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Effect of Stakeholders' Management Practices on the Performance of Social Protection Projects: A Case of Girinka Program in Musanze District, Rwanda

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to assess the effect of stakeholders' management practices on the performance of social protection projects. This study had the following specific objectives: to determine the effect of stakeholders' identification practices on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District, to find out the effect of stakeholders' analysis practices on performance of Girinka program in Musanze District, to assess the effect of stakeholders communication practices on performance of Girinka program in Musanze District and to analyze the effect stakeholders' relationship the management on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District. The researcher conducted both descriptive and correlational studies. The research included 179 participants, including Girinka committee at the District level, Girinka Liaison Officer, the Girinka committee at the sector level and the beneficiaries' representative at the sector level in Musanze District. The sample size is given by the help of Solvin's formula. The stratified sampling was more appropriate for this study. Then, the number of staff was first stratified and a simple random sampling was applied. The study was delivered to 123 Participants of the Girinka program in the Musanze district with closed questions, the collectors as responders confined to certain replies or picking from a selection of options. The study applied the following tools of data collection; documentary, interview and questionnaire. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) used to perform frequency and correlation analyses. Findings revealed that there is a positive and significant effect of stakeholders' identification practices on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District (Beta=.1.343, P Value=0.000<0.05). There is a positive and significant effect of stakeholders' analysis practices performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District (Beta=0.968, P Value=0.000<0.05). There is a positive and significant effect of stakeholders' communication practices performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District (Beta=0.948, P Value=0.020<0.05). There is a positive and significant effect on stakeholders' relationship management performance of Girinka program in Musanze District (Beta=0.955, P Value=.0.000<0.05). The study recommended that the management of Girinka program should organize collaborative workshops involving diverse stakeholders to collectively prioritize their interests, fostering a comprehensive understanding of needs and concerns.

Keywords: *Stakeholders' Management, Social Protection & Project Performance.*

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1. Introduction

Despite the fact that the Government and private actors are implementing a number of activities to encourage successful project execution, low stakeholders' participation may be ascribed to poor project management cycle performance. According to the findings of prior research, many initiatives in Rwanda fail for a variety of reasons, including miscommunication, a lack of supplies, and inadequate risk management. Considering the tools and strategies necessary to prevent project failure, the literature results reveal that focusing on key performance indicators, such as stakeholder participation, monitoring, and decision-making, indicates the effectiveness of project work (Mukeshimana, 2021).

The studies conducted in Rwanda including Amandin and Kule (2016) and other research on Rwandan projects found that poor planning, cost overruns, and delays were major factors in the failure of 65% of government projects between 2009 and 2012. According to Mwangi (2016), stakeholders want a voice in the decisions made at each stage of a project's lifecycle. Rwandan citizens are not well informed about or engaged in government- and NGO-funded programs. Despite attempts to ensure success, many projects in Rwanda have repeatedly gone over budget and over schedule and failed to achieve final product criteria, customer objectives, or management goals (Kobusingye *et al.*, 2017).

The Rwandan Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning's 2016 project report found that, of the total 1,711 projects carried out in the country, 35% failed to complete their work by the deadline (schedule), 65% failed to complete their work within their allotted budget (scope), 45% failed to bring all the functionality that was expected (scope), 22% failed to continue after their funding source pulled out, and 55% failed to complete their work to the quality that was expected (quality). Felix's (2018) research on the impact of the Girinka program in Rwanda, it has helped its recipients advance economically. He said that everyone who responded had problems with cattle illnesses, 82% had problems with pastures, 71% had problems with veterinarians, and 41.1% had problems with animals.

It has been shown that research on stakeholder engagement and project performance undertaken internationally, regionally, and locally has not focused on stakeholders' management practices and the performance of social protection initiatives in Rwanda. In light of this, the researcher proposed conducting a study on the effect of stakeholders' identification, Stakeholders' analysis, Communication with Stakeholders and Stakeholders' relationship on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research was to assess the effect of stakeholders' management practices on the performance of social protection projects.

This study had the following specific objectives:

- i. To determine the effect of stakeholders' identification practices on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.
- ii. To find out the effect of stakeholders' analysis practices on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.
- iii. To assess the effect of stakeholders' communication practices on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.
- iv. To analyze the effect of stakeholders' relationship management on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.

