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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY OF FOREIGN FUNDED WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS IN JUBA CITY: A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY.

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Abstract

Background

This study aims to assess the relationship between public participation in project planning and the sustainability of foreign-funded water supply projects in Juba City.

Methodology

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect data. In total, a sample of 94 respondents participated in the study. Data collection methods used were questionnaires, interviews, and documentary reviews. Quantitative data was coded and entered into SPSS and analyzed using the Pearson correlation coefficient Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis based on the research objectives.

Results

Pearson's correlation coefficient for public participation in project planning and sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources in Juba City was r = 0.539**, with a probability value (p = 0.000) that is less than 0 .05 level of significance showing a strong relationship between participation in planning and sustainability of foreign-funded Water Sources

Conclusion

It was concluded that public participation in project planning has a strong positive relationship with the sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources. This conclusion was based on the Pearson correlation coefficient which is at 539** with a significance level of 0.000. Therefore, if public members are involved in the planning stage such as needs identification, work plan development, and technology selection, there will be improved sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources.

Recommendations

The study recommends that public members should be involved in drafting work plans to follow while carrying out foreign-funded water Source activities. This will promote community involvement and participation which will enhance ownership and sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources.

Keywords: *Public, Project, Planning, Participation, Sustainability, Foreign, Funded, Water, Supply, Projects, Relationship, Juba City.*
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Introduction

"Participation is defined as a process through which beneficiaries influence and share control over development initiatives, and make contributions to decisions that affect them" (Bakenegura, 2003). Public participation refers to people's active involvement and control of their community programs and projects and the activities that take place in those programs and projects (National Community Development Policy, 2012). Public participation which is the independent variable (IV) in this study is defined as, the process where beneficiary groups influence the direction and implementation of their development. Public participation ensures effective utilization of resources, improved accountability to communities; responsiveness to local needs; increases equitable access, quality, and better performance" (Pauline 2003). According to Salum (2002), sustainability of local development Sources relies heavily on Public participation". "In South Sudan, the water sector development has been encouraged to adopt Public participation models to achieve access to safe and clean water for all" (NWP, 1999; Cinara, 1999; MWE, 2009). The government and donors in South Sudan have influenced public participation in the planning of foreign-funded water Sources through a variety of

Avenues like use of Public demand approaches and civil society funding. "For instance, in FY2013/2014, the Government of South Sudan allocated 100 USD billion for civil society organizations working in the water sub-sector" (MoFPED Budget framework 2013/2014). "Despite all these attempts, the sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources remains a serious challenge for local communities. For example, by June 2013, the national access to safe water in the rural areas remained at 44% against the projected national average of 88%" (Juba Eye 21, 2014), and the level of sustainability in accessing the said water sources is low where it is indicated that 20% of the water sources are not in use two years after installation. According to the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) (2014), "poor access to clean water is blamed on inadequate public participation in planning because people do not take good care, maintenance and ownership after the water projects implementors leave. If nothing is done, it is feared that 1.5 million South Sudanese who live in urban areas might die of waterborne diseases because of a lack of clean water. This study aims to assess the relationship between public participation in project planning and the

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sustainability of foreign-funded water supply projects in Juba City.

Methodology

Research design

"A cross-sectional study design was adopted for this research because it enables and facilitates the collection of data at one point in time", as Sekaran (2003) suggests. In addition, the study adopted a triangulation of both quantitative and qualitative approaches for data collection and analysis. "In this case, the quantitative approach allowed the researcher to solicit information expressed in numerical format while the qualitative approach complemented the quantitative approach by soliciting more detailed information expressed in textual format" (Mugenga & Mugenga, 1999).

Study population

The study population included; top officials in the City who are involved in handling Public and water project issues. Public members were also included in the research. Juba City officials have a total of 10 key officials who are involved in foreign-funded water Sources. "There are 5 water board members who oversee water-related activities and 3 water technical team members whose role is to provide maintenance and operation of water facilities" (Juba City Human Resource Record 2014). There are 197 water users and 25 Public members that have been selected for this study. The entire population where this study was drawn included 197 people from whom samples of 132 respondents were selected.

Table 1: Study Population and sampling techniques

Population category	Total	Sampling Size	Sampling Techniques
City Officials	10	10	Purposive
Water Board Members	4	4	Purposive
Water technical team	03	03	Purposive
Water user Public members	180	115	Simple random
Total	197	132	

Source: Juba City human resource records, (2016).

