# INFLUENCE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION PRACTICES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR ON PROMOTING GOVERNANCE IN  EXECUTIVE ARM OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF MANDERA

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## ABSTRACT

*There is a lack of focus on the cultural, social, and economic factors that may influence the effectiveness of M&E systems in these contexts. The main objective of the study was to analyze influence of effective monitoring and evaluation practices in the public sector on promoting governance in Mandera County. A descriptive research design was used.  This study targeted 150 respondents which made up the target population. A stratified random sampling method was used. The sample size was 108 respondents. The analysis of the data used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The SPSS software, version 26 was used to evaluate quantitative data using descriptive statistics. The study findings were significance to County Government Officials, County Government Employees, Monitoring and Evaluation Practitioners, Citizens and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Development Partners and Donor Agencies, Researchers and Academics. The study found out that, respondents tend to agree to some extent that continuous learning and improvement led to regular analysis and reporting, but the response remains somewhat neutral. The mean score of 1.7980 suggested that, on average, respondents agreed more with the statement that collecting and analysing data had led to good governance. Respondents, on average, agreed more with the statement that stakeholders' involvement had led to collaborative partnerships, as indicated by a mean score of 2.4444. The study concluded that rrespondents appeared to be somewhat neutral or leaning towards agreement regarding regular analysis, feedback loops, and regular feedback resulting from continuous learning and improvement efforts. Respondents generally agreed that collecting and analysing data had had positive impacts on decision making, particularly in areas related to clarity of objectives, time management, and risk management. Respondents generally agreed that stakeholder involvement had positive impacts on collaborative partnerships, regular communication, empowerment, and an improved feedback mechanism. Organizations should continue to emphasize and prioritize good governance practices, as these are perceived positively by respondents. The study recommended that given that respondents view continuous improvement as positively impacting capacity and flexibility, organizations should continue to invest in and emphasize these aspects of their continuous improvement initiatives, as they were seen as strengths. The neutral response regarding improved data quality suggests that organizations should focus on quality control and assurance measures in their data collection and analysis processes to ensure that data integrity and reliability are maintained. Organizations should recognize and leverage positive aspects of stakeholder involvement, particularly in fostering collaborative partnerships, communication, empowerment, and feedback mechanisms.*

***Key Words:*** *Learning and Improvement, Data Collecting and Analysis, Stakeholders Involvement*

**INTRODUCTION**

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is an essential component of public sector management in the United States. Public institutions in the US use M&E to measure and track progress, identify areas for improvement, and evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and policies (Ramanathan and Prakash, 2020). The US federal government has a number of M&E initiatives, such as the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) of the Office of Management and Budget, which assesses the efficacy of federal programs, and the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), which necessitates the creation of strategic plans and annual performance reports by federal agencies. State governments in the US also use M&E to track progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and policies. For example, California's Department of Finance has an M&E program that includes tracking key performance indicators and conducting program evaluations (Gorgonio and Patulot, 2021).

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are important aspects of good governance in United Kingdom public sector. M&E involves the systematic gathering and analyzing data to assess the progress and effectiveness of policies and programs, with the aim of improving their impact and achieving better outcomes for citizens (Krafchik, 2015). In the UK, M&E is typically carried out by public agencies at national, the regional, and the local levels. These agencies use a varieties of tools and methods to collect data, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and performance indicators. The UK government also places a strong emphasis on evidence-based policy-making, which requires robust M&E systems. This approach involves using data and research to inform policy decisions, rather than relying on ideology or political expediency (Roberts, 2016).

Effective governance also requires strong leadership and management, as well as a commitment to continuous improvement. Government agencies in South Korea must be willing to learn from their successes and failures, and use that knowledge to make data-driven decisions and improve their policies and programs over time (Bhattacharjee and Chakraborty, 2017). The South Korean governments has placed a strong emphasis on using technology in M&E, including the development of online platforms and databases to collect and analyze data. This has helped to improve the efficiency and accuracy of M&E processes (Araral, 2018). In addition, the South Korean governments implementation of various measures in promotion of accountability and transparency, includes establishing Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission and a Whistleblower Protection Act ( Bhattacharjee and Chakraborty, 2017).

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and good governance are important parts of the public sector in South Africa. M&E involves the systematic collection and analysis of data to assess the progress and effectiveness of policies and programs, with the aim of improving their impact and achieving better outcomes for citizens. Good governance in South Africa requires transparency and accountability, which can be facilitated through M&E. By making data and information available to the public, citizens can better understand how their tax dollars are being spent and hold government officials accountable for their actions(OECD, 2015). The South African government has implemented a range of measures to promote transparency and accountability, including the establishment of the Public Finance Management Act and the National Development Plan. However, challenges remain, particularly around the effective implementation of these policies and the collection and use of data for M&E purposes. Government of South Africa has also placed a strong emphasis on the use of technology in M&E, including the development of online platforms and databases to collecting and analyzing data. This has helped to improve the efficiency and accuracy of M&E processes (OECD, 2015).

Effective governance also requires strong leadership and management, as well as a commitment to continuous improvement. Government agencies in Tanzania must be willing to learn from their successes and failures, and use that knowledge to make data-driven decisions and improve their policies and programs over time (UNDP, 2020). The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act are only two of the numerous steps the Tanzanian government has put in place to encourage accountability and

openness. However, challenges remain, particularly around the effective implementation of these policies and the collection and use of data for M&E purposes. The Tanzanian government has also placed a strong emphasis on the use of technology in M&E, including the development of online platforms and databases to collecting and analyzing data. This has helped to improve the efficiency and accuracy of M&E processes (World Bank, 2017).

Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of public sector programs and policies is crucial in promoting good governance in Mandera County, Kenya. Mandera County, which is located in the northeast region of Kenya, faces several challenges such as insecurity, limited access to water and sanitation, and high poverty levels. Therefore, it is essential that public sector programs and policies are properly monitored and evaluated to ensure that they are addressing these challenges and promoting the well-being of the citizens (UNDP, 2020.). One of the key roles of effective M&E in promoting good governance in Mandera County is to ensure transparency and accountability. By monitoring and evaluating public sector programs and policies, it becomes easier to identify areas where resources are being misused or mismanaged, and to take corrective action. This helps to build trust between the government and citizens, as it shows that the government is committed to using public resources effectively and efficiently (World Bank, 2017).

**Statement of the Problem**

A study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) examined the role of M&E in public institutions reforms in the Asia-Pacific region. The study found that M&E systems effectiveness were crucial for improving the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of public institutions. The article by Ayee and Yin (2014) examines the monitoring and evaluating public sector reforms in Ghana. The authors argue that despite the efforts of the Ghanaian government to implement public sector reforms, there are still significant problems in monitoring and evaluating the impact of these reforms. The authors identified limited capacity, Weak coordination, Lack of political commitment and Limited data availability as the main problems. The UNDP study focuses on the Asia-Pacific region and does not specifically address the problems faced in African countries like Ghana. The Ayee and Yin (2014) study highlights the problems of M&E in Ghana, but does not provide recommendations for addressing these challenges. The Kusek and Rist guide provides practical advice on design and implement a results-based M&E system, but does not focus on the specific problems faced in developing countries. Although the studies highlight the importance of effective M&E systems in achieving good governance and development outcomes, they do not provide a comprehensive analysis of the specific influence of M&E in developing countries. Specifically, there is a lack of focus on the social, cultural and economic factors that may influence the effectiveness of M&E systems in these contexts. It is in this context that we carried out the current study on the influence of effective monitoring and evaluation practices in the public sector on promoting governance in Mandera County, Kenya.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of monitoring and evaluation practices in the public sector on promoting governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya. The following specific research objectives guided this study: -

- To establish the influence of continuous improvement as a M&E practice on promoting good governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya.
- To establish the influence of decision making as a M&E practice on promoting good governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya.
- To evaluate the influence of stakeholders engagement as a M&E practice on promoting good governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya.

The study was guided by the following research questions:-

- How does continuous improvement as a M&E practice influence good governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya?
- To what extent does decision making as a M&E practice influence good governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya?
- What is the influence of stakeholders engagement as a M&E practice on good governance in the county government of Mandera, Kenya?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Empirical Literature Review

Good governance encompasses effectivenesss and a responsible management of the public or the private institutions, organizations, or systems. Transparency, accountability, involvement, the rule of law, efficiency, and responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of the population it serves are its distinguishing characteristics. Transparency implies openness, accessibility, and availability of information (Berhane and Iye, 2021). It involves sharing information with the public, ensuring clarity in decision-making processes, and making information easily accessible to stakeholders. Accountability holds individuals and institutions responsible for their actions, decisions, and use of resources. It involves mechanisms for oversight, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure that public officials and organizations are answerable for their performance (Belghitar and Boubakri, 2021).

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is widely recognized as an essential tool for promoting good governance and improving development outcomes. However, in many low- and middle-income countries, there are significant challenges in implementing effective M&E systems at the local level. This study explores the roles of M&E in local governance in Ghana, drawing on qualitative data from interviews with key stakeholders involved in M&E at the local level (Alidu, Awumbila and Dake, 2021). The study finds that while there are significant challenges in implementing M&E in the Ghanaian context, there is significant potential for M&E to support local governance and improve development outcomes. The study suggests that there is a need for greater investment in capacity building and institutional support for M&E at the local level, as well as greater engagement with local communities in the M&E process. The study also highlights the importance of context-specific approaches to M&E, which take into account the unique challenges and opportunities of the local setting. Overall, the study provides insights into the potential for M&E to support good governance and development outcomes at the local level in Ghana and other low- and middle-income countries (Alidu et al., 2021).

Continuous learning and improvement are essential components of effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices. M&E is a process which is systematic of collecting, analyzing, and using data to assessing progress, performances, and outcomes of programs, policies, or interventions. It helps organizations and stakeholders understand what works, what doesn't, and why, in order to make informed decisions and improve their actions (Jaggers and Makarin, 2019). By embracing a culture of continuous learning and improvement in M&E, organizations can enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. It allows them to adapt to changing circumstances, learn from successes and challenges, and make evidence-based decisions to improve program outcomes and overall performance (Shen and Chen, 2019).

Continuous learning and improvement are crucial for promoting good governance. They enable governments, institutions, and stakeholders to enhance their practices, policies, and systems to achieve greater transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and responsiveness (Araral, 2018). Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms allows for the systematic assessment of governance initiatives and interventions. Continuous learning necessitates active participation from stakeholders, such as members of the private sector, community organizations, and individuals. Establishing knowledge-sharing platforms and networks dedicated to good governance can facilitate the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches (Jaggers and Makarin, 2019).

Decision making plays a critical role in the context of monitoring and evaluation (M&E). M&E provides valuable information and insights that inform decision-making processes at various levels, from program management to policy formulation. Decision making and M&E are closely intertwined (Sarker and Xiao, 2021). M&E provides data, evidence, and insights that support informed decision making at various levels, from programmatic adjustments to policy formulation and resource allocation. Effective decision making based on M&E findings leads to improved program and policy outcomes, increased accountability, and continuous learning and improvement (Rahim, 2020).

