

Remote Management Strategy on the Performance of Food Security and Livelihood Project in Lower Juba, Somalia

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to establish the effects of remote management strategy on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia. Specifically, the study sought to; Assess the effect of security management, determine the effect of skills and competence management, establish the effect of leadership management and determine the effect of process management on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia. The target population for this study comprised 6 Field middle management team, 6 Support team (Nairobi), 36 Food monitors and 110 Food distributors who are involved in food and livelihood project of ARC in Lower Juba, Somalia. 86 respondents were sampled purposively. This study used primary data. Primary data was obtained from the original sources using a semi-structured questionnaire and captured through a 5-point type Likert scale. A likert scale questionnaire was preferred as it made it possible to convert responses into quantitative format for ease of data analysis using computer-based software. The questionnaires were self-administered using the drop and pick later method. A pilot study was undertaken on 10 respondents of the sample population. The questionnaire was subjected to overall reliability analysis of internal consistency. After quantitative data was obtained through questionnaires, it was prepared in readiness for analysis by editing, handling blank responses, coding, categorizing and keyed into statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer software for analysis. The results were presented in form of charts and tables. The study found that security management, skills and competence management, leadership management and process management positively and significantly affect the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.

Key Words: *Remote Management Strategy, Performance of Food Security and Livelihood Project, Lower Juba, Somalia*

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The term 'remote management' has been widely used to describe situations in which humanitarian agencies implement programmes with limited or non-existent direct access to populations in need. For some agencies, remote management is simply the decentralization of management, a practice that might be used in situations where the agency did have access but chose to work through partners on the ground (Antonio & Daniel, 2013). Several organizations have linked the notion of remote management to the absence of international staff performing some key functions associated with assessments, programme design and/or monitoring. To other agencies, remote management implies a lack of physical presence due to political limitations or security risks. It is notable that organizations also employ diverse definitions of 'access', ranging from occasional short visits to a given area by senior staff with the constant

presence of local staff, to working only through local partners without any direct contact between the agency and the affected population (Antonio & Daniel, 2013).

In insecure and fraught environments, humanitarian agencies are increasingly resorting to various forms of remote programming and remote management in order to maintain aid delivery when the presence of international staff is no longer possible or allowed (Antonio & Daniel, 2013). These approaches generally involve the withdrawal of agency international staff, and even senior national staff, from the area of operations and their replacement by a variety of remote control, telemonitoring, distance management and/or sub-contracting arrangements with local partners (Antonio & Daniel, 2013). Remote management implies the withdrawal of senior international or national humanitarian managers from the location of the provision of assistance or other humanitarian action as an adaptation to insecurity or denied access. As such, it constitutes a deviation from ‘normal’ programming practice (Abby, Adele and Jean, 2010). It is different from decentralized programming or the capacity-building of local organizations and communities that occurs routinely in development or humanitarian situations. Rather, remote management denotes a less-than-desirable adaptation in the sense that it is understood that quality and effectiveness may suffer to what the agency deems an unacceptable level of risk. It is typically a last-resort modality, short of suspending operations (Abby *et al.*, 2010). It is usually intended to be temporary but can also be of considerable duration.

In the past two decades, humanitarian assistance has realized changes “both its composition and its presumed universality. Civil wars in Sri Lanka and Syria have highlighted the lack of consistent political solutions to situations of extreme violence and restricted humanitarian access” (Davey, Borton and Foley, 2013). As such “Providing humanitarian assistance amid conflict has always been a dangerous and difficult endeavor; however, over the last decade aid worker casualties tripled, reaching over 100 deaths per year. From 2005 onwards the largest numbers of violent attacks on humanitarian personnel have been concentrated in a small number of countries representing the most difficult and volatile operating environments. Attacks in some of these settings have also grown more lethal and sophisticated and the number of kidnappings has risen dramatically” (Egeland, 2011).