Sample size, selection and procedure

The categories of participants were selected from different departments involved in water program planning, implementation, and monitoring. The key informants included water board members, City officials like; the chief administrative officer, City water officer, City health inspector, City Public development officer, pump mechanics, secretary for works and technical services at the City level, City officials like; Senior Assistant secretary/ City chief, Public development officer, pump mechanics, secretary for works and technical services, health assistants, water technical team (water source manager, water source caretakers). At the Public level, focus group discussions were carried out among the water user committees and the general public at large. Observation techniques were also carried out by the researcher. According to Sekaran (2003), "It is necessary for a researcher to obtain information from specific target groups".

Sampling techniques

In this study, both random and purposive sampling techniques were employed where random sampling included; simple random sampling. "As seen in table 3.1 above, simple random sampling was used in Public survey because it offers a high degree of representation of all the categories under study" (Amin, 2005). "Purposive sampling is justified in situations where respondents with vital information are few" (Amin, 2005).

Data collection methods

The data collection methods involved key informant interviews, questioning, focus group discussions, and observation checklists.

Key informants Interviews

An interview guide was used to collect information from the key top City officials who included the following staff; the chief administrative officer, City water officer, City health inspector, City Public development officer, pump mechanics, secretary for works, and technical services. The information supplied by key informants was triangulated by the information supplied by the members of the technical team and the Public.

Questionnaire method

This was used to collect information that is relevant to the study from members of the Public and water user committees

Data collection instruments

These included; an interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and observation checklist.

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Interview guide

Structured interviews were conducted with both individuals and groups. This was administered to communities that access safe water. This method is suitable because it gives room for probing based on the responses from the respondents. Interviews give more clarity and yield the biggest response rate. This kind of data collection gives room for flexibility during investigation to the researcher.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires were used to collect in-depth information from the water user committees and the Public.

Pretesting (Validity and Reliability) of research instrument

Validity

This simply refers to the appropriateness of the instrument. The instrument should be able to confirm that what we measure is what we get. The findings should be in agreement with the theoretical or conceptual values. The content validity index was used to measure the extent to which the content of the instruments corresponds to the content of the conceptual framework of the study. Amin (2005) recommends that "an instrument which has an average index of 0.7 or above is accepted as being valid". The researcher therefore measured the content validity by;

a) Ensuring that the contents in the key informant guide conform to the conceptual framework b) engaging research experts and research supervisors to evaluate the relevance and clarity of the questions

c) Field testing of focus group discussions on 3 groups each from a parish and observation of foreign-funded water Sources. Content validity will then be measured by the formula: CVI=Total number of items rated to be valid / Total number of items in the instruments.

Table .2: Content validity index

Variables	Content validity index	Number of items
Participation in Planning	0.875	8
Participation in Implementation	0.75	8
Participation in Monitoring Sustainability of foreign funded water Sources	0.9375	8

Source: Primary data

Reliability Statistics (Table 3 results from reliability tests)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.947	**37**

Source: Primary data (2016)

Results in Table.2 show that all variables had content validity index which was above 0.7. This shows that the instruments were valid for the study.

Reliability

An instrument is treated as reliable when it is able to measure what it is intended to measure. A pre-test was carried by the researcher to respondents who are not part of the study. It is from this pre-test that the researcher judged that the data collection tool was reliable as it would enable the researcher to estimate the error.

Table 3 results from reliability tests

Results in Table.3 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha obtained was .947 which is above 0.7. That means that the data collection instruments would be used to collect reliable data.

Procedure for data collection

A cover letter from the university was obtained to enable the researcher to undertake the study in the selected departments of Juba City. The researcher employed three research assistants and one data entrant who are familiar with conducting qualitative research. Face-to-face interviews were carried out by the researcher himself.

Data processing

Qualitative data collected from the key informants' respondents will be edited and categorized according to themes and summarized into percentages in computer spreadsheets. Quantitative data was coded and entered into SPSS.

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Data Analysis

The qualitative data was analyzed through the use of an interview guide, documentary review, and observation linking them to the variables while examining the relationship. The data was then coded and entered into the computer using a statistical package for social scientists (SPSS version 20.0). Data manipulation was through the Pearson correlation coefficient to establish the relationship between variables.

Measurement of variables

Public participation as an independent variable was measured in terms of percentages and ratios of Public involvement in terms of planning, implementation, and monitoring. Sustainability as a dependent variable was measured through triangulation of the relationship between Public participation in terms of finance, technical, and institutional sustainability.

