through non-governmental human rights education" presents an experiential account of how Bolivian adolescent indigenous girls discover, articulate, experience, and advocate human rights, (Christine Gervais, 2011). This study further explores adolescent girls' demonstrations of empowerment, agency, resistance, and solidarity as part of their initiatives within non-governmentally based human rights workshops. By featuring their voices, this study demonstrates how young Bolivian females are able to shape their own expectations and experiences of human rights. This study further emphasizes how a supportive and interactive educational introduction to the conventions, declarations, and constitutions by different stakeholders intended to safeguard human rights can open up possibilities for comfort, self-realization, and liberation among adolescent girls amidst endemic patriarchal constraints and ongoing political and economic instability.

This study has sought to enrich international debates and to move beyond state centered views on children's rights by framing its analysis through a lens that emphasizes individual experiences and personal impressions of human rights. In particular, this article has projected the voices of adolescent girls who have illustrated their journeys that were initiated with their discovery of human rights, sustained by their discernment of empowerment and solidarity and propelled by their assertions of agency, advocacy, and resistance. As such, the girls' own voices have shown how a supportive, safe, and creative educational introduction to human rights can open up possibilities for self-realization, dignity, emancipation, safety, and hope among adolescent females, (Gervais, 2011).

The girls' efforts and accomplishments are undeniably still nascent, fraught with challenges and are reflective of various aptitudes and attitudes, as well as different stages of commitment (Kaiser 2005). Nevertheless, the girls have shown enthusiasm, determination, and potential as actors, defenders, organizers, and citizens in pursuit of their rights (Quijada 2008, Cunningham and Mathie 2009). Such awareness-based activities should also integrate participant-driven research components that maximize the contributions of the youth. Further efforts should be made to monitor, both in the short term and the long term, the youth's articulations and actions, as well as their own feelings and perceptions of their expectations and activism (Kaiser 2005). Such attempts are essential to illustrating more comprehensively and accurately the complex changes and challenges related to human rights education and advocacy.

A study by Keselman, Chase, Rewolinski, Dutton and Kelly (2019) on "Lessons learned from multisite implementation and evaluation of Project SHARE, a teen health information literacy, empowerment, and leadership program," revealed that one likely factor for faring differently of projects is the amount of time for planning and building program capacity. Early beginning of projects is always a plus for its successful implementation as they benefit from both the extra time and the experiences of the others. Strong pre-established relationships with the community among other stakeholders also seemed to matter, easing the logistics of recruitment and implementation. Another important consideration is the strength of the connection between the lessons and the leadership activities, which provide motivation and cohesion. Also established from

the study is that tension between adaptability and fidelity of implementation is unavoidable in health information outreach programs that use existing curricula. This study illustrates the challenges that such conflicting requirements pose for implementation and evaluation. However, it is believed that more in-depth staff training, longer planning periods, student incentives to prevent attrition, and stronger association between information and action will strengthen such programs' impact (Keselman, Chase, Rewolinski, Dutton, Kelly 2019).

Stakeholder Collaboration Engagement Strategy

A collaborative stakeholder perspective is a managerial strategy to broaden an organization's perspective about its environment and its capacity to identify and persuade its various key stakeholders and influencers in order to manage risks (Friedman, Andrew; Miles, Samantha 2002). As important as that advice is, it runs counter to the demands of building a collaborative stakeholder network focused on solving a shared problem through multi-sector, multi-expertise cooperation.

On failure of collaborations between nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and business, lack of trust and the fundamental differences between the cultures of the collaborating organizations have been cited as the reasons for failure (Dahan, Doh, Oetzel and Yaziji, 2010)). More recently, attention has been drawn to the professional competencies required for successful partnerships. For instance, Business for Social Responsibility commissioned a study to determine existing and emerging competencies related to sustainable business practices and found that among the new competencies required is stakeholder engagement. Similarly, Boston College's competencies for corporate citizenship leaders emphasize the ability to work collaboratively with stakeholders and call for qualities such as optimistic passion (Kinnicutt and Pinney, 2010). There are an increasing number of ideas in professional discourses about strategy for business in society and socially responsible collaborative engagement found in the popular business press, among practitioner networks, and by experts/think-tanks/consultants promulgating their services.