Promoting good governance requires effective decision making at various levels, including government institutions, organizations, and stakeholders. Decision making should be based on reliable evidence and data (Rahim, 2020). Good governance emphasizes the importance of involving stakeholders and promoting participatory decision-making processes. Making decision in promotion of the good governance should be transparent and accountable. Ethical considerations are paramount in promoting good governance. Decision making should consider the long-term implications and sustainability of governance initiatives (Sarker and Xiao, 2021).

Stakeholder involvement is critical in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes. Engaging stakeholders throughout the M&E cycle ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, enhances the credibility and relevance of findings, and promotes ownership and utilization of results ( Herrera and Postero, 2019). By actively involving stakeholders in M&E processes, organizations and decision makers can ensure that evaluation efforts are inclusive, contextually relevant, and contribute to meaningful learning and improvement. Stakeholder involvement enhances the credibility of evaluations, supports evidence-based decision making, and strengthens the overall impact and sustainability of programs and policies (Lundgren and McMakin, 2018).

Citizens are the primary stakeholders in county governance. Their participation includes voting in elections, attending public meetings, providing feedback on policies and services, and holding government officials accountable. Stakeholder involvement is crucial for promoting good governance as it fosters inclusivity, transparency, accountability, and ownership (Lundgren and McMakin, 2018).Engaging citizens as stakeholders in governance processes is fundamental. Effective stakeholder involvement in promoting good governance requires creating platforms for dialogue, providing opportunities for meaningful participation, and building trust and collaboration (Ramkumar, 2019). By involving stakeholders at different levels, promoting inclusivity, and recognizing their diverse interests and expertise, governance processes can be more responsive, accountable, and effective in meeting the needs of the population (Lundgren and McMakin, 2018).

**Theoretical Review**

**Principal-agent theory**

The idea was created and improved through time by a number of academics, although it is typically credited to the 1970s and 1980s work of economist Michael C. Jensen and his associates. It is common to point to Jensen's 1976 article "Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs, and Ownership Structure" as a significant early development of the theory. Relationships between the principals and the agents is examined by the principle-agent theory, a concept in economics and management. The agent is the person or entity hired by the principle to carry out a work on their behalf. The principal is the person or organization that engages the agent. In order to align interests and minimize conflicts, the theory aims to explain how to create the best contracts between principals and agents (Ross, 1973). The divergences of the interests between the principals and the agents is one of the fundamental tenets of principal-agent theory. While the agent may have motivations or interests of their own that may be at odds with the principal's, the principal wants the agent to operate in their best interest. The idea seeks to develop strategies to bring these interests together so that the agent is motivated to work in the principal's best interest (Tirole, 1986).

There are several solutions proposed in principal-agent theory to to match preferences of the principal and agent. One solution is to offer the agent incentives that are tied to the achievement of the principal's goals. This is typically done through performance-based compensation, where the agent is rewarded for achieving specific targets. Another solution is to monitor the agent's behavior and performance closely, which can reduce the risk of the agent acting against the interests of the principal (Ross, 1973). Principal-agent theory can be applied to monitoring and evaluation of government projects to ensure that public funds are used efficiently and effectively. Including corporate governance, public administration, financial markets, and healthcare. It helps in understanding and addressing issues related to delegated decision-making and accountability. In this context, the principal is the government, and the agent is the organization or individual responsible for implementing the project. Applying principal-agent theory to monitoring and evaluation of government projects can help improve accountability, transparency, and efficiency, ultimately leading to better use of public resources (Tirole, 1986).

**Social Accountability Theory**
Some key figures who have contributed to the development of social accountability theory and its practical application include John Gaventa, Robert Chambers, Jonathan Fox, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, among many others. Social accountability theory is a concept in governance and public administration that focuses on the roles of citizens and organizations from civil society in holding governments and public officials accountable for their actions and decisions. It emphasizes the importance of citizens' participation in the governance process, and the need for transparency, openness, and responsiveness on the part of the government (Fox, 2007). The theory posits that social accountability is a critical component of good governance, as it helps to ensuring that public officials are acting in my best judgment of the public, and that resources are being used effectively and efficiently. Social accountability is achieved through various means, such as citizen participation, media monitoring, public hearings, and public inquiries (Gaventa and McGee, 2013).

One of the key assumptions of social accountability theory is that citizens have the right to participate in governance and hold public officials accountable for their actions. This means that citizens must have access to information about government policies and decisions, and the means to express their opinions and concerns (Chambers, 1997). It also means that governments must be responsive to citizens' needs and concerns, and be willing to engage in dialogue and consultation. Social accountability theory recognizes the importance of organizations from civil society, such as non-governmentalagencies, neighborhood associations, and media organizations, in promoting transparency and accountability in governance. These organizations play a critical role in mobilizing citizens, providing information and education, and advocating for changes in government policies and practices (Fox, 2007).

Social accountability theory can be applied to the monitoring and evaluation of government projects by involving citizens and civil society organizations in the process. This approach can help guaranty the effective and efficient use of public resources, and that the demands and concerns of citizens are taken into consideration. One way to apply social accountability theory to the monitoring and evaluation of government projects is through citizen monitoring (Fox, 2007). Citizen monitoring involves engaging citizens in the process of monitoring and evaluating government projects. This can be done through various means, such as community meetings, public hearings, surveys, and citizen scorecards (Spivak, 1988). By involving citizens in monitoring and evaluation, the government can ensure that there is transparency and accountability in the process, and that the needs and concerns of citizens are being addressed (Spivak, 1988).

**Conceptual Framework**
A conceptual framework provides a basis for developing research questions, hypotheses, and methodology. It helps to identify the key variables and relationships between those variables that will be examined in the study. It also provides a structure for organizing and analyzing data, and for interpreting the results of the study.

