Using the Behavioural Factors to explain Perceived Project Performance of Ugandan Citizenship Projects: A Multivariate Analysis

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to develop and validate a causal modal of behavioural factors that explains perceived project performance of Ugandan Citizenship projects. Although numerous classical studies are reported in various contexts involving project communication, individual commitment, social networks and perceived project performance, no existing study focuses on how these four domains are linked together. Based on literature review, a theoretical model and 15 hypotheses were developed. A cross sectional data from a survey of 322 project staff of all 121 citizenship projects conducted by all 16 commercial banks in Uganda was used to validate the model. The results of Structural Equation Modelling support 11 of the 15 hypotheses and reveal that project communication does not influence perceived project performance directly but it influences it through the mediation of social networks and continuance commitment. Surprisingly, the study data did not support path coefficients between the other two individual commitment elements (affectivity and normative) and perceived project performance. Although these constructs are robust and sufficiently represent the behavioural aspects, the multidimensional nature of behavioural practises in perceived project performance can be investigated further. The individual commitment elements were expected to positively influence perceived project performance but did not. The use of case studies and additional surveys in future research might help to explain this surprising paradox. Further, since the future of project management practises go through evolution, additional 'soft' factors may be incorporated into the four domain causal model. The study results suggest that the social network elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance. This implies that the corporate managers of citizenship projects need to develop strategies to create social networks with their stakeholders in order to increase perceived project performance.

Key words: Project communication, Individual commitment, Social networks and Perceived project performance

1. Introduction

An increasing number of organisations have adopted project management as a means to achieve their strategic objectives. This has consequently led to growth of the project management field in the last decades both for profit and non-profit organisations that have implemented it in their operational practises searching for a systematic approach in planning, execution and controlling (Meredith & Mantel, 2003). Despite this growth most projects fail to meet their objective in terms of time, budgets, scope and quality among others (Pinto & Slevin, 1988; Cockburn & Highsmith, 2001; Shenhar, Tishler, Dvir, Lipovetsky & Lechler, 2002; Sauser, Reilly, & Shenhar, 2009; Howell, Windahl, & Seidel, 2010).

Ugandan Commercial banks have focused on new competitive strategies like increased ventures in citizenship projects' as a way of upholding performance (Hopkins, 2007; McDonald & Rundle-Thiele, 2008). According to Drucker (1993), Citizenship projects are those projects aimed at active commitment to making a difference in ones community, ones society and one's country. Many Commercial Banks are becoming more involved in activities like improving education and public health (Barclay's sustainability review report, 2007) because superior firm performance is correlated with the success of citizenship projects (Hopkins, 2007; Scott, 2007).

Despite the increased involvement of commercial banks in citizenship projects in Uganda, anecdotal evidence reveals that over 70% of Citizenship projects fall short of the expected quality, fail to boost bank awareness, are cost overrun and are completed behind schedule (Stanbic Bank Uganda, 2009; Barclay's bank-Uganda, 2007). This could be attributed to ineffective project communication (Ramsing, 2009; Ruuska, 1996), inadequate social networks (Andrews, 2007; Downes, 2005; Granovater, 1973) and lack of individual commitment to such projects (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The successful management of citizenship projects from idea generation to handover presents a win-win situation for the bank and the society (Scot, 2007). However, local companies have failed to implement citizenship projects to the satisfaction of society (Ofori & Hinson, 2007).

Although numerous classical studies have been conducted in various contexts involving project communication, individual commitment, social networks and perceived project performance, researchers have not focused on how these four project management domains are linked together. Scott (2007) argues that perceived failure of citizenship projects causes negative publicity and that most project failures could be attributed to ineffective project communication. He further emphasises that clarity of project information fosters commitment and trustworthy relationships amongst the targeted societies. According to Downes (2005), relationships amongst societies are referred to as social networks. These enhance performance by facilitating social capital exchanges (Hogg & Adamic, 2004). As such, the neglect of social norms, adversely affects performance. Up to now, some top level managers are still less committed to citizenship activities by suggesting that citizenship projects detract them from business-related responsibilities (Hopkins, 2007).

This is manifested in delays to pass decisions that pertain to implementation of citizenship projects. Consequently management makes late and less than required financial releases. The challenge widens as other project team members get influenced to pick up similar affections. Although Stanbic's commitment to citizenship projects is well incorporated in its vision (Stanbic Bank Uganda; Annual report, 2009), anecdotal evidence surprisingly shows that over six of every ten of its employees are not aware of such undertakings and by implication are not committed to them. There is need to ensure that citizenship projects that commercial banks fund meet their expectations. The purpose of this study is to develop and validate a causal modal of behavioural factors that explain perceived project performance of Ugandan Citizenship projects. We intend to contribute towards understanding of the relationship between project communication, individual commitment and social networks in the context of their influences on perceived project performance for Citizenship projects in less developed context. The rest of this article starts with theoretical background, reviews literature to generate hypothesis and hypothetical model followed by research methodology, discusses findings and concludes with implications, limitations and area for future research.

2. Theory and Research Hypotheses

In this paper the theories of communication, commitment and social networks have all been invoked to explain and describe behavioural factors in perceived project performance. For project communication, the researchers have greatly drawn from argumentation theory, Cognitive dissonance theory, Elaboration Likelihood Model and uncertainty reduction theory. The proponents of argumentation theory argue that it involves verbal and social activity of reason aimed at increasing (or decreasing) the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or reader, by putting forward a constellation of propositions intended to justify (or refute) the standpoint before a rational judge (Eemeren et al, 1996). The Cognitive dissonance is a communication theory adopted from social psychology that views cognitive as thinking or the mind and dissonance as inconsistency or conflict. Cognitive dissonance is therefore the psychological conflict from holding two or more incompatible beliefs simultaneously (Dickerson, Thibodeau, & Miller, 1992). The theory views individuals as more purposeful decision makers who strive for balance in their beliefs. If presented with information that creates dissonance, they use dissonance-reduction strategies to regain equilibrium, especially if the dissonance affects their self-esteem. The theory suggests that 1) dissonance is psychologically uncomfortable enough to motivate people to achieve consonance, and 2) in a state of dissonance, people will avoid information and situations that might increase the dissonance (Dickerson et al, 1992).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is based on the idea that attitudes are important because attitudes guide decisions and other behaviours (Petty& Cacioppo, 1986). While attitudes can result from a number of things, persuasion is a primary source. The model features two routes of persuasive influence; central and peripheral.