It is in line with this collaborative stakeholder perspective that the Bicycle Empowerment Project program was introduced, with the World Bicycle Relief, collaboratively with Plan Kenya in providing bicycles to children, teachers and community education supporters with the goal of improving educational access and academic performance for children in primary and secondary schools.

The goal of the collaborative intervention was to improve educational access and performance of children who attend primary and secondary schools with the lowest enrollment rates and the highest dropout rates. By providing bicycles to children who must travel long distances to school, usually on foot, the project aimed at providing a program that is truly transformational in the lives of students and their families. With a particular emphasis on providing greater access to girls who live in rural communities of Homa Bay County for quicker and safer transportation to school, (Plan International, 2012).

Khwaja (2004) uses primary data on development projects in Northern Pakistan to provide empirical support to illustrate the effects of collaborative community participation on project performance. His findings do provide evidence supporting the theoretical claim, that greater community collaborative participation in non-technical decisions is associated with higher project outcomes.

Khisa (2012) in his study established that withdrawal of donor funding affects project sustainability and development. In the event that donor funding was withdrawn, most (41%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the project would cease operating, 33% pointed out that project would be affected significantly, 18% indicated that project would be not effect at all while 8% were of the opinion that project would continue normally. Khisa also established that financing affects sustainability and performance of the project. From the findings Most (59%) of the interviewed respondents pointed out that financing affects project sustainability at a very great extent, 28% at a great extent while 13% reveled that financing affects project sustainability at moderate extent. This illustrates that poor misuse of the funds allocated for project sustainability, adequate fund and embezzlement of funds may hinder sustainability of the project.

III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design: Research design is the plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions. The plan is the overall scheme or program of the research (Robson, 2002). The study adopted a descriptive survey design with both qualitative and quantitative characteristics, the designs is the most appropriate for the study because according to Kothari (2004) a descriptive survey describes facts and characteristics concerning an individual, group or situation. The design was also picked based on the assertion that descriptive studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the status of phenomena and whenever possible to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered.

Target Population: According to Kothari, (2004) a population is referred to as the total of items about which information is required. The population of the study was150, which comprised of project staff from civil society organizations, the community at large, the community based organizations implementing girls'

educational empowerment projects in Homa-Bay County and officials from Ministry of Education. The researcher targeted about 15 organizations/institutions implementing girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County; giving a population of 150 respondents.

Sample Size: Sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. The size of a sample should neither be excessively large, nor too small. It should be optimum. (Kothari C.R and Garg, G 2014) The study applied Sekeran (2003) sample determination table shown in appendix II to determine the sample from the population. Given a population of 150 people, the sample size according to the pre-calculated table by Sekaran was 108 respondents. The researcher therefore picked the 108 respondents from the partner organizations.

Sampling Procedure: The researcher applied a simple random sampling and stratified to select the 108 respondents. The researcher developed a sample frame list of 108 people from the 15 institutions who were directly involved in implementation of the girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County. The selection criteria were such that those project staff and volunteers who had been implementing girl empowering projects six months preceding the study were eligible. This was to ensure that the respondents had adequate knowledge to respond to the questions. The researcher then picked 108 names randomly; they were then approached for administration of the questionnaire.

Research Instruments: The study collected primary data by the use questionnaires for stakeholders identified, Key Informants Interviews for project heads and government officials and Focus Group Discussions for the identified community members as key stakeholders in girl empowerment projects. The questions were developed based on information and experiences derived from review of literature on stakeholder participation in girls' educational empowerment projects. The selection of the tool was guided by the nature of the data collected, availability of such data as well as the objective of the study. The questionnaire was used since the study was concerned mainly with variables which could not be observed directly such as views, opinions and the population was literate and hence wasn't difficult in responding to the questions.

