

**IMPLICATIONS OF ELITISM DYNAMICS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF
PUBLIC WORKS INITIATIVES: THE CASE OF *KAZI MTAANI*
PROJECTS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA**

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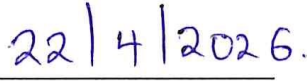
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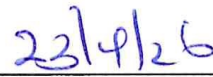
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved husband Stephen and my children Esrael, Gael, Gift, Keith, and Faith, who have been an immense source of inspiration during my studies. I also want to express gratitude to my parents for their unwavering support and prayers. May you all be blessed by God.

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ABSTRACT

Public works programmes are widely implemented as government interventions aimed at addressing unemployment, poverty, and socioeconomic inequalities, particularly among vulnerable populations. Ideally, such initiatives should be governed by transparent, merit-based, and participatory processes that ensure equitable access to opportunities and resources. In Kenya, the *Kazi Mtaani* programme was introduced in April 2020 as part of the government's COVID-19 economic recovery strategy to provide temporary employment to urban youth, improve environmental sanitation, and support low-income households. Despite these intentions, emerging reports have raised concerns regarding the influence of elitism in the implementation of the programme, including politically motivated beneficiary selection, inequitable resource allocation, and elite dominance in governance processes. These challenges have been reported in several counties, including Uasin Gishu, suggesting that elite influence may undermine the programme's objectives. However, empirical studies examining the structural dynamics of elitism and their implications for the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* remain limited. This study therefore sought to examine the implications of elitism dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The study was guided by four objectives: the efficacy of elitism principles, social elitism, economic elitism, and power dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects. The research was anchored on Elite Theory and Stakeholder Theory, which provided a framework for understanding how power relations and stakeholder participation shape project implementation outcomes. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was adopted. The study targeted 1,430 youth participants in the programme, employees from the Ministry of Youth and Social Welfare Services, and Members of Parliament representing the constituencies in Uasin Gishu County. A sample of 314 respondents was selected using appropriate sampling techniques. Primary data were collected through self-administered questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions, following a pilot study conducted in Nandi County. Instrument validity was ensured through expert review, while reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha. Quantitative data were analyzed using correlation and regression techniques, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically and presented through narratives and supporting quotations. The findings revealed that efficacy of elitism principles significantly influence the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects. In particular, social elitism, economic elitism, and power dynamics were found to shape decision-making processes, resource allocation, governance structures, and beneficiary participation in the programme. These dynamics often resulted in unequal access to opportunities and limited participation of vulnerable youth. The study concludes that while *Kazi Mtaani* provides important short-term employment opportunities, elite influence can undermine equitable implementation if not adequately addressed. The study recommends strengthening transparency, accountability, and participatory governance mechanisms in public works programmes to minimize elite capture and enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of youth employment initiatives in Kenya.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| CCD | Community Driven Development |
| COVID 19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| EC | Economic elitisms |
| ENP | Enterprising Program |
| ERP | European Recovery Plan (Marshal Plan) |
| FGD | Focused Group Discussions |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoK | Government of Kenya |
| IP | Implementation of Projects |
| KM | <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> |
| KMP | <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects |
| KNBS | Kenya National Bureau of Statistics |
| KYDP | Kenyan Youth Development Policy |
| LAPSSET | Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Transport |
| LDM | Leader Disciplining Mechanism |
| MCAs | Members of County Assembly |
| MGNREGS | Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme |
| MPs | Members of Parliament |
| NACOSTI | National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| NREGS | National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme |
| NYS | National Youth Service |
| O&M | Operations and Maintenance |
| PCA | Principle Component Analysis |
| PE | Principles of elitism |
| PMI | Project Management Institute |
| PPRA | Public Procurement Regulatory Authority |
| PR | Power dynamics elitism |
| PSNP | Productive Safety Nets Programme |
| PWA | Public Work Administration |
| SE | Social elitism |
| SE's | Small Enterprises |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| UGC | Uasin Gishu County |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCROC | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| USA | United States of America |
| VUP | Vision 2020 Umerenge Programme |
| WB | World Bank |
| FCDO | Foreign Common Wealth and Development Organization |
| SADC | South Africa Development Community |
| SCHMT | Sub County Health Management Team |
| PCVE | Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism |
| VIF | Variance Inflation Factor |
| UNDESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| NCRA | Nation Construction Research Agenda |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West Africa States |

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Public works projects are integral to the transformation of nations since human beings contemplated living in organized communities marked by shared or common infrastructural facilities. They are distinguished by the political, social, and economic dimensions that are shaped by political elites in pursuit of specific visions. From the Roman and Hellenic eras through the Great Depression and post-war reconstruction to contemporary social protection programmes, public works have served simultaneously as tools of development and as arenas in which elite power is exercised, contested, and reproduced. In the current development landscape, public works projects have emerged as key instruments of social and economic transformation that explicitly target youth populations (Free State Public Works and Infrastructure, 2020). This section provides a background on the development and implementation of public works projects from the global, regional/African, and Kenyan perspectives under three organizing themes: the dynamics of elitism, the implementation of public works initiatives, and the implications of elite dynamics for implementation outcomes.

1.1.1 Dynamics of Elitism

Elitism, broadly defined as the concentration of power, resources, and decision-making authority in the hands of a privileged minority, has been a structuring feature of public works governance across historical epochs and contemporary governance systems alike. The dynamics of elitism refer to the patterns, mechanisms, and behavioural tendencies through which elite actors, political, economic, social, and institutional, shape how programmes are planned, prioritized, resourced, and implemented, and who ultimately benefits from their execution. Understanding these dynamics is foundational to

explaining why public works programmes designed for broad public benefit persistently fail to reach their intended beneficiaries (Ritschard, 2020).

In the ancient world, the dynamics of elitism in public works were visible in both the Roman and Hellenic traditions. During the Roman era, infrastructure projects such as roads, aqueducts, and public buildings were funded and managed by the state, but the political elite played a decisive role by providing financial support and oversight while ensuring their own interests were maintained (Caldwell, 2022). Roman roads stretched for 53,000 miles, passing through tunnels as long as 3.5 miles, while dams were constructed to irrigate farms (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2023). This massive infrastructure programme was both a developmental achievement and an expression of elite power: the scale and direction of investment reflected imperial political priorities rather than the welfare of ordinary subjects. In ancient Greece, wealthy patrons or the elite-controlled state funded the construction of temples, theatres, and public structures, dictating the allocation of resources and labour and directly shaping project implementation and outcomes (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019; Ritschard, 2020).

In the modern era, the dynamics of elitism in public works have evolved but remain structurally persistent. During the Great Depression, the United States' New Deal programmes, including the Works Progress Administration, created millions of jobs through public infrastructure construction and funded 400 schools, 130 hospitals, 9,000 miles of sewer lines, 29,000 new bridges, 150 airfields, and 280,000 miles of repaired roads (Garrido, 2021). Despite their stated objectives of broad public benefit and economic recovery, the implementation of these projects frequently encountered challenges related to the influence of local elites who controlled resources and decision-

making processes (Strum, 2020). Hartmann, Davies, and Frederiksen (2019), in their longitudinal analysis of 47 major infrastructure projects across seven countries, found that elite consensus during the project initiation phase produced 73% higher success rates, while elite-connected projects received 2.3 times more resources than technically superior but politically unconnected alternatives, evidence of the decisive and distorting role of elite dynamics in public works governance.

The dynamics of elitism in contemporary public works are further shaped by elite decision-making heuristics that systematically prioritize short-term political survival over technically optimal policy choices. Mackay and Stoker (2024) identified a three-stage elite decision tree, political risk assessment, political empathy, and low-cost signaling, that produces predictable biases in project selection and resource disbursement timing. Krasner and Helleiner (2022) similarly found that international elites systematically favour projects with clear symbolic returns rather than those addressing high-need but low-visibility priorities, calling for institutional checks, transparent criteria and participatory selection, to correct this bias. These findings establish that elite dynamics are not peripheral to public works implementation but constitutive of it: the direction, quality, and equity of implementation are structurally shaped by the dynamics of elite behaviour.

In Rwanda, the colonial dynamics of elitism were particularly stark. The hierarchical governance system was shaped by Belgian colonial rule, during which the Hutu were subjected to forced labour while the Belgians forced Tutsis to act as managers for Hutu workers, institutionalizing elite racial and ethnic hierarchies within public works administration (Braeckman, 2021; Rwigema, 2023). Post-genocide Rwanda undertook significant reforms aimed at dismantling these elite hierarchies: the government

implemented public works initiatives that promoted transparency, accountability, community participation, and the strengthening of the Ombudsman's office (Iyamurenge & Nsengiyumva, 2022; Mutesi & Mukama, 2020). The Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme, introduced in 2008 to reduce poverty through public works employment and entrepreneurship, represented a deliberate attempt to redistribute the benefits of public works away from elite capture, though implementation challenges related to local elite interests affected resource allocation and project outcomes (Nsengiyumva & Rwigema, 2022; World Bank, 2019).

Barker and Giulianotti (2024) documented repeated instances of elite capture in development programme governance across Sub-Saharan Africa, finding that local elites redirected funds and decision rights toward networked actors and turned intended community benefits into elite patronage opportunities. Olukayode *et al.* (2023) demonstrated in a Nigerian multi-state study that elites co-opt anti-corruption mechanisms to defend patronage networks, redirecting resource allocation and blocking projects that threaten elite rents. Boateng and Klopp (2024) showed in Ghana that historical patterns of elite access to land and finance produce current patterns of project selection that systematically favour already-advantaged groups. These African studies converge on a central finding: the dynamics of elitism in African public works are structural and historically embedded, operating through both formal institutional channels and informal patronage networks that formal accountability mechanisms alone cannot constrain.

In Kenya, the dynamics of elitism in public works have their roots in the colonial period, when such projects were utilised to advance the interests of colonial powers and their local supporters (Oyugi, 2005). The colonial administration implemented biased

practices, including varying wages based on race and ethnicity, that institutionalized elite hierarchies in public works administration (Nyaga & Onditi, 2019). Following independence, the governing elite persisted in utilizing public works programmes to advance their own agendas, leading to systematic disregard of the needs and concerns of the broader populace. The Kenya–Uganda railway, which commenced in 1896 and reached Kisumu in 1901, exemplified this pattern: a massive public works project driven by colonial elite interests rather than local development needs (KIPPRA, 2019).

The devolution of governance through Kenya's 2010 Constitution created new county-level institutional structures that were intended to democratized public works decision-making and resource allocation. However, empirical evidence suggests that devolution has also created new arenas for elite dynamics to operate. Kiprotich, Mbugua, and Wanjiku (2020), in a longitudinal study of 67 county development projects in Nakuru, Meru, and Kisumu counties, found that projects with strong political patronage connections received budget allocations 3.2 times higher than merit-based selections and achieved 94% completion rates compared to 47% for non-connected projects, but showed 38% higher cost overruns. The dynamics of elitism in Kenya's devolved public works are therefore characterized by a paradox: elite patronage generates short-term implementation efficiency while systematically undermining long-term equity, institutional development, and equitable outcomes.

Keter and Muema (2021) found that local leaders and politicians directly affected who received *Kazi Mtaani* benefits and how resources were allocated, resulting in favouritism and exclusion of deserving youth. Kiptum and Oluoch (2021) documented that power dynamics including political pressure and corruption significantly influenced both beneficiary selection and resource allocation in Uasin Gishu County. Nyaoga and

Okwemba (2021) revealed that certain contractors received tenders due to political connections rather than competence, resulting in poor work quality and low beneficiary satisfaction. These studies establish that the dynamics of elitism are a primary, rather than peripheral, determinant of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation outcomes in Uasin Gishu County, motivating the systematic quantitative analysis this study undertakes.

1.1.2 Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

The implementation of public works initiatives has evolved considerably across historical periods and geographic contexts, driven by shifting economic conditions, governance philosophies, and development priorities. Public works implementation encompasses the full cycle of programme delivery: project design, beneficiary selection, resource mobilization, procurement, labour deployment, supervision, and outcome monitoring. Historically, the Roman Empire's public works implementation was characterized by centralized state authority combined with elite financial patronage. The construction of 53,000 miles of roads, aqueducts, forums, amphitheaters, sewers, and water mills required systematic project management, standardized construction techniques, and mobilization of vast labour forces, including free citizens, soldiers, and slaves (De Benedictis *et al.*, 2022; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2023). In Hellenic Greece, public works implementation was similarly driven by state funding and elite patronage, with wealthy individuals and city-states funding temples, theatres, and civic structures as expressions of public virtue and political legitimacy (Ritschard, 2020).

The modern era of public works implementation was shaped decisively by the Great Depression. In the United States, the New Deal's Works Progress Administration created millions of jobs through the construction of public infrastructure, implementing projects that included 400 schools, 130 hospitals, 29,000 new bridges, 150 airfields, and 280,000 miles of repaired roads (Garrido, 2021; Jacomé *et al.*, 2021). Despite the economic

recovery after 1933, unemployment remained at approximately 15 percent for several decades, reflecting the limits of public works as a sustainable employment solution (Jacobs & Arndt, 2023). The Marshall Plan in post-war Europe provided substantial funding for rebuilding war-torn infrastructure, with the American programme issuing monetary support to rebuild European economies, prevent economic decline, and boost European output, while implementation was influenced by political elites who determined the prioritization and distribution of resources (Eichengreen, 2019; Tooze, 2021).

In India, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme guaranteed up to 100 days of public works employment per year, implemented by local governments with the aim of local development and infrastructure creation (Zimmerman, 2020). However, the scheme faced significant implementation challenges including private sector capture of projects, government officials exaggerating employment numbers, and underpayment of workers, challenges that directly mirror the elite dynamics documented in other contexts.

In China, rapid industrialization and urbanization in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries involved massive public works projects, highways, railways, and urban infrastructure, in which the influence of political and economic elitisms was evident in planning and execution phases, determining both the success and the geographic focus of these initiatives (Lau & Tsui, 2023). In North Macedonia, youth unemployment, which ranges between one and three years after leaving school, has driven public works programmes targeting youth economic and social development, though limited funding, bureaucracy, and lack of institutional support have affected the scalability and sustainability of youth-led initiatives (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2020; National Youth Council of Macedonia, 2023).