Planning was measured in terms of community participation in needs identification, work plan development and technology selection as supported by Bartle (2007). In addition, implementation was measured in terms of the establishment of water, maintenance, donor support, and leadership skill development (Atkinson et al., 2011). On the other hand, participation in monitoring was measured in terms of performance analysis, appraisal, and information dissemination (Kiyimba, 2011) while sustainability was measured in terms of functional and operational sustainability (Narayan, 1995).

Ethical considerations

The study took into account ethical considerations; that is, the researcher first sought consent from all prospective respondents and then explained to them what the study was all about. Further assurance and confirmation was given to respondents that the information was treated with confidence and for use in academic purposes only.

Results

Response rate

Table 4. Shows that out of 115 questionnaires distributed, 80 were returned giving a response rate of 69% in addition, out of 17 interviews, 14 were conducted, giving a response rate of 82%. "The overall response rate was 70% which is above the recommended two-thirds (67%) response rate" (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

Background characteristics

During the study, the researcher sought the background characteristics of respondent's in terms of gender, age group and the type of water source provided. Results are presented in the next section of this report.

Results in figure.1 show that majority (66%) of the respondents were males. On the other hand, 34% of the respondents were females. The above findings imply that study results were obtained from a gender balanced sample size, therefore, not gender biased.

Age group

According to Figure 2 majority 45% of the respondents were aged between 26 – 30. In addition, 29% were aged 16 – 25 while 26% of the respondents were aged 31 years and above. This implies that most respondents were mature and able to understand the purpose of the study to give valid responses.

Type of water source provided

Results in Figure 3 show that majority 50% of the respondents used spring wells. 24% of the respondents used piped water, 17% shallow well while 9% used boreholes. The above results indicate that community members had access to different types of water sources and were able to provide reliable data for the study.

Table 4 Response rate

Instruments	Targeted	Conducted/Returned	Percentage
Questionnaires	115	80	69%
Interview guides	17	14	82%
Total	135	94	70%

Source: Primary data (2023)

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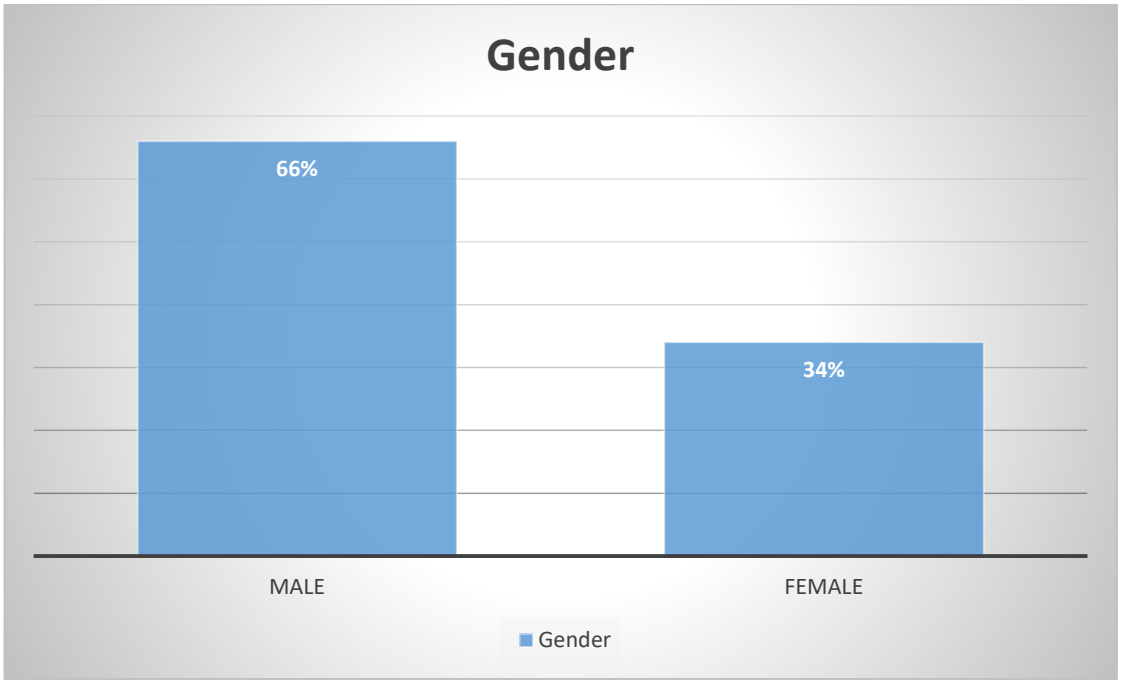
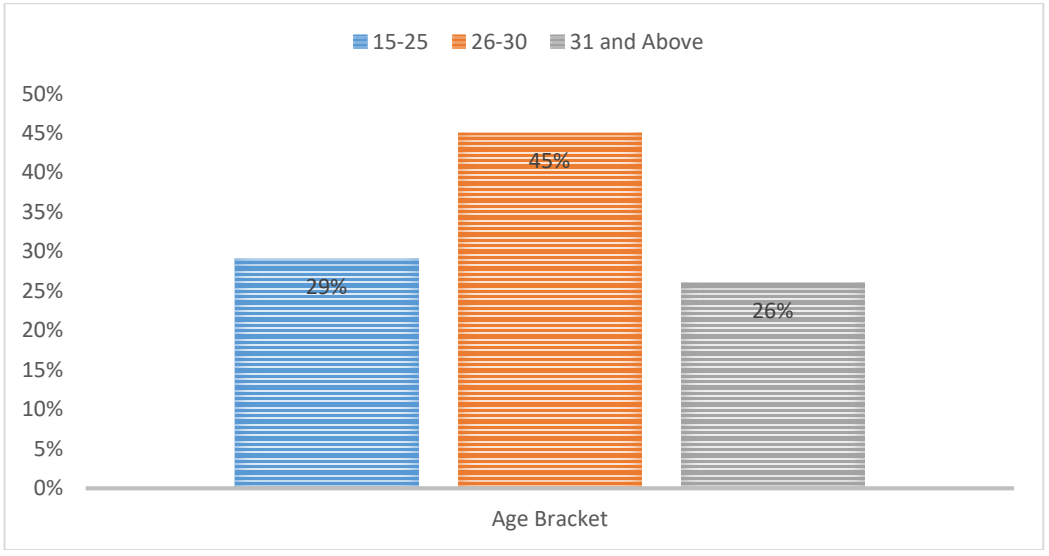
Gender of respondents