The ELM accounts for the differences in persuasive impact produced by arguments that contain ample information and cogent reasons as compared to messages that rely on simplistic associations of negative, and positive attributes to some object, action or situation. The proponents of uncertainty reduction theory argue that people communicate to reduce uncertainty because it is unpleasant (Heath & Bryant, 2000). Uncertainty reduction follows a pattern of developmental stages (entry, personal, exits). During the entry stage information about another's demographic information is obtained and much of the interaction in this entry phase is controlled by communication rules and norms. When communicators begin to share attitudes, beliefs, values, and more personal data, the personal stage begins. The communicators feel less constrained by rules and norms and tend to communicate more freely with each other. Finally, the communicators decide on future interaction plans.

Consistent with Meyer and Allen (1997), this paper also views the individual commitment as employee's psychological attachment to the project in terms of work-related attitudes, such as job satisfaction, defined as an employee's feelings about their job, and organizational identification, defined as the degree to which an employee experiences a 'sense of oneness' with their projects. According to Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment are affective commitment that is defined as the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization; continuance commitment in which the individual commits to the organization because he/she perceives high costs of losing membership and normative commitment where the individual commits to and remains with an organization because of feelings of obligation. Lastly the social network theory views social relationships in terms of nodes and ties; nodes are the individual actors within the networks and ties are the relationships between the actors (Downes, 2005, P.411; Scott, 2000). There can be many kinds of ties between the nodes however in its most simple form; a social network is a map of all of the relevant ties between the nodes being studied (Fowler, Dawes & Christakis, 2009). The network can also be used to determine the social capital of individual actors (Ntayi, Rooks, Eyaa & Qian, 2010).

2.1 Project Communication and Individual Commitment

Effective project communication creates a feeling of responsibility and attachment between a stakeholder and the project tasks that makes one indebted to the project thereby creating an atmosphere for individual team members to act without much control and coercion (Nangoli, 2010). Under such circumstances, what drives a person to work is the emotional attachment to the project as natured by communication. This is consistent with Ntayi et al (2010) findings that workers with positive attitude about the task carry out certain role behaviors well beyond the basic minimum levels required of them. They for example may not take extra breaks and they tend to obey the project rules and regulations even when no one is watching, they attend meetings that are not mandatory but considered important. They also keep abreast of changes in and out of the project that affect or are affected by the project and responsibly discuss them with those concerned. Consistent with Lievens and Moenaert (2000), project Communication was conceptualized as extra-project communication (communication with the external project environment) and intra-project communication (communication flows within the project).

Individual commitment is the willingness by an individual to devote energy and loyalty to a project as expressed in three forms; - affective, continuance and normative (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The 'net sum' of a person's commitment to a project reflects each of these separable psychological states (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Affective commitment is an individual's emotional attachment with (i.e. identification with and involvement in) the project. Continuance commitment refers to the individual's recognition of the benefits of continued association with the project compared to the perceived cost of leaving the project. Normative commitment refers to the employee's feeling of obligation to stay in the project. All three forms of commitment affect the individuals' willingness to remain with a project and their work related behavior. Consistent with Oliver (1980) cognitive and affective theory, when a manager or team member with a high need for self esteem, volunteers to work on a project and communicates his intentions to associate within the project, he emotionally gets attached to ensuring the project succeeds. This is because he derives satisfaction from the success of philanthropic engagements. As long as the project delivers as expected by its stakeholders, they will remain committed to the project's values otherwise stakeholders may become less committed and dissociate themselves from the project (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003; Conway & Briner, 2002). According to Eisenberger et al. (1990), individuals who perceive that they are cared for, have not only higher levels of commitment but are more conscious about their responsibilities, have greater involvement in the organization and are more innovative. From this debate we therefore hypothesize that;

H1: Project communication positively influences individual commitment to the project.
H1a: Intra-project communication positively influences individual commitment elements.
H1b: extra-project communication positively influences individual commitment elements.

2.2 Individual Commitment and Perceived Project Performance

Project success has been measured differently in the literature (Jugdvev & Muller, 2005; Ika, 2009). Pinto and Slevin (1988) acknowledged three aspects of project performance as the implementation process, the perceived value of the project and client satisfaction with the delivered project outcome. Shenhar et al. (1997) suggest two additional project performance measures: business success and preparing for the future. However, empirical results by Lipovetsky et al., (1997) indicate that the importance of the latter measurement is all but negligible. Perceived Project Performance refers to what the project stakeholders like the project sponsor and client make out of the project performance. Usually, various directly and indirectly affected parties perceive the operations of the project differently due to the diversity of interests. What the recipient sees as a failure may be viewed as a success to the implementer of the project. Despite research in project management there is no agreement on project performance. Most times some stakeholders perceive successful projects as failures due to inadequate awareness, if project stakeholders know nothing of what the project is about, they will get the perception that the project is not worthwhile.

Committed project members more often do not have intentions to quit (Addae, Parboteeah & Davis, 2006) which saves the project costs of recruiting and orienting a new member both in form of time and money. Also, costs of supervision are mitigated if the project members are committed to their project tasks. It follows that where project stakeholders are joyful about the project's success, the investing bank's public image will blossom in the case of citizenship projects run by commercial banks. Despite the abundance of research that has examined commitment and performance (Riketta, 2002), very few studies (e.g. Ntayi etal., 2010) have examined this phenomenon in a Ugandan context. Even then, they did not focus on performance of citizenship projects which are gathering more strategic attention as drivers of organizational competitiveness of late (McDonald & Rundle-Thiele, 2008). It is imperative therefore, that the understanding of individual commitment as an antecedent of project performance is enriched through extending the frontiers of research. Consistent with this argument we theorize that;

H2: Individual commitment positively influences perceived project performance.
H2a: Affectivity commitment positively influences perceived project performance.
H2b: Continuance commitment positively influences perceived project performance.
H2c: Normative commitment positively influences perceived project performance.

2.3 Project Communication and Social Networks

Downes (2005, P.411) refers to social networks as a collection of individuals linked together by a set of relations. Entities in a network are called 'nodes' and the connections between them are called 'ties' (Downes, 2005). According to Fowler et al. (2009), social networks can be fundamentally discussed in terms of degree and transitivity. Social network degree is the number of social ties the project has. Network degree is at times referred to as network size. On the other hand, network transitivity refers to the likelihood that two of a persons' contact are connected to each other. It transforms into the level of trust members give themselves. The establishment, development, defence and maintenance of network positions is done by developing multiple relationships in the focal net i.e. in the relevant network in which the firm is active by relating externally and adapting internally. Ntayi et al. (2010) alludes that the strength of the linkage (relationship) grows through a history of interactions in which members of a network develop friendship and trust. The above statement points to the fact that stronger relations in a network could be fostered through effective project communication over time. Herkt (2007) affirms that the project manager's major responsibility is to build supportive social networks (collaborative relationships) among a diverse group of stakeholders. Burt (2001) argues that no social network can be fully depended upon because of the diversity in egocentricity among nodes. He avers that "the fact that an individual can live up to expectations of several others in different places and at different times makes it possible to preserve an inner core, to withhold inner attitudes while conforming to various expectations".