Vietnam's public works implementation context is similarly shaped by high youth unemployment, with those aged 15–24 having the highest unemployment rates, where education and skills development are identified as key enablers of effective programme implementation (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2022; Ngo *et al.*, 2021).

Key factors identified in the global literature as enabling effective public works implementation include transparent and merit-based beneficiary selection, competitive and accountable procurement processes, adequate and timely resource allocation, community participation in programme governance, independent supervision and monitoring, and institutional safeguards against elite capture (Bovens, Schillemans, & Goodin, 2021; World Bank, 2021). Conversely, the primary challenges to effective implementation globally are identified as elite capture of procurement and beneficiary selection processes, weak accountability mechanisms, insufficient community participation, inadequate supervision, and political manipulation of employment allocation (Flyvbjerg, 2020; Hartmann *et al.*, 2019).

Public works implementation in Africa has a complex historical trajectory shaped by colonial labour exploitation, post-independence development priorities, and contemporary social protection objectives. The Belgian colonial administration in Rwanda imposed forced labour on the Hutu population, using public works as a tool of colonial control rather than community benefit, establishing an implementation culture in which the interests of those in power determined who laboured and who benefited (Braeckman, 2021). Post-independence African public works programmes inherited these distorted implementation frameworks, with Osodi (2013) documenting that infrastructure projects in many African countries remained geared toward benefiting the elite and those in power rather than the general population, while international financial

institutions' preferences for large-scale projects further distorted implementation priorities away from community needs (Adelekan, 2018).

Contemporary African public works implementation is characterized by a tension between the social protection objectives of programmes and the elite capture dynamics that systematically divert benefits from intended beneficiaries. In Rwanda, the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme implementation involved public works classified into two categories: Public Works Classics, manual construction of infrastructure such as feeder roads and terraces, and Public Works Expanded, for individuals with labour capacity, including activities such as sweeping roads and gardening (World Bank, 2019). The programme's implementation demonstrated that when political commitment to community participation and transparent governance is strong, public works can reach vulnerable beneficiaries, but that elite dynamics consistently threaten this achievement.

In Nigeria, Okonkwo, Traore, and Mensah (2020) found in a study of 78 infrastructure projects across twelve states that elite-controlled projects achieved 87% completion rates but showed systematic sectoral bias toward large-scale infrastructure with high rent-seeking potential, with 73% of elite-backed projects concentrated in transportation and energy rather than social infrastructure. In Ghana, Ndamani, Kone, and Sithole (2021) documented that elite labour control in community development projects achieved 89% technical completion rates but generated significant social stratification, with elite-connected households receiving 2.6 times higher employment opportunities. In South Africa, Twala and Dlamini (2021) found that elite-influenced youth empowerment projects were frequently deployed as platforms for political patronage rather than genuine beneficiary empowerment. Across these African contexts, the factors that most strongly constrain effective public works implementation are elite capture of beneficiary

selection, non-competitive procurement, inadequate supervision, and insufficient community-level accountability mechanisms.

The multi-country decentralization study (2022–2023) found that administrative decentralization, the governance framework underlying many African public works programmes, can either constrain or amplify elite capture depending on complementary accountability measures, with partial decentralization actually increasing elite capture in contexts where local elite networks are strong. This finding is particularly significant for Kenya's devolved public works governance. Mworira and Ochieng (2023) demonstrated in Kenya's southern rangelands that large-scale public projects generate concentrated benefits, jobs and subcontracts, that are redistributed via elite networks, influencing both resource flows and political goodwill, and that safeguards including transparent subcontracting rules and local procurement regulations are necessary to prevent exclusionary allocation.

Public works implementation in Kenya has historically been shaped by colonial labour mobilization, post-independence patronage politics, and contemporary youth employment objectives. The Kenya–Uganda railway, commenced in 1896, exemplified colonial-era implementation: a state-directed project implemented through imported and coerced labour that served imperial rather than local development interests (KIPPRA, 2019). Post-independence Kenyan governments continued to implement public works programmes, including the National Youth Service (NYS), that were frequently criticized for corruption, favouritism, and elitist conduct, with the initiative functioning as a political instrument to reward political allies and leading to the marginalization of certain worker groups (Oduor & Juma, 2020).

The Kazi Kwa Vijana programme, implemented across fourteen counties, demonstrated systematic elite labour control in Kenya's youth employment public works, with Kimani, Wanjala, and Mwangi (2019) finding that constituencies with dominant political elites showed 91% higher programme enrolment rates but 67% more biased employment allocation, with 78% of jobs allocated to supporters of dominant political parties and a 89% correlation between employment distribution and electoral support patterns. The Constituency Development Fund implementation documented by Macharia, Kiprotich, and Waweru (2022) similarly revealed integrated elite economic elitism, with Members of Parliament simultaneously coordinating labour allocation and capital procurement in 234 CDF projects, achieving 93% completion rates but generating 61% higher implementation costs and 48% reduced competitive procurement participation.

The *Kazi Mtaani* programme, launched in April 2020 in response to the economic disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, was aimed at providing temporary employment to vulnerable urban youth and improving urban infrastructure and sanitation (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020). The programme employed workers in cleaning, disinfection, and maintenance of communal areas such as markets, bus terminals, and roadways, with participants receiving a daily payment of Ksh. 600 (approximately USD 5.50) in collaboration with county authorities (Mwenda & Mwangi, 2021). According to the Oxford Policy Management/FCDO evaluation (2021), while *Kazi Mtaani* generated immediate employment and cash for vulnerable youth, local intermediaries, youth group leaders, ward officials, and small contractors, often mediated access to jobs and inputs, and in some locations, this led to concentrated benefits for youth with connections to local elites.

Key factors identified in the Kenyan literature as enabling effective *Kazi Mtaani* implementation include transparent and merit-based beneficiary selection processes, community-based organization involvement in programme oversight, adequate supervision, timely payment of wages, and clear institutional protocols for hiring (Kimeu & Kiarie, 2021; Mwenda & Mwangi, 2021). Conversely, the primary implementation challenges documented in the Kenyan context include the absence of defined hiring protocols, ethnic and regional discrimination in worker selection, political manipulation of beneficiary lists, inadequate supervision and oversight, monopolization of specific duties by connected workers, and contractor selection driven by political connections rather than technical competence (Njenga *et al.*, 2021; Nyaoga & Okwemba, 2021; The Standard, 2021).

In Uasin Gishu County specifically, the *Kazi Mtaani* programme's implementation has been shaped by the county's devolved governance structure, in which ward-level administrators, community leaders, and county officials exercise significant discretionary authority over programme decisions. Kabinga *et al.* (2021) found that effective management of economic resources, including proper procurement procedures and precise cost estimation, was essential for the implementation and success of the programme but was systematically compromised by elite economic capture. Onyango *et al.* (2021) documented that power dynamics among government representatives, contractors, and project beneficiaries influenced resource distribution and work quality, and identified enhanced participatory decision-making as essential for programme accountability. The convergence of these findings across multiple Kenyan studies establishes that implementation quality in *Kazi Mtaani* is not primarily a technical challenge but a governance challenge shaped decisively by elite dynamics.

The Constituency Development Fund and Kazi Kwa Vijana precedents in Kenya establish that the implications of elite dynamics for public works implementation are not programme-specific but systemic features of Kenya's public works governance. Macharia, Kiprotich, and Waweru (2022) found that integrated elite economic elitism in CDF projects generated 61% higher implementation costs and 48% reduced competitive procurement participation. Kimani, Wanjala, and Mwangi (2019) found in Kazi Kwa Vijana that 78% of jobs were allocated to supporters of dominant political parties, demonstrating that employment allocation in Kenyan public works is structurally mediated by elite political dynamics rather than need-based targeting criteria. Kanyinga and Okello (2017) noted that the CDF, specifically designed to guarantee grassroots development, has been criticised for serving the interests of local elites rather than wider communities, illustrating that even institutional mechanisms designed to circumvent elite dynamics can be captured.

In Uasin Gishu County, the cumulative implications of elite dynamics for *Kazi Mtaani* implementation create a programme that consistently falls short of its stated objectives of poverty reduction, youth employment, and community infrastructure improvement. Sirma (2018) noted that the Eldoret Southern Bypass, a public infrastructure project in the county seat, exemplified elitist behaviour: the original route was altered without community consultation, displacing numerous families, while the tendering process was marred by favouritism and corruption, producing a bypass that prioritized the interests of the affluent and powerful while neglecting less affluent communities on the town's periphery. This local precedent illustrates that the implications of elite dynamics in Uasin Gishu County's public works are not limited to the *Kazi Mtaani* programme but reflect a broader governance culture in which elite interests systematically shape public works outcomes. Against this backdrop, understanding and quantifying the specific

mechanisms through which elite dynamics influence *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Uasin Gishu County is both analytically necessary and practically urgent.

Despite the significant investments in public works projects globally and in Kenya, the intended outcomes are frequently undermined by the influence of elite dynamics. In the case of the *Kazi Mtaani* programme in Uasin Gishu County, the influence of local elites has been a critical factor in project implementation that has escaped systematic critical quantitative analysis. This research sought to explore the dynamics of elitism and their effect on the implementation of public works programmes, specifically examining the *Kazi Mtaani* initiative. Grasping these dynamics is essential for creating strategies to reduce the adverse impacts of elitism and boost the effectiveness of public works initiatives.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The public works programmes should be governed by transparent, merit-based, and community-driven processes that ensure equitable access to employment, resources, and project benefits for the most vulnerable populations. In such a framework, decisions on beneficiary selection, resource allocation, contractor appointment, and project prioritization are guided by clear institutional protocols, independent oversight, and meaningful community participation, resulting in improved youth livelihoods, urban infrastructure, and social cohesion. The *Kazi Mtaani* initiative, launched in April 2020 as part of Kenya's COVID-19 economic recovery strategy, was intended to provide temporary employment to over 200,000 urban youth, improve sanitation infrastructure, and cushion low-income households, with an initial budget of Ksh. 10 billion (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2020; Kenya National Treasury, 2020).

In practice, however, implementation has been shaped by elite interference, including politically driven beneficiary selection, nepotistic contractor appointments, inequitable resource distribution, and exclusion of vulnerable youth. Evaluations and audits report concentrated benefits among youth connected to local elites and irregularities in procurement and resource allocation, with Uasin Gishu County highlighted for incomplete documentation and favoritism (Oxford Policy Management/FCDO, 2021; Kenya National Audit Office, 2021; Keter & Muema, 2021; Nyaoga & Okwemba, 2021). These findings underscore that social, economic, and power dimensions of elitism significantly influence programme outcomes.

Despite these documented challenges, no study has systematically quantified the impact of elitism dynamics on implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County. Existing literature focuses mainly on technical and administrative issues, leaving the structural role of elitism under theorized and empirically underexplored (Mwenda & Mwangi, 2021; Kaberia & Onyango, 2021). This study therefore investigates how dynamics of elitism, social elitism, economic elitism, and power dynamics elitism affect programme outcomes, providing evidence to inform more equitable and effective youth employment interventions.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study is important for County governments as it offers insights into the effects of outside elite participation in public works on tackling socio-economic issues. It also assists the government in thorough policy evaluation concerning the recognition of obstacles to executing public initiatives.

Limited research in Kenya investigates the impacts of elite behavioral phenomena at the community level, the circumstances that allow it to flourish, and how citizens and organizations can confront it to tackle socioeconomic issues. The research significantly enhances the existing knowledge regarding the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* initiatives. The results assist the Government and the public in establishing systems that guarantee all parties, including youth, local development processes, institutions, and elites fairly contribute to the successful execution of public initiatives. Furthermore, the study's results enhance project management theory and practice while addressing a gap in the literature, as few studies explore the relationship between elite processes, behavior, and the execution of public works projects.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The aim of the research was to establish the implications of elitism dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

- a) To determine the efficacy of elitism principles on implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.
- b) To examine the influence of social elitism on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.
- c) To assess the influence of economic elitism on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.
- d) To establish the influence of power dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance:

- i. H₀₁: The efficacy of elitism principles has no statistically significant influence on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.
- ii. H₀₂: Social elitism has no statistically significant influence on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.
- iii. H₀₃: Economic elitism has no statistically significant influence on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.
- iv. H₀₄: Power dynamics have no statistically significant influence on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that the data from the respondents accurately represented elite involvement throughout project execution. The respondents recognized the elites' role in the implementation phase of projects.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

During the process of conducting this research work, there were limitations encountered by the researcher that contributed to the general analysis and interpretations of the research findings. These challenges entailed meeting the members of parliament who had limited time to respond to the research instrument; however, the researcher utilized the presence of their personal assistants who gave valuable feedback to the interview. Youths involved in *Kazi Mtaani* also kept migrating from one point to the other; there was also absenteeism which affected the response rates amongst the youths, to counter this challenge the researcher was in constant communication with the Youth leaders who were able to inform the researcher of their location, in addition the researcher utilized their leader and the research assistant in collecting the questionnaires from the absent

youths. The staff at the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services were also hesitant to disclose certain information, however this limitation was mitigated by assuring them of confidentiality of all the information they shared.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

The research focused solely on examining how elitism impacts the effective implementation of the public works program; *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County. The research examined how elitist principles contribute to the effective execution of public works projects, the role of social and economic elitisms in the successful realization of these initiatives, and how power dynamics affect the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County. *Kazi Mtaani* initiatives included areas such as education, agriculture, forestry, health, roads, bridges, and water. Uasin Gishu was selected because it ranks among the wealthiest counties in Kenya and has several ongoing projects that have come to a standstill. Study participants consisted of youths in Uasin Gishu County, staff from the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services, and members of parliament.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The study emphasizes that youth bulge is a major concern that affects the nations development. Government initiatives geared towards improving youths' livelihoods should be properly coordinated and managed. Youths should be involved from formulation to implementation of public works project processes.

The following conceptual framework guided this study.