Source: Primary data (2023)

Figure 1 Respondents according to gender



Source: Primary data (2023)
Figure 2 Respondents according to age group

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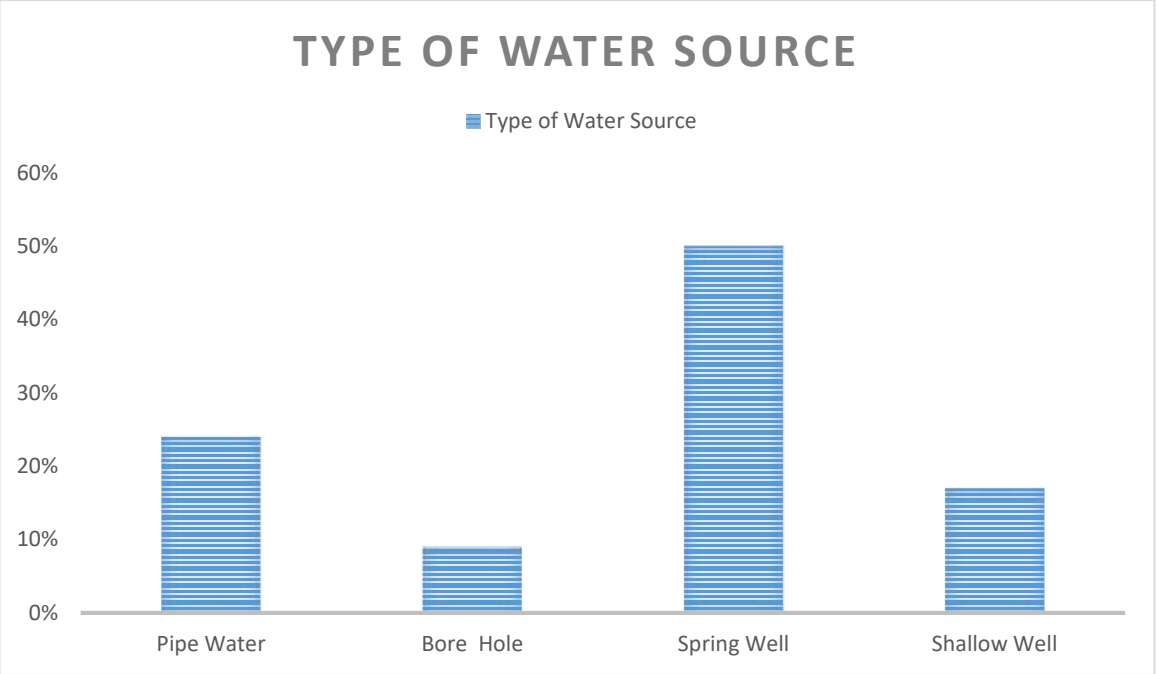