The questionnaire had five sections, section A was on Demographic data, section B Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Implementation of Girls Educational Empowerment Project, section C was on Participative Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Implementation of Girls Educational Empowerment Project, section D was on Empowering Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Implementation of Girls Educational Empowerment Project, section E was Communicating Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Implementation of Girls Educational Empowerment Projects. The researcher also tested the dependent variable in section F; the implementation of girls' empowerment educational projects in Homa Bay County.

Pilot testing of Questionnaires: Piloting is a mini or preliminary study undertaken to establish the effectiveness of a study research instrument. Pretest a sample should be between 1% and 10% of the study sample size (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Respondents during the pilot testing were picked from the nearby Kisumu County, the researcher picked 5 projects that implement girls' educational empowerment projects in Kisumu County, which constituted 10% of the sample size.

Validity of the Instruments: Validity indicates the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomena under study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Data validity was tested by the supervisors who are expert. The research adopted the content validity to measure the validity of the instruments used. Content validity enables data being collected to be reliable in representing the specific content of a particular concept. The researcher critically considered each item to see if it contained a real representation of the desired content and tested if it measured what it was supposed to measure.

Reliability of the Instruments

According to Kasomo (2006), reliability refers to how consistent a research procedure or instrument is. It therefore means the measure of degree to which research instruments yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. The pretest method was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. After administering the questionnaires, a correlation co-efficient was calculated using appropriate formula to establish the relationship between the two set of scores.

Data Collection Procedures: It is prudent to acquire consent from relevant authorities before embarking on data collection exercise. The researcher sought permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and innovation, a letter of transmittal was also obtained from the University of Nairobi. Upon visiting each location of implementation and organizations, the respondents identified, introduction about the study done and their informed consent to participate in the study sought. All the instructions on how to complete the questionnaire were made clear to the respondents. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondents of the study. On-spot checks were done to the questionnaires to confirm whether they were completed well and accurately. Any question or clarification was done on any answer that was not clear. The researcher also thanked the respondent for participating in the study upon verifying that everything was fine.

Data Analysis: Once data was collected, it was checked for completeness, edited and cleaned. This involved making call backs for the questionnaires not filled in correctly. Quantitative data from the

questionnaires were coded and then entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis. Quantitative data analyzed using frequencies, means and standard deviations. Chi-square p-value used to test the significance of relationships between the independent and the dependent. The findings were presented in table format.

Ethical Considerations: Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Nairobi, Ministry of Higher Education through the department for National Commission for Science, Technology Innovation. Respondents' informed consent obtained. To ensure confidentiality, interviews were conducted in private areas and strict control maintained over data collected. Respondents' personal identifiers were not taken for the purpose of the study. The study did not have any risk to the participant since the kinds of questions asked were neither personal nor sensitive. There wasn't any direct benefit to the respondents; however, the study findings would be useful in promoting acceptable stakeholder engagement practices for sustainable programming.

Response Rate: The response rate for the research was good as it was at 86.1% as shown in the worked out table 2 below since response rates are one of the key concerns for statistical accuracy.

Table 1: Response rate

Sample size	Respondents interviewed	Percent
108	93	86.1%

Ninety-three (93) respondents were interviewed representing 86.1% of the study sample. This was considered very good for analysis. The high response rate was attributed to the good working relationship the researchers had with the respondents. A response rate of 50% is considered adequate for analysis and reporting, 60% is good and that of 70% and above is very good (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

Table 2: Demographics of the respondents

Statement	Variation	Frequency/%
Gender of respondents	18-23	4(3.3%)
	24-29	22(23.7%)
	30-35	19(20.4%)
	36-41	2223.7%)
	42-47	10(10.8%)
	48-53	13(14%)
	54 and above	4(3.3%)
Gender of respondents	Male	46(49.5%)
	Female	47(50.5%)
Respondent's level of education	Post graduate	10(10.8%)
	Graduate	33(35.5%)
	Diploma	26(28%)
	KCSE	24(25.8%)
Respondents organization	Action Aid International Kenya	4(4.3%)
	CARITAS	7(7.5%)
	County Government	3(3.2%)
	CRS	5(5.4%)
	Department of Children Services	9(9.7%)
	Department of Health	3(3.2%)
	Directorate of Youth Affairs	1(1.1%)
	Eastern Collaboration for social economic right	1(1.1%)
	EGPAF	3(3.2%)
	GREAT AND PILLARS CBO	10(10.8%)
	Homa Bay County Education Network	3(3.2%)
	Homa Bay Paralegal and Networking CBO	5(5.4%)
	I Choose Life Africa	8(8.6%)
	Ministry of Labour and Social	1(1.1%)
	NCPWD	1(1.1%)
	Nyarongi Women Network in partnership with ActionAid	3(3.2%)
	Nyarwek	1(1.1%)