The security and human rights situation has deteriorated continuously since 1991. There are currently 3.25m million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance across Somalia, a 77% increase since January 2008 (Horst, 2008). 1.3 million People are currently displaced - 870,000 of these have been forced to flee their homes due to violence and insecurity since the start of 2007. Somalia has the highest levels of malnutrition in the world - up to 300,000 children acutely malnourished annually (Horst, 2008). The crisis is still dramatically worsening due to a combination of three main factors – extreme and worsening insecurity, deepening drought and hyperinflation causing record high food prices. The crisis is compounded by extremely limited access to those in need. Insecurity, targeted assassinations, kidnappings, and threats against international and national staff of INGOs and LNGOs have reduced the ability of agencies to operate and are causing many agencies to modify their ways of working in order to adapt to the current context. International actors are using different programming modalities, including distance management, remote partnerships and remote support, to continue their operations and assure a certain level of programme quality.

Although Somalia remains a single country in the eyes of much of the international community, in many ways it constitutes three separate programming (and management) contexts for agencies working there. The most extreme challenge for remote management is in south-central Somalia, in areas controlled either by AlShabaab or by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The modus operandi for gaining access in the late 1990s and early 2000s required

negotiation with multiple parties. Despite worsening security conditions from 2006 to 2009, national and international staff continued to have access to Al-Shabaab-controlled areas. But in the second half of 2009, Al-Shabaab banned foreign nationals from most of those areas. As of early 2011, some international agencies had national staff and offices in south-central Somalia, but no international staff. In November 2011, Al-Shabaab completely banned sixteen agencies from operating in areas under its control (Donini, & Maxwell, 2013). Agencies already had several remote management practices by 2011. The most significant was third-party monitoring visits to get an independent perspective on programmes. Data collection was mostly not tolerated by Al-Shabaab authorities in control of particular regions, and individuals found to be involved in data collection could be accused of spying or other allegations and subsequently punished (e.g., jailed or subjected to a more severe form of punishment) (Horst, 2008). Third party reporting was regular but provided limited information on programme results given the monitoring focus on inputs; it could not provide much information on issues such as protection.

As the situation worsened in 2011, a number of agencies further developed risk management procedures. These included partnership reviews; assessment of ability to maintain access and abide by donor regulations; follow-up actions on the available monitoring information; and risk management training for staff. The UN established a Risk Management Unit (RMU), which became a resource for (mainly) UN agencies in conducting risk assessments, recommending risk management solutions and doing some direct monitoring. But of course, the RMU was subject to many of the same constraints of access (Donini, & Maxwell, 2013). Due to frequent attack by Alshabaabs in Somalia, measures were devised in response to the challenge of remote management. A number of agencies set up ‘call centres’ in which staff were assigned contacting partners and field-based facilities by phone using Somalia’s well-functioning cell phone networks. Second, upgrading the staff of local partner organizations was facilitated. In some cases, INGOs seconded trained and experienced Somali staff to local partners (Horst, 2008). In some cases, funding for overheads to cover local partner staff support costs was increased. Through these measures, the timeliness and clarity of reporting improved, and there was less conflicting information both between and within reports. Even so, the very nature of the pressures to resort to remote management techniques also limited assessments or evaluations to measure the true impact of remote management (Donini, & Maxwell, 2013). In comparison to Iraq and Afghanistan, the use of remote management in Somalia used different approaches but still had the same cases of mixed results as the other two countries (Horst, 2008). A report from the Somalia NGO Consortium noted that “international actors are using different programming modalities, including distance management, remote partnerships and remote support, to continue their operations and assure a certain level of programme quality.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Attacks upon aid workers have been on the rise for much of the past decade, according to the Aid Worker Security Database. Such a trend has increasingly led international organizations, NGOs, donor agencies, private firms and other implementing agencies involved in insecure environments to develop “remote” programming models (Cordesman, 2012). Violence in Somalia makes organizations face difficulties working in specific areas which are war prone. Many humanitarian organizations face almost the same predicament because of insurgence and fights between government forces and rebels. In some parts and because the government has been very assertive and restrictive with movements of international staffs, different organizations have resorted to manage programs remotely from Juba or even go further and station support teams in neighboring countries like Kenya. This study therefore seeks to establish the effects of remote management strategy on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.