Maintaining effective communication with the project team over time raises the quantity of social ties and the clustering co-efficient both directly and indirectly. This is consistent with Zhong and Low's (2009) findings that changes driven by the project management are usually unlikely to produce desired effects without coordination and support from a variety of personnel.

Project managers however, are most times preoccupied with addressing the technical issues and fail on soft issues like proper functioning of informal communication. The value of oral communication must be taken into consideration as it affects the interaction patterns among project members. In the current era of the internet, e-mail and instant messaging, the quality of the actual communication can determine the longevity of the group and help predict the likelihood of the group's survival. Face-to-face communication is needed, especially in the early stages, to establish understanding and trust among members. We therefore hypothesize that;

H3: Project communication positively influences social network
H3a: Intra-project communication positively influences social network elements
H3b: Extra-project communication positively influences social network elements

2.4 Social Networks and Perceived Project Performance

Social networks act as a vehicle for quickly and easily getting the project message to intended audience thereby enhancing project awareness (Hogg & Adamic, 2004) and the organization's public image at large. According to (Burt, 2001), Social networks provide access to timely information and referrals to others in the network. He adds that timely access to information among others creates a deeper understanding of community needs at initiation stage of any project development. This supports the view that ample information at initiation mitigates the possibility of losing out on quality in the later stages as a result of inadequate project planning. Particularly, collaborations create perceived fairness in exchanges there by reducing transaction cost (Hoang & Antoncic 2003) in form of less detailed contracts and less restrictive clauses with stakeholders like the government. Transactions involve cost of discovering who it is that one wishes to deal with, informing people that one wishes to deal and on what terms, conducting of negotiations among others which is cheaply and quickly achieved through social networks. We hypothesize that;

H4: Social networks positively influence perceived project performance.
H4a: Social network degree positively influences perceived project performance.
H4b: Network transitivity positively influences perceived project performance.

Further, when H1, H2, H3 and H4 are connected together in the theoretical model shown in figure 1, there shows a need to investigate the mediating role of the individual commitment and social network elements existing between project communication and perceived project performance. However, whether this mediation role is full or partial deserves more attention. We therefore hypothesize that;

H5a: Individual commitment elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance.
H5b: Social network elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance.

Figure 1 shows the hypothetical model of relationships between project communication, individual commitment, social network and perceived project performance.

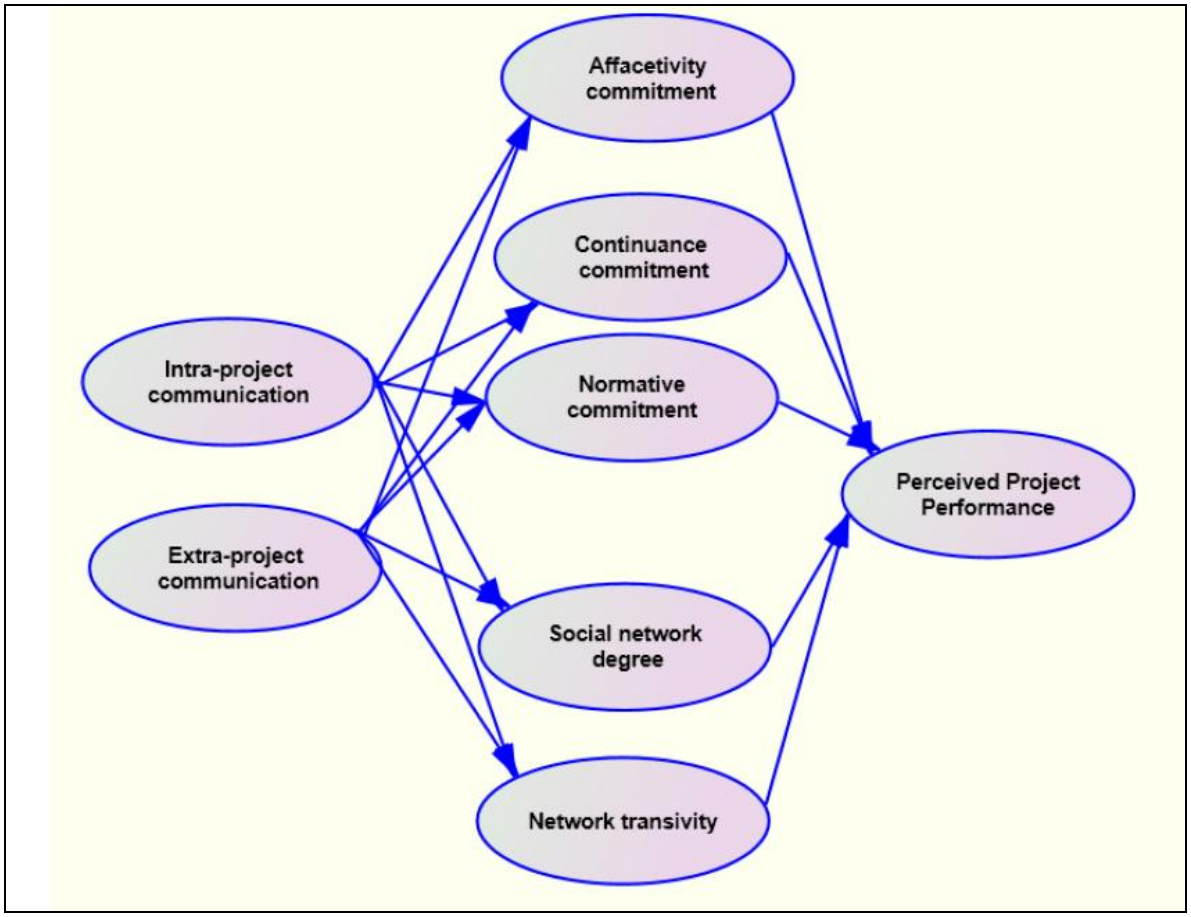

Figure 1: Hypothetical model

3. Methodology

3.1 Measures

Project communication was measured using an abridged version of Goldhaber and Rogers' (1979) Communication Audit Survey (CAS) questionnaire. This was because it captured the researcher's aspect of study more extensively compared to comparative tools like the information processing perspective by Lievens and Moenaert (2000). Also, the CAS is being used by many researchers today (e.g. Carrie`re & Bourque, 2009; Downs & Adrian, 2004; Madlock, 2008). Respondents assessed project communication on a five (5)-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. In measuring individual commitment, an abridged version of the employee Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), as developed by Meyer and Allen (1997), was used to assess the commitment of individual members on the project teams because it specifies a clear delineation among the types of organizational commitment unlike Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian (1974)'s OCQ. This tool has been commonly used by recent researchers (e.g. Brown 2003). The tool solicited responses on a five (5)-point Likert scale with the following verbal anchors: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Social networks were measured using a combination of the network Degree and network transitivity (Fowler et al., 2009; Rosenthal, 2007, P.293). Respondents assessed their perceived network position on a five (5)-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Perceived Project performance was measured using an amalgam of the research measures used by Pinto and Slevin (1988) and Shenhar et al. (1997) and the competence areas defined in the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK, 2008).