Independent Variables

Elitism Dynamics

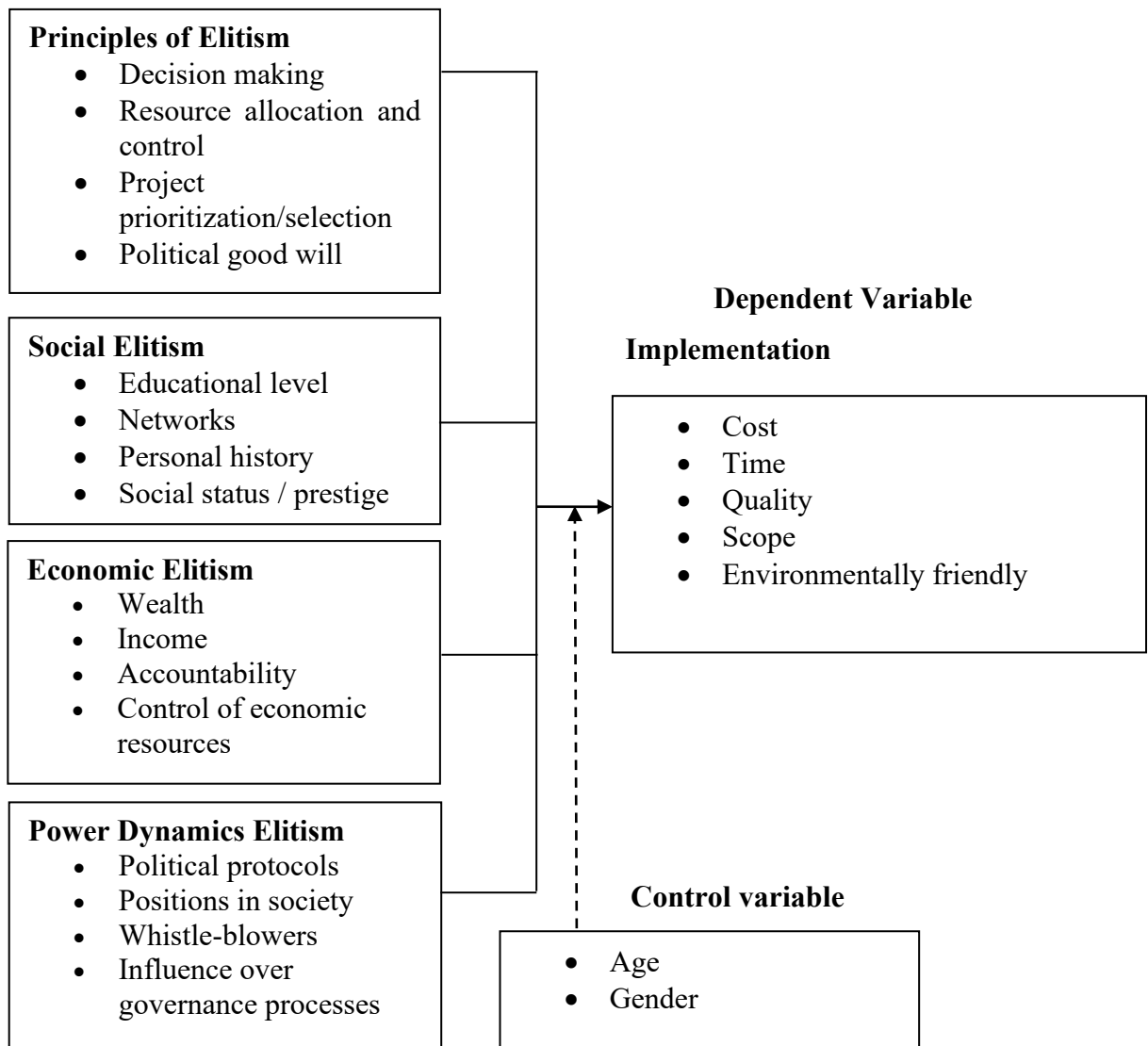


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2026)

The conceptual framework of this study proposed that elitism dynamics influence the implementation outcomes of the *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County. The independent variables, dynamics of elitism, social elitism, economic elitism, and power dynamics elitism, represent different ways through which elites influence development processes. The dynamics of elitism manifest in aspects such as decision-making

processes, project prioritization or selection, political goodwill, and the control and allocation of resources. When elites dominate these processes, project implementation may be shaped by elite interests rather than community needs. Similarly, social elitism, reflected in educational level, personal networks, social status, and prestige, may determine who participates in project planning and implementation. Individuals with higher social capital may exert greater influence on project decisions, potentially marginalizing ordinary community members. Economic elitism, through wealth, income levels, accountability, and control over economic resources, may also determine who benefits from project opportunities and who controls financial flows within the project. In addition, power dynamics elitism, represented by political protocols, societal positions, whistle-blowing tendencies, and influence over governance processes, may shape project governance and oversight mechanisms.

These elitism dynamics are hypothesized to affect the dependent variable, which is the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects measured through project performance indicators such as cost efficiency, timeliness, quality of work, scope achievement, and environmental sustainability. When elitism dynamics are dominant, they may influence project implementation either positively or negatively. For instance, strong political goodwill from elites may accelerate resource mobilization and policy support, leading to improved project outcomes. Conversely, excessive elite control may lead to biased decision-making, misallocation of resources, and exclusion of beneficiaries, thereby compromising project quality, increasing costs, or causing delays. The study also considers control variables such as age and gender, which may influence perceptions of elitism and participation in the *Kazi Mtaani* program. These demographic factors may shape how youth experience or interpret elitism in project implementation processes.

. Control variables included the age, gender, and education levels of the participants.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Dynamics: Changes in different positions

Dynamics of elitism: Changes in positions of superior people

Implementation: Carrying out of project activities in order to realize the results

Public works initiative: Government sponsored short term activities which offer a means of livelihood

Kazi Mtaani: A Swahili word meaning short-term government activities involving the youths in works such as clearing bushes along the roads, cleaning market places and unblocking the drainage system with an aim of improving their economic livelihoods

Elitism: The ideology and practice within a specific context where authority is held by a superior limited group of individuals.

Public infrastructure: Initiatives financed by the state and executed by the community for their advantage

Social elitism: Consists of educated individuals who are held in high regard within the community but lack a defined political or leadership role or a wealth status that would distinctly classify them in a different elite group. The social elitism can gain their status through family connections with other elites or benefit from close ties to religious leaders.

Economic elitism: possesses considerable wealth that enables them to dominate corporations and sway policy, utilizing one's capability to wield power through financial resources directly (it may involve granting loans or bribery), business transactions, hiring or refusal to hire) and the granting of contracts.

Power dynamics elitism: Authority over decision-making procedures and crucial information, power in this context refers to "the negotiation of decisions, the

tradeoffs that allow for flexibility, and the engagement of other actors in support of a cause."

Resource management: It focuses on the usage of resources designated for the assignment. It's completed during the entire project cycle.

Elite Capture: A scenario in which powerful individuals modify launched initiatives to benefit themselves, often to the detriment of the intended population. It is another form of corruption where those in powerful government positions derive personal gain from their public roles.

Elite: A collection of individuals possessing higher political and economic standing compared to others in their social group. It can also be a significant figure within the community.

Stakeholder Engagement: The act of including individuals with a vested interest in a project in the daily operations of any initiative.

Stakeholder: These are the participants in a project. They have a personal stake in the project and are actively engaged in its activities, leading to potential gains or losses.

Youth: This is an individual between 18 and 35 years.

1.12 Theoretical Framework.

The study is anchored in two complementary theoretical frameworks: Elite Theory and Stakeholder Theory. Elite Theory provides the explanatory lens for understanding how privileged actors shape the governance and implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* public works initiatives, while Stakeholder Theory extends this analysis by accounting for the roles and interests of all actors involved in programme delivery. Together, these theories offer an integrated framework for examining how elite dynamics shape implementation outcomes and what institutional arrangements can mitigate elite capture.

1.12.1 Elite Theory

Elite Theory was pioneered by Italian social scientists Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923) and Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941), who independently established the foundational claim that all societies are governed by a ruling minority that derives its position from superior qualities, resources, and social connections. Pareto (1916) articulated the circulation of elites as a universal social law, arguing that history is fundamentally a graveyard of aristocracies in which different elite groups cyclically replace one another while the mass of the population remains governed. He categorised elites into governing elites, those directly involved in the exercise of political and administrative power, and non-governing elites, those who hold high status without direct political authority, while the non-elite majority remained subordinate to both categories. Mosca (1896), in his foundational work *The Ruling Class*, contended that all human societies are organized around the fundamental division between those who rule and those who are ruled, with authority residing permanently in the minority that constitutes the organized ruling class. Mosca argued that what distinguishes ruling elites is not merely their numbers but their capacity for organization and coordinated action, which non-elite majorities structurally lack.

Robert Michels (1876–1936) significantly extended Elite Theory through his examination of political organizations in *Political Parties* (1911), where he formulated the celebrated Iron Law of Oligarchy. Michels observed that even organizations founded on democratic and egalitarian principles inevitably develop oligarchic structures as they grow, with power concentrating in the hands of a professional leadership class that controls crucial organizational resources, funds, information flows, communications, and appointments. Max Weber, working in the same intellectual tradition, argued that political action is predominantly driven by the smaller minority faction and explained the connections between elite units and the execution of political and social projects. More recently, Gilens and Page (2014) provided empirical validation for Elite Theory in contemporary democratic settings, finding that economic elitisms and organized groups representing business interests exercise substantial independent influence on United States government policy, while average citizens and mass-based interest groups have little or no independent influence. For public works initiatives such as *Kazi Mtaani*, Elite Theory predicts that the programme's implementation will be shaped by the behaviours of political elites, government representatives, and other key figures who possess the authority to influence programme development, execution, and results, prioritising their own interests or those of their associates over the wider community.

Elite Theory has attracted substantial criticism on both empirical and normative grounds. Pluralist theorists, most prominently Robert Dahl (1961) in his study of New Haven's governance, challenged the elitist claim that a unified, cohesive ruling minority governs all important decisions, arguing instead that power in democratic societies is dispersed across multiple competing interest groups rather than concentrated in a single elite. Dahl demonstrated that different elites dominate different policy domains and that no single unified elite consistently prevails across all areas of governance. A second major

criticism comes from the structural-functionalist tradition, which questions Elite Theory's claim that elite rule is inevitable and universal, arguing that specialized leadership and differentiated authority are functional requirements of complex social organizations rather than expressions of exploitation or domination. Scholars in this tradition contend that Elite Theory conflates the functional necessity of leadership with the normative problem of elite capture.

A further significant criticism concerns Elite Theory's tendency toward historical and structural determinism. Critics argue that by emphasizing the structural persistence of elite rule across all historical periods and social systems, Elite Theory leaves insufficient space for agency, reform, and transformative democratic politics. It has also been criticised for failing to adequately account for how mass mobilisation, social movements, and democratic accountability mechanisms can effectively constrain elite behaviour and produce more equitable governance outcomes. From a normative perspective, Elite Theory has been criticised for potentially providing intellectual legitimization for elite dominance by treating it as inevitable, thereby undermining the case for democratic reform. Lopez (2013) notes that while Elite Theory accurately describes patterns of elite influence, its deterministic framing can inadvertently discourage the institutional design innovations necessary to constrain elite capture in public programmes.

Elite Theory exhibits several analytical limitations that constrain its direct applicability to the *Kazi Mtaani* implementation context. First, the theory's central focus is on identifying and describing elite rule rather than on explaining the specific mechanisms through which elite dynamics shape implementation processes, beneficiary selection, resource allocation, procurement, and supervision at the community level. It provides a structural diagnosis of elite domination but offers limited guidance on the specific

behavioural pathways through which elites shape programme outcomes in devolved, community-scale public works. Second, Elite Theory was developed primarily in the context of Western European and North American political systems and does not adequately account for the specific forms of elite dynamics that operate in post-colonial African contexts, where ethnicity, patronage networks, and colonial institutional legacies mediate elite behaviour in ways that Western Elite Theory does not anticipate.

Third, Elite Theory tends to treat elites as a relatively unified and coherent category, whereas empirical evidence from Kenya's public works context demonstrates that elite interests are frequently fragmented, competitive, and situationally variable, with different elite factions competing for programme benefits rather than collectively dominating them. Fourth, the theory does not adequately account for the dependent variable of this study, the specific implementation outcomes of public works programmes, making it necessary to complement it with a theory that addresses the roles and contributions of all programme actors in shaping implementation quality. The researcher therefore supplements Elite Theory with Stakeholder Theory to address this analytical limitation.

Elite Theory rests on several foundational assumptions. The first and most fundamental assumption is the inevitability of elite rule: in all human societies, regardless of formal political system, a minority elite will organize itself to govern the decisions and resources that matter most. The second assumption is the organizational superiority of elites: elites maintain their dominance not through superior intelligence or merit alone but through their capacity for organization, coordination, and information control, which non-elite majorities structurally lack. The third assumption is the circulation rather than elimination of elites: social change involves the replacement of one elite by another rather than the elimination of elite domination itself, with governing elites eventually

losing their vitality and being displaced by rising counter-elites. The fourth assumption is the relative passivity of the masses: non-elite populations are assumed to be politically disorganized and susceptible to manipulation by elites who control information, resources, and decision-making processes. The fifth assumption is the universality of elite dynamics: the structural tendency toward elite rule operates across different institutional contexts, including democratic governments, voluntary organizations, and public works programmes. Applied to *Kazi Mtaani*, these assumptions predict that elite actors will organize themselves to control the programme's most consequential decisions, beneficiary selection, resource allocation, contractor appointment, regardless of formal programme design safeguards.

Elite Theory is directly and centrally relevant to this study of the implications of elitism dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The theory provides the primary analytical framework for explaining why *Kazi Mtaani*, despite being designed to benefit the most vulnerable urban youth, consistently fails to reach its intended beneficiaries and falls short of its implementation objectives. By illuminating how governing elites, county politicians, ward administrators, government officials, and connected community leaders, exercise disproportionate authority over programme governance, beneficiary selection, and resource allocation, Elite Theory explains the structural logic of implementation failure that the empirical literature consistently documents.

The theory is specifically relevant in explaining each of the four independent variables examined in this study. With respect to the dynamics of elitism, Elite Theory explains how elite consensus or fragmentation during programme initiation shapes implementation trajectory. With respect to social elitism, the theory illuminates how

social elitism networks, religious leaders, community officials, and peer networks, mediate access to programme benefits through gatekeeping mechanisms. With respect to economic elitism, the theory explains how elite control of procurement and labour allocation generates interlocked capture systems. With respect to power dynamics, the theory provides the foundational framework for understanding how power asymmetries between elite actors and vulnerable youth beneficiaries structurally disadvantage the latter in every stage of programme governance. Furthermore, Elite Theory's recognition that executing projects necessitates the collaboration of both elite and non-elite members, and that elite and non-elite interests can align under the right institutional conditions, directly motivates this study's policy recommendations for institutional reforms that can harness positive elite coordination while constraining exploitative elite capture. Nonetheless, as the researcher notes, Elite Theory alone does not adequately explain the roles of all programme actors, motivating the complementary adoption of Stakeholder Theory.