**Independent Variables**                                                   **Dependent Variable**
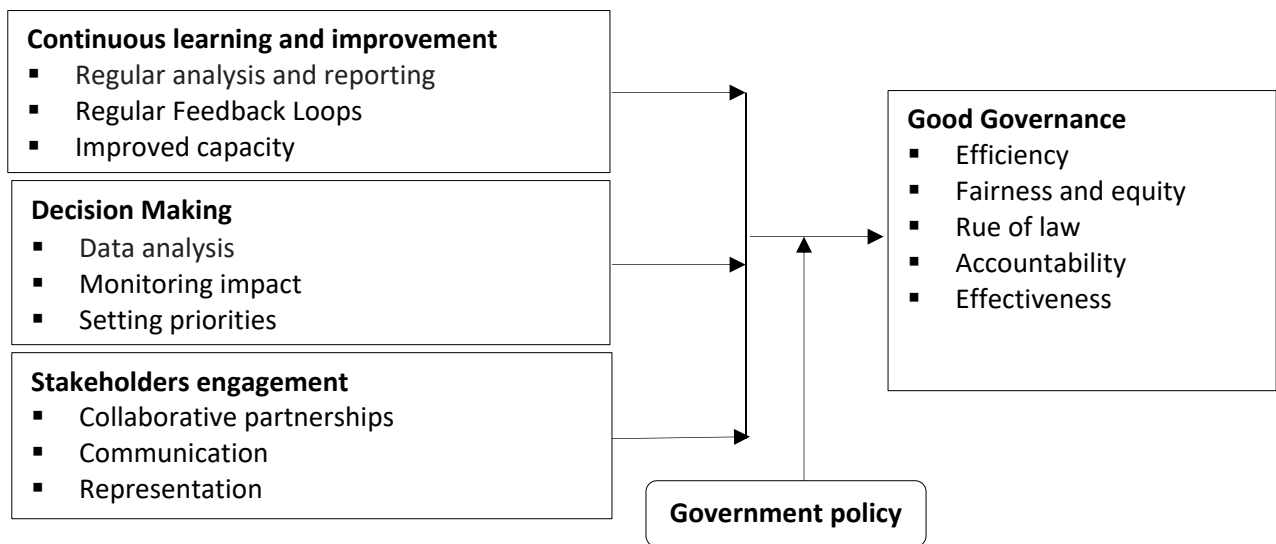
Source: Auth or (2023)

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Continuous improvement are critical components of promoting good governance, as they help to ensure that government policies and actions are responsive to changing needs, priorities, and circumstances. Continuous learning and improvement require robust data collection and analysis, including both quantitative and qualitative data. Evaluation and feedback mechanisms are essential for learning and adaptation, as they help to assess the effectiveness and impact of government policies and actions, and to identify areas for improvement. Continuous learning and improvement require a commitment to continuous improvement, with a willingness to experiment, innovate, and take calculated risks.

Effective decision-making is a key aspect of promoting good governance, as it helps to ensure that government policies and actions are evidence-based, responsive to citizens' needs and preferences, and aligned with the public interest. Decision-making processes should be inclusive and participatory, with a range of stakeholders and perspectives represented. Decision-making processes should be transparent and accountable, with clear criteria and procedures for decision-making, and opportunities for public input and scrutiny. Decision-making should be based on the best available evidence, including data, research, and expert analysis. Decision-making should take a holistic and systems-based approach, recognizing the interconnections and interdependencies of different factors and actors.

Stakeholders engagement are essential components of promoting good governance, as they help to ensure that citizens have a voice in decision-making processes, and that government policies and actions are responsive to their needs and priorities. Stakeholders involvement require access to information, including information about government policies, programs, and decision-making processes. Stakeholders involvement require representation and diversity, a variety of stakeholders and perspectives represented in decision-making processes. Stakeholders involvement require empowerment and capacity-building, with mechanisms for citizens to participate effectively in decision-making processes.

Government policies are the principles, guidelines, and actions adopted by governments to address specific issues, achieve societal goals, and shape public programs and services. Policies are designed to tackle various challenges, such as economic development, social welfare, environmental sustainability, and more. Monitoring and evaluation provide the necessary feedback and evidence to inform the formulation, implementation, and

evaluation of government policies. Good governance principles underpin the effective use of M&E data, ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in policy processes. Together, these elements support the development and implementation of policies that address societal needs and promote positive outcomes.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative techniques. The researcher used a descriptive design since it ensured the collection and descriptive analysis of data from the study population. The study's audience was employees of Mandera County government. According to the Mandera County Government HR Department (2021), at the time of this study, there were 150 staff members in the departments of interest. The study used Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling table to attain a sample size of 108.

Questionnaires were distributed to the county of Mandera's agencies in order to gather data. The interviewee was permitted to choose how they felt about each of the five questions on a Liker scale with the alternatives of 1. Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, and 5. The survey's open-ended questions provided participants the flexibility to react anyway they see suitable. The researcher gave eight surveys to one Wajir County Government entity. These individuals in the pilot study was counted in the final results. The final questionnaires were enhanced utilizing the issues identified in earlier drafts before being used in the main study. The researcher used content validity to ensure instrument validity by having the supervisor confirm the applicability of the surveys. The researcher carried out a pilot study to assist identify questionnaire inaccuracies.

To guarantee that the data was accurate and full, editing was done to reduce biases, boost precision, and establish uniformity. Following that, data was examined using descriptive statistics, which was reported as mean, correlation, standard deviation, and percentages, using SPSS software version 26.0 for regression analysis. Analyzing data that had already been recorded entails summarizing the information, putting it through the proper statistical analysis, and making conclusions. Following that, the analysis was presented graphically utilizing graphs, frequency tables, and charts. The study used a multiple regression model to examine how the various variables relate to one another. Good governance was the dependent variable in the model, whereas continuous improvement, decision making and stakeholders engagement was treated as independent factors. By calculating the mean percentage score based on the answers obtained from the Likert scale questions, the responses on good governance were evaluated.