	Office of the 1st Lady(County Government of Homa Bay)	3(3.2%)
	Plan International Kenya	6(6.5%)
	World Vision	7(7.5%)
	Youth Enterprise Development Fund	3(3.2%)
	WOFAK	6(6.5%)
Respondents position in the organization	Assistant Director	3(3.2%)
	Chairperson	6(6.5%)
	Coordinator	5(5.4%)
	Community Development Facilitator	6(6.5%)
	Community Volunteer	2(2.2%)
	County Credit Officer	3(3.2%)
	Data Clerk	4(4.4%)
	Director of programmes	8(8.6%)
	Female representative	1(1.1%)
	Field officer	2(2.2%)
	Member	3(3.2%)
	Organizing secretary	1(1.1%)
	programme officer	4(4.4%)
	Project Officer	34(36.5%)
	Secretary	1(1.1%)
	Service provider	3(3.2%)
	Social Development Officer	3(3.2%)
	Sponsorship and focal point person	1(1.1%)
	Treasurer	3(3.2%)
Duration worked for the organization	1 to 5 years	60(64.6%)
	6 to 10 years	9(9.7%)
	11 to 15 years	4(4.3%)
	21- 25 years	6(6.5%)
	Below a year	12(12.9%)
Whether organization engaged with any girls' educational empowerment projects	Yes	92(98.9%)
	Unclear	1(1.1%)
Duration organization engaged with girls' educational empowerment projects	Unaware	7(7.5%)
	1-5 year	55(59.1%)
	6-11 years	19(20.4%)
	12-16 years	3(3.2%)
	17-22 years	6(6.5%)
	Below 1 year	3(3.2%)
Girls' educational empowerment program areas engaged in	Unaware	4(4.3%)
	Girl child mentorship trainings	17(18.3%)
	Education as bursary disbursements, school re-entry, fee support and provision of learning package	20(21.5%)
	ASRH as provision of sanitary pads	9(9.7%)
	Child protection and ending child marriage	6(6.5%)
	Ending child marriage	28(30%)
	Child advocacy	3(3.2%)
	OVC empowerment under MWENDO program	6(6.5%)

Age of respondents: The researcher asked respondents to indicate their ages as from 18 years and above to establish the distribution of the age of respondents who participated in the survey. Respondents aged from 24 to 29 years and 36 to 41 years were the majority of the respondents, closely followed by those aged between 30 and 35 years while the least number of respondents at 18 to 23 and those aged 54 and above both formed the minority at 4(3.3%) each.

Gender of respondents: In line with gender equity, the researcher asked respondents to indicate their gender to determine the participatory levels for both genders in the survey. More than half of the respondents, 47(50.5%) were females while the males were46(49.5%) forming the minority

Respondent's level of education: The researcher asked respondents to indicate their level of education that many a times influences the likely position of an individual in an organization. Graduate respondents were the preponderance, 33(35.5%), diploma holders were 26(28%), KCSE certificates holders 24(25.8%) with post graduate respondents forming the minority at 10(10.8%).

Respondents organization: The researcher asked respondents to indicate their organization to ascertain the like-minded organizations that engage in girl-empowerment projects. A number of child friendly organizations, departments and institutions were represented with Great and Pillars Community based organization having the highest representation of 10(10.8%), closely following was department of social services, 9(9.7%), I Choose Life, 8(8.6%), World Vision and Caritas, 7(7.5%), Plan International and WOFAK, 6(6.5%) with Nyarwek, NCPDW, Eastern Collaboration for social economic right and Directorate of Youth Affairs having the lowest representation of 1(1.1%).