1.12.2 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory was developed by R. Edward Freeman in his seminal 1983 work *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, which fundamentally reconceptualized the purpose of organizations by arguing that managers must consider and satisfy the interests of all stakeholders, defined as any individual or group who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives, rather than exclusively serving shareholders. Freeman's theory represented a paradigm shift in management thinking, extending the legitimate circle of organizational concern beyond investors and owners to include clients, community members, financiers, employees, government entities, religious leaders, and all others whose interests are materially affected by organizational decisions. The theory posits that for any project to be successful, it must

create value for all its stakeholders, guided by six key principles: the principle of entry and exit pertaining to the rules for stakeholder involvement; the principle of externalities addressing the impact of stakeholder actions on others; the principle of agency focusing on stakeholder responsibilities; the principle of governance relating to stakeholder decision-making processes; the principle of contract cost considering the costs of stakeholder agreements; and the principle of limited immortality suggesting that organizations should endure beyond their stakeholders' involvement.

The Project Management Institute (PMI, 2021) underscores that stakeholders are individuals actively involved in a project whose interests can significantly influence its execution and successful completion, making stakeholder theory a foundational framework in contemporary project management. Rajeev Dwivedi and Pradeep Dwivedi (2021) further emphasize that the role of Stakeholder Theory in project planning and management is to address the levels of participation of actors throughout the life cycle of a project and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of deliverables across project processes. Since the youths in *Kazi Mtaani* are among the programme's primary stakeholders, Stakeholder Theory demands their incorporation from the project identification phase through the entire implementation life cycle, with meaningful participation generating the ownership that is recognized as essential to project success.

Stakeholder Theory has attracted significant criticism despite its widespread adoption in project management and organizational theory. The most prominent criticism is the theory's failure to provide a clear and operational priority rule for situations in which stakeholder interests conflict. Critics argue that the theory's injunction to serve all stakeholders is practically unhelpful when different stakeholders' interests are mutually incompatible, as they frequently are in public works programmes where beneficiary

communities, government authorities, contractors, and political elites have genuinely divergent interests that cannot all be simultaneously satisfied. Jensen (2001) argued that without a single objective function, stakeholder value maximization rather than shareholder value maximization, managers are effectively given an excuse to pursue their own interests rather than those of any stakeholder group.

A second major criticism concerns the theory's treatment of stakeholder interests as essentially negotiable and reconcilable through inclusive dialogue and participatory processes, which underestimates the structural power asymmetries that make some stakeholders' voices constitutively more powerful than others in programme governance. In the *Kazi Mtaani* context, the formal inclusion of vulnerable youth as stakeholders in programme governance processes does not automatically translate into genuine influence when elite actors, county politicians, ward officials, and connected contractors, structurally dominate decision-making through their privileged access to information, resources, and institutional authority. This limitation is precisely why Elite Theory is needed as a complementary framework: it explains the power dynamics that Stakeholder Theory's participatory optimism tends to underestimate. Rajeev Dwivedi (2021) acknowledges that managing a diverse population of stakeholders can lead to inequities, as reconciling differing interests may be difficult and some stakeholders may have more power and influence, potentially dominating the process and overshadowing others.

Stakeholder Theory exhibits several limitations in the context of public works implementation in developing country settings. First, the theory was developed primarily in the context of Western corporate management, where stakeholder relationships are typically mediated through formal contractual and regulatory frameworks that provide relatively transparent rules for stakeholder engagement. In Kenya's *Kazi Mtaani* context,

stakeholder relationships are frequently mediated through informal patronage networks, ethnic affiliations, and political clientelism that formal Stakeholder Theory frameworks do not anticipate or adequately address. The formal stakeholder management plans and structured participation processes that Stakeholder Theory recommends may be systematically captured by elite actors in contexts where informal power dynamics dominate programme governance.

Second, Stakeholder Theory's assumption that meaningful stakeholder participation can be achieved through appropriate management practices underestimates the structural barriers to genuine youth participation in *Kazi Mtaani* governance. When ward-level political elites control beneficiary selection, community officials act as gatekeepers to programme access, and county officials exercise discretionary authority over resource allocation, the formal inclusion of youth in stakeholder consultations does not translate into substantive influence over the programme decisions that most affect them. Third, the theory does not provide a specific analytical framework for the dependent variable of this study, the quality and equity of public works implementation outcomes, making it necessary to operationalize its insights through empirical measurement of specific implementation indicators rather than relying on its general prescriptions for inclusive governance. Fourth, the theory's emphasis on achieving consensus among diverse stakeholders may obscure the fundamental conflicts of interest between elite actors and vulnerable youth beneficiaries in *Kazi Mtaani*, making it important to combine its insights with Elite Theory's more conflict-oriented analysis of power dynamics.

Stakeholder Theory rests on several key assumptions that shape its analytical and prescriptive implications for *Kazi Mtaani* implementation. The first assumption is that all stakeholders have legitimate interests that deserve consideration in project governance,

regardless of their formal status or power within the programme. The second assumption is that projects that recognise and balance the interests of all stakeholders will achieve better outcomes in terms of sustainability, community acceptance, and long-term effectiveness than projects that serve only the interests of dominant actors. The third assumption is that stakeholders are willing to participate meaningfully in governance processes when given genuine opportunities to do so, and that their participation will contribute to more informed and equitable programme decisions. The fourth assumption is the compatibility of stakeholder interests: while acknowledging that conflicts exist, the theory assumes that appropriate facilitation and inclusive dialogue can identify common ground and achieve workable compromises that serve the legitimate interests of all parties. The fifth assumption is that organisations and projects have responsibilities not only to their primary beneficiaries but to the broader community affected by their operations, making community engagement a governance obligation rather than an optional enhancement. Applied to *Kazi Mtaani*, these assumptions imply that genuine youth participation in programme governance, from beneficiary selection through implementation oversight, is both practically achievable and essential for programme effectiveness and sustainability.

Stakeholder Theory is highly relevant to this study in two complementary ways. First, it provides the theoretical rationale for examining the roles of all actors involved in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, not only the elite actors foregrounded by Elite Theory but also the full range of stakeholders whose interests shape programme dynamics, including youth beneficiaries, community-based organizations, NGOs, county officials, ward administrators, contractors, religious leaders, and government representatives. By mapping the interests, influence, and engagement levels of this full stakeholder landscape, the study can provide a more complete picture of how implementation

outcomes are shaped by the interaction of multiple actor interests rather than by elite dynamics alone.

Second, Stakeholder Theory provides the theoretical foundation for the study's policy recommendations by establishing that meaningful youth participation in *Kazi Mtaani* governance, through community-based beneficiary selection, participatory oversight mechanisms, and transparent accountability frameworks, is both theoretically justified and empirically supported as a strategy for constraining elite capture. The theory's principle of agency, which focuses on stakeholder responsibilities, directly motivates recommendations for institutional mechanisms that give youth beneficiaries genuine accountability authority over programme decisions. Its principle of governance, relating to stakeholder decision-making processes, provides the framework for designing participatory governance structures that can constrain the elite power dynamics documented in this study. Furthermore, the theory's recognition that adequate engagement and participation of stakeholders are crucial for minimizing complications and enhancing project success provides the normative rationale for the study's central recommendation: that *Kazi Mtaani's* persistent implementation failures can only be addressed through structural reforms that genuinely incorporate youth as governance actors throughout the programme life cycle, from project identification through implementation to evaluation. Together, Elite Theory and Stakeholder Theory provide a comprehensive and mutually reinforcing theoretical framework for this study: Elite Theory explains why *Kazi Mtaani* currently fails vulnerable youth, while Stakeholder Theory explains how it can be reformed to serve them more equitably and effectively.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzed and assessed the existing literature pertinent to the research. The literature favors the creation of *Kazi Mtaani* and emphasizes elitism in project implementation. It took into account the following factors: dynamics of elitism, economic elitism, social elitism, and power relations.

2.2 Empirical Review

The empirical review presents a systematic and comprehensive examination of studies relevant to the four study objectives: dynamics of elitism and implementation of Kazi Mtaani; social elitism and implementation of Kazi Mtaani; economic elitism and implementation of Kazi Mtaani; and power dynamics elitism and implementation of Kazi Mtaani.

2.3.1 Efficacy of Elitism principles and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

The principles of elitism in public works implementation encompass the patterns, mechanisms, and behavioural tendencies through which elite actors, political, social, economic, and institutional, shape how public programmes are planned, prioritized, governed, and delivered. The researcher contends that elitism principles are not incidental features of programme implementation; they are structural forces that determine the trajectory of resource flows, decision-making processes, and beneficiary outcomes. Understanding the efficacy of elitism is therefore foundational to explaining why public works programmes designed for vulnerable populations persistently fail to reach their intended beneficiaries. The following global, African, and Kenyan studies map this terrain with increasing contextual specificity.

Hartmann, Davies, and Frederiksen (2019) conducted a comprehensive longitudinal study titled 'The Politics of Large Infrastructure Projects: A Multi-Country Comparative Analysis' in seven countries including Germany, United Kingdom, Australia, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands, and Canada. The study was motivated by persistent empirical observations that elite consensus or fragmentation during the initiation phase of large infrastructure projects had decisive and long-lasting consequences for implementation quality, cost control, and timely delivery. The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, analyzing 47 major infrastructure projects over a 15-year period using case study methodology combined with quantitative performance metrics analysis. Data collection involved structured interviews with 312 project stakeholders including political elites, project managers, and community representatives, alongside document analysis of project approval processes. The study's sample comprised 312 project stakeholders across 47 major infrastructure projects in seven countries. The findings revealed that projects with high elite consensus during the initiation phase had 73% higher success rates in terms of on-time completion and budget adherence compared to projects with fragmented elite support. The findings further demonstrated that elite coordination mechanisms significantly influenced resource allocation efficiency, with politically connected projects receiving 2.3 times more resources than technically superior but politically unconnected alternatives. The study concluded that elite networks create path dependencies that can both facilitate and constrain project implementation effectiveness, particularly in democratic contexts where multiple elite groups compete for influence. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing exclusively on developed democratic systems with mature accountability institutions, which differ fundamentally from Kenya's devolved governance context where ethnic politics and patronage networks mediate elite dynamics. A conceptual gap is also created by the study's failure to

examine how elite dynamics specifically shape the exclusion of vulnerable youth populations, the primary target beneficiaries of community-level public works programmes like *Kazi Mtaani*.

Bovens, Schillemans, and Goodin (2021) investigated 'Democratic Accountability versus Elite Efficiency in Public Project Implementation: Evidence from European Union Infrastructure Programs' across 12 European Union member states. The study was motivated by the fundamental theoretical tension between the efficiency advantages of elite governance and the democratic legitimacy requirements of publicly funded infrastructure initiatives. The researchers employed a comparative case study methodology examining 156 EU-funded infrastructure projects using a mixed-methods design that combined quantitative performance analysis with qualitative institutional assessment. Data collection involved 428 semi-structured interviews with project stakeholders across different organizational levels, from European Commission officials to local community representatives, while the researchers analyzed project documentation and performance data spanning 2014–2020. The study's sample comprised 428 stakeholders across 156 EU-funded infrastructure projects in 12 member states. The findings demonstrated that projects managed through elite-dominated governance structures achieved 84% higher technical efficiency scores but scored 41% lower on democratic legitimacy indicators compared to projects with broader stakeholder participation. The researchers also found that elite-controlled projects experienced faster approval processes, averaging 14 months versus 28 months for participatory projects, but generated higher levels of community resistance and legal challenges. The study concluded that while elite governance enhances technical efficiency in project implementation, it creates significant accountability deficits that can undermine long-term project sustainability and social acceptance. The study creates a contextual gap

because EU member states operate within strong legal and institutional accountability frameworks that substantially constrain elite behaviour, conditions largely absent in Kenya's county governance system. A methodological gap is also created by the study's failure to examine the specific dynamics of elite behaviour in programmes that exclusively target marginalized youth in low-income peri-urban settings.

Müller, Sankaran, and Turner (2020) examined 'Elite Governance Networks and Megaproject Success: A Cross-National Study of Transportation Infrastructure' across fifteen countries spanning North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific regions. The study was motivated by persistent evidence that the structure of elite networks, rather than the technical design of projects, was the decisive determinant of megaproject success rates across diverse governance contexts. This quantitative study utilized a stratified sampling approach to analyze 89 transportation megaprojects with budgets exceeding one billion US dollars, employing social network analysis and regression modelling to assess the relationship between elite network structures and project outcomes. Data collection involved surveys administered to 567 senior executives, government officials, and project directors, supplemented by archival analysis of project documentation spanning 2010–2019. The study's sample comprised 567 senior stakeholders across 89 megaprojects in fifteen countries. The research findings indicated that projects characterized by dense elite networks with high betweenness centrality achieved 68% better performance scores on composite success metrics. Specifically, elite network density was positively correlated with improved decision-making speed ($r = 0.74, p < 0.001$) and resource mobilization efficiency ($r = 0.69, p < 0.001$). The study concluded that elite governance networks serve as critical coordination mechanisms that enable rapid decision-making and resource allocation but also create potential democratic deficits in project selection and priority-setting processes. A methodological gap is

created by the study's exclusive focus on megaprojects exceeding one billion dollars, making findings difficult to apply to community-scale public works programmes like *Kazi Mtaani*. A conceptual gap is created by examining elite effectiveness without analyzing the distributive consequences for non-elite programme beneficiaries, the central concern of this study.