The two give more rational results as regards perceived project performance and have been used before by researchers like Ramírez (2002). The responses were anchored on a 5 linkert scale from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

3.2 Sample

The target population comprised of all 121 citizenship projects conducted by all sixteen (16) commercial banks in Uganda (BOU report, 2009). The unit of inquiry comprised the project workers who were or had ever taken part in the citizenship projects. The self administered questionnaire was first pre-tested on professors from Makerere University Kampala, a major research university in Uganda. They had all had worked on Citizenship projects in Africa for a remarkable time of more than four years with a wide experience on this topic. The scales were also pilot-tested using 45 citizenship projects and yielded 100% response rate. Based on these responses and comments, item scales that were unclear and ambiguous were either improved or deleted. Following the guidelines set forth by Dillman (1991) questions were brief and to the point, addressing only a single issue at a time and avoided phrases that could elicit socially acceptable response. Each construct was measured by at least five questions that were relevant in terms of prior research or established theory. A well-designed cover letter was included that explained the purpose and intended use of survey data and promised anonymity of respondent and company in the reporting.

The responses were 322 usable questionnaires representing 82% response rate which were analysed and the descriptive statistics demonstrated that 54% of respondents had been involved in the execution of citizenship projects for a period of (3-6) years. 6.4% and 1.7% had spent 7-10 and more than 10 years respectively in the execution of citizenship projects. The findings further indicated that most of these projects have existed for about (3-6) years (48.8%), less than 3 years (43.6%) and more than 10 years (2.9%). The majority of respondents were females (51.7%) and (48.3%) were males which could imply that more females take up citizenship activities than their male counterparts. Majority of these respondents were either married (52%) or single (46%) with majority in the age bracket of (20-30) years representing 73.3%. 72.7% of the respondents had attained at least a Bachelors degree, 4% and 15% had masters and professional qualifications respectively. As regards the positions held in the execution of citizenship projects by individual respondents, majority (78.5%) of them revealed that they held the capacity of team members while 10.5% were project managers and 4.1% were project beneficiaries. The project types included health (31.7%), education (19%), environment (11.1%), economic (25.4%) and rehabilitation (12.7%).

4. Data Analysis

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS Version 19.0 in which parameters are estimated by minimizing the discrepancy between the model-implied covariance matrix and the observed covariance matrix was used in tracing structural relations (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). SEM was chosen because it is a confirmatory approach that provides explicit test statistics for establishing convergent and discriminant validity important to management research, tests an overall model rather than individual coefficients, allows for error terms and reduces measurement error through the use of multiple indicators (Kearns & Sabherwal, 2007). The approach chosen was to separate analysis of the measurement and structural models in a two-step process recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). This allows refinement of measures before testing of the structural model and is consistent with previous studies (Byrne, 2001; Kearns & Sabherwal, 2007). In the first phase, a measurement model was used to measure the fit between the theorized model and observed variables and to establish reliability and validity. In the second phase, results of the measurement model were used to create a structural model in order to measure the strength of the theorized relationships.

Since this study took a confirmatory rather than exploratory approach, the total sample (N=322) was split into two samples (calibration sample (N=161) on which the initially hypothesised model was tested and validation sample (N=161) for testing the validity of its structure) to allow cross-validation of findings (Byrne, 2001, p.249).

4.1 The measurement model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed for examining construct validity by assessing how well individual items represent the construct. Construct validity and discriminant validity were tested to demonstrate the dimensionality of the constructs in the measurement model and nomological validity was tested for the robustness of the structural model.

Consistent with Jung, Wang & Wu (2008), in this study, construct validity was evaluated in two ways: (1) High factor loadings with significant t-values are mostly good indicators of the construct validity and (2) A high squared corelation value for a construct also indicates good construct validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Joreskog and Sorbom, 1989). All eight constructs demonstrated good model fit when subjected to Hu and Bentler's (1999) criteria and Rigdon's (1996) criteria. The factor loading of each item in all eight constructs was reasonably acceptable (above 0.40). In addition, all the factor loadings were significant, indicated by their corresponding T-values above 2. Following guideline by Fornell and Larcker (1981), squared correlations values were then calculated for each construct. The variance extracted for each of the eight constructs exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.50, indicating that the variance captured by a construct was larger than the variance due to measurement errors (Jung et al, 2008). Hence, the construct validity of the eight constructs was established.

The reliability analysis was conducted by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each construct. The results showed that the Cronbach's alpha measures for all eight constructs well exceeded the recommended critical point of 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998), indicating good internal-consistency reliability. The final results of construct validity and reliability tests of the seven constructs are tabulated in Table I.

Table 1: Construct validity and reliability

Constructs and final Items		Std loadings	T value	R square	Cronbach coefficient
Code	***Intra-project communication***				
ipc01	Am satisfied with the amount of information I receive from my supervisor(s)	.715	10.06	.511	.86
ipc02	The language we use in our correspondences is familiar to all team members	.705	9.88	.496	
ipc06	I like the channels that we use to share information amongst team members	.799	11.83	.638	
ipc08	Informal communication amongst team members is usually active	.779	11.39	.606	
ipc10	New Information usually circulates amongst project team members in time	.742	10.52	.551	
	Extra-project communication				
epc07	Our external stakeholders are reliably informed of the progress of our citizenship projects	.722	10.09	.521	.80
epc08	Our external stakeholders like the way we communicate with them	.815	11.92	.667	
epc09	We have always maintained timely communications with external stakeholders	.817	11.91	.397	
	Affectivity commitment				
aff02	I am willing to exert more effort to guarantee successful execution of citizenship activities	.630	8.37	.749	.71
aff04	I find that my personal values and those of citizenship projects are very similar	.865	13.15	.551	
aff05	I feel like part of the family of the citizenship project teams	.742	10.48	.551	
aff06	I feel emotionally attached to citizenship projects	.654	8.88	.427	
	Continuance commitment				
con4	It would be too costly for me to quit citizenship activities right now	.794	11.20	.630	.74
con3	My life would be upset if I decided not to engage in citizenship activities	.834	11.92	.696	
con2	It would be very hard for me to abandon citizenship activities even if I wanted to	.723	9.73	.522	
con1	I think no other activities can match the benefits that citizenship activities present to me	.688	9.17	.473	
	Normative commitment				
nor03	I would feel guilty to abscond from taking part in citizenship activities	.623	8.02	.389	.72
nor04	I feel I have an obligation to keep performing citizenship activities	.780	10.87	.608	
nor05	I have a sense of obligation to the recipients of citizenship projects	.820	11.56	.672	
nor06	I owe a great deal to citizenship projects	.589	7.51	.347	
	Network degree				
nd04	This bank's top management strongly supports citizenship activities	.698	9.43	.487	.80

