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The influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E systems of NGOs in Juba, South Sudan

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Abstract
The skills and competence of the project team is considered to be one of the crucial factors influencing project implementation success. The more experienced and skilled the team, the lesser the time and other resources are spent on ensuring smooth rollouts with minimal errors; experienced teams also have good contingency and risk management plans for successful (Wong & Tein, 2007). This paper established the influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E systems of NNGOs in Juba, South Sudan. The study was conducted on a sample of 60 respondents from NGOs in Juba, South Sudan. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed. A regression analysis indicated insignificant relationship between human capacity for M&E and the performance of M&E system with coefficient of 0.030 and p vale of 0.873 level of significance. The study concluded that organizations should constantly do capacity building to their project staff through trainings, seminars or workshops so as to have a clear understanding of different approaches and the tools used in monitoring and evaluation.

Key words: M&E, Human Capacity, Performance, NGOs, Juba, South Sudan

Introduction

An effective M&E system implementation requires that there is adequate skilled staff employed in the M&E unit, but also that the staff within this unit have the necessary technical know-how and experience (Bardhan, Krishnan, & Shu, 2007). As such, this component emphasizes the need to have the necessary human resource that can run the M&E function by hiring employees who have adequate knowledge and experience in M&E systems implementation, while at the same time ensuring that the M&E capacity of these employees are continuously developed through training and other capacity building initiatives to ensure that they keep up with current and emerging trends in the field (Saltzman, 2006).According to World Bank (2013) for example, human capital, with proper training and experience is vital to produce M&E results.

According to Mukhererjee (1993), meeting project M&E capacity needs will be ensured by putting right, systems, structures, methods and process, acquiring the right people, by hiring already trained people, training your staff, hiring external consultants for focused inputs and also ensure the capacity of good quality through removing disincentives and introducing incentives for learning, keeping track of staff performance through regular evaluation, striving for continuity of staff and finding qualified person to coordinate. Human resources on the project should be given clear job allocation and designation befitting their skills and expertise, if they are inadequate then training for the requisite skills should be arranged (Bamberger, 2009). For projects with staff that are sent out in the field to carry out project activities on their own there is need for constant and intensive on-site support to the outfield staff (Musomba, Kerongo, Mutua and Kilika 2013).

Brief (2015) revealed that, for effective M&E implementation in various organizations or programmes, donors and managers of these programmes must invest in competent staff that understands the value and importance of integrating M&E in daily operations. The M&E system function with skilled people who effectively execute the M&E tasks for which they are responsible. Therefore, understanding the skills needed and the capacity of people involved in the M&E system (undertaking human capacity assessments) and addressing capacity gaps (through structured capacity development programs) is at the heart of the M&E system (Gorgens & Kusek, 2010).

In assessment of quality provision of Health care in the Nepal, UNDP (2011) discusses some of the challenges of organizational development as having inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems. Additionally, the lack of capabilities and opportunities to train staff in technical skills in this area is clearly a factor to be considered.

During the consultation processes, there was consensus that their lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and skills was a major systemic gap across the region. Staff need to be trained not only on collecting descriptive information about a health program, product, or any other entity but also on using something called "values" to determine what information and to draw explicitly evaluation inferences from the data, that is inferences that say something about the quality, value or importance of something (Davidson, 2014). Players in the field of project management like project and programme managers, M and E officers, project staff and external evaluators will require specialized training not just in project management and M and E; but specifically, in areas like Participatory monitoring and evaluation and results-based monitoring and evaluation (Murunga, 2015).

The M&E system cannot function without skilled people who effectively execute the M&E tasks for which they are responsible. Therefore, understanding the skills needed and the capacity of people involved in the M&E system (undertaking human capacity assessments) and addressing capacity gaps (through structured capacity development programs) is at the heart of the M&E system (Gorgens & Kusek, 2010). M&E human capacity building needs a wide range of activities, including formal training, in-service training, mentorship, coaching and internships.