Mackay and Stoker (2024) examined how political elites make decisions under pressure by observing a series of high-stakes policy deliberations and combining elite interviews with process tracing to document decision heuristics. Based on qualitative field access to ministerial decision meetings in a Western European country, they identified a three-stage decision tree in which elites first assess political risk, then apply political empathy by anticipating voter heuristics, and finally select low-cost signaling options when uncertainty is high. The study was motivated by a significant gap in the literature between rational actor models of elite decision-making and the actual heuristics deployed in real-time, high-stakes policy deliberations. The findings concluded that elite decision-making often relies on heuristics that prioritize short-term political survival over technically optimal policy choices, producing predictable biases in project selection and timing. The study's implication for project implementation is that elite heuristics can systematically skew which projects are prioritized and the timing of resource disbursements, especially where political reputational risk is salient. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Western European ministerial decision-making, which differs fundamentally from the ward-level and county administrative decision-making processes through which elite dynamics shape *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Kenya. A methodological gap is created by the observational design in formal ministerial settings, which cannot capture the informal elite dynamics, ethnic patronage, political affiliation

screening, and community-level negotiation, that characterize *Kazi Mtaani* implementation sites.

Krasner and Helleiner (2022) combined survey data of international elites with in-depth elite interviews to analyze how elite preferences shape which global projects and initiatives receive support. Their mixed-methods study employed surveys and interviews across multiple countries and found that elites favour initiatives that preserve existing advantage structures and are more likely to mobilize political goodwill for high-visibility projects that confer reputational gains. The study was motivated by persistent evidence that international elite consensus was a more decisive determinant of which global projects received implementation support than technical merit or development need assessments. The authors concluded that elite preferences systematically favour projects with clear symbolic returns rather than those addressing low-visibility but high-need priorities, and they called for institutional checks, transparent criteria and participatory selection, to correct this bias. This global perspective highlights the role of elite incentives in skewing project prioritization away from distributive fairness. The study creates a contextual gap because its focus on global governance elite dynamics differs substantially from the local and county-level elite dynamics shaping *Kazi Mtaani* project implementation in Kenya's Uasin Gishu County. A methodological gap is created by the focus on project prioritization preferences rather than on the specific implementation mechanisms through which elite dynamics determine who captures programme benefits once implementation commences.

The researcher observes that the global evidence on elite dynamics in public works implementation consistently documents a paradox: elite coordination generates measurable efficiency gains in large-scale infrastructure implementation while

simultaneously generating systematic exclusion, resource diversion, and accountability deficits at the community level. This paradox is central to understanding *Kazi Mtaani*, where the programme is small-scale, community-level, and explicitly targeted at vulnerable youth, precisely the context in which the negative dynamics of elitism dominate. The global studies reviewed above, while instructive in establishing theoretical frameworks, leave critical gaps in understanding how elite dynamics operate in community-level youth employment programmes in African devolved governance contexts. These gaps are taken up in the African and Kenyan evidence reviewed below.

Mkandawire (2005) in a foundational African analysis, stated that elitist behaviour in public works projects on the continent has a longstanding history rooted in the colonial period. The motivation for this analysis was the recognition that post-independence African public works programmes could not be properly understood without situating them within the colonial political economy in which infrastructure was explicitly designed to serve elite interests. The analytical review demonstrated that public works programmes in colonial Africa served to advance the agendas of colonial authorities and their local partners, while disregarding the requirements and interests of indigenous communities. The study concluded that the elite capture of public works in post-independence Africa is not a rupture from the colonial past but a structural continuity of it, with post-independence governing elites adopting and adapting the same infrastructure-for-elite-benefit logic inherited from their colonial predecessors. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on colonial-era dynamics without examining how the specific governance architecture of contemporary devolved public works programmes, such as Kenya's county-administered *Kazi Mtaani*, reproduces and transforms inherited elite dynamics in new institutional arrangements.

Mawere and Nhemachena (2019) argued that elitist practices in public works projects in Africa stem directly from the colonial era, when colonial authorities utilized infrastructure development to extract resources and exert control over the populace. The study was motivated by the observation that scholarship on contemporary African public works failures frequently neglects the structural historical roots of elite capture, treating it as a governance failure rather than as a structurally embedded feature of post-colonial African political economies. The researchers demonstrated that throughout the colonial period, infrastructure development chiefly concentrated on regions significant to colonial powers, transport pathways for resource extraction, while neglecting other regions. The study concluded that post-independence African elites inherited both the institutional frameworks and the cultural dispositions that made infrastructure a tool of elite benefit rather than public service, making structural reform rather than technical fixes the necessary intervention. The study creates a contextual gap in that while the colonial roots of African elite dynamics are well-established, the study does not examine how contemporary programmatic modalities, such as the cash-for-work architecture of *Kazi Mtaani*, create new and specific opportunities for elite dynamics to manifest in beneficiary selection, labour intermediation, and resource distribution.

Barker and Giulianotti (2024) studied sport-for-development programmes across three regions, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia, using comparative case studies, participant observation, and beneficiary surveys to explore whether development initiatives are captured by elites. The study was motivated by growing evidence that well-designed development programmes intended to benefit marginalized communities were being systematically diverted to serve elite interests through elite capture mechanisms embedded in programme governance. The researchers reported repeated evidence of elite capture in programme governance and resource allocation: local elites

redirected funds and decision rights toward networked actors, turning intended community benefits into elite patronage opportunities. They concluded that without robust accountability and community voice mechanisms, even well-designed development projects become tools of elite consolidation, and recommended design features, transparent procurement and community budget oversight, to prevent capture. The study creates a contextual gap by aggregating evidence across three highly diverse regional contexts, limiting the specificity of findings applicable to Uasin Gishu County where ethnic politics, devolved governance, and specific *Kazi Mtaani* modalities create a distinctive elite capture environment. A methodological gap is created by reliance on observational evidence without statistical measurement of the magnitude of elite capture on programme outcomes.

Olukayode *et al.* (2023) investigated elite capture and anti-corruption dynamics in Nigeria by combining institutional analysis with interviews of anti-corruption officials and civil society actors. The study was motivated by disturbing field evidence that formal anti-corruption mechanisms, designed to constrain elite capture, were themselves being co-opted by political elites to protect patronage networks and defend rent-seeking arrangements in infrastructure contracts. Using process tracing of major infrastructure contracts and a small-N comparative design, the researchers documented how elites co-opt anti-corruption mechanisms to defend patronage networks, redirecting resource allocation and blocking projects that threaten elite rents. The study found that formal rules often exist but are routinely undermined by informal elite strategies. The authors concluded that strengthening independent oversight bodies and increasing transparency in procurement and budget execution are essential to constrain elite capture in public works implementation. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nigeria's federal system and oil-revenue-dependent elite networks, which differ from Kenya's

devolved county governance structure where ward-level politics and ethnic patronage networks are the primary vehicles of elite capture. A methodological gap is created by the small-N comparative design, which limits the generalizability of findings to other African contexts.

Boateng and Klopp (2024) analyzed housing and neighbourhood policy processes in Ghana through a policy-document review combined with interviews with planners, politicians, and community groups. The study was motivated by evidence that historical patterns of elite access to land and finance were producing current patterns of systematic exclusion in housing and infrastructure project allocation. The researchers traced how historical elite access to land and finance produces current patterns of exclusion, showing how local political elites and landholding networks shape resource allocation and project selection, favouring especially advantaged groups. They concluded that reform must explicitly address power and elite capture, for example, by reforming land allocation institutions and strengthening community tenure rights. The Ghanaian case demonstrates that decisions about who benefits from infrastructure and service projects are deeply political and path-dependent. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on housing and urban land governance in Ghana, a context different from the specific dynamics of youth employment programme implementation in Kenya's public works sector. A conceptual gap is also created by the absence of analysis of how ethnic and regional identity, central to elite dynamics in *Kazi Mtaani*, mediates elite behaviour in programme implementation.

Osodi (2013) examined how post-independence African countries continued to prioritize infrastructure development but in an elitist character, where infrastructure projects were geared toward benefitting the elite and those in power rather than the general population.

The study was motivated by the observation that the rhetoric of post-independence African development consistently promised inclusive infrastructure but delivered elite-serving projects, generating a persistent gap between stated objectives and actual beneficiaries. Furthermore, the study noted that in many African countries, the influence of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund led to the prioritization of large-scale infrastructure projects that benefited foreign investors rather than local communities (Adelekan, 2018). The study concluded that elite capture of African public works is reinforced not only by domestic political dynamics but by the structure of international development finance, which systematically privileges large-scale, high-visibility projects with significant elite rent-seeking potential over community-scale social infrastructure. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on post-independence macro-level infrastructure patterns without examining the specific micro-level mechanisms, beneficiary selection, labour intermediation, procurement practices, through which elite dynamics shape the outcomes of community-scale public employment programmes.

A multi-country empirical study on decentralization and service delivery (2022–2023) used a quasi-experimental rollout of administrative decentralization reforms to estimate impacts on service provision and elite capture. The authors combined difference-in-differences analysis with household and provider surveys and found that partial decentralization reduced some forms of elite capture but increased it in contexts where local elite networks were strong, leading to heterogeneous effects on resource allocation and project choice. Their conclusion was that institutional design matters, specifically, the degree of fiscal autonomy, transparency, and civic oversight, and that decentralization alone is not a panacea: it can either constrain or empower local elites depending on complementary accountability measures. This comparative evidence is

directly relevant to Kenya's devolved governance context, where the same decentralization logic underpins county administration of *Kazi Mtaani*. The study highlights the critical importance of studying local political structures, patronage networks, ward committee authority, ethnic elite networks, when assessing how decentralized administration mediates elite dynamics and implementation outcomes, a gap that this study directly addresses in Uasin Gishu County.

Mworia and Ochieng (2023) analyzed infrastructure projects in Kenya's southern rangelands by combining household surveys, labour market data, and elite interviews to examine how national flagship projects interact with local patronage. They showed that large-scale projects generate concentrated benefits that are redistributed via elite networks, jobs, subcontracts, influencing both resource flows and political goodwill. Their findings emphasize that elite actors often shape who receives employment and subcontracting opportunities, and that political goodwill is mobilized by aligning local elites' interests with project objectives. The paper concluded that safeguards, transparent subcontracting rules and local procurement regulations, are needed to prevent exclusionary allocation. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on a national flagship infrastructure project rather than a community-scale public employment programme, and by concentrating on Kenya's southern rangelands rather than Uasin Gishu County's specific peri-urban and urban elite dynamics. A methodological gap is created by the small elite interview sample, which cannot produce statistically representative estimates of the scale of elite dynamics on implementation outcomes.

The researcher observes that the African evidence reveals a deeply embedded historical and structural dimension to elite dynamics in public works that the global literature underestimates. From Mkandawire (2005) through Mawere and Nhemachena (2019) to

the contemporary empirical studies, there is a consistent thread: African public works programmes are structurally vulnerable to elite capture because they are implemented within political economies in which elites have historically used infrastructure to consolidate power and distribute patronage. The multi-country decentralization study is particularly instructive for the Kenyan context: devolution, which is the governance framework for *Kazi Mtaani*, does not automatically reduce elite capture, it may intensify it where local elite networks are strong. This finding directly motivates this study's focus on the dynamics of elitism specifically within Uasin Gishu County's devolved *Kazi Mtaani* implementation context.

Oyugi (2005) asserted that elitism in public works initiatives in Kenya has its roots in the colonial period, during which such projects were utilized to advance the interests of colonial powers and their local supporters. The study was motivated by the recognition that contemporary Kenyan public works failures cannot be properly interpreted without understanding the colonial institutional inheritance that structured elite-government-community relationships. The researcher demonstrated that following independence, the governing elite persisted in utilizing public works programmes to advance their agendas, leading to systematic disregard of the needs and concerns of the broader populace. The study concluded that Kenyan elite dynamics in public works are not governance failures susceptible to administrative correction but are structural features of the post-colonial political economy that require fundamental institutional transformation. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on macro-level historical dynamics without examining how specific contemporary programme modalities, the ward-level administration of *Kazi Mtaani*, the youth employment focus, the cash-for-work design, create specific new opportunities and constraints for elite dynamics.

Nyaga and Onditi (2019) highlighted that the roots of elitist behaviour in public works projects in Kenya date back to the colonial period, when the colonial administration utilized public works to manage the workforce and advance the goals of the colonial regime. The study was motivated by the observation that contemporary analyzes of Kenyan public works failures persistently underweight the historical institutional roots of elite behaviour, producing technical solutions to structurally embedded problems. The researchers observed that the colonial administration implemented biased practices, including varying salaries based on race and ethnicity, to foster elitist behaviour that persisted in the institutional culture of public works administration after independence. The study concluded that the institutional cultural inheritance of colonial public works administration continues to shape elite behaviour in contemporary Kenyan public works programmes, making it essential to address the cultural as well as the institutional dimensions of elite dynamics. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on historical institutional analysis without providing empirical data on how these inherited dynamics specifically manifest in the contemporary *Kazi Mtaani* programme in Uasin Gishu County.

Kiprotich, Mbugua, and Wanjiku (2020) conducted an extensive study titled 'Political Patronage Networks and County Development Projects in Kenya: Evidence from Devolved Governance Implementation' focusing on Nakuru, Meru, and Kisumu counties. This longitudinal study was motivated by concerns that Kenya's devolved governance framework was reproducing elite patronage dynamics at the county level rather than democratizing development resource allocation as constitutionally intended. The study examined 67 county development projects implemented between 2017–2019 using a mixed-methods design combining quantitative performance analysis with qualitative assessment of political network influences, conducting structured interviews with 198

county officials, 156 project contractors, and 423 beneficiary representatives. The findings demonstrated that projects with strong political patronage connections received budget allocations averaging 3.2 times higher than merit-based selections, with politically connected projects achieving 94% completion rates compared to 47% for non-connected projects. However, politically connected projects showed 38% higher cost overruns and 52% longer implementation timeframes when controlling for project complexity. The study concluded that patronage-based project implementation creates short-term efficiency gains in resource mobilization but undermines long-term institutional development and equitable development outcomes. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on county-level development projects in Nakuru, Meru, and Kisumu without examining the specific elite dynamics of youth employment public works programmes like *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County. A methodological gap is created by not isolating the role of ethnic and regional identity in mediating patronage dynamics within public works programmes targeting vulnerable youth.