Respondents' position in the organization: The researcher asked respondents to indicate their position in the organization that is of importance as positions influence decision making. By a large the respondents were project officers, 34(36.5%), 8(8.6%) were programme directors, Community Development Facilitator and chairmen were 6(6.5%), coordinators were 5(5.4%), 4(4.4%) were programme officers and data clerks each with the least at 1(1.1%) being secretaries, sponsorship and focal point person, organizing secretary and female representatives respectively.

Duration worked for the organization: The researcher asked respondents to indicate the duration worked for their organization that is of importance to the study to evaluate the retention level of staff of the given organizations. Respondents who had worked for their given organizations for 1 to 5 years were slightly less than two thirds at 60(64.6%), those worked for between 11 to 15 years formed the minority at 4(4.3%).

Analysis of Implementation of Girls' Educational Empowerment Projects
The dependent variable for this study was implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects. Five statements on implementation were used to assess the research participants' perspectives on the implementation of the projects.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Implementation of Girls' Educational Empowerment Projects

Item	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	SD
IGE1	The girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable	2(2.2%)	7(7.5%)	20(21.5%)	35(37.6%)	29(31.2%)	3.89	1.010
IGE2	The girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are always implemented within the stipulated time frame	0(0.0%)	6(6.5%)	18(19.4%)	42(45.2%)	27(29%)	3.98	0.864
IGE3	The girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County continues operating even 5 years after donor funding ceases	7(7.5%)	13(14%)	26(28%)	31(33.3%)	15(16.1%)	3.37	1.146
IGE4	Considerably large number of people continue to benefit from the girls' educational empowerment	5(5.4%)	19(20.4%)	14(15.1%)	36(38.7%)	19(20.4%)	3.49	1.191

	projects after donor funding ceases							
IGE5	The scope of operation of the girls' educational empowerment projects often remain the same or expand after donor funding ceases	2(2.2%)	27(29%)	11(11.9%)	26(28%)	27(29%)	3.53	1.253
	Mean of mean						3.65	1.093

Item IGE1 sought to corroborate whether the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable. Ascertained from the study was that the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable, 64(68.8%), 20(21.5%) were unsure whether the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable while the minority,9(9.7%) felt that the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are neither financially nor socially viable; the item mean= 3.89< mean of means (3.65), SD=1.010. This infers that the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable.

Item IGE2 sought to verify whether the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are always implemented within the stipulated time frame. Respondents in agreement were the preponderance at 69(74.2%), 18(19.4%) unsure while 6(6.5%) were in disagreement with the same; the item mean= 3.98< mean of means (3.65), SD=0.864. This denotes that the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are always implemented within the stipulated time frame. Similarly, it was established from a survey by Keselman A, Chase RA, Rewolinski J, Dutton YC, Kelly JE, (2019) on "Lessons learned from multisite implementation and evaluation of Project SHARE, a teen health information literacy, empowerment, and leadership program," revealed that one likely factor for faring differently of projects is the amount of time for planning and building program capacity. Early beginning of projects is always a plus for its successful implementation as they benefit from both the extra time and the experiences of the others.

Item IGE3 sought to ascertain whether the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County continues operating even 5 years after donor funding ceases. Slightly less than half of the respondents at 46(49.4%) felt that girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County continues operating even 5 years after donor funding ceases, 26(28%) were unclear on their stand while 20(21.5%) of the respondents were in disagreement; the item mean= 3.37< mean of means (3.65), SD=1.146. This infers that the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County continues operating even 5 years after donor funding ceases.