Source: Primary data (2023)
Figure 3 Respondents according to type of water source provided

Table 5 Descriptive statistics on sustainability of water sources

Sustainability	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
Water equipment are functional most of	12%	9%	9%	43%	27%	3.66	.959
Equipment for water Sources are effectively used	7%	7%	10%	56%	20%	3.66	1.024
There is sustained water supply to the Public	11%	13%	12%	48%	16%	3.33	1.059
There is effective accountability of funds	49%	10%	5%	12%	25%	2.48	1.093
Water Sources are fully operational all the time	15%	13%	11%	42%	19%	3.77	.986
Water Sources have enough equipment for project success.	42%	11%	8%	13%	26%	2.53	1.119
Water Sources fully address the needs of Public members.	38%	16%	4%	30%	12%	2.95	1.197

Results in Table 5 show that 70% of the respondents agreed that water equipment is functional most of the time. On the other hand, 21% disagreed,9% were not sure. The corresponding mean for the statement was 3.66 which is above average while the standard deviation was .959, representing the number of respondents who gave varying responses. The mean is above average, which implies that the majority of respondents held the view that water equipment is functional most of the time. On whether equipment for water sources is effectively used, 76% agreed, 14% disagreed, and 10% were not sure. The findings were verified with a mean value of 3.66 which is above average while the standard deviation was 1.025. This implies that due to public participation, equipment for water sources is effectively used. The above findings were supported by an interviewee who had this to say;

"Equipment for water sources are effectively used and protected because if not properly handled, community members will run short of water which is essential for their lives."

During the study, respondents were asked whether there was a sustained water supply to the public. To this, 64% of the respondents agreed, 24% disagreed and 12% were not sure. The corresponding mean value for the statement was 3.33 which is above average while the standard deviation was 1.059. This implies that the majority of the respondents supported the statement. That there is effective accountability of funds for water sources was supported by 37% of the respondents while the majority 59% disagreed and 5% were not sure. The above statistics were verified with a mean of 2.48 which is below average while the standard deviation was 1.093, representing the number of respondents with

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varying responses. This shows that very few respondents held the view that there is effective accountability of funds for water sources. The above findings were supported by an interviewee who had this to say;

"There is inadequate accountability of funds for water sources because of corruption tendencies in the water sector. Each village was supposed to have at least three boreholes, but only one was constructed, yet funds to construct three boreholes were released by donors".

When respondents were asked whether water sources are fully operational all the time 61% agreed, 28% disagreed, and 11% were not sure. The obtained mean value for the statement was 3.77 which is above average while the standard deviation was 0.986, implying that some respondents gave varying responses.

On whether water sources have enough equipment for project success, only 39% of the respondents agreed. The majority 53% disagreed while 13% were not sure. The statistics were verified with a mean of 2.53 which is below average and a standard deviation of 1.119. This implies that few respondents held the view that water sources have enough equipment for project success. The above findings were further supported by a key informant during face-to-face interviews when he said;

"Water sources do not have enough equipment for project success because when a borehole breaks down, it takes more than six months to get repaired due to lack of equipment. This hurts water supply to community members."

That water sources fully address the needs of public members was supported by 42% while 54% disagreed and 4% were not sure. The obtained mean for the statement was 2.95 which is below average while the standard deviation was 1.197, implying that some respondents gave varying responses.

Overall, the results indicate that the sustainability of water sources has been affected by inadequate accountability of funds for water sources due to corruption tendencies. This has affected the availability of equipment for project success and further limited the ability of water sources to address the needs of public members.

Public participation in project planning and sustainability of water Sources

The study examined the relationship between public participation in project planning and the sustainability of water sources.