1.3 Hypotheses

Research hypotheses may be characterized as a preliminary answer to the investigation question or an informed prediction as to the result of the research. The following hypotheses guided this study:

H01: There is no significant effect of stakeholders' identification practices on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District.

H02: There is no significant effect of stakeholders' analysis practices on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District.

H03: There's no significant effect of stakeholders' communication practices on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District.

H04: There is no significant effect of stakeholders' relationship management on the performance of Girinka program in Musanze District.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical review

For this study, the theoretical framework is a thorough look at and evaluation of the existing theories and ideas about the topic under study. It is the process of systematically analyzing and putting together information from different sources in order to get a full picture of the issue.

2.1.1 Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory was initially developed in 1984 by R. Edward Freeman. Freeman stated that corporations should not just concentrate on increasing shareholder profit but also on the interests and requirements of other stakeholders. Several researchers and practitioners expanded on the notion of stakeholder theory, such as Thomas Donaldson, who stressed the ethical and moral components of stakeholder theory, and Archie Carroll, who offered a framework of corporate social responsibility that included stakeholder theory (Freeman *et al.*, 2020).

Stakeholder theory is a management theory that says a company should take into account the needs and wants of all of its stakeholders, not just those of its owners or shareholders. People who have a stake in a business include employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and even the environment. Stakeholder theory says that when making decisions and coming up with plans, an organization should think about what is best for all of its stakeholders. This indicates that a corporation should not just concentrate on making profits for its shareholders but also on providing value for all of its stakeholders. By doing so, a business may produce long-term value for itself and its stakeholders (Phillips & Freeman, 2021).

According to Jones (2021), stakeholder theory highlights the need for stakeholder participation and communication. An organization may better meet its stakeholders' interests and establish deeper connections by interacting with them and understanding their wants and concerns. This may lead to increased trust, loyalty, and support from stakeholders. Stakeholder theory is becoming more significant in current business practice as firms acknowledge the value of social responsibility, sustainability, and ethical conduct. Organizations that follow a stakeholder approach may not only achieve financial success but also provide social and environmental value for the communities they serve.

As the researcher aims to conduct a study on projects and want to provide suggestions to improve stakeholder engagement, their communication, their decision-making and their

reputation found the stakeholder theory to be a useful framework. By taking a stakeholder-focused approach, researcher ensured that project outcomes align with the needs and expectations of all stakeholders, leading to more successful projects and increased stakeholder satisfaction.

2.1.2 Goal setting theory

The goal-setting theory was first introduced by Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham in 1968. Since then, the theory has been widely studied and applied in various fields, including business, education, sports, and personal development. According to Locke and Latham, goals should be explicit, quantifiable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. They also stated that feedback and support from supervisors and coworkers might assist people in meeting their objectives and improving their performance (Latham & Locke, 2019).

The goal-setting theory is a way of thinking about how to run a business. It says that making goals that are hard and specific can increase motivation, performance, and success. The idea is that both individuals and teams perform better when they have clear goals to work toward and a sense of purpose and direction. Goal-setting theory's detractors claim that it might have unexpected implications, such as unethical conduct or a concentration on short-term objectives at the expense of long-term goals. Yet proponents of the idea say that by carefully selecting and managing goals, these risks may be reduced. Goal-setting theory has had a substantial influence on management practice and is an important area of study and development in organizational behavior (Seijts & Latham, 2020).

The goal-setting theory helped this research, which aims to improve project performance and get better results, by giving it a framework. The idea helped make sure that everyone involved in a project is working toward the same goals and that resources are used in the best way possible by setting clear goals, creating motivation and commitment, and encouraging responsibility and ownership.

2.1.3 Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) is a management and planning approach that describes how change happens and what actions are needed to achieve specific goals. The origins of the Theory of Change are difficult to trace, but it is believed to have been first used in the 1960s by the social science community in the United States. In recent years, the Theory of Change has gained popularity as a planning and evaluation tool in the fields of international development, social innovation, and philanthropy. The ToC approach helps organizations and communities to clarify their goals, identify the necessary steps to achieve them, and measure progress towards their desired outcomes (Connell *et al.*, 2020).