Item IGE4 sought to determine whether considerably large number of people continue to benefit from the girls' educational empowerment projects after donor funding ceases. Of the opinion that considerably large number of people continue to benefit from the girls' educational empowerment projects after donor funding ceases were the majority, 55(59.1%), 24(25.8%) were of divergent opinion as the least number of respondents, 14(15.1%) uncertain whether considerably large number of people continue to benefit from the girls' educational empowerment projects after donor funding ceases or not.; the item mean= 3.49< mean of means (3.65), SD=1.191. This hints that considerably large number of people continue to benefit from the girls' educational empowerment projects after donor funding ceases

Item IGE5 sought to establish whether the scope of operation of the girls' educational empowerment projects often remain the same or expand after donor funding ceases. In support of the scope of operation of the girls' educational empowerment projects often remaining the same or expand after donor funding ceases were the preponderance, 53(57%), 29(31.2%) were in disagreement while unsure respondents formed the minority, 11(11.9%); the item mean= 3.53< mean of means (3.65), SD=1.253. This revealed that the scope of operation of the girls' educational empowerment projects often remained the same or expand after donor funding ceases.

The mean of means and composite standard deviation for performance of Stakeholder participation engagement strategy was 3.65 and 1.093 respectively. This denotes that the overall successful implementation and sustainability of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County was largely upheld. This is established by the fact that; the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable, projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are always implemented within the stipulated time frame, continues operating even 5 years after donor funding ceases, considerably large number of people continue to benefit from the girls' educational empowerment projects after donor funding ceases and the scope of operation of the girls' educational empowerment projects often remain the same or expand after donor funding ceases.

In addition, stakeholder empowerment strategies were gender sensitive and inclusive as noted from the group discussions with Nyarogi Women Network and community members as they stated to have worked with

both genders in schools and at the community level with the projects being transparent, non-discriminatory, properly coordinated aiding in abandonment of retrogressive cultures. Some of the challenges expressed from: the focused group discussions with Nyarogi Women Network and community members; key informant interviews with Plan International Western Kenya area manager and Homa Bay sub-county director for education in the implementation of Girls empowerment projects in Homa Bay County were; retrogressive cultures, ignorance, early marriages, teenage pregnancy, poverty, gender discrimination, gender based violence, child headed families, inadequate funding for organizations, conflicting strategies used by partners and unfavorable government policies. A respondent in discussions with Nyarogi Women Network expressed:

"Ndhiwa sub-county lacks a rescue centre and yet cases of abuse are rampant in this place and most girls who dropped out of school because of pregnancy wish to go back to school but due to lack of school fees they are unable to go back.''

In support of the strengthening of the legal systems was Raphael, the area manger Plan International in a key informant interview by stating that more needs to be done especially in the legal systems since it is noted that the perpetrators go free as the justice system is weak.

Analysis of Stakeholder Collaboration on Implementation of Girls' Educational Empowerment Projects
The study sought to establish the frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations on stakeholder collaboration on implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects.

Table 4: Stakeholder collaboration strategy

Item	Stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy	SD	D	N	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	SD
CES1	A conducive platform/environment exists in partnering with other stakeholders in implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(4.3%)	32(34.4%)	57(61.3%)	4.57	0.579
CES2	Our interaction with other stakeholder in girls' educational empowerment projects is often engaging and collaborative	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	6(6.5%)	33(35.5%)	54(58.1%)	4.52	0.619
CES3	We are actively engaged in networking with other stakeholders	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(4.3%)	37(39.8%)	52(55.9%)	4.52	0.583
CES4	The engagements in line with girls' educational empowerment projects are often intermittent engagement and only happens when the parent stakeholder deems necessary	1(1.1%)	17(18.3%)	28(30.1%)	29(31.2%)	18(19.4%)	3.49	1.039
CES5	Our engagement in girls' educational empowerment projects are systematic and promotes structured learning	0(0.0%)	3(3.2%)	11(11.8%)	27(29%)	52(55.9%)	4.38	0.820
	Mean of means and composite SD						4.3	0.728

Item CES1 sought to establish whether a conducive platform/environment existed in partnering with other stakeholders in implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County. It was widely shared by 89(95.7%) of the respondents that a conducive platform/environment exists while those unclear whether the a conducive platform/environment exists or not in partnering with other stakeholders in implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County formed the minority at 4(4.3%); the item mean= 4.57< mean of means (4.3), SD=0.579.This denotes that a conducive platform/environment existed in partnering with other stakeholders in implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County. In support is a study by Dahan et.al, 2010 that revealed that, on failure of collaborations between nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and business, lack of trust and the fundamental differences between the cultures of the collaborating organizations have been cited as the reasons for failure (Dahan, Doh, Oetzel, and Yaziji,2010).