Constructs and final Items		Std loadings	T value	R square	Cronbach coefficient
nd03	We trust that many societies are in support of our citizenship projects	.810	11.66	.656	
nd02	Through citizenship activities, we have improved the lives of many citizens	.678	9.070	.460	
nd01	Many members of the general public know much about our citizenship projects	.743	10.34	.552	
	Network transitivity				
tr01	I think that the beneficiaries of our citizenship projects become our advocates	.620	7.726	.384	
tr02	I believe that many consumer groups are pleased with our citizenship projects	.877	12.70	.768	.74
tr04	Community leaders have always welcomed our citizenship projects	.686	8.82	.471	
tr06	In my view, our citizenship activities are liked by people of diverse interests	.663	8.32	.439	
	Perceived project performance				
ena01	In my view many of our customers are aware of our citizenship activities	.801	11.01	.641	
ena02	I think that many people have known about this bank through its citizenship activities	.675	8.58	.456	
pq04	Our citizenship projects have greatly improved the livelihood of many individuals	.586	7.10	.343	
pq05	I am satisfied with the outcomes of the citizenship activities this bank has undertaken	.808	11.06	.653	
pq06	We do not doubt the quality of our services to the community	.748	9.80	.560	.90
pq07	To a great extent, the citizenship activities we undertake meet our expectations	.697	8.83	.486	
tm02	Our citizenship Project team is always committed to beating set deadlines	.744	9.70	.554	
tm03	We usually provide necessary information to project stakeholders in time	.767	10.16	.589	
tm04	Our project activities from initiation to closure are always timely	.735	9.44	.540	

4.1.1 Discriminant validity

The discriminant validity test was performed in order to establish the distinction among all the constructs used in this study (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Chi-square ($\chi 2$) difference tests were run for all possible construct pairs. For each pair, a comparison was made between the $\chi 2$ values for the constrained model and the unconstrained model. The constrained model represents a case in which the variances and covariance for the construct pairs were constrained to unity. The $\chi 2$ differences were significantly less for the unconstrained models compared to the constrained models, suggesting that the better model was the one in which the factors are separate but correlated (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Discriminant validity was also established for any construct pair, when the variance extracted of each construct exceeded the square of the construct correlations shown in the table 1**.** No correlation exceeded the prescribed limit of 0.90 which was a good indicator that there was no item redundancy and multicollinearity was also absent in this study. Also a confidence interval of (+/-) *3* standard errors was calculated for each of the construct correlations to determine if the interval contained the value 1. None of the confidence Intervals contained the value 1 indicating that the correlations between these constructs differ significantly from unity and that the probability of perfect correlation was extremely low.

4.1.2 Common method variance

Common method variance is a potential problem when all measurements are provided by a single respondent. Because self-reporting, consistency motif, acquiescence, social desirability, affectivity and transient mood state lead to common method variance; it is of concern in survey research when sampling perceptual data (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). Common methods bias leads to type 1 & 2 errors where the researchers may accept or reject the null hypothesis when they should not have done so. Common method bias was addressed in three ways; firstly using the strategies to ameliorate the problems of self-report data by designing a questionnaire to avoid implying that one response is better than the other, avoided socially accepted responses, decomposed questions relating to more than one possibility and avoided complicated syntax (Kearns & Sabherwal, 2007).

Common method variance was further assessed using Harman's one factor test (Podsakoff et al, 2003). The underlying logic for this test is that if common method bias accounts for the relations among variables, then a factor analysis should yield a single factor when all the items are analysed together. No single factor emerged or one general factor accounted for most of the variance implying that no substantial common method variance was present.

Finally, a confirmatory factor analysis approach was used to test a model positing that a single factor underlies the study variables, by linking all the items to a single factor for common method variance (Kearns & Sabherwal, 2007). The model exhibited a poorer fit as compared to the initial and final measurement models suggesting that common method variance was not a problem.

4.1.3 Non-response bias

Non response bias was established in T-tests by comparing the average values for each of the constructs for the first quartile completed questionnaires received versus the last quartile completed questionnaires allowing the late questionnaires to proxy the perceptions of non-respondents. Mean differences for each of the constructs did not reveal any significant difference between the early and late questionnaires (2-tailed *t*-tests, $p < 0.05$). This comparative test depicted the absence of non-response bias in this study.

4.2. The structural model

Results from the final measurement model were used to create the structural model that tested the strength and significance of the theorized relationships. The final revised model with path coefficients is shown in Figure 2. The final structural model accounts for 85.2% of the variation in perceived project performance. Thus, the model is very successful in accounting for a substantial portion of the variability in perceived project performance. Three paths did not demonstrate the expected results; the path coefficients between affectivity commitment and perceived project performance, normative commitment and perceived project performance were non-significant and the path between normative commitment and perceived project performance was expected to be positive but instead it was negative.

4.2.1 Goodness-of-fit

Goodness-of-fit was established by multiple indices to negate bias associated with the use of a single index. The measures that were used include $\chi 2/df$, TLI, CFI and RMSEA (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). Although $\chi 2$ is recognized as a measure of fit, it is frequently affected by the size of correlations within the model and can produce inaccurate probability values hence it was replaced with the $\chi 2/df$ with values of less than 3.0 being acceptable (Kearns & Sabherwal, 2007). The TLI compares the lack of fit of a target model to the lack of fit of a baseline model, usually the independence model and is one of the indexes affected least by sample size. The CFI also has the advantage of reflecting fit at all sample sizes and measures the comparative reduction in noncentrality. Values above 0.90 are desirable for both the TLI and CFI. The RMSEA computes average lack of fit per degree of freedom and is less affected by sample size. For both, values below 0.08 are recognized as adequate. Mardia's coefficient is a measure of model kurtosis and high values >3 indicate that some study variables are non-normally distributed (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989).