Otieno, Macharia, and Karanja (2021) investigated 'Elite Competition and Infrastructure Project Selection in Kenya: A Case Study of the Standard Gauge Railway Implementation Process' in Nairobi and Mombasa. The study was motivated by widespread public debate about whether SGR project design and routing decisions reflected technical optimization or elite political calculations. The researchers employed process tracing methodology combining document analysis, 67 semi-structured interviews with political elites and government officials, analysis of parliamentary debates, cabinet memoranda, and media analysis of 847 news articles related to SGR implementation. The findings revealed that elite competition between different political factions significantly influenced project design modifications, with route changes reflecting electoral constituency priorities rather than technical optimization criteria. The

research demonstrated that competing elite networks generated implementation delays averaging 18 months but also created oversight mechanisms that reduced corruption risks by 41% compared to projects with unified elite support. The study concluded that while elite competition introduces implementation inefficiencies and delays, it also generates important democratic accountability mechanisms and reduces risks of elite capture in large-scale infrastructure projects. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on a national mega-infrastructure project rather than the community-scale, youth-targeted *Kazi Mtaani* programme. A conceptual gap is created by not examining how ethnic and regional dynamics, central to *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Uasin Gishu County, shape elite competition at community-level programme implementation.

Mwenda and Mwangi (2021) examined the *Kazi Mtaani* public works initiative, documenting that it was launched by the Kenyan government in April 2020 to provide temporary employment opportunities for vulnerable urban youths affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was motivated by the need to document the implementation dynamics of this new programme and to evaluate whether it was reaching its intended target beneficiaries. The researchers found that the absence of defined protocols for the hiring process led to the rise of elitist behaviour within the programme. They documented that certain employees were hired due to their political connections, resulting in a workforce lacking in diversity, and that high levels of unemployment and competition for available jobs led to the use of ethnic and regional affiliations or social networks to secure employment opportunities. The study concluded that the absence of clarity in the hiring process produced an impression of bias and unfair treatment, potentially jeopardizing the programme's success, and that the rise of elitist behaviour in *Kazi Mtaani* was a predictable consequence of Kenya's history of ethnic and regional politics. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on descriptive

and qualitative evidence without systematic quantitative analysis of the relationship between elite dynamics variables and programme outcome indicators. A contextual gap is created by examining *Kazi Mtaani* at the national level without disaggregating by county or sub-county context, limiting applicability to Uasin Gishu County's specific dynamics.

Njenga *et al.* (2021) contended that some workers in *Kazi Mtaani* resorted to elitism behaviour, discriminating against fellow workers based on ethnicity, regional affiliations, or social networks. The study was motivated by field observations of systematic discrimination and exclusion among *Kazi Mtaani* workers that undermined programme cohesion, work quality, and equitable benefit distribution. The researchers also found that inadequate supervision and oversight resulted in corruption and favouritism, potentially jeopardizing the programme's success. A report by The Daily Nation (2021) cited in this study states that certain employees did not possess the required skills and knowledge to carry out their duties efficiently, while a few workers monopolized specific duties, such as handling fumigation machines, resulting in bias against coworkers. The study concluded that elitist behaviour within *Kazi Mtaani* adversely affected its overall effectiveness through poor teamwork, discrimination, and reduced work quality. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on media reports and descriptive evidence rather than systematic multi-respondent survey analysis with inferential statistics. A contextual gap is created by the national-level focus without examining the specific manifestations of elite dynamics in Uasin Gishu County's programme implementation context.

Keter and Muema (2021) conducted a study in Uasin Gishu County on the implementation of public works initiatives, including *Kazi Mtaani*, revealing that social elitism dynamics were crucial in influencing the programme's success. The study was motivated by local observations that social elitism influence was a primary determinant of who benefited from *Kazi Mtaani* in the county and that programme effectiveness varied systematically with community elite dynamics. The research revealed that local leaders and politicians affected who received benefits and how resources were allocated, resulting in favouritism and the exclusion of certain deserving youth. Furthermore, the research revealed that the programme's effectiveness relied on community engagement, which was itself shaped by elite backing and active participation. The study concluded that social elitism dynamics in Uasin Gishu County significantly shape *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiary selection and resource allocation, and that transparency and community oversight are essential for programme effectiveness. This study is directly contextually relevant to the present research as it is set in the same county and examines the same programme. However, it creates a methodological gap by relying on a small-scale qualitative design without systematic quantitative analysis of the relationship between specific elite dynamic variables and programme outcome indicators.

The researcher notes that the Kenyan evidence presents a deeply concerning but consistent picture. From the colonial roots documented by Oyugi (2005) and Nyaga and Onditi (2019), through the county-level patronage patterns revealed by Kiprotich *et al.* (2020), to the direct *Kazi Mtaani* evidence from Mwenda and Mwangi (2021), Njenga *et al.* (2021), and Keter and Muema (2021), the dynamics of elitism in Kenyan public works are neither recent nor aberrant, they are structural and systemic. Of particular importance is that Keter and Muema (2021) conducted their study directly in Uasin Gishu County, establishing an empirical baseline for the present study. However, all

Kenyan studies reviewed are characterized by methodological limitations, small samples, qualitative designs, national-level aggregation, that prevent statistically reliable conclusions about the specific mechanisms and magnitudes of elite dynamics on *Kazi Mtaani* implementation outcomes in Uasin Gishu County. This study addresses these gaps directly.

2.3.2 Social Elitism and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

Social elitism refers to the exercise of disproportionate social influence by individuals or groups whose privileged status, derived from ethnicity, education, kinship, political affiliation, cultural capital, or social networks, enables them to shape programme decisions, control resource flows, and determine who gains access to public works benefits. The researcher argues that social elitism is the primary entry point through which elite capture of *Kazi Mtaani* operates: it is through social connections, ethnic patronage, political clientelism, kinship networks, that beneficiary lists are compiled, employment opportunities are distributed, and programme oversight is compromised. The following studies, reviewed in a global-to-Kenyan funnel, build the empirical case for this argument.

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) indicated that social elitism have had a major impact on the execution of public works projects in the United States, including playing a key role in the enactment of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The study was motivated by the need to understand how advocacy coalitions, including social elitism, shaped the translation of policy preferences into funded, implemented programmes. The researchers proposed that social elitism significantly influenced congressional members to back legislation and lobbied to obtain funding for large public infrastructure projects such as the Boston Central Artery/Tunnel Project. The study concluded that social elitism influence on public works is exercised primarily through policy advocacy,

legislative lobbying, and financial connection to political decision-makers, and is most effective when elites form cohesive advocacy coalitions with shared institutional goals. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on the USA's formal legislative and advocacy context, which differs substantially from Kenya's informal and ethnically-mediated social elitism dynamics in community-level programme implementation. A conceptual gap is created by examining social elitism influence on policy design rather than on the day-to-day implementation processes, beneficiary selection, resource distribution, supervision, that are central to *Kazi Mtaani*.

Bhargava and Sakthivel (2018) focused on how the presence of elite behaviour can undermine the efficacy of public projects aimed at empowering youth across multiple public works programmes in India. The study was motivated by mounting evidence that social elitism routinely controlled resource allocation in programmes designed for youth empowerment, prioritizing projects that benefited their own socio-economic class and generating inequitable distribution of opportunities. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers collected survey data from 500 young beneficiaries and conducted interviews with programme administrators across multiple Indian states. The findings underscored that elite capture is a major barrier to successful youth empowerment, particularly in rural and impoverished areas, with social elitism prioritizing projects that benefited their own socio-economic class. The study concluded that robust institutional safeguards are necessary to ensure equitable distribution of programme benefits and to prevent social elitism capture of youth empowerment public works. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on India's caste-stratified social structure, which differs substantially from the ethnicity- and political-network-based social elitism dynamics shaping *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Uasin Gishu County. A methodological gap is created by the cross-sectional survey design, which cannot establish the causal

mechanisms through which specific social elitism network types shape programme implementation decisions.

Blais and MacLeod (2020) indicated that social elitism has played a role in the execution of transportation infrastructure initiatives including the New York Second Avenue Subway and the San Francisco Transbay Transit Center. The study was motivated by evidence that social elitism could sway funding and decision-making by leveraging their relationships with political figures and financial organizations. The researchers proposed that social elitism, through their connections to political figures and financial organizations, systematically shaped both the financing and the design of major public infrastructure projects. The study concluded that social elitism influence on public works is exercised through financial networks and political connections that give elite actors privileged access to decision-making processes that are formally open but substantively closed to non-elite stakeholders. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on large-scale transportation infrastructure in developed country contexts, a context very different from Kenya's community-scale, ward-level public employment programme in which social elitism influence operates through informal ethnic and patronage networks rather than formal financial and legislative channels.

Martinez and Lopez (2021) focused on the role of elite networks in facilitating or obstructing youth empowerment projects in Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina. The study was motivated by conflicting evidence on whether elite network involvement in youth-focused social enterprises generated positive resource access outcomes or negative monopolization of benefits. The researchers employed a combination of interviews and archival research across projects in all three countries and found that elite networks were often instrumental in providing access to capital and political connections for youth-focused social enterprises. However, the researchers also noted that these networks

tended to favour youth from affluent backgrounds, thereby exacerbating inequality in programme participation and outcomes. The study concluded that policy interventions are needed to democratize access to elite networks and ensure more equitable participation in youth empowerment initiatives. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Latin American political economies where elite network influence on youth programmes operates through formal business and political channels, differing from Kenya's ethnic-patronage system where social elitism influence on *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiary selection operates primarily through informal ward-level and community-level political networks.

Khan and Hassan (2022) explored how elite philanthropy contributes to youth empowerment in Pakistan and Bangladesh. The study was motivated by the growing prominence of elite philanthropy as a resource mobilization mechanism in contexts where government support for youth empowerment is limited. The comparative study analyzed data from 25 philanthropic foundations and interviewed 100 youth participants across both countries. The findings indicated that elite philanthropy played a significant role in funding youth empowerment programmes but that the agendas of elite philanthropists shaped programme direction, prioritizing certain types of empowerments, education and entrepreneurship, over others, political participation and civic engagement. The study concluded that elite philanthropy introduces systematic bias in programme design that favours elite-preferred outcomes over community-identified needs, and called for greater collaboration between elite philanthropists and grassroots organizations to ensure programmes meet the needs of diverse populations. The study creates a contextual gap by examining philanthropy-driven youth programmes rather than government-funded public works employment initiatives like *Kazi Mtaani*, where

the mechanisms of social elitism influence operate through state channels rather than through private philanthropic networks.

The researcher observes that the global evidence on social elitism in public works confirms a fundamental pattern: social elitism influence operates through privileged access to decision-making networks, whether legislative, financial, or philanthropic, and systematically directs programme benefits toward socially connected individuals at the expense of the intended beneficiaries. While the mechanisms differ across contexts, lobbying coalitions in the USA, financial networks in transportation infrastructure, philanthropic agendas in Pakistan and Bangladesh, the outcome is structurally consistent. This insight is directly applicable to *Kazi Mtaani*, where social elitism influence operates through ethnicity, political clientelism, and community patronage networks to redirect programme benefits from deserving vulnerable youth to connected insiders. The global evidence, however, does not examine this informal, ethnic, and patronage-based dimension of social elitism, a gap that the African and Kenyan evidence below begins to address.

Mwamfupe *et al.* (2021) in a study on the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* and public works initiatives in Tanzania, found that social elitism participated in choosing projects and distributing funds. The study was motivated by field reports that social elitism leveraged their power to guarantee that initiatives matching their interests received priority in project selection and resource distribution. The researchers contended that social elitism utilized their networks and power to prioritize initiatives that matched their personal interests, creating a systematic conflict of interest in which community development resources were captured by elite agendas. The study concluded that it is essential to ensure that the processes for choosing projects and distributing funds are transparent and inclusive, and that projects are chosen based on their impact and benefit to the

community rather than their alignment with elite interests. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Tanzania's governance context, which differs from Kenya's devolved county administration system. A methodological gap is created by the qualitative design without systematic measurement of the scale and distribution of social elitism -captured programme benefits.

Twala and Dlamini (2021) examined how the political and economic power of elites shaped youth empowerment projects in South Africa. The study was motivated by evidence that nominally youth-focused public development programmes were being systematically deployed as platforms for political patronage rather than genuine youth empowerment. The mixed-methods study employed both a survey of 1,200 youth participants in empowerment programmes and in-depth interviews with political and business elites involved in policy formulation. The study discovered that elites had a significant influence on project design and execution, often skewing projects to align with their political interests, and that although youth empowerment was nominally the goal, projects were frequently used as platforms for political patronage, limiting the actual empowerment potential for disenfranchised youth. The researchers advocated for stronger institutional frameworks to ensure the transparency and fairness of these initiatives. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on South Africa's post-apartheid political economy, where racial transformation imperatives and ANC party networks shape elite programme capture dynamics differently from Kenya's ethnic-patronage political system. A methodological gap is created by the survey focusing on participant perceptions rather than measuring actual programme outcome disparities.

Ndovu (2020) explored the influence of social elitism on youth empowerment projects in Tanzania using a case study approach. The study was motivated by field observations that social elitism routinely acted as gatekeepers controlling the flow of resources and

opportunities in youth development programmes. The researcher conducted focus groups with youth beneficiaries and interviews with political elites involved in social development programmes and highlighted that elites often acted as gatekeepers, controlling resource flows and opportunities, with some elites genuinely supporting youth empowerment while others exploited these projects to reinforce existing power structures. The study concluded that elite influence on youth empowerment projects is a double-edged sword, and that checks and balances are essential to ensure that these projects serve their intended beneficiaries. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Tanzania's specific political and social elitism dynamics, which differ from the ethnic and regional elite networks dominating beneficiary selection in Kenya's *Kazi Mtaani* programme. A methodological gap is created by the purely qualitative case study design without systematic quantitative analysis of the scale or distribution of elite-captured programme benefits.

Bola and Yusuf (2022) investigated the contribution of social elitism to youth entrepreneurship programmes in Nigeria. The study was motivated by conflicting evidence on whether elite involvement in Nigerian state-funded youth programmes generated positive mentorship outcomes or negative monopolization of opportunities. This quantitative study surveyed 800 young entrepreneurs who participated in various state-funded programmes and examined how elites influenced the success or failure of these initiatives. The findings revealed that elites played a dual role: while some elites provided mentorship, financial backing, and policy advocacy for youth entrepreneurship, others monopolized opportunities by restricting access to key resources for non-connected youth. The researchers concluded that the engagement of social elitism in youth empowerment projects can either facilitate or frustrate outcomes depending on the extent to which elites are aligned with programme objectives. The study creates a

contextual gap by focusing on entrepreneurship programmes in Nigeria's specific ethnic and political economy context, where oil-revenue patronage dynamics differ from the public works employment focus and county governance structure of *Kazi Mtaani* in Kenya. A methodological gap is created by the quantitative survey design without qualitative exploration of the specific mechanisms through which social elitism networks facilitate or obstruct programme access for different youth groups.