Item CES2 sought to determine whether interaction with other stakeholders in girls' educational empowerment projects was often engaging and collaborative. This was found to be upheld by majority who felt

the interaction with other stakeholders in girls' educational empowerment projects often engaging and collaborative as stated by 87(93.5%) of the respondents while the least at 6(6.5%) were unsure whether their interaction with other stakeholders in girls' educational empowerment projects was often engaging and collaborative or not; the item mean= 4.52< mean of means (4.3), SD=0.619. This implies that interaction with other stakeholders in girls' educational empowerment projects was often engaging and collaborative. Nyarogi Women Group Network revealed that they actively collaborate with Action Aid and other like-minded partners to implement projects with group discussions with the community revealing that the collaborative strategy moderately utilized by partners and the most effective stakeholder strategy.

Item CES3 sought to verify whether partners were actively engaged in networking with other stakeholders. Active engagement in networking with other stakeholders was largely shared by 89(95.7%) of the respondents as uncertain respondents on the same were, 4(4.3%); the item mean= 4.52< mean of means (4.3), SD=0.583. This infers that the stakeholders are actively engaged in networking with other stakeholders.

Item CES4 sought to ascertain whether the engagements in line with girls' educational empowerment projects were often intermittent engagement and only happened when the parent stakeholder deemed necessary. The engagements in line with girls educational empowerment projects are often intermittent engagement and only happens when the parent stakeholder deems necessary was upheld by slightly more than half of the respondents, 47(50.6%), 28(30.1%) were unclear on their stand on the same while 18(19.4%) forming the minority were of divergent opinion in line with the engagements with girls educational empowerment projects being often intermittent and only happens when the parent stakeholder deems necessary; the item mean= 3.49< mean of means (4.3), SD=1.039. This denotes that the engagements in line with girls' educational empowerment projects are often intermittent engagement and only happens when the parent stakeholder deems necessary.

Item CES4 sought to establish whether the engagement in girls' educational empowerment projects are systematic and promotes structured learning. Respondents for the idea that engagement in girls' educational empowerment projects are systematic and promotes structured learning were the preponderance at 79(84.9%), 11(11.8%) were unsure whether the engagements are either systematic and promotes structured learning or not as those of divergent opinion forming the minority at 3(3.2%); the item mean= 4.38< mean of means (4.3), SD=0.820. This hints that the engagement in girls' educational empowerment projects are systematic and promotes structured learning.

The mean of means and composite standard deviation for performance of Stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy was 4.3 and 0.728 respectively. The majority of the respondents practicing and in support of the stakeholder collaborative strategies: a conducive platform/environment exists in partnering with other stakeholders in implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County, interaction with other stakeholders in in girls' educational empowerment projects is often engaging and collaborative, respondents actively engaged in networking with other stakeholders, engagements in line with girls educational empowerment projects are often intermittent engagement and only happens when the parent stakeholder deems necessary and engagement in girls' educational empowerment projects are systematic and promotes structured learning denotes that successful implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County is leveraged on the adoption of stakeholder collaboration engagement strategies by the employees of the organizations. Similarly, a study by Friedman et. al, 2002 revealed that revealed that a collaborative stakeholder perspective is a managerial strategy to broaden an organization's perspective about its environment and its capacity to identify and persuade its various key stakeholders and influencers in order to manage risks (Friedman, Andrew L.; Miles, Samantha (2002)).

Correlation Analysis
The researcher computed Spearman Correlation between stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy and implementation of girls' educational empowerment project in Homa Bay County. The results are as shown

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient

			Stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy	Implementation of girls educational empowerment project
Spearman's rho	Stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.615[**]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	93	93
	Implementation of girls educational empowerment project	Correlation Coefficient	.615[**]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.