The results suggest that the model adequately fits the data ($\chi 2$=1169.79, df=614, $\chi 2/df$,= 1.91, p<0.01), the other fit indices also suggested a good fit to the model (CFI=.83, TLI=.806, RMSEA=.075). Based on these values, the final structural model was deemed acceptable since the hypothesised model adequately fits the sample data (Byrne 2001; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). Figure 2 shows the final structural model and path coefficients.

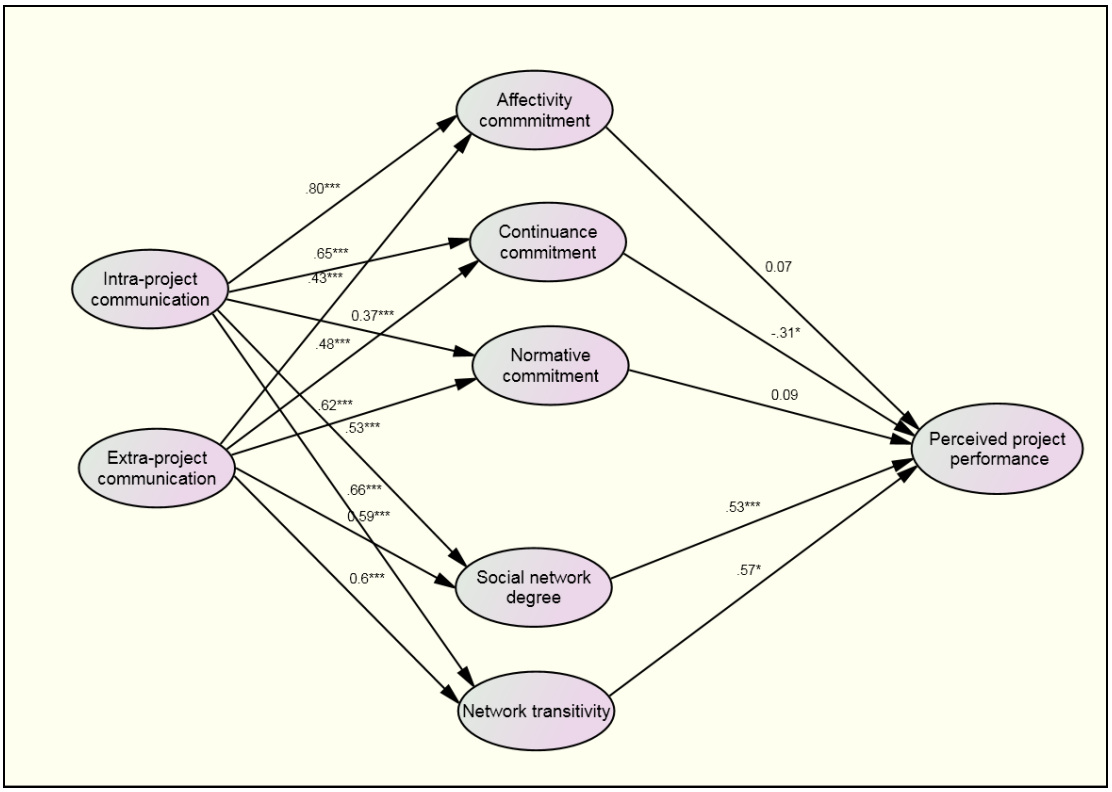

Figure 2: Final structural model

Note:*, **, * represent *p* levels of .05, .01 and .001 respectively**

4.2.2 Support for Hypotheses

Using 322 observations provided by citizenship project workers, survey data supported 11 of the study's 15 hypotheses as shown in table 2. The results reveal that intra-project communication has positive and significant effects on all the three individual commitment elements: affectivity commitment (β=0.796, p<0.001), normative commitment (β=0.369, p<0.001) and continuance commitment (β=0.652, p<0.001) hence supporting H1a*: Intra-project communication positively influences individual commitment elements.* There was a strong and significant association between extra-project communication and the three individual commitment elements: affectivity commitment (β=0.426, p<0.001), normative commitment (β=0.618, p<0.001) and continuance commitment (β=0.480, p<0.001) hence supporting *H1b: extra-project communication positively influences individual commitment elements.* Thus, H1 is fully supported; *Project communication positively influences individual commitment to the project.*

The results also point out that intra-project communication has positive and significant effects on all the two social network elements: network degree (β=0.532, p<0.001) and network transitivity (β=0.664, p<0.001) hence supporting *H3a: Intra-project communication positively influences social network elements.* There was a strong and significant association between extra-project communication and the two social network elements: network degree (β=0.590, p<0.001), network transitivity (β=0.602, p<0.001) hence supporting *H3b: Extra-project communication positively influences social network elements.* Thus, H3 is fully supported; *Project communication positively influences social network.*

The results reveal that affectivity commitment (β=0.07, p>.05) and normative commitment (β=0.088, p>0.05) have no significant effects on perceived project performance: thus rejecting *H2a: Affectivity commitment positively influences perceived project performance* and *H2c: Normative commitment positively influences perceived project performance.* There was a negative and significant association between continuance commitment (β=-0.305, p<0.05) and perceived project performance hence rejecting *H2b: Continuance commitment positively influences perceived project performance.* Surprisingly rejecting, *H2: Individual commitment positively influences perceived project performance.*

There was a strong and significant association between Social network degree (β=0.529, p<0.001), network transitivity (β=0.567, p<0.05) and perceived project performance hence supporting *H4a: Social network degree positively influences perceived project performance and H4b: Network transitivity positively influences perceived project performance.* Thus fully supporting, *H4: Social networks positively influence perceived project performance.*

The results of the structural model further suggest that project communication variables influence perceived project performance through individual commitment (only continuance) and social network elements. In other words, individual commitment (only continuance) and all two social network elements act as mediating variables connecting intra and extra-project communication and perceived project performance. To further examine whether project communication strategies have direct effects on perceived project performance in addition to the full mediation via social networks and continuance commitment, a competing model was developed. The initial model was modified by adding two direct paths from intra-project communication and extra-project communication to perceived project performance. The competing model was tested by AMOS 19.0 and the results are shown in Figure 3.