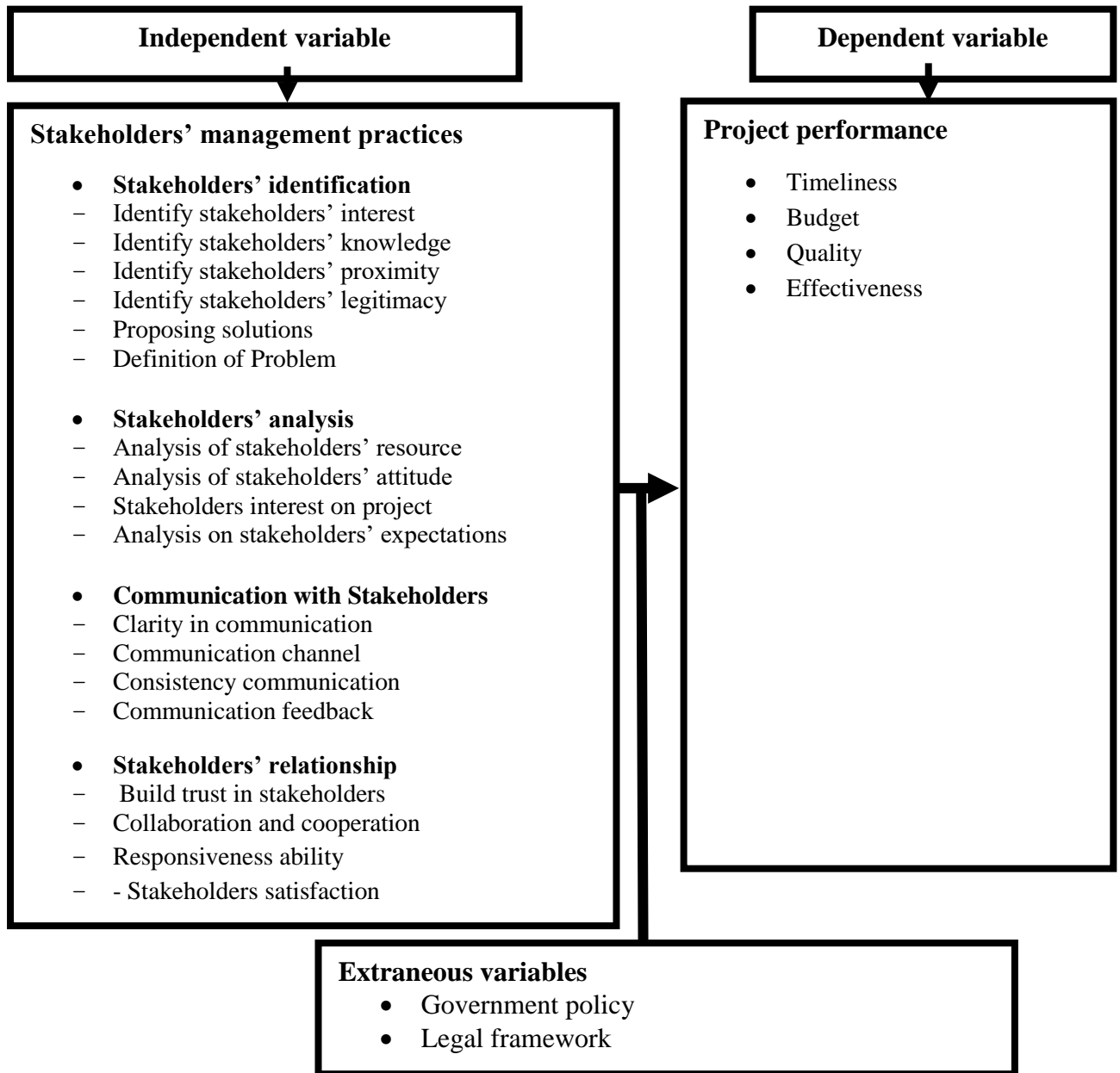
In this study, the Theory of Change (ToC) used to help plan, carry out, and evaluate projects. The ToC method is especially useful for big, complicated projects where it is important to know what changes are happening and why, as well as how they are happening. The ToC method helped project managers get a better understanding of the environment in which their projects run and come up with strategies that are more in line with the results and goals of the project.

2.2 Conceptual framework

The study conceptualized on the premise that there is a direct link between the independent variables (Stakeholders' identification, Stakeholders' analysis, Communication with

Stakeholders and Stakeholders’ relationship) and the dependent variable, project performance as measured by timeliness, budget, quality and effectiveness as described.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Researcher conceptualization, 2023

The independent variable is stakeholders’ management practices which consist of four sub-variables: stakeholders' identification, stakeholders' analysis, communication with stakeholders, and stakeholders' relationship.