The relationship equation was as shown below-

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Whereby:

$Y$ = Good Governance

$\beta_0$ is the Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = coefficients of Monitoring and Evaluation

$X_1, X_2, X3, X4$ = Independent Variables explaining variance $y$

$X_1$ = Continuous Improvement

$X_2$ = Decision Making

$X_3$ = Stakeholders Engagement

$\varepsilon$ = Error term

The researcher devoted a large amount of time to reading and understanding about the historical context of the secondary material to ascertain the reason for the collection or creation of the content by rigorous reading and vetting. Performing secondary data analysis was required to identifying the data that was relevant to the project in interpreting the secondary data, comparing the secondary data in order to determine what happened and why it happened.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Descriptve Statistics

**Table 1: Continuous Improvement**

|  | N | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Continuous learning and improvement has led to regular analysis and re-porting | 99 | 2.3333 | .60609 |
| Continuous learning and improvement has led to regular feedback loops | 99 | 2.4949 | .54161 |
| Continuous learning and improvement has led to improved capacity | 99 | 2.7172 | .53529 |
| Continuous learning and improvement has led to regular feedback | 99 | 3.0000 | .47380 |
| Continuous learning and improvement has led to flexibility | 99 | 3.2323 | .51167 |

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 1 presents the results of a survey or assessment related to Continuous Improvement. The data includes the number of respondents (N), the mean score, and the standard deviation for each statement. The mean score for this statement is 2.3333, which falls between "neutral" (3) and "agree" (2) on the Likert scale. This suggests that, on average, respondents are slightly leaning towards agreement that continuous learning and improvement have led to regular analysis and reporting, but the response is somewhat neutral. The mean score for this statement is 2.4949, again indicating a response that is slightly leaning towards agreement. Respondents are more inclined to agree that continuous learning and improvement has led to regular feedback loops, but the response remains somewhat neutral. The study findings agrees with Shen and Chen (2019) who argued that by embracing a culture of continuous learning and improvement in M&E, organizations can enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. It allows them to adapt to changing circumstances, learn from successes and challenges, and make evidence-based decisions to improve program outcomes and overall performance.

The mean score of 2.7172 indicates that respondents are more in agreement that continuous learning and improvement has led to improved capacity. This suggests that respondents believe this aspect of continuous improvement has had a more positive impact. The mean score of 3.0000 falls exactly at "neutral" on the Likert scale, indicating that respondents are generally neutral when it comes to whether continuous learning and improvement have led to regular feedback. The study findings agrees with Shen and Chen (2019) who argued that by embracing a culture of continuous learning and improvement in M&E, organizations can enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. With a mean score of 3.2323, respondents are leaning towards agreement that continuous learning and improvement have led to flexibility. This suggests that, on average, respondents see a positive impact in terms of increased flexibility due to continuous improvement efforts. The study findings agrees with Shen and Chen (2019) who argued that by embracing a culture of continuous learning and improvement in M&E, organizations can enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact.

**Table 2: Decision Making**

|  | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Collecting and analyzing data has led to good governance | 99 | 1.7980 | .40355 |
| Collecting and analyzing data has led to clarity of objectives | 99 | 1.9899 | .10050 |
| Collecting and analyzing data has led to time management | 99 | 2.6061 | .49111 |
| Collecting and analyzing data has led to risk management | 99 | 2.9899 | .10050 |
| Collecting and analyzing data has led to improved data quality | 99 | 3.0000 | .00000 |
| Collecting and analyzing data has led to improved data use | 99 | 3.1212 | .32803 |

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 2 provided data on respondents' perceptions of how collecting and analyzing data has influenced decision making. The data includes the number of respondents (N), the mean score, and the standard deviation for each statement, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The mean score of 1.7980 suggests that respondents, on average,

agree more with the statement that collecting and analyzing data has led to good governance. However, the mean is closer to "neutral" (3) than "agree" (2), indicating a somewhat mixed perception. With a mean score of 1.9899, respondents are leaning towards agreement that collecting and analyzing data has led to clarity of objectives. The standard deviation is quite low, indicating a relatively consistent response.

The mean score of 2.6061 suggests that, on average, respondents agree that collecting and analyzing data has led to improved time management. The standard deviation indicates some variability in responses but not to a significant degree. Respondents, on average, are leaning towards agreement (mean score of 2.9899) that collecting and analyzing data has led to better risk management. The low standard deviation suggests a relatively consistent response. The mean score of 3.0000 indicates that respondents are neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, regarding whether collecting and analyzing data has led to improved data quality. The study findings agrees with Rahim (2020) who argued that M&E provides data, evidence, and insights that support informed decision making at various levels, from programmatic adjustments to policy formulation and resource allocation. Effective decision making based on M&E findings leads to improved program and policy outcomes, increased accountability, and continuous learning and improvements. The extremely low standard deviation suggests a unanimous response. Respondents, on average, are slightly leaning towards agreement (mean score of 3.1212) that collecting and analyzing data has led to improved data use. The standard deviation indicates some variability in responses but not to a significant extent. The study findings agrees with Rahim (2020) who argued that M&E provides data, evidence, and insights that support informed decision making at various levels, from programmatic adjustments to policy formulation and resource allocation. Effective decision making based on M&E findings leads to improved program and policy outcomes, increased accountability, and continuous learning and improvements.