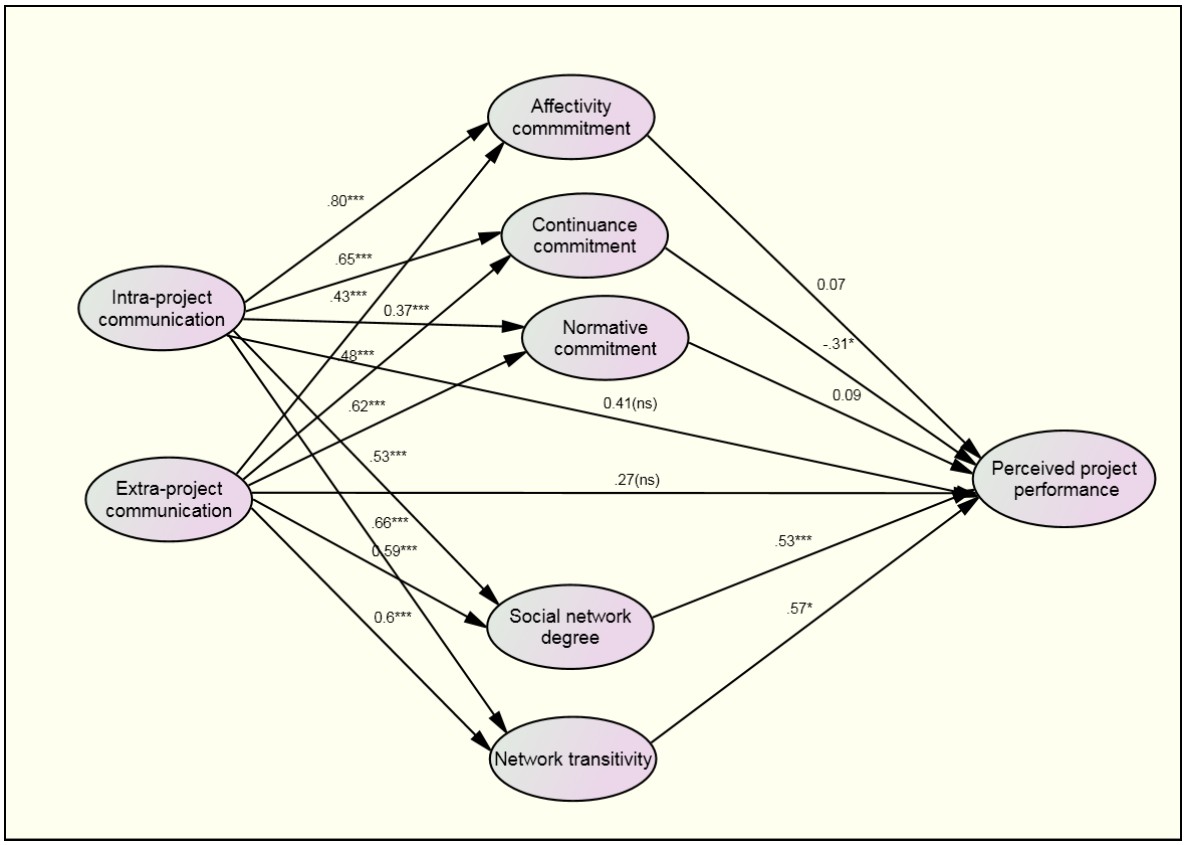

Figure 3: Competing model

Note: *, **, * represent *p* levels of .05, .01 and .001 respectively**

For the modified model, the overall model fit indices were: $\chi 2$=1167.99, df=612, $\chi 2/df$,= 1.91, p<0.01, CFI=.83, TLI=.806, and RMSEA=.075. All model fit measures show similar values to those of the initial model. As noted, both intra-project communication (β=0.41, $p>.05$) and extra-project communication (β=0.27, $p>.05$) respectively have non-significant effects on perceived project performance, as depicted in Figure 3. Thus, the direct paths coefficients from the two communication variables to perceived project performance are non-significant. Subsequently, it can be concluded that the social network elements and continuance commitment (only element of individual commitment) fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance. Other relationships being identical to the initial model, the non-significant relationships between the two project communication variables and perceived project performance suggest a higher nomological validity of the initial model, indicating the superiority of the initial model over the competing model.

Thereby partly supporting *H5a: Individual commitment element (only continuance) fully mediates the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance* and also fully supporting *H5b: Social network elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance.*

We further cross validated these mediation findings using the procedure developed by Baron and Kenny (1986) and later modified by Kenny (2006). The three of Baron and Kenny's (2006) conditions for mediation were fully met. First, for the mediation by continuance commitment between intra-project communication and perceived project performance there was an effect to be mediated initially between intra-project communication and perceived project performance (β=0.804, $p<.001$). Second, there was a significant relationship between intra-project communication and the mediator (β=0.652, $p<.001$) and third, the coefficient of the mediator (β=-0.305 $p<.05$) was significant with both intra-project communication and continuance commitment as predictors. As noted earlier, when the mediator (continuance commitment) was introduced into the model the coefficient between intra-project communication and perceived project performance becomes non-significant (β=0.41, $p>.05$) thus confirming full mediation by continuance commitment between intra-project communication and perceived project performance.

For the second mediation by social network elements between extra-project communication and perceived project performance also there was an effect to be mediated initially between extra project communication and perceived project performance (β=0.802, $p<.001$). Second, there was a significant relationships between extra-project communication and the mediator (network degree was β=0.590, $p<.001$) and third, the coefficients of the mediator (network degree was β=0.529, $p<.001$) significant with both extra-project communication and network degree as predictors. Consistent with the earlier findings when the mediator (network degree) was introduced into the model the coefficient between extra-project communication and perceived project performance becomes non-significant (β=0.27, $p>.05$).

Similar wise for the mediation by network transitivity between extra-project communication and perceived project performance there was an effect to be mediated initially between extra-project communication and perceived project performance (β=0.802, $p<.001$). Second, there was a significant relationship between extra-project communication and the mediator (β=0.602, $p<.001$) and third, the coefficient of the mediator, network transitivity (β=0.567, $p<.001$) significant with both extra-project communication and network transitivity as predictors. Consistent with the former findings when the mediator (network transitivity) was introduced into the model the coefficient between extra-project communication and perceived project performance also became non-significant (β=0.27, $p>.05$). These consistent findings confirm full mediation by social network elements between extra-project communication and perceived project performance.