In many instances, remote management is seen as a last resort strategy and ‘an adaptation to insecurity, the practice of withdrawing international (or other at-risk staff) while transferring increased programming responsibilities to local staff or local partner organizations (Antonio & Daniel, 2013). This is the approach which food security and livelihood project has adopted in Somalia. The question however remains; does this strategy impact positively on performance of the project in meeting its goals? As Antonio and Daniel (2013) put it, remote management signifies less than desirable adaptation by an organization because to insecurity or risk. What this means is organizations are ‘forced’ by externalities to engage in model. For this reason, it was important to measure how effective remote management approach was by measuring it against the desired result or achievements by a given organization. This was what motivated the current study to investigate the effect of remote management strategy on the performance of food security and livelihood project in Lower Juba, Somalia.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to establish the effects of remote management strategy on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.

The specific objectives that guided this study were;

- i. Assess the effect of security management on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.
- ii. Determine the effect of skills and competence management on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.
- iii. Establish the effect of leadership management on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.
- iv. Determine the effect of process management on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia.

4. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

A theory is any conceptualization, used in interpretation of empirical phenomenon. According to Sapru (2008), theories can be classified according to their scope, function, structure and level. The main theory underpinning the current study is control theory while self-efficacy is the supporting theory.

4.1 Control theory

Control theory is based on cybernetics which uses the feedback loop as the fundamental building block of action. In its simplest form, the feedback loop consists of four elements: a referent standard or goal, a sensor or input function, a comparator, and an effectors or output function. Human control systems fit well with the theory since people use feedback to attain goals. When framed as a theory of behaviour, control theory has two primary elements: one cognitive and one affective. The cognitive component consists of internal goals, the processing of information about one's current state, and the comparison of that state with those goals. The active component arises from perceived discrepancies between one's desired and current states, and behaviour is initiated from one's desire to resolve those discrepancies. Complex behaviours can be explained by hierarchies of feedback loops (Klein, 1989; Latack, Kinicki, & Pmssia, 1995; Hollenbeck, 1989; Edwards, 1992). This theory is relevant to the study since it informs remote management strategy variables. Developing a remote management framework based on control theory (Le., a hamework including feedback loops) appeared attractive since control theory is becoming widely accepted as a general theoretical framework for understanding human behavior (Edwards, 1992).

4.2 Self-efficacy Theory

The theory is one of the components of Bandura's (1986) general social cognitive theory, which suggests the behavior, environment, and cognitive factors (i.e., outcome expectations and self-efficacy) of an individual are all highly inter-related. Bandura (1978) defined self-efficacy as “a judgment of one's ability to execute a particular behavior pattern. This definition was expanded by Wood and Bandura (1989) who stated that self-efficacy beliefs form a central role in the regulatory process through which an individual's motivation and performance attainments are governed. They state that how much effort people will spend on a task and how long they will persist with it is determined by the self-efficacy judgments. According to Bandura and Schunk (1981), this means that, people with strong self-efficacy beliefs exerts greater efforts to master a challenge while those with weak self-efficacy beliefs are likely to reduce their efforts or even quit.

According to the theory, there are four major sources of information used by individuals when forming self-efficacy judgments as explained by Mitchell and Gist (1995) and Bandura (1988). In order of strength, the first is performance accomplishments, which refers to personal assessment information that is based on an individual's personal mastery accomplishments (i.e., past experiences with the specific task being investigated). Previous successes raise mastery expectations, while repeated failures lower them. The second is vicarious experience, which is gained by observing others perform activities successfully. This is often referred to as modeling, and it can generate expectations in observers that they can improve their own performance by learning from what they have observed. Social persuasion is the third, and it refers to activities where people are led, through suggestion, into believing that they can cope successfully with specific tasks. Coaching and giving evaluative feedback on performance are common types of social persuasion. The final source of information is physiological and emotional states. The individual's physiological or emotional states influence self-efficacy judgments with respect to specific tasks. Emotional reactions to such tasks (e.g., anxiety) can lead to negative judgments of one's ability to complete the tasks.