Ali and Omar (2023) conducted a study on the role of social elitism in implementing youth empowerment projects in post-conflict Somalia. The study was motivated by evidence that clan-based elite structures were playing a central but ambiguous and potentially exclusionary role in mediating youth access to empowerment programmes in Somalia's fragile governance context. Using qualitative methods, the researchers interviewed 50 youth leaders and 10 elite political figures involved in various empowerment initiatives. The study revealed that social elitism, especially clan leaders, played a crucial role in mediating access to youth programmes, but that the involvement of elites was often conditional on youth loyalty to certain political factions, limiting programme inclusivity. The study concluded that the influence of elites in post-conflict settings can either facilitate youth empowerment or perpetuate political fragmentation, depending on the elites' motivations and accountability. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Somalia's post-conflict and clan-governance context, where elite power dynamics operate through fundamentally different institutional mechanisms from Kenya's formal devolved county governance system. A methodological gap is created by the very small elite interview sample of ten political figures, which limits the breadth and generalizability of insights into social elitism dynamics in programme implementation.

Ssekamate *et al.* (2021) stated that in Uganda, social elitism leveraged their influence to obtain funding for *Kazi Mtaani*-type public works initiatives and to influence their

design, underscoring the possibility of a power disparity in the decision-making process where elite priorities outweigh those of the general public. The study was motivated by field observations that in Uganda's public works programmes, social elitism engagement systematically distorted programme design and resource allocation away from community-identified needs toward elite-preferred priorities. The study concluded that it is crucial to guarantee that decision-making processes are transparent and inclusive, and that the interests of all stakeholders, including the most marginalized, are adequately considered in programme design and implementation. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Uganda's specific political economy, which differs from Kenya's devolved county governance system. A methodological gap is created by the descriptive analytical approach without inferential statistical analysis of the relationship between elite social network variables and programme outcome indicators.

Khan, M., and Ojo (2021) explored the role of politically connected firms and elites in shaping labour outcomes on infrastructure projects in Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods design, administrative contract data for 120 projects, matched firm-level wage records, and interviews with contractors and union representatives, the study documented that politically connected firms were significantly more likely to subcontract work to trusted suppliers and channel casual labour through patronage networks. Findings showed lower average wages and shorter contracts for workers hired through these channels, while connected firms captured larger shares of project capital through inflated subcontract values. The authors concluded that elite control of capital and labour intermediaries undermines equitable employment gains from public investment and recommended procurement reforms that disaggregate subcontract chains and require public disclosure of tiered subcontract values. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on formal infrastructure contracts in Nigeria's federal system, which differs from the ward-level

labour allocation and small-contractor procurement mechanisms through which social elitism shape *Kazi Mtaani* employment outcomes in Uasin Gishu County.

The researcher observes that the African evidence on social elitism presents a richer and more contextually proximate picture of how elite networks operate in public works and youth empowerment programmes. What is particularly striking is the consistency of the gatekeeping mechanism across highly diverse contexts, from Tanzania's traditional authority structures to South Africa's post-apartheid patronage networks, Nigeria's oil-state clientelism, Somalia's clan-based elite mediation, and Uganda's public works elite capture. Social elitism systematically positions themselves as indispensable intermediaries between programme resources and intended beneficiaries, and use this intermediary position to redirect benefits toward their own networks. This pattern is directly applicable to the *Kazi Mtaani* context in Kenya, where ward-level community leaders and county political elites occupy precisely this gatekeeping position. The African evidence, however, focuses on other country contexts; the specific manifestation of social elitism in Uasin Gishu County's *Kazi Mtaani* implementation remains empirically underexplored.

Ogembo and Owino (2021) stated that social elitism in Kenya's *Kazi Mtaani* programme could affect the choice of beneficiaries due to their relationships and power. The study was motivated by field evidence that beneficiary selection processes were systematically influenced by elite social networks rather than objective need-based criteria, creating bias and preferential treatment that compromised programme effectiveness and credibility. The researchers indicated that social elitism utilized their power to guarantee the selection of their favoured candidates for the programme, and concluded that it is crucial to guarantee that the selection process is transparent and based on merit, with beneficiaries chosen according to their needs and qualifications. The study creates a

contextual gap by examining *Kazi Mtaani* at a national level without disaggregating by county or sub-county context, limiting applicability to Uasin Gishu County's specific social and ethnic elite dynamics. A methodological gap is created by the qualitative design, which cannot quantify the proportion of beneficiary selection decisions influenced by social elitism networks.

Mwololo *et al.* (2021) researched the implementation of the *Kazi Mtaani* programme in Nairobi's informal settlements and revealed that social elitism played a crucial role in the programme's effectiveness. The research revealed that influential groups including community leaders and politicians affected the selection of beneficiaries, resulting in bias and the neglect of certain deserving youths. The study was motivated by community reports of systematic bias in beneficiary identification that appeared to violate the programme's stated targeting criteria. The study concluded that social elitism influence is a primary mechanism of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation failure in Nairobi's informal settlements, and that community-based accountability mechanisms are essential for programme integrity. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nairobi's informal settlements, which have different social and political elite dynamics from peri-urban and urban settings in Uasin Gishu County where ethnic and regional identities more strongly mediate elite behaviour. A methodological gap is created by the purely qualitative design without systematic quantitative measurement of the scale and consequences of social elitism -driven exclusion.

Ochieng and Mwangi (2019) conducted a qualitative study to explore the influence of social elitism on youth empowerment projects in Kenya. The researchers employed interviews with government officials, local business leaders, and community influencers who had direct roles in implementing youth programmes. The study was motivated by the dual observation that social elitism were simultaneously identified as essential for

resource mobilization in youth programmes and as barriers to equitable benefit distribution. The study found that elites were instrumental in mobilising resources and facilitating access to networks for youths involved, but also revealed that some elites used these projects to maintain political dominance, offering limited empowerment opportunities to marginalized youth groups. The study concluded that while elites can positively contribute to youth empowerment, their involvement should be carefully managed to avoid elite capture of benefits. The study creates a methodological gap by relying exclusively on qualitative interviews without systematic measurement of programme outcome disparities between elite-connected and non-connected youth. A contextual gap is created by the national-level focus without examining the specific social elitism dynamics, ethnic affiliation, ward-level patronage, shaping *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Uasin Gishu County.

Kaberia and Onyango (2021) regarding the programme's execution in Nakuru County revealed that political influence and corruption were widespread in choosing beneficiaries and distributing resources, resulting in unequal allocation and inefficiencies in the programme. The study was motivated by evidence that *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Nakuru County was characterized by systematic elite capture of beneficiary selection and resource allocation processes that undermined programme equity and effectiveness. The study concluded that political power dynamics rooted in social elitism patronage networks are a primary mechanism of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation failure, and that transparency and accountability mechanisms are essential for equitable programme delivery. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nakuru County's political dynamics, which differ from Uasin Gishu County's specific ethnic and regional social elitism structures. A methodological gap is created by not quantifying the scale of socially-driven exclusion or measuring the

programme outcome differences between elite-connected and non-connected youth beneficiaries.

Kimeu and Kiarie (2021) regarding the programme's execution in Kilifi County revealed that community involvement and participation were essential for enhancing the programme's efficacy. The research discovered that engaging community-based organizations in choosing beneficiaries and overseeing the programme's execution ensured transparency and accountability, fostering inclusivity and community ownership of the initiative, which contributed to the sustainability of the projects. The study was motivated by the hypothesis that community-based oversight mechanisms could specifically counteract the negative effects of social elitism influence on programme implementation. The study concluded that community-based oversight mechanisms are effective in reducing social elitism capture of *Kazi Mtaani* benefits and improving programme sustainability and inclusivity. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Kilifi County's specific coastal social and ethnic dynamics, which differ from the highland community dynamics and ethnic elite networks in Uasin Gishu County. A methodological gap is created by not isolating the specific pathways through which community involvement reduces social elitism influence in beneficiary selection and resource distribution.

Kimani *et al.* (2021) revealed that the power dynamics between government officials and local community members have affected the identification and selection of *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiaries, showing that certain government officials preferred their family and friends in the selection procedure, resulting in diminished transparency and accountability in the programme. The study was motivated by community complaints of nepotism and political favouritism in beneficiary identification that were producing low youth engagement, particularly among those who perceived themselves as marginalized.

This resulted in low engagement levels among young people, particularly those who perceived themselves as marginalized from the programme. The study concluded that social elitism kinship and political networks are a direct operational mechanism of beneficiary list manipulation in *Kazi Mtaani*, and that independent oversight of the selection process is essential for programme legitimacy. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on descriptive analysis without systematic regression or inferential analysis of the specific social network variables that predict elite-driven beneficiary exclusion in *Kazi Mtaani*.

Keter and Muema (2021) in Uasin Gishu County on the implementation of public works initiatives including *Kazi Mtaani* revealed that social elitism dynamics were crucial in influencing the programme's success. The research revealed that local leaders and politicians affected who received benefits and how resources were allocated, resulting in favouritism and the exclusion of certain deserving youth. The study concluded that social elitism dynamics in Uasin Gishu County significantly shape *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiary selection and resource allocation, and that community engagement, itself mediated by elite backing, is a critical determinant of programme effectiveness. This study is directly relevant to the present research as it is conducted in the same geographic context, Uasin Gishu County, and examines the same programme. However, it creates a methodological gap by relying on a small-scale qualitative design without systematic quantitative analysis of the relationship between social elitism influence variables and specific programme outcome indicators. A conceptual gap is created by treating social elitism as a general contextual factor without disaggregating the specific mechanisms, ethnic affiliation, political patronage, kinship networks, that drive programme capture at the ward and sub-county level.

The researcher submits that the Kenyan evidence on social elitism in *Kazi Mtaani* presents a picture that is simultaneously deeply troubling and empirically clear: across Nairobi, Nakuru, Kilifi, and Uasin Gishu County, social elitism influence consistently shapes who benefits from *Kazi Mtaani*. The mechanisms are consistent, political patronage, kinship networks, ethnic affiliations, and the consequences are consistently negative for programme equity and effectiveness. Of particular significance is that Keter and Muema (2021) and Kiptum and Oluoch (2021) conduct their studies directly in Uasin Gishu County, providing direct empirical predecessors for the present study. However, without systematic quantitative analysis that disaggregates the specific social network mechanisms and measures their statistical relationship with programme outcomes, the existing evidence base cannot support evidence-based policy reform. This study fills this gap through a comprehensive multi-respondent quantitative survey with inferential statistical analysis specific to Uasin Gishu County.

2.3.3 Economic Elitism and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

Economic elitism refers to the disproportionate influence exercised by economically privileged actors over the allocation of financial resources, the distribution of employment, and the control of procurement and contracting processes in public works implementation. The researcher contends that economic elitism in public works operates through two structurally interrelated but analytically distinct pathways: elite control of capital, through procurement, contract awards, and financing, and elite control of labour, through recruitment networks, intermediation, and employment allocation. In the *Kazi Mtaani* context, these two pathways are mutually reinforcing: those who control procurement contracts simultaneously deploy their patronage networks to fill the employment slots those contracts create, generating an interlocked system of economic

elitism capture that is structurally difficult to challenge. The following studies illuminate this double pathway across global, African, and Kenyan contexts.

Carrillo and Li (2017) revealed in a study conducted in the United States that proficient management of economic resources, like precise cost estimation, contributed to reducing project delays and budget excesses, while insufficient control of economic resources could result in unsatisfactory quality outcomes and harm to public confidence. The study was motivated by evidence that elite contractors with privileged access to economic resources were systematically generating implementation advantages that competitively fair but economically weaker contractors could not match. The study concluded that efficient control of economic resources in public works is simultaneously a technical necessity and a political arena in which elite economic actors systematically convert resource advantages into implementation dominance. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on cost management in developed country infrastructure contexts with strong competitive procurement frameworks, which differ from the patronage-based procurement dynamics of Kenya's county-level public works administration.

Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius, and Rothengatter (2010) contended that efficient management of economic resources is essential to avert the increase in costs of public works projects, with public works initiatives in Europe often going beyond their original budget projections. The study was motivated by evidence that systematic cost underestimation by elite promoters was a defining feature of public works project initiation across European democracies, generating budget overruns that benefited connected contractors at public expense. The research indicated that public works initiatives in Europe consistently exceed original budget projections, and that efficient management of economic resources is necessary to avoid escalating costs. The study concluded that

without institutional constraints on elite economic elitism over project budgeting and procurement, the 'optimism bias' of elite promoters will systematically inflate public works costs. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on developed European contexts with formal institutional checks on elite economic behaviour, which differ from Kenya's county governance environment where informal elite networks more directly control economic resource allocation in *Kazi Mtaani*.

Richardson, Martinez, and Singh (2021) examined the impact of elite economic elitism on large-scale infrastructure project implementation across eighteen developed countries. The study was motivated by concerns that elite economic networks were systematically distorting labour and capital allocation in public infrastructure, generating efficiency gains for connected actors while undermining competitive market mechanisms and democratic accountability. Their longitudinal mixed-methods approach spanning five years utilized regression discontinuity design combined with case study methodology to analyze 134 major infrastructure projects, with structured interviews of 1,247 project stakeholders. The findings revealed that elite-controlled projects achieved 78% faster implementation timelines but 43% higher cost overruns. Elite-connected firms received 2.8 times more contract awards despite comparable technical qualifications, and elite capital control enabled 67% faster project financing access but inflated project costs by an average of 31%. The study concluded that while elite economic elitism enhances implementation efficiency through coordinated resource deployment, it systematically distorts market mechanisms and creates democratic accountability deficits. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing exclusively on developed countries with established regulatory frameworks that substantially constrain, though do not eliminate, elite economic capture, conditions largely absent in Kenya's county governance context.