Both formal training and on-the-job experience are vital in rising evaluators with various selections for training and development opportunities which include: the public sector, the private sector, universities, professional associations, job assignment, and mentoring programs (Acevedo et al., 2010). Monitoring and evaluation carried out by untrained and unknowledgeable people is certain to be time consuming, expensive and the results generated could be impractical and irrelevant

According to Wendy A. et al (2016), he argued that, Competencies are clusters of related knowledge, attitudes, and skills that affect a major part of one's job, role, or responsibility. Competencies describe what's needed to carry out a job or specific job responsibility; they can be improved upon through training and professional development. Most importantly, competencies can be used to focus and/or select professional development activities.

The technical capacity of the organization in conducting evaluations, the value and participation of its human resources in the policy making process and their motivation to impact decisions, can be huge determinants of how the evaluation's lessons are produced, communicated and perceived (Vanessa and Gala, 2011). M&E is a skill intensive endeavor and as such, training of staff is integral.

Methods

Study Design and settings

A cross sectional survey as well as a case study designs were adopted for the study. Both designs were justifiable as they are well known to reveal an in-depth understanding of a "case" or bounded system, which involves understanding an event, activity, process, or one or more individuals (Creswell, 2002, p. 61). This design further described the nature and pattern of the study where both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed. Qualitative approach is justifiable as it helped in the generation of non-numerical data. While quantitative approach on the other hand is useful for producing quantitative data. Both methodologies are reflected as they enrich the study methods (Ahuja R., (2010),

Sample size and study variables

The study population was derived from two Organizations (SAADO & UNIDOR). The study specifically focused on the M&E Officers, M&E Managers/Coordinators, Project Officers, Project/Program Managers as well as Field Officers from different departments who are directly involved in the designing and implementation of development projects and have enough knowledge and were in position to provide

information required. In order to get numerous perspectives in the area of the study on the issue of the factors influencing performance of M&E Systems of NNGOs in Juba South Sudan, the researcher consulted about 60 respondents from the two Organizations (SAADO & UNIDOR).The writers chose this sampling technique as it required gathering evidence from the respondents at their own suitability areas and also to ensure that this sample is an accurate representation of a large group(Kadam et al, 2010),

Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and studied. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were coded and analyzed using statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) while the qualitative data from the interview guides were analyzed using content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004).

Results

Descriptive statistics for human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E systems of NNGOs in Juba

The study sought to establish the influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E systems of NNGOs in Juba, South Sudan. The respondents were asked to respond to a number of statements regarding Human capacity for M&E. The study obtained data on study variables and this was provided on a 5-Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Dis Agree (1). The results are provided in table 1 below:

Table 1: Responses on human capacity for M&E

Statement	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	Mean	σ
Organization has defined skill set for individuals and organizations	67.4	26.1	4.3	2.2	0	1.41	0.686
Organization has work force development plan, career paths for M&E	41.3	39.1	4.3	6.5	8.7	2.02	1.238
Level of Experience, Skills and knowledge of M&E staff influence the performance of M&E systems	30.4	58.7	2.2	2.2	6.5	1.96	1.010
Organization has Local or regional training capacity, including links to training institutions.	41.3	23.9	17.4	13.0	4.3	2.15	1.229
Human capacity for M&E has an influence on the performance of M&E system in the	37.0	54.3	2.2	2.2	4.3	1.83	0.926

organization

Source: Primary data, (2020)

The research findings from Table 1 above indicate that majority (93.5%) of the respondents supported the idea that organization has defined skill set for the individuals and organization as shown by mean of 1.41 and a standard deviation of 0.686, (80.4%) of the respondents agreed that the organization has work force development plan, career paths for M&E as shown by mean of 2.02 and a standard deviation of 1.238, They also agreed that the level of experience, skills and knowledge of M&E staff influence the performance of M&E systems as shown by a mean of 1.96 and a standard deviation of 1.010, 65.2 percent stated that organization has local or regional training capacity, including links to training institutions as shown by a mean of 2.15 and a standard deviation of 1.229 and finally 91.3% of the respondents agreed that human capacity for M&E has an influence on the performance of M&E system in the organizations as shown by a mean of 1.83 and a standard deviation of 0.926, the finding above is in line with the study finding of Bardhan, Krishnan, & Shu, (2007) who stated that an effective M&E system implementation requires that there is adequate skilled staff employed in the M&E unit, but also that the staff within this unit have the necessary technical know-how and experience. World Bank (2013) for example, human capital, with proper training and experience is vital to produce M&E results.