	N	93	93

It was determined that there was a strong significant positive correlation between influence of stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy on implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County. Spearman's rho= 0.615, p=0.000, CI=99%. This meant that successful implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County is attributed to the adoption of stakeholder collaboration engagement strategies by the employees of the organizations. The area manager for Plan International Western Kenya hub stated that, stakeholders were largely engaged at all stages of the projects implementation bringing so many people on board. Diverging with this finding was a survey by Masanyiwa and Kinyashi (2008) that denoted that local communities are generally not actively involved in decision-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes.

Regression Analysis

Table 7: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.219[a]	0.048	0.041	1.779

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder collaboration

This table provides the R and R2 values. The R value represents the simple correlation and is 0.219 (the "R" Column), which indicates a high degree of correlation. The R2 value (the "R Square" column) indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, Implementation of Girls education empowerment projects, can be explained by the independent variable, stakeholder collaboration strategy. In this case, 4.8% can be explained. This value indicates that 4.8% of the variance in implementation of girl educational empowerment projects can be predicted from the variable stakeholder collaboration strategy.

Table 8: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	4.826	1	4.826	3.207	.001[b]
1	Residual	109.337	92	1.087		
	Total	114.163	93			

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of Girls empowerment projects
b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder collaborative strategy

This table indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable significantly well through looking at the "Regression" row and the "Sig." column. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was run. Here, p < 0.0005, which is less than 0.05, indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable and hence it is a good fit for the data. This is because the independent variable (collaborative) explains the variation in the dependent variable (implementation). We hence reject the null hypothesis that stakeholder communication strategy does not explain the Implementation of girl educational empowerment projects.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	2.786	.256		4.474	.000
1	Stakeholder Collaboration	.564	.074	.873	7.598	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of Girl Empowerment projects

IV. DISCUSSIONS

Ascertained from the study was that the girls' educational empowerment projects implemented in Homa-Bay County are financially and socially viable, the projects always implemented within the stipulated time frame and moderately continue operating even 5 years after donor funding ceases. Considerably large

number of people continue to benefit from the projects after donor funding ceases and the scope of operation of the girls' educational empowerment projects often remain the same or expand after donor funding ceases.

The study discovered that a conducive platform/environment existed in partnering with other stakeholders and often engaging and collaborative interaction of the respondents with other stakeholders' notable. Established also was that the respondents actively engaged in networking with other stakeholders and the engagements often intermittent happening when the parent stakeholder deemed necessary. The engagement in girls' educational empowerment projects were also systematic and promoted structured learning. Inferred was that there was a strong significant positive correlation between influence of stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy on implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County. Spearman's rho= 0.615, p=0.000, CI=99%).

V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there was a strong significant positive correlation between the influence of stakeholder collaboration engagement strategy on implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County. Noted also was that the community members did not talk of adoption/practice of the girl centered interventions giving the notion that the projects are left for the parent implementers hence the project might stall after their exit hence no sustainability. Also deduced was that successful implementation of girls' educational empowerment projects in Homa Bay County is attributed to the adoption of stakeholder collaboration engagement strategies by the employees of the organizations.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

To yield better results in implementation of Girls empowerment projects among other varied projects implemented in Homa Bay County, parent organizations implementing the given projects need to cement partnership, strengthen/capacity build relevant partners/ supportive structures as the police as noted in the discussions that they lightly address cases reported to them and creation of linkages with stakeholders.

The community members also need to be enlightened on the adoption and owning the projects for sustainability even after the exit of parent implementers.

All organizations/institutions and more-so parent implementing partners should equalize engagement/participation of the stakeholders throughout the continuum with non-bias to the resources brought on board to avert the feeling that some stakeholders are more preferred that the others.

Parent organizations implementing girl empowerment projects among other projects needs to enhance the extent of collaborative, communication, participation and empowerment engagements with its stakeholders, this will function to strengthen their capacities in project cycle management hence greater sustainability for it projects.

For greater ownership of implementing projects, parent organizations steering the implementation need to ensure they are the lead in all the stakeholder engagement practices strengthening functional participation among stakeholders for greater ownership of project activities and sustainability of its projects.

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