Stakeholders' identification; Stakeholders' interest: The identification of stakeholders' interests helps understand their specific needs and requirements, which can influence project performance. Stakeholders' knowledge: Identifying stakeholders' knowledge allows project managers to tailor communication and engagement strategies accordingly, potentially impacting project performance. Stakeholders' proximity: Proximity refers to the physical or

geographic closeness of stakeholders to the project. Proximity can affect stakeholder involvement, support, and collaboration, ultimately influencing project performance. Stakeholders' legitimacy: Recognizing stakeholders' legitimacy ensures that relevant and authorized stakeholders are appropriately considered, which can positively affect project performance.

Stakeholders' analysis; Analysis of stakeholders' resource: Understanding the resources that stakeholders bring to the project enables better resource allocation and utilization, potentially impacting project performance. Analysis of stakeholders' attitude: Analyzing stakeholders' attitudes helps identify potential barriers or facilitators to project success and informs strategies to address them. Stakeholders' interest in the project: Assessing stakeholders' interest in the project provides insights into their level of engagement and commitment, which can influence project performance. Analysis of stakeholders' expectations: Understanding stakeholders' expectations allows project managers to align project goals and deliverables with stakeholder requirements, potentially impacting project performance.

Communication with stakeholders; Clarity in communication: Clear communication ensures that stakeholders have a thorough understanding of project objectives, activities, and progress, which can positively influence project performance. Communication channel: Utilizing effective communication channels facilitates timely and accurate information exchange between project stakeholders, potentially improving project performance. Consistency in communication: Consistent communication helps build trust and maintain stakeholder engagement throughout the project, which can positively impact project performance. Communication feedback: Encouraging and incorporating stakeholder feedback enhances the project's responsiveness to stakeholder needs and expectations, potentially improving project performance.

3. Research methodology

This chapter gives research design, the study population, describes the sample selection and data collection techniques, how data collected, processed, and analyzed to draw conclusions.

3.1 Study Design

This study employed descriptive study design and correlational research design with quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study concerned on descriptive study design with measurements of the same variables across all respondents in the study. This study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research approaches (used mixed method) in order to generate the advantage of both approaches.

3.2. Population of the Study

The research included 179 participants, including Girinka committee at District level, Girinka Liaison Officer, Girinka committee at sector level and beneficiaries' representative at sector level in Musanze District.

3.3 Sampling procedures

A sample size is the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. In selecting a sample an optimum sample size considered.

The sample-size given by the help of Solvin's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample-size, N is the population size, and e is the marginal of error (5%).

$$n = \frac{179}{1 + 179(0.05)^2} = \frac{179}{1 + 0.4475} = \frac{179}{1.4475} = 123$$

3.4. Data collection methods and instruments

The study applied the following tools of data-collection; documentary, interview and questionnaire.

The study delivered-to 123 Participants of Girinka program in Musanze district with closed questions, the collectors as responders limited to certain replies or picking from a selection of options.

During the procedure of documentary-analysis, the researcher used certain papers and after comprehending and assessing the significance of writings to this research, Researcher classed them down on manuscripts and later typed them on a computer for compilation. This is important because it reviews the literature and tries to locate global perspectives in order to make a comparative framework for analysis and evaluation for readers.

Interview technique in research refers to the specific methods and strategies used to conduct interviews as a data collection tool. It encompasses the various approaches, principles, and skills employed by researchers when interacting with participants to gather qualitative information and insights. For this study, it was important to get information from the managerial staff on stakeholders' participation, its intervening variables to lead the performance of the Girinka Program in Musanze.

3.5. Data analysis

Data analysis is the study of numbers and the creation of statistics. Statistical methods are mathematical ideas, formulae, models, and procedures used in statistical analysis of random data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) used to perform frequency and correlation analyses.

The mean, standard-deviation, minimum/maximum, and other variables used to quantify-variability.

Therefore, the regression model to be used as below

$$Y = \alpha + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where; Y = Project performance

X₁ is stakeholders' identification

X₂ is stakeholders' analysis

X₃ is stakeholders' communication

X₄ is stakeholders' relationship

α = constant

b₁-b₄ = Regression Coefficient

ε = error term

4. Research findings

This chapter focused on the presentation of research findings and the analysis of data. The study involved the distribution of 123 questionnaires to participants, all of which were completed and returned, the study guided by the specific objectives.