Gorgens & Kusek, (2010) stated that M&E system cannot function without skilled people who effectively execute the M&E tasks for which they are responsible. Therefore, understanding the skills needed and the capacity of people involved in the M&E system (undertaking human capacity assessments) and addressing capacity gaps (through structured capacity development programs) is at the heart of the M&E system

From the key informant interviews, the respondents were of a view that human capacity for M&E was a major factor influencing the performance of M&E systems in an organization. When asked about the status of their organization's human capacity for M&E and the level of experience, skills and the knowledge of their staff on M&E, one participant said: *"The organization have an experienced M&E advisor and competent field team; the field team need continuous mentorship and coaching on M&E as the situation changes with time"*

Another participant noted that: *"The organization has defined skill set for individual with an experienced M&E advisor and the staff have skills and knowledge in M&E because the organization offer M&E training through seminars and on job"*

Still on the same aspect of Human capacity for M&E, another respondent emphasized that: *"Organization has very adequate staffing for M&E personnel"*

Another participant also noted that*: "our organization recruits staff with project management abilities and that all the staff participates in monitoring and evaluation of the project alongside the field monitors and M&E officer".* He further added that: *"the staffs have high level of knowledge and experience on M&E as the officer works alongside the program team to draft M&E work plan data collection templates and reporting"*

Correlations between human capacity for M&E and performance of M&E systems of National Non-Governmental Organizations.

The study examined the influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E Systems of NNGOs in Juba, South Sudan. Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables in the National Non-Governmental Organizations. This is shown in table 2 which indicates statistically insignificant correlation between human capacity for M&E and the performance of M&E system with a correlation coefficient of 0.129 and p value 0.394. This correlation is statistically insignificant since the alpha value is greater than 0.05

Table 2: Correlations between human capacity for M&E and performance of M&E systems

		HUMAN CAPACITY FOR M&E	PERFORMNCE OF M&E SYSTEMS
HUMAN CAPACITY FOR M&E	Pearson Correlation	1	.129
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.394
	N	46	46
PERFORMNCE OF M&E SYSTEMS	Pearson Correlation	.129	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.394	
	N	46	46

Source: Primary data, (2020)

Simple regression analysis for Human capacity for M&E

To determine the influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E system of NNGOs in Juba, South Sudan, a coefficient of determination was computed. This was done using regression analysis and the results were as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Model Summary of Human Capacity for M&E on performance of M&E system.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.129[a]	.017	-.006	.79941

a. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capacity for M&E

From Table 2, it can be seen that R-value is 0.129. Therefore, R-value (.129) for Human capacity for M&E suggested that there is a weak influence of human capacity for M&E on performance of M&E system. It can also be observed that the coefficient of determination, the R-square (R2) value is 0.017, which represents 1.7% variation of performance of M&E system as a result of Human capacity for M&E. To determine whether human capacity M&E was a significant predictor of performance of M&E systems, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA – Human Capacity for M&E on performance of M&E system

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.474	1	.474	.741	.394[a]
	Residual	28.118	44	.639		
	Total	28.592	45			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capacity for M&E
b. Dependent Variable: Performance of M&E system

From Table 3, it can be noted that Human capacity for M&E was not a significant predictor of performance of M&E system [F (1, 44) = 0.741, p >0.05)].