Table 2: Summary of support for hypotheses using all dependent variables

Hypotheses	Supported
H1: Project communication positively influences individual commitment to the project.	YES
H1a: Intra-project communication positively influences individual commitment elements.	YES
H1b: extra-project communication positively influences individual commitment elements.	YES
H2: Individual commitment positively influences perceived project performance.	NO
H2a: Affectivity commitment positively influences perceived project performance.	NO
H2b: Continuance commitment positively influences perceived project performance.	NO
H2c: Normative commitment positively influences perceived project performance.	NO
H3: Project communication positively influences social network	YES
H3a: Intra-project communication positively influences social network elements	YES
H3b: Extra-project communication positively influences social network elements	YES
H4: Social networks positively influences perceived project performance.	YES
H4a: Social network degree positively influences perceived project performance.	YES
H4b: Network transitivity positively influences perceived project performance.	YES
H5a: Individual commitment elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance.	YES
H5b: Social network elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance.	YES

5. Discussion of Results

The purpose of this paper was to develop and validate a causal modal of behavioural factors that explain perceived project performance of Ugandan Citizenship projects. We initially hypothesised that intra-project communication and extra-project communication which are considered as two most prominent elements of communication, affect perceived project performance through the mediation of commitment elements and social network elements. Project communication was hypothesised to affect individual commitment, which in turn was expected to influence perceived project performance. As hypothesised, our results reveal that the direct causal relationship between project communication and perceived project performance were non-significant. Thus the final model without such causal relations is supported as shown in Figure 2.

Intra-project communication is positively related to all the three individual commitment elements (Figure 2). Individual commitment is also influenced by extra-project communication. Our results complement those of Yammarino and Naughton (1988) who demonstrated that a positive relationship exists between amount of time spent communicating and the level of effort expended by each project team member on execution of tasks. This means that effective project communication creates a feeling of responsibility and attachment between a stakeholder and the project tasks that makes one indebted to the project thereby creating an atmosphere for individual team members to act without much control and coercion (Nangoli, 2010). This is consistent with Ntayi et al (2010) findings that workers with positive attitude about the task carry out certain role behaviors well beyond the basic minimum levels required of them. Under such circumstances, what drives a person to work is the emotional attachment to the project as natured by communication. This means that when individuals recognize that they are cared for, they become more committed and conscious about their responsibilities, they take greater involvement in the executing tasks and are more innovative. They also keep abreast of changes in and out of the project that affect or are affected by the project and responsibly discuss them with those concerned.

The results further revealed that Intra-project and Extra-project Communication are both positively associate with Social networks and indicated that transitivity and network degree are both positively related to perceived project performance. This indicates that where project managers listen to other stakeholders and incorporate their views in the decisions they implement, over time, many stakeholders are likely to be propelled to act as the bank's advocates and may be depended on by the bank as marketing agents. These findings are in agreement with those of Granovater (1973) and Herkt (2007) who showed that reinforced relationships overtime become dependable. Furthermore, the findings support the fact that Project communication determines the extent to which a particular project wins the collective support and efforts of team members which is in line with Cooke-Davies (2002) and Jugdvev & Muller (2005).

The results also imply that efforts to promote effective communications through availing timely information to stakeholders leads to strengthening of the relationships that exist amongst stakeholders. The results are in agreement with Rasbery and Lamoine (1986) who argued that the consideration of the recipient's preferences in terms of time and means of communication bring about building of trust amongst the two parties. These findings also implied that when the societies within which a commercial bank operates are in support of its citizenship projects, the bank incurs lower cost on implementation of such projects. This could be in terms of the locals availing some free labour during implementation. It could be in form of having locals actively pass on the information to other locals at no cost. These findings are in agreement with those of Hogg and Adamic (2004) who signified that Social networks act as a vehicle for quickly and easily getting the project message to intended audience thereby enhancing awareness and the banks' public image at large. The findings also revealed that Social networks provide the shared maintenance necessary to calm down high stress levels and enable achievement of not only timely but quality outputs. These findings also reflect studies by Pinto (2000) who argued that there is a need to develop a network of other experts who can be called upon for assistance.

Our results further indicate that project communication does not directly influence perceived project success. This means that project communication must work through social networks in order to achieve significant influence on project performance. It should be noted that social network elements have a stronger positive and significant effect on perceived project performance while the commitment element (continuance commitment) has a negative effect on perceived project performance. This study therefore makes a significant contribution by concluding that social networks and continuance commitment fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance.

This means that projects need social networks to achieve their goals successfully in addition to project communication.

5.5 Implications for practice and research

Unless project sponsors and champions ensure that other project stakeholders have been provided with and are satisfied with the availed project information, the efforts (both financial and otherwise) invested into citizenship projects could be seen as having been fruitless. In the same vein, where project supervisors are not as attentive to their subordinates' views and no appropriate avenues have been designated to capture feedback from implementers' and beneficiaries of the project, there will be a high chance of failure of citizenship projects. The project managers in charge of citizenship projects in commercial banks ought to ensure commitment of project staff to achievement of objects by creating an atmosphere of feeling like they (project staff) are part of the family of the project implementation team. This could be through fulfilling the promises that top management sets forth. In this way, the various stakeholders involved in implementation are likely to perceive the project as a success. This study has extended the research frontiers in understanding the role of interpersonal factors (project communication, individual commitment and social networks) in perceived project performance. Despite many studies in project success very few have focused on the role of interpersonal factors and yet as indicated by findings these factors play a significant role. Projects are about managing expectations that have to do with perceptions of success. When researchers are conceptualizing and building theories they should not ignore interpersonal factors.

5.2 Limitations of the study and areas for further research

Although the study provides some interesting findings and makes an important contribution in project performance literature, there are latent limitations worth noting. The study used behavioural constructs which originated from the literature review of commonly cited 'soft' factors in the project management literature. Although the three constructs are robust and sufficiently represent the behavioural aspects, the multidimensional nature of behavioural practises in perceived project performance can be investigated further. Further, since the future of project management practises go through evolution, additional 'soft' factors may be incorporated into the four domain causal model.

The data collection instrument was a standard questionnaire which usually limits the ability to collect views about information outside asked question. The individual commitment elements were expected to positively influence perceived project performance but did not. The two of individual commitment elements (affectivity and normative) were non-significant while the other individual commitment element (continuance) was negatively associated with perceived project performance. The use of case studies and additional surveys in future research might help to explain this surprising paradox.

The study used a cross sectional research design, the behaviors of the variables over a long time could not be completely analyzed and this restricts the applicability of the findings as a longitudinal study may give different results from the ones that were obtained. Future researcher should employ a bigger sample involving other stakeholders like the regulators, customers, local population, among others. This is so because the study only captured the perceptions of bank staff that had taken part in executing citizenship projects and was intended to justify the continued investment in citizenship projects by commercial banks yet accommodation of various stakeholders could give a different view. Despite the diagnostic statistical testes for common methods bias, the use of a questionnaire where all the data was collected in the same measurement context using a common rater and with common item context makes common methods bias remain a potential threat. The future studies should also try to obtain measurements of the independent and dependent variables from different sources and at different times.

Conclusively this study results suggest that the social network elements fully mediate the relationship between project communication and perceived project performance. This implies that the corporate managers of citizenship projects need to develop strategies to create social networks with their stakeholders in order to increase perceived project performance.

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