Table 1: Correlations on Stakeholders’ management practices and performance of Girinka program

		Stakeholders identification on practices	Stakeholders analysis practices	Stakeholders communication practices	Stakeholders relationship management	Performance of the Girinka program
Stakeholders identification practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.644**	.651**	.178*	.739**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.049	.000
	N	123	123	123	123	123
Stakeholders analysis practices	Pearson Correlation	.644**	1	.725**	.299**	.775**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.001	.000
	N	123	123	123	123	123
Stakeholders communication practices	Pearson Correlation	.651**	.725**	1	.200*	.758**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.027	.000
	N	123	123	123	123	123
Stakeholders relationship management	Pearson Correlation	.178*	.299**	.200*	1	.359**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.049	.001	.027		.000
	N	123	123	123	123	123
Performance of the Girinka program	Pearson Correlation	.739**	.775**	.758**	.359**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	123	123	123	123	123

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, August 2023

Table 1 presents the correlation matrix depicting the relationships between different Stakeholders’ management practices and the performance of the Girinka program. Based on the correlation matrix presented in Table 1, the significance levels (p-values) indicate whether the correlations are statistically significant. For this study all independent variables are statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$). Stakeholders’ identification practices are positively correlated with the performance of the Girinka program ($r = 0.739$). Stakeholders’ analysis practices are significantly correlated with the performance of the Girinka program ($r = 0.775$). Stakeholders’ communication practices show a strong positive correlation with the performance of the Girinka program ($r = 0.758$). Stakeholders’

relationship management is positively correlated with the performance of the Girinka program ($r = 0.359$).

In line with the principles highlighted by various previous studies, Stakeholders identification practices exhibit a positive and significant correlation with the Girinka program's performance ($r = 0.739$), echoing Johannes *et al.* (2020)'s interactive PSS emphasis. Stakeholders' analysis practices also correlate significantly with performance ($r = 0.775$), resonating with Ahmed (2018)'s community involvement findings. Effective communication practices, aligned with Abraham's study, demonstrate a strong correlation with performance ($r = 0.758$). Furthermore, Uzair *et al.* (2019)'s focus on stakeholder relationships aligns with the correlation between Stakeholders relationship management and performance ($r = 0.359$). These correlations affirm that robust stakeholder engagement, communication, collaboration, and relationship management are integral to successful program outcomes.

Table 2: Model Summary on Stakeholders' management practices and performance of Girinka program

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.869 ^a	.755	.746	7.17311

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholders relationship management, Stakeholders identification practices, Stakeholders communication practices, Stakeholders analysis practices

Source: Primary data, August 2023

Table 2 illustrates the model summary detailing the effect of Stakeholders' management practices on the performance of the Girinka program. The R-value of 0.869 indicates a strong positive correlation, indicating that Stakeholders' management practices collectively explain a substantial proportion of the variance in the program's performance. The R Square value of 0.755 signifies that approximately 75.5% of the variability in the performance can be attributed to the predictor variables while other percentages can be accounted for other variables which included in this model. In Johannes *et al.*'s (2020) study, interactive Participatory Stakeholder Systems (PSS) facilitated collaboration, information sharing, and collective decision-making, leading to successful outcomes in project engagement. Uzair *et al.* (2019) found that stakeholder involvement, especially within project teams, significantly influenced project success. Similarly, Chukwuemeka's (2020) research emphasized the positive impact of employee participation on government agency performance. Furthermore, Ahmed's (2018) exploration of community involvement highlighted the connection between collaboration and project viability. In line with these findings, the correlation matrix (Table 2) in the current study reveals strong positive effect of Stakeholders' management practices on the performance of the Girinka program. The model summary (Table 2) underscores the collective influence of these practices on program success, reinforcing the idea that effective engagement, communication, analysis, and relationship management play pivotal roles in achieving project objectives.