This theory is relevant to this study since it is suited to studying virtual organizations or remote employees. The remote employees in such organizations typically work with minimal supervision and rely heavily on their own abilities and initiative to perform their job tasks. Information technology is the typical medium used to communicate with management since face-to-face interaction is rare or infrequent. Often the employee works in a location with few or no co-workers, so the potential for isolation can be high and the availability of co-worker advice is often low. Since remote employees enjoy considerable work autonomy, the potential impact that their own motivation and beliefs in their abilities (i.e., self-efficacy judgments) can have on their outcomes may be considerably more than for employees whose behaviors are under tighter supervision. Therefore, virtual organizations that learn how to maximize employees' self-efficacy with respect to working remotely may reap greater benefits from a virtual working environment.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study seeks to determine the effect of remote management strategy on the performance of performance of food and livelihood projects in Lower Juba, Somalia. The independent variables are security management, skills and competence management, leadership management and process improvement while the dependent variable is performance of performance of food and livelihood projects in Lower Juba, Somalia. These variables are connected by the conceptual framework.

**Independent Variables
Variable**

Dependent

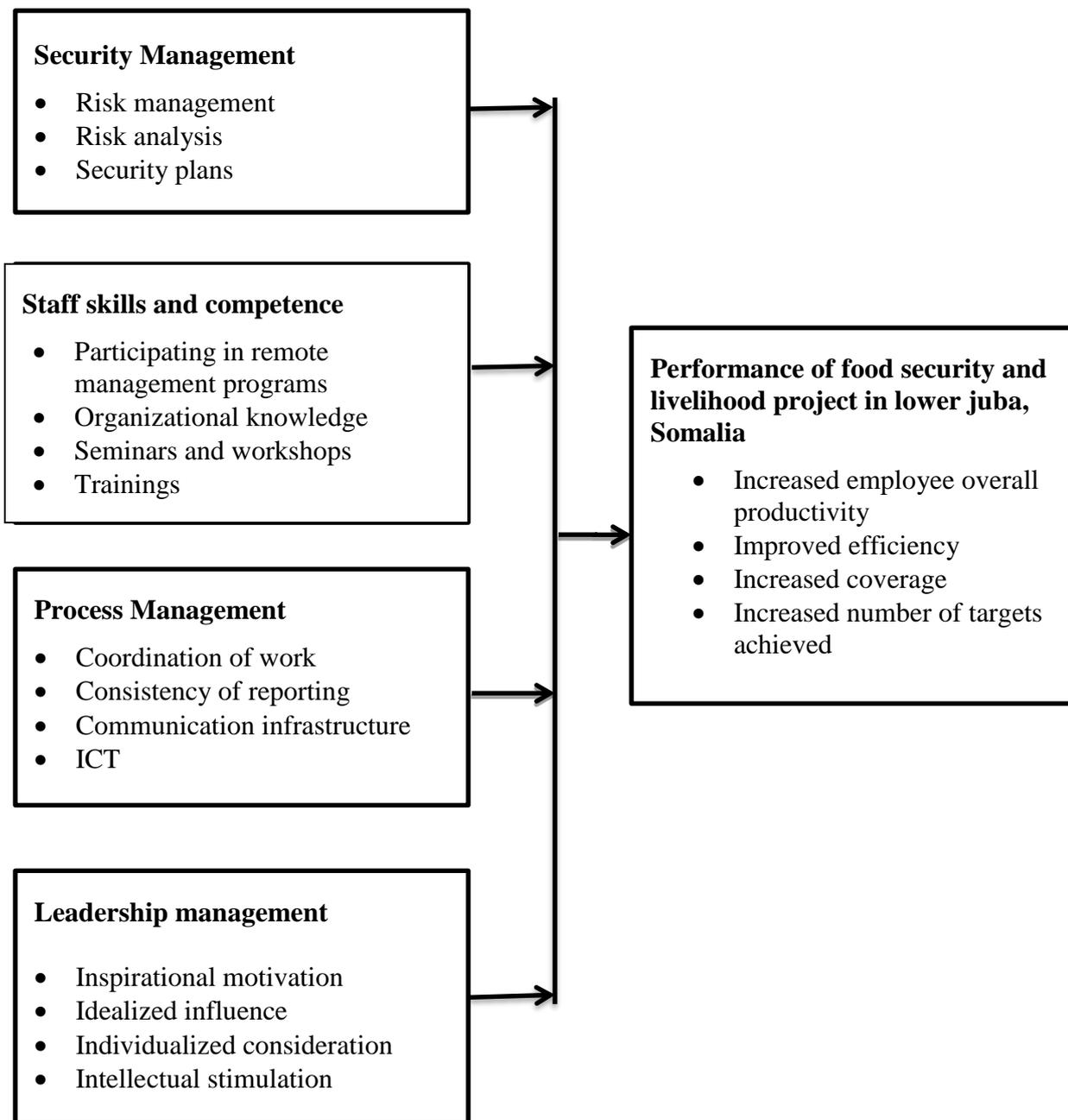


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive research design. Descriptive research is conducted to describe the present situation, what people currently believe, what people are doing at the moment and so forth. Target population is the specific population from which information is obtained. The target study population included; 6 Field middle management team, 6 Support team (Nairobi), 36 Food monitors and 110 Food distributors who are involved in food and livelihood project of ARC in Lower Juba, Somalia.

The study used census approach for field middle management team and support staff since they were few in number. Therefore, all field middle management team and support staff were used as unit of analysis. Purposive random sampling was then used to select 19 food monitors and 55 food distributors. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that purposive sampling technique allow the researcher to use cases that have the required information and convenience with respect to the objects of his or her study. The study used primary qualitative data collected through questionnaires which were self- administered with the help of research assistants. The researcher used self-introduction letters with the help of research assistants.

After data has been collected through questionnaires, it was prepared in readiness for analysis by editing, handling blank responses, coding, categorizing and keying into Statistical Package for Social Sciences computer software for analysis. A multiple linear regression model was used to test the significance of the effect of remote management strategy on the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia. The multiple linear regression model was as below $Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+ \beta_4X_4+ e$, where Y = Performance of food security and livelihood project, X₁ = Security management, X₂= Staff skills and competency, X₃ = Process management and X₄ = Leadership.

7. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Preliminary analysis was carried out to determine whether there were significant associations between security management, skills and competence management, leadership management, process management and the performance of food security and livelihood project. In this study, Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to explore relationships between the variables, specifically to assess both the direction and strength. This was crucial to assess the nature of relationships existing between the variables before carrying out further analysis. Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to examine the extent of correlation between the variables of study and to show the strength of the linear relationships between the variables in the regression, r ranges between ±1. Where r= +0.7 and above it indicates a very strong relationship; r=+0.5 to below 0.7 is a strong relationship; r=0.3-0.49 is a moderate relationship while r=0.29 and below indicates a weak relationship. Where r=0 it indicates that there is no relationship (Esther- Smith, Thorge and Love, 1999). The results of correlation analysis are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficients Matrix

		Performance	Security Management	Skills and Competence	Leadership Management	Process Management
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Security Management	Pearson Correlation	.650**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002				
Skills and Competence	Pearson Correlation	0.559	-0.013	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.91			
Leadership Management	Pearson Correlation	0.619	-0.095	-0.061	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.006	0.42	0.604		

		Performance	Security Management	Skills and Competence	Leadership Management	Process Management
Process Management	Pearson Correlation	.600**	.363**	-0.149	0.08	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009	0.001	0.205	0.45	8

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

The correlation analysis results revealed that there was a positive and a significant relationship between security management and performance of food security and livelihood project ($r=0.650$, $p=0.002$). The results indicated that there was a positive and a significant relationship between skills and competence and performance of food security and livelihood project ($r=0.559$, $p=0.005$). The results also indicated that there was a positive and a significant relationship between leadership management on the performance of food security and livelihood project ($r=0.619$, $p=0.006$). Lastly, the results indicated that there was a positive and a significant relationship between rocess management and performance of food security and livelihood project ($r=0.600$, $p=0.009$). All the correlation coefficients presented in the table 4.6.1 fall below 0.7. The correlations between the predictor variables and retirement preparedness were high ($r>0.07$), the variables are suitable for further analysis using multiple regression.