**Table 3: Stakeholders Engagement**

|  | N | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stakeholders involvement has led to good governance | 99 | 2.2121 | .70382 |
| Stakeholders involvement has led to collaborative partnerships | 99 | 2.4444 | .59285 |
| There is regular communication with stakeholders | 99 | 2.7273 | .56817 |
| There is good representation of stakeholders | 99 | 3.0000 | .45175 |
| Stakeholders involvement has led to empowerment | 99 | 3.4545 | .53970 |
| Stakeholders involvement has led to improved feedback mechanism | 99 | 3.5758 | .53626 |

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 3 presents data on respondents' perceptions regarding stakeholders' engagement and its impact on various aspects. The data includes the number of respondents (N), the mean score, and the standard deviation for each statement, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The mean score of 2.2121 suggests that, on average, respondents are leaning towards agreement that stakeholders' involvement has led to good governance. However, the relatively high standard deviation indicates significant variability in responses, suggesting that opinions on this statement vary widely among respondents.

Respondents, on average, agree more with the statement that stakeholders' involvement has led to collaborative partnerships (mean score of 2.4444). The standard deviation suggests some variability in responses but not to a significant degree. With a mean score of 2.7273, respondents, on average, agree more that there is regular communication with stakeholders. The standard deviation indicates some variability in responses but not to a significant extent. The mean score of 3.0000 suggests that respondents are neutral regarding whether there is good representation of stakeholders. The low standard deviation indicates a consistent response. The study findings agrees with Ramkumar (2019) who argued that stakeholder involvement is crucial for promoting good governance as it fosters inclusivity, transparency, accountability, and ownership. Engaging citizens as stakeholders in

governance processes is fundamental. Effective stakeholder involvement in promoting good governance requires creating platforms for dialogue, providing opportunities for meaningful participation, and building trust and collaboration.

Respondents, on average, agree more that stakeholders' involvement has led to empowerment (mean score of 3.4545). The standard deviation suggests some variability in responses but not to a significant degree. With a mean score of 3.5758, respondents are leaning towards agreement that stakeholders' involvement has led to an improved feedback mechanism. The standard deviation indicates some variability in responses but not to a significant extent. Th study findings agrees with Herrera and Postero (2019) who argued that stakeholder involvement is critical in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes. Engaging stakeholders throughout the M&E cycle ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, enhances the credibility and relevance of findings, and promotes ownership and utilization of results (By actively involving stakeholders in M&E processes, organizations and decision makers can ensure that evaluation efforts are inclusive, contextually relevant, and contribute to meaningful learning and improvement.

**Table 4: Good Governance**

|  | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Good governance has led to improved efficiency | 99 | 3.5657 | .49819 |
| Good governance has led to fairness and equity | 99 | 3.8586 | .49508 |
| Good governance has led to observing the rule of law | 99 | 4.0909 | .32233 |
| Good governance has led to improved accountability | 99 | 4.4444 | .49943 |
| Good governance has led to improved effectiveness | 99 | 4.6970 | .46191 |

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 4 provides data on respondents' perceptions regarding good governance and its impact on various aspects. The data includes the number of respondents (N), the mean score, and the standard deviation for each statement, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The mean score of 3.5657 indicates that, on average, respondents agree that good governance has led to improved efficiency. The standard deviation suggests some variability in responses, but not to a significant degree. Respondents, on average, strongly agree (mean score of 3.8586) that good governance has led to fairness and equity. The standard deviation suggests some variability in responses, but the overall agreement is high. The study findings agrees with Berhane and Iye, (2021) who argued that good governance encompasses effectiveness and a responsible management of the public or the private institutions, organizations, or systems. Transparency, accountability, involvement, the rule of law, efficiency, and responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of the population it serves are its distinguishing characteristics. Transparency implies openness, accessibility, and availability of information.

With a mean score of 4.0909, respondents strongly agree that good governance has led to observing the rule of law. The low standard deviation indicates a consistent response with a high level of agreement. The mean score of 4.4444 suggests that respondents strongly agree that good governance has led to improved accountability. The standard deviation indicates some variability in responses, but the overall agreement is high. Respondents strongly agree (mean score of 4.6970) that good governance has led to improved effectiveness. The standard deviation suggests some variability in responses, but the overall agreement is high. The study findings agrees with Berhane and Iye, (2021) who argued that good governance encompasses effectiveness and a responsible management of the public or the private institutions, organizations, or systems. Transparency, accountability, involvement, the rule of law, efficiency, and responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of the population it serves are its distinguishing characteristics. Transparency implies openness, accessibility, and availability of information.

**Correlation Analysis**

**Table 5: Correlation Analysis**

| | | CONTINU-OUS IM-PROVEMENT | DECI-SION MAKING | STAKEHOLD-ERS ENGAGE-MENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CONTINUOUS IM-PROVEMENT | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .114 | .270[**] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .263 | .007 |
| | N | 99 | 99 | 99 |
| DECISION MAKING | Pearson Correlation | .114 | 1 | .092 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .263 | | .365 |
| | N | 99 | 99 | 99 |
| STAKEHOLDERS EN-GAGEMENT | Pearson Correlation | .270[**] | .092 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .007 | .365 | |
| | N | 99 | 99 | 99 |
| GOOD GOVERN-ANCE | Pearson Correlation | .080 | .024 | .219[*] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .434 | .813 | .029 |
| | N | 99 | 99 | 99 |

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 5 presents a correlation analysis between three variables: Continuous Improvement, Decision Making, Stakeholders Engagement, and Good Governance. The table provides Pearson correlation coefficients along with their significance levels. The p-values associated with each correlation coefficient determine whether the observed correlations are statistically significant or not.

A common threshold for statistical significance is 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$), meaning that if the p-value is less than 0.05, the correlation is considered statistically significant.

Good Governance and Continuous Improvement (Pearson Correlation = 0.080): The p-value is 0.434, which is greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the correlation between Good Governance and Continuous Improvement is not statistically significant. Good Governance and Decision Making (Pearson Correlation = 0.024): The p-value is 0.813, which is much greater than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the correlation between Good Governance and Decision Making is not statistically significant. Good Governance and Stakeholders Engagement (Pearson Correlation = 0.219): The p-value is 0.029, which is less than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the correlation between Good Governance and Stakeholders Engagement is statistically significant.