To establish the direction of the relationship between these variables, the Pearson (r) correlation coefficient was computed as shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Correlation matrix for Public participation in project planning and sustainability of water Sources

Correlations

		Planning	Sustainability
Planning	Pearson Correlation	1	.539**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Sustainability	Pearson Correlation	.539**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results in Table 6 show that the correlation coefficient was 0.539** which shows a strong positive relationship between the two variables, and its significance is 0.000 at the 0.01 level which is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that planning has a positive significant relationship with the sustainability of water sources. Therefore, if the public is allowed to participate in needs identification, work plan development, and technology selection, they will greatly contribute to the sustainability of the water source. On the other hand, if public members do not participate in the planning process, water sources are likely not to be sustainable. From all the results obtained, the hypothesis that "there is a positive significant relationship between public participation in project planning and sustainability of water Sources" was accepted.

Discussion

Pearson's correlation coefficient for public participation in project planning and sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources in Juba City was r = 0.539**, with a probability value (p = 0.000) that is less than 0 .05 level of significance showing a strong relationship between participation in planning and sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources.

During the study, it was established that few public members are involved in identifying project needs during the planning stage. This is contrary to Rifkin (2009), who asserted that "community members should be involved in identifying their own needs". According

to him, "public development should place much discussion specifically in promotion of participation by community members". However, findings from this study revealed that few public members are involved in identifying project needs. In most cases, the staff members at the City and councilors represent community members to identify needs. Sometimes, some of the identified needs are not the priority needs of community members, which affects the sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources. This is corroborated by Atkinson et al., (2011) who contend that "community representation by leaders may not be adequate to identify and address the immediate challenges people face".

Study findings further revealed that the project hires experts in the project to participate in needs identification. This is supported by Gibson and Pappas (2003) who asserted that "needs are not directly assessed, but rather, the identification of needs is the result of a complex process that requires expert personnel, integration and synthesis of many factors, including the results from numerous assessments specialists". Therefore, if the project hires experts there are high chances of providing quality services that contribute to project sustainability.

Findings from the study further revealed that needs identification answers all questions about foreign-funded water Sources as reported by the majority. This is consistent with Kusek & Rist, (2004) who argued that "the assessments synthesized into needs should address all concerns such as the pre-event levels of function, the amount and types of damage sustained initially and existing at the current time; current levels of function and the levels of function detected by the last assessment, the presence of a surge, the demands of the population affected, the culture in which the event occurred, the climate in the affected area, the geography and access to the affected area; and politics".

In addition, study findings revealed that needs identification considers sources' identical indicators. This is consistent with Bartle (2007) who revealed that "to identify needs, assessments, and requirements must use identical indicators". Needs are expressed in terms of goods and/or services. In the water sector, needs identification considers identical indicators such as inadequate access to foreign-funded water Sources, the distance that one walks to reach the nearest water point, and many other indicators that warrant water supply in an area.

Findings from the study further revealed that the identification of needs integrates information obtained from assessments by public members. In addition, public members are involved in drafting a work plan to follow while carrying out foreign-funded water Source activities. This is further supported by Gibson and Pappas (2003) who contend that "a work plan is required and should be based upon a project already approved, and identify a specific time segment within that project or program". Other study findings indicated that public members are not involved in drafting a work plan to follow while carrying out foreign-funded water Source activities. The plan is mostly done by the City engineer and other technical people from the Department of natural resources.

According to study findings, few public members are involved in the selection of appropriate technologies. When selecting appropriate technologies, most public members are not involved. It is assumed that it is the work of engineers and other specialists in the water sector. Indeed, community members may not have good knowledge of appropriate technologies. This is corroborated by Rosenfeld and Shohet (1999) who stated that "projects need to consider emerging technologies and tools which have great potential to help project teams mitigate risks associated with unknown existing site and equipment conditions or other factors".

Conclusion

Based on study findings, it was concluded that public participation in project planning has a strong positive relationship with the sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources.

This conclusion was based on the Pearson correlation coefficient which is at 539** with a significance level of 0.000. Therefore, if public members are involved in the planning stage such as needs identification, work plan development, and technology selection, there will be improved sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources.

Recommendation

The study recommends that public members should be involved in drafting work plans to follow while carrying out foreign-funded water Source activities. This will promote community involvement and participation which will enhance ownership and sustainability of foreign-funded water Sources.

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List of abbreviations

GOSS: Government of South Sudan
SS: South Sudan
KU: Kampala University
JC: Juba City
MWE: Ministry of Water and Environment
MoFP: Ministry of Finance and Planning
JUWS: Juba Urban Water Supply

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Conflict of interest

The author had no conflict of interest.

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