Table 3: ANOVA on Stakeholders’ management practices and performance of Girinka program

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18663.650	4	4665.912	90.682	.000 ^b
	Residual	6071.521	118	51.454		
	Total	24735.171	122			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of the Girinka program

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholders relationship management, Stakeholders identification practices, Stakeholders communication practices, Stakeholders analysis practices

Source: Primary data, August 2023

In Table 3, the ANOVA results showcase the impact of Stakeholders’ management practices on the performance of the Girinka program. The p-value of 0.000 indicates that the overall effect is statistically significant, supporting the notion that these management practices collectively contribute to program performance. The regression analysis reveals that the model's independent Variables—Stakeholders relationship management, Stakeholders identification practices, Stakeholders communication practices, and Stakeholders analysis practices—jointly explain a substantial portion of the variance in program performance, as indicated by the significant F-statistic (90.682). Overall, the findings provide strong evidence for the crucial role of effective stakeholder engagement, communication, analysis, and relationship management in driving the success of the Girinka program.

The findings previously supported by Johannes *et al.* (2020) highlighted the significance of interactive Participatory Stakeholder Systems (PSS) in promoting collaboration and information sharing among stakeholders. Ahmed (2018) and Abraham (2022) focused on community and stakeholder involvement, emphasizing their substantial impact on project outcomes. Uzair *et al.* (2019) and Chukwuemeka (2020) both underscored the pivotal role of stakeholder engagement and participation in driving project success, indicating a direct correlation between involvement and positive outcomes. Collectively, these studies provided a robust foundation for understanding the critical link between effective stakeholder management practices and project success.

Table 4: Coefficients on Stakeholders’ management practices and performance of Girinka program

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	20.525	4.858		4.225	.000
	Stakeholders identification practices	1.343	.265	.323	5.073	.000
	Stakeholders analysis practices	.968	.225	.310	4.304	.000
	Stakeholders communication practices	.948	.228	.293	4.147	.000
	Stakeholders relationship management	.955	.304	.150	3.142	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of the Girinka program

Source: Primary data, August 2023

Therefore, the regression model to be used was as below:

$$Y = \alpha + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + \epsilon$$

Y = Project performance

X_1 is stakeholders' identification, X_2 is stakeholders' analysis, X_3 is stakeholders' communication, X_4 is stakeholders' relationship, α = constant, b_1 - b_4 = Regression Coefficient, ε = error term

In Table 4, the coefficients provide insights into the effect of Stakeholders' management practices on the Girinka program's performance. The model's constant coefficient is 20.525, signifying the predicted performance level when all predictors are zero. Stakeholders' identification practices exhibit a positive coefficient of 1.343, indicating that a one-unit increase in this variable corresponds to a 1.343-unit increase in the program's performance. Similar positive coefficients are observed for Stakeholders analysis practices (0.968) and Stakeholders communication practices (0.948). Stakeholders' relationship management shows a positive coefficient of 0.955. A p-value of 0.000 indicates that the coefficient's effect on the dependent variable is statistically significant. This indicates a high level of confidence that the observed effect of these predictors and the performance of the Girinka program are not due to random chance. These results align with the studies by Johannes *et al.* (2020), Ahmed (2018), Uzair *et al.* (2019), and Chukwuemeka (2020) consistently emphasized the importance of effective stakeholder engagement, analysis, communication, and relationship management in achieving project success. It indicates that there is significant effect of stakeholders' management practices on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.

Since the p-values are significantly below the threshold (0.05), the null hypotheses (H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} , and H_{04}) are rejected in favor of the alternative hypotheses, implying that there are indeed positive and significant effects of these stakeholders' management practices on the performance of the Girinka program in Musanze District.

5. Conclusion

This study clarifies the integral effect of stakeholders' management practices in shaping the performance of the Girinka program. The positive relationships, significant coefficients, and strong correlations underscore the importance of a holistic approach to stakeholder engagement. As organizations seek sustainable development and impactful outcomes, embracing effective stakeholders' management practices remains imperative. These findings contribute to the broader field of project management and offer valuable guidance for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers alike, serving as a foundation for informed decision-making and fostering enduring relationships between programs and their stakeholders.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendation was made:

- MINAGRI through its agency (RAB) should organize a collaborative workshop on Girinka Program that involve a diverse range of stakeholders. The goal is to collectively prioritize their interests, fostering a comprehensive understanding of needs and concerns.
- MINAGRI/RAB should organize workshops on Girinka Program aimed at equipping the committee members with essential Girinka program management skills. Emphasize adopted communication, conflict resolution, and active listening to enhance stakeholder engagement.
- Musanze District should put in place a mechanism aimed at monitoring stakeholders' interests and potential impacts. This will facilitate timely adjustments to strategies, ensuring alignment with evolving stakeholder dynamics.

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