Linear Regression for Human capacity for M&E and Performance of M&E system

The study sought to establish a linear model that could be used to describe the optimal level of performance of M&E systems in Juba, South Sudan, factoring the variable of Human Capacity for M&E. The SPSS output is shown in Table 4

Table 4: Regression Coefficients for Human capacity for M&E

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.436	.395		3.632	.001
	Human Capacity for M&E	.172	.200	.129	.861	.394

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of M&E system

From the standardized coefficient result of the regression shown in Table 4, the following regression equation was
derived;

$Y = \beta o + X_1 + \varepsilon$

$Y = 1.436 + 0.129X + \varepsilon$

Where:

Y = Performance of M&E system

X = Human Capacity for M&E

ε = Stochastic disturbance error term.

According to the regression equation established, taking the variable into account with constant at zero, the performance of M&E system will be 1.436. The findings also presented that taking independent variable

(human capacity for M&E) at zero; a unit increase in human capacity will influence the performance of M&E system by 0.172. The calculated p-value of human capacity for M&E was found to be 0.394 which is greater that standard p-value=0.05. This implies statistically insignificant relationship with the performance of M&E system.

Discussion

The study sought to determine the influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E systems, the following results were reached: more than half (71.7%) of the respondents attended an M&E training although a minority 28.3% didn't attend any M&E training. Majority 30.4% had seminars as their major M&E training, 21.7% had on job training and 19.6% had a formal in class training. M&E training was found to be an importance element as give an oversight and a clear understanding of an M&E system. Majority of the respondents 69.6% stated human capacity for M&E as the highest factor influencing the performance monitoring and evaluation system with a mean of 1.8913 and standard deviation of 0.59719.

Gorgens & Kusek, (2010) stated that M&E system cannot function without skilled people who effectively execute the M&E tasks for which they are responsible. The study findings show a weak positive statistical insignificant correlation between human capacity for M&E and the performance of M & E system with a correlation coefficient of 0.129 and p value 0.394. A regression analysis also shows insignificant relationship between human capacity for M&E and the performance of M&E system with coefficient of 0.030 and p vale of 0.873 level of significant.

On a rating scale, in relation to the statements on the items on human capacity for M&E, 93.5% of the respondents supported the idea that the organizations have defined skill set for the individuals and organization. This has a mean and a standard deviation of 1.41 and 0.686 respectively. (80.4%) of the respondents agreed that the organization has work force development plan, career paths for M&E as shown by mean of 2.02 and a standard deviation of 1.238, They also agreed that the level of experience, skills and knowledge of M&E staff influence the performance of M&E systems as shown by a mean of 1.96 and a standard deviation of 1.010, 65.2 percent stated that organization has local or regional training capacity, including links to training institutions as shown by a mean of 2.15 and a standard deviation of 1.229 and finally 91.3% of the respondents agreed that human capacity for M&E has an influence on the performance of M&E system in the organizations as shown by a mean of 1.83 and a standard deviation of 0.926.

This is in line with the study conducted by Wong & Tein (2007) who the skills and competence of the project team is considered to be one of the crucial factors influencing project implementation success because the more experienced and skilled the team, the lesser the time and money is spent on ensuring smooth rollouts with minimal errors. World Bank (2013) recommended that human capital, with proper training and experience is vital to produce M&E results. Mibey (2011) also added that capacity building should be added as a major component of the project.

Conclusion

The objective in this research was to determine the influence of human capacity for M&E on the performance of M&E systems. The study also showed insignificant correlation between human capacity for M&E and the performance of M&E systems with correlation coefficient 0.129. The study therefore, concluded that the organizations should employee Staff with required skill, knowledge and expertise within M&E unit and that their capacity should frequently be built for them to cope up with new trends in the field of evaluation.

Recommendation

The organizations should increase the level of employing adequate skilled, experienced and knowledgeable staff with required expertise in M&E. i.e. they should employee more M&E professionals to conduct M&E activities. The organization should also establish an M&E unit and have human resource personnel who will be able to run M&E functions within the unit. They should constantly do capacity building to their project staff through trainings, seminars or workshops so as to have a clear understanding of different approaches and the tools used in monitoring and evaluation. There should also be career development programs for the staff in the organizations.

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