Based on the p-values and the threshold of $\alpha = 0.05$ for statistical significance: There is a statistically significant positive correlation between Continuous Improvement and Stakeholders Engagement. Improvements in one tend to coincide with improvements in the other. The other correlations (Continuous Improvement with Decision Making, Decision Making with Stakeholders Engagement, Good Governance with Continuous Improvement, and Good Governance with Decision Making) are not statistically significant. This means that there is no strong evidence of linear relationships between these pairs of variables in the sample.

**Regression Analysis**

**Table 6: Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .220[a] | .048 | .018 | .33752 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholders Engagement, Decision Making, Continuous Improvement

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 6 provides the summary statistics for a regression model. The table includes various metrics to assess the model's goodness of fit and predictive power. The coefficient of multiple determination (R) represents the correlation between the dependent variable and the linear combination of the independent variables. In this case, R is equal to 0.220. R Square is the square of the correlation coefficient (R) and represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. Here, R Square is equal to 0.048. Adjusted R Square is similar to R Square but adjusted for the number of predictors in the model. It penalizes the addition of unnecessary predictors. In this model, the adjusted R Square is 0.018. This represents the standard error of the residuals, which measures the average distance between the observed values and the values predicted by the model. In this case, the standard error of the estimate is 0.33752.

The R value of 0.220 suggests a weak positive correlation between the dependent variable and the combination of independent variables. However, the R Square value of 0.048 indicates that only approximately 4.8% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model. This indicates that the model has limited explanatory power, and there are other factors contributing to the dependent variable that are not captured by the included predictors.The adjusted R Square of 0.018 is quite low. This suggests that the inclusion of the independent variables in the model does not significantly improve its explanatory power, and the model may be overfit or have too many predictors relative to the amount of data available. The standard error of the estimate (0.33752) represents the average error in predicting the dependent variable using the model. A lower standard error indicates better predictive accuracy, but the provided value is relatively high, indicating that the model's predictions may have significant errors.

The regression model, as indicated by the low R Square and adjusted R Square values, does not provide a strong explanation for the variance in the dependent variable. The R Square value of 0.048 suggests that only a small proportion of the variance in the dependent variable can be accounted for by the independent variables in the model. This implies that the model is not effective in predicting or explaining the dependent variable based on the included predictors.

**Table 7: Anova**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | .551 | 3 | .184 | 1.611 | .192[b] |
| | Residual | 10.822 | 95 | .114 | | |
| | Total | 11.373 | 98 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: GOOD GOVERNANCE
b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholders Engagement, Decision Making,  Continuous Improvement

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 7 presents the results of an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for a regression model. ANOVA helps assess whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The regression SS is 0.551. It represents the variability explained by the regression model. Residual Sum of Squares (SS): The residual SS is 10.822. It represents the unexplained variability or the error term. The total SS is 11.373, which is the sum of the regression and residual SS. It represents the total variability in the dependent variable.

There are three sets of degrees of freedom:Regression df = 3, which is the number of predictors (independent variables) in the model.Residual df = 95, which is the sample size minus the number of predictors. Total df = 98, which is the sum of regression and residual df.

The mean square is calculated by dividing the sum of squares by the degrees of freedom. For the regression, MS = 0.184, and for the residual, MS = 0.114. The F-statistic is calculated by taking the ratio of the regression

mean square to the residual mean square. In this case, F = 1.611. The significance level associated with the F-statistic is 0.192 (Sig. = .192b), which is greater than the typical significance threshold of 0.05 (α = 0.05).

A p-value greater than 0.05 suggests that we do not have enough evidence to conclude that the regression model is significant. In other words, the predictors (Stakeholders Engagement, Decision Making, Continuous Improvement) do not collectively explain a significant amount of the variance in the dependent variable (GOOD GOVERNANCE). Based on the results, it does not appear that the predictors included in the model (Stakeholders Engagement, Decision Making, Continuous Improvement) collectively have a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable (GOOD GOVERNANCE). Further analysis, including the exploration of additional predictors or a different model specification, may be necessary to better understand the relationships in the data.

**Table 8: Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.550 | .705 | | 5.035 | .000 |
| | Continuous Improvement | .018 | .086 | .022 | .210 | .834 |
| | Decision Making | .005 | .262 | .002 | .021 | .984 |
| | Stakeholders Engagement | .179 | .087 | .213 | 2.044 | .044 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Good Governance | | | | | | |

*Source: Researcher (2023)*

Table 8 presents the coefficients for the regression model, including unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients (Beta), t-values, and p-values. These coefficients provide insights into the relationships between the independent variables (Continuous Improvement, Decision Making, Stakeholders Engagement) and the dependent variable (Good Governance). The intercept (constant) represents the expected value of the dependent variable (Good Governance) when all independent variables are set to zero. In this case, the intercept is statistically significant (p < 0.05), indicating that it contributes significantly to the model. The coefficient for Continuous Improvement is not statistically significant (p > 0.05). This suggests that Continuous Improvement does not have a significant linear relationship with Good Governance in this model.

The coefficient for Decision Making is not statistically significant (p > 0.05). This suggests that Decision Making does not have a significant linear relationship with Good Governance in this model. The coefficient for Stakeholders Engagement is statistically significant (p < 0.05). This indicates that Stakeholders Engagement has a significant positive linear relationship with Good Governance in this model. A one-unit increase in Stakeholders Engagement is associated with an increase in Good Governance.