A regression model was run to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The results in Table 2 present the fitness of model used in explaining the relationship between security management, skills and competence management, leadership management, process management and the performance of food security and livelihood project. The independent variables (security management, skills and competence management, leadership management, process management) were found to be satisfactory variables in determining the performance of food security and livelihood project. This was supported by the coefficient of determination also known as the R-square of 0.732. This means that security management, skills and competence management, leadership management and process management explain 73.2% of the variations in the dependent variable which is performance of food security and livelihood project. These results further mean that the model applied to link the relationship of the variables was satisfactory.

Table 2: Model Fitness

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.856	0.732	0.731	0.373296

Predictors: (Constant), Process Management, Leadership Management, Skills and Competence Management, Security Management

Table 3 provides the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicate F statistic of 65.481 which was greater than f critical implying that the model was statistically significant. Further, the results imply that the independent variables, security management, skills and competence management, leadership management, process management and work life balance, were good predictors of performance of food security and livelihood project. This

was also supported by the reported $p=0.00$ which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.809	4	0.952	65.481	.000
Residual	10.137	69	0.147		
Total	13.946	73			

Regression of coefficients results in table 4 shows that security management positively and significantly influence performance of food security and livelihood project ($\beta=0.148$, $p=0.011$). The table indicates that Skills and competence management positively and significantly influence performance of food security and livelihood project ($\beta=0.160$, $p=0.040$). It was also established that leadership management positively and significantly influences performance of food security and livelihood project ($\beta=0.137$, $p=0.008$). The table further indicates that process management positively and significantly influence performance of food security and livelihood project ($\beta=0.115$, $p=0.027$).

Table 4: Beta Coefficient

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.798	0.47		3.829	0.000
Security Management	0.148	0.057	0.288	2.608	0.011
Skills and Competence Management	0.160	0.077	0.218	2.092	0.040
Leadership Management	0.137	0.05	0.282	2.725	0.008
Process Management	0.115	0.051	0.252	2.258	0.027

Dependent Variable: Performance of food security and livelihood project

8. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings above the study concluded that security management, skills and competence management, leadership management and process management positively and significantly affect the performance of food security and livelihood project in lower juba, Somalia. The study concludes security management determines the risks facing the operation and therefore developing effective security plans that will mitigate these risks and then implementing the plans in the best possible way. Minimum security requirements have to be established. These MSR outlines the key requirements that must be included in security plans, while reinforcing the implementation of the layered security framework that has been adopted.

In addition, the study concluded that firms need to improve continuous learning in their organizations so as to improve the skills, attitude and behavior of employee towards the discharge of their individual tasks to be able to attain high performance potentiality. Lastly, the study concludes that process management have relationship with the support quality management practices and reporting and analysis of quality data. It indicates the role of process management is as a mediating factor in the relation of the supporting the practices and reporting and analysis of quality data to operational performance.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that before the project is started, Good safety and security management is required for clarity about authority and responsibility, lines of communication and decision-making. Authority and responsibility BE vested in line managers, and that safety and security are managed close to the ground. At field level, the study recommends that safety- and security-related tasks be delegated to other staff, notably logisticians, field security officers and/or administrators. From the findings, this study recommends that skilled and competent staff should be recruited in undertaking the food security and livelihood project. Staff with great passion for work, and who are visionary be recruited to be in charge of wind power projects. This study recommends that good leadership is need to achieve specific goals through team building by creating, and maintaining a sense of vision, culture and interpersonal relationships. The leadership should include valuing, visioning, coaching, empowering, team building, promoting quality and listening to the grievances raised by the team members. There should be an increasing interest in various leadership models such as transactional, transformational, servant and situational leadership.

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