Among the independent variables, only Stakeholders Engagement has a statistically significant relationship with Good Governance in this regression model. Both the standardized coefficient (Beta) and the p-value suggest that Stakeholders Engagement plays a significant role in predicting Good Governance. Continuous Improvement and Decision Making do not show statistically significant relationships with Good Governance in this model, as indicated by their non-significant p-values.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents appeared to be somewhat neutral or leaning towards agreement regarding regular analysis, feedback loops, and regular feedback resulting from continuous learning and improvement efforts. Respondents are more in agreement that continuous improvement has led to improved capacity and increased flexibility. It may be beneficial to explore why respondents are relatively neutral or slightly leaning towards agreement regarding

certain aspects of continuous improvement. This could involve conducting follow-up surveys or interviews to gather more detailed feedback on specific areas for improvement. Continuous learning and improvement have yielded positive results in several areas, but there is still room for improvement, especially in regular analysis and reporting. It's important to address the variability in perceptions and continue efforts to enhance these aspects further. The positive feedback and high flexibility ratings indicate that the organization should continue to invest in continuous improvement initiatives.

Respondents generally agree that collecting and analyzing data has had positive impacts on decision making, particularly in areas related to clarity of objectives, time management, and risk management. Respondents are neutral when it comes to the statement that collecting and analyzing data has led to improved data quality. Respondents are somewhat in agreement that data collection and analysis have improved data use. Since respondents generally perceive positive impacts on decision making due to data collection and analysis, organizations should continue to prioritize and invest in data-driven decision-making processes. The organization should consider leveraging data analysis to improve risk management, data quality, and data use, while continuing to explore ways to enhance its contribution to good governance and time management, especially where perceptions vary.

Respondents generally agree that stakeholder involvement has positive impacts on collaborative partnerships, regular communication, empowerment, and an improved feedback mechanism. Respondents are somewhat neutral regarding whether there is good representation of stakeholders, indicating a lack of consensus on this aspect. There is a wider range of opinions about whether stakeholder involvement has led to good governance, with some respondents agreeing and others disagreeing. Stakeholders generally perceive their involvement positively across all aspects measured in the table. However, there are variations in their perceptions, with the most significant impact being seen in terms of improved feedback mechanisms and empowerment, while good governance and collaborative partnerships are rated lower. The low standard deviations in some items suggest a higher level of agreement among respondents, while the moderate standard deviations in others indicate some diversity of opinions. To better understand and address stakeholder engagement, it may be beneficial to explore these differences and gather qualitative data to gain insights into specific concerns and suggestions for improvement.

Organizations should continue to emphasize and prioritize good governance practices, as these are perceived positively by respondents. These practices can contribute to improved efficiency, fairness, adherence to the rule of law, accountability, and overall effectiveness. To maintain and enhance good governance practices, organizations should consider regular assessments and audits to ensure that governance principles are consistently applied and to identify areas for continuous improvement.

Given that respondents view continuous improvement as positively impacting capacity and flexibility, organizations should continue to invest in and emphasize these aspects of their continuous improvement initiatives, as they are seen as strengths. To further enhance the effectiveness of continuous improvement efforts, organizations can consider implementing specific measures to address areas where respondents are less convinced or neutral, such as enhancing the regular feedback and analysis processes. This could involve soliciting more feedback from employees and making improvements based on their input.

The neutral response regarding improved data quality suggests that organizations should focus on quality control and assurance measures in their data collection and analysis processes to ensure that data integrity and reliability are maintained. To further enhance data-driven decision-making practices, organizations can provide training and resources to help employees effectively use data for decision-making purposes. This can help bridge the gap between collecting data and actually leveraging it for better decision outcomes.

Organizations should recognize and leverage the positive aspects of stakeholder involvement, particularly in fostering collaborative partnerships, communication, empowerment, and feedback mechanisms. This can help improve decision-making processes and overall governance. To address the lack of consensus regarding good

representation of stakeholders, organizations may need to assess their current stakeholder engagement strategies and seek input from stakeholders themselves to ensure their diverse perspectives and interests are adequately represented. Communicating the positive outcomes of good governance to stakeholders can enhance trust and support for these practices. Additionally, organizations should actively involve stakeholders in governance processes to further promote transparency and accountability.

## Recommendations for Further Studies

Studying the influence of effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices in the public sector on promoting governance in the County Government of Mandera, Kenya, is a crucial area for research and can provide valuable insights for policy and practice. Here are several areas for further study:

- Assessment of Current M&E Practices:Conduct an in-depth assessment of the existing M&E practices within the County Government of Mandera. Evaluate the tools, systems, and processes currently in place for monitoring and evaluating public programs and policies.
- Impact of M&E on Decision-Making: Investigate how the data and information generated through M&E processes influence decision-making at various levels of the county government. Examine whether evidence-based decision-making is prevalent and the extent to which M&E findings are integrated into policy formulation.
- Governance Outcomes Measurement: Explore the specific governance outcomes that are influenced by effective M&E practices. This may include examining the impact on transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and service delivery.
- Capacity Building Needs: Assess the capacity and skills of county government staff involved in M&E activities. Identify gaps in training and capacity building to improve the effectiveness of M&E practices.
- Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback Loops: Investigate the extent to which stakeholders, including citizens, are engaged in the M&E process. Examine the mechanisms in place for collecting and incorporating feedback from various stakeholders.
-  Impact on Service Delivery: Investigate how effective M&E practices influence the delivery of public services in Mandera County. Assess whether improved M&E leads to better access to healthcare, education, infrastructure, and other essential services.
- Citizen Engagement and Participation: Study the role of M&E in encouraging citizen engagement and participation in decision-making processes. Assess whether M&E practices enhance public participation in county government affairs.
- Transparency and Accountability: Analyze how M&E practices contribute to increased transparency and accountability in county governance. Examine whether M&E mechanisms help in tracking the allocation and utilization of public funds.

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