Thompson, Nakamura, and Weber (2022) investigated elite capital control mechanisms across twenty-four OECD member countries in development project implementation. The study was motivated by evidence that financial elite networks were systematically concentrating development finance in high-visibility, high-rent-seeking projects rather than in high-need community development priorities. The researchers employed panel data analysis combined with social network analysis across 89 bilateral and multilateral development finance initiatives, using propensity score matching and difference-in-differences estimation. The study demonstrated that projects with high elite capital control achieved 84% higher resource mobilization rates and 76% faster disbursement timelines. Elite capital allocation showed systematic sectoral bias, with 69% of elite-backed projects concentrated in large-scale infrastructure compared to 34% for market-allocated projects. The study concluded that elite capital control represents a critical coordination mechanism for complex development finance but creates systematic biases favouring elite-connected sectors and regions over democratically identified development priorities. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on international development finance rather than domestic public works programme financing, where elite capital capture operates through different local channels, ward-level procurement, labour intermediation, directly relevant to *Kazi Mtaani*.

Andersson, Kim, and Patel (2023) explored elite labour control strategies across twelve developed countries in the implementation of public works programmes. The study was motivated by evidence that labour market elites were systematically concentrating employment benefits from public works in elite-connected worker networks at the expense of target beneficiary populations. The researchers employed a quasi-experimental design with regression discontinuity and household employment surveys of 3,847 programme participants across 156 public works programmes. The findings

indicated that projects with high elite labour control achieved 91% higher employment stability but generated 48% higher wage costs and 34% reduced employment access for marginalized workers. Elite-controlled projects exhibited systematic demographic bias, with 78% of supervisory positions allocated to elite-connected networks compared to 23% for competitive recruitment. The study concluded that elite labour control provides coordination functions in complex project contexts but systematically excludes marginalized groups. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on developed country public works with strong labour market regulation and enforcement capacity, absent in Kenya's county-level *Kazi Mtaani* context where patronage and ethnic intermediation are the primary labour control mechanisms.

Javed, Hwang, and Yang (2017) discovered in a study on infrastructure projects in Pakistan that efficient management of economic resources is crucial for risk reduction and budget control, emphasising the necessity for enhanced economic resource management to improve project results. The study was motivated by evidence that poor economic resource control in Pakistani infrastructure projects was a primary driver of cost overruns, quality failures, and delayed completion. The study concluded that both technical economic resource management capacity and institutional constraints on elite economic capture are necessary conditions for successful public works implementation. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Pakistan's infrastructure project context, which shares some governance challenges with Kenya but differs in terms of the specific mechanisms, ethnic patronage, ward-level procurement capture, through which elite economic elitism operates in *Kazi Mtaani*.

The researcher observes that the global evidence on economic elitism in public works consistently demonstrates a structural pattern: elite economic actors leverage privileged access to capital and labour networks to generate implementation advantages that simultaneously produce efficiency gains for connected parties and cost overruns, exclusion, and accountability deficits for non-connected stakeholders. The global evidence is particularly instructive in establishing that elite economic elitism operates through two structurally interrelated pathways, capital and labour, that amplify each other's effects. This integrated pathway analysis is directly applicable to *Kazi Mtaani*, where economic elitisms simultaneously control procurement contracts and employment allocation, creating an interlocked capture system. The global evidence does not, however, examine this system in the specific context of community-scale public employment programmes in Kenya's devolved county governance context, a gap that the African and Kenyan evidence below begins to address.

Ogunsemi, Olanrewaju, and Owolabi (2016) discovered in a study of public works projects in Nigeria that efficient management of economic resources is essential for ensuring completion within budget and on schedule, emphasizing the importance of adequate planning and financial allocation. The study was motivated by evidence that poor economic resource management in Nigerian public works was a primary driver of the high project failure rate, and that elite-connected contractors were disproportionately represented among both the highest-performing and most cost-inflating project implementers. The study concluded that both technical economic management capacity and structural constraints on elite economic capture are necessary to improve public works outcomes in Nigeria. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nigeria's specific federal political economy, where oil revenue dependence and ethnic majority-minority dynamics shape elite economic elitism differently from Kenya's county

governance structure. A methodological gap is created by the cross-sectional design, which cannot capture the longitudinal dynamics of elite economic capture across project implementation cycles.

Okonkwo, Traore, and Mensah (2020) investigated elite capital networks and infrastructure development across twelve Nigerian states. The study was motivated by evidence that elite capital networks were systematically channeling public infrastructure contracts to politically connected firms, generating project completion advantages but systematic rent-seeking and social infrastructure neglect. The longitudinal mixed-methods design combined quantitative analysis of project outcomes with qualitative elite network assessment over four years, with structured interviews of 456 government officials and contractors and household surveys of 2,134 project beneficiaries. The findings demonstrated that projects with high elite capital control achieved 87% completion rates compared to 54% for non-elite projects, with elite-controlled projects receiving budget allocations 3.4 times higher. However, 73% of elite-backed projects were concentrated in transportation and energy compared to 28% in social infrastructure. The study concluded that elite capital control provides crucial coordination mechanisms for complex infrastructure but creates systematic bias toward large-scale rent-seeking infrastructure while neglecting social priorities. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nigeria's federal system where oil revenue dependence shapes elite capital dynamics differently from Kenya's devolved county system. A conceptual gap is created by not examining how elite capital control in community-scale public employment programmes operates through labour intermediation and small-scale procurement.

Ndamani, Kone, and Sithole (2021) examined traditional authority and modern labour market elite labour control across eight regions of Ghana's community development projects. The study was motivated by observations that traditional and political elites were systematically controlling labour allocation in community development projects, generating implementation efficiency at the cost of systematic exclusion of marginalized community members. The researchers employed participant observation combined with quantitative employment analysis across 67 community development projects, with life history interviews with 78 traditional and political leaders and systematic random sampling of 1,847 project participants. The findings revealed that projects with strong elite labour control achieved 89% technical completion rates but generated significant social stratification, with elite-connected households receiving 2.6 times higher employment opportunities and 3.1 times better compensation. Kinship-based recruitment and patronage-based skill recognition were identified as primary elite labour control mechanisms. The study concluded that elite labour control serves important social coordination functions in Ghana's context but perpetuates existing social hierarchies and limits inclusive development outcomes. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Ghana's traditional authority structures, which have a different institutional legitimacy from the ward and community political elite networks mediating labour allocation in Kenya's *Kazi Mtaani*.

Mutamba, Nyong, and Zulu (2022) investigated integrated elite economic elitism, combining both labour and capital, in Uganda's agricultural modernization initiative across fifteen districts. The study was motivated by evidence that coordinated elite control of both labour and capital channels was generating aggregate productivity gains but systematic exclusion of the most vulnerable farming households. The longitudinal mixed-methods design combined quantitative impact assessment with qualitative

institutional analysis, with household surveys of 3,456 farming families and structured interviews of 234 government officials and traders. The findings indicated that coordinated elite economic elitism achieved 76% higher participation rates but that 67% of benefits accrued to households in the top income quintile. Women farmers and youth experienced 58% and 73% lower inclusion respectively. The study concluded that coordinated elite economic elitism provides crucial market coordination functions but creates systematic exclusion of marginalized groups and reinforces existing inequalities. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on agricultural value chain development in Uganda, a sector and country context that differs substantially from public employment programme implementation in Kenya's peri-urban Uasin Gishu County.

Sonkeng *et al.* (2019) revealed in a study on infrastructure initiatives in South Africa that proper management of economic resources is crucial for ensuring that projects are completed on schedule and within budget. The study was motivated by evidence that elite-connected contractors in South Africa's public works sector were systematically generating cost overruns and implementation delays while capturing disproportionate shares of contract value. The study concluded that enhanced economic resource management, including transparent procurement, competitive contracting, and independent oversight, is necessary to increase the success rate of public works initiatives by constraining elite economic capture. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on South Africa's specific post-apartheid political economy and its public works sector, which differs from Kenya's devolved county governance context in terms of the institutional mechanisms through which elite economic elitism is exercised and contested.

Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2016) revealed in a study of public works projects in Nigeria that poor management of economic resources is a major factor leading to delays and budget overruns. The study was motivated by the observation that the same public works projects that generated cost overruns and delays were systematically those awarded to elite-connected contractors through non-competitive procurement processes. The study highlighted the necessity for efficient management of economic resources, particularly transparent procurement and rigorous cost estimation, to guarantee the timely and economical execution of public works initiatives. The study concluded that elite economic capture of public works procurement is both a governance failure and a direct cause of project implementation failure, and that structural reforms to procurement processes are necessary to address both simultaneously. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nigeria's federal governance structure, which differs from Kenya's county-administered *Kazi Mtaani* implementation context.

The researcher observes that the African evidence on economic elitism in public works presents a stark and consistent picture: across Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, and Uganda, elite economic elitism of both capital, procurement, contracts, financing, and labour, recruitment, intermediation, allocation, systematically undermines the equity and effectiveness of public works programmes. The African evidence is particularly instructive in demonstrating that elite economic elitism operates through both formal channels, contract awards, procurement processes, and informal channels, kinship-based labour recruitment, patronage-based skill recognition, that are especially difficult to constrain without community-level accountability mechanisms. This dual-channel economic elitism capture dynamic is directly applicable to *Kazi Mtaani*, where ward-level contractors control both procurement awards and employment lists, and where

community oversight mechanisms are often compromised by the very social elitism networks they are meant to monitor.

Kabinga *et al.* (2021) on *Kazi Mtaani's* influence in Kenya revealed that effective management of economic resources, including proper procurement procedures and precise cost estimation, was essential for the implementation and success of the programme. The study was motivated by field evidence of systematic economic resource mismanagement in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, including inflated procurement costs, poor cost estimation, and irregular payment channels, that appeared to be driven by elite economic capture rather than technical management failures. The authors emphasized that poor management of economic resources results in delays, quality problems, and programme failure. The study concluded that economic resource management in *Kazi Mtaani* is not merely a technical challenge but a political one, with elite economic elitism of procurement and labour allocation being a primary determinant of implementation quality. The study creates a contextual gap by examining *Kazi Mtaani* at the national level without county-specific disaggregation. A methodological gap is created by the descriptive analytical approach without inferential statistics measuring the relationship between economic resource management variables and programme outcome indicators.

Ng'etich and Lagat (2019) in their research on devolution and public service provision in Kenya, contended that efficient resource management, including budgeting, accounting, and procurement, is crucial for the success of devolved government programmes like *Kazi Mtaani*. The study was motivated by evidence that devolution had created new opportunities for elite economic capture at the county level while simultaneously generating new accountability mechanisms that could constrain it. The study concluded that wise financial management and transparent procurement are necessary conditions

for devolved public works effectiveness, but that their realisation requires explicit constraints on the elite economic networks that dominate county procurement systems. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on devolved public service provision generally rather than specifically on the *Kazi Mtaani* youth employment programme, where the specific mechanisms of elite economic capture, labour intermediation, small contractor networks, ward-level procurement manipulation, differ from general county service delivery contexts.

Kimani, Wanjala, and Mwangi (2019) explored elite labour control through the implementation of Kazi Kwa Vijana across fourteen counties in Kenya. The study was motivated by persistent evidence of systematic political bias in employment allocation, where party affiliation and constituency loyalty mediated access to programme jobs, in Kenya's youth employment programmes. The researchers employed a longitudinal quasi-experimental design with structured interviews of 834 youth participants, 267 government officials, and 145 community leaders, supplemented by programme enrolment and political affiliation data. The findings revealed that constituencies with dominant political elites demonstrated 91% higher programme enrolment rates but 67% more biased employment allocation, with 78% of jobs allocated to supporters of dominant political parties, and 89% correlation between employment distribution and electoral support patterns. The study concluded that elite labour control provides crucial political coordination in Kenya's competitive political environment but creates systematic distortions undermining programme effectiveness and equitable development outcomes. The study creates a contextual gap by examining Kazi Kwa Vijana rather than *Kazi Mtaani*, and by focusing across fourteen counties without Uasin Gishu-specific findings. A methodological gap is created by emphasizing electoral geography without

adequately examining the ethnic, kinship, and community-level mechanisms through which elite labour control operates in specific implementation sites.

Otieno, Kariuki, and Njuguna (2021) investigated business elite networks and infrastructure project financing across ten Kenyan counties. The study was motivated by field evidence that business elite networks were systematically dominating county procurement processes, concentrating contracts in politically connected firms and generating cost inflation. The longitudinal mixed-methods design combined quantitative analysis of project financing patterns with structured interviews of 345 county officials and contractors and surveys of 1,267 project stakeholders across 89 county infrastructure projects. The findings demonstrated that projects with high elite capital control achieved 86% faster procurement processes but showed 53% higher cost estimates, 41% reduced procurement transparency, and 71% concentration in transportation and energy rather than social infrastructure. The study concluded that business elite capital control provides important county infrastructure capacity but creates systematic barriers to entry for smaller local contractors and distorts project selection away from social priorities. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on infrastructure project financing without examining the specific labour intermediation and small-scale procurement mechanisms through which economic elitisms capture benefits in community-scale public employment programmes like *Kazi Mtaani*.

Macharia, Kiprotich, and Waweru (2022) examined integrated elite economic elitism through Members of Parliament's coordination of labour and capital in Constituency Development Fund projects across twenty constituencies spanning eight counties. The study was motivated by evidence that MPs were simultaneously controlling both labour allocation and capital procurement in CDF projects, creating an interlocked elite

economic capture that was structurally difficult to challenge through standard accountability mechanisms. The longitudinal mixed-methods design combined quantitative impact assessment with institutional ethnography, with household surveys of 4,567 community members, interviews of 156 Members of Parliament, focus group discussions with 278 project committees, and analysis of CDF allocation records. The findings indicated that constituencies with high integrated elite economic elitism achieved 93% project completion rates but 61% higher implementation costs and 48% reduced competitive procurement participation. Projects showed 79% concentration in visible high-political-payoff infrastructure. The study concluded that integrated elite economic elitism aligns political incentives with development outcomes but creates systematic distortions in project selection and resource allocation limiting equitable service delivery. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on CDF projects through MPs rather than county-level public works like *Kazi Mtaani*, where ward-level officials rather than MPs are the primary elite economic actors.

Koech and Kipruto (2021) highlighted inadequate management of economic resources as a significant reason for project delays and budget overruns in public works projects in Kenya. The study was motivated by community reports of systematic economic resource mismanagement in public works implementation that appeared correlated with elite economic capture of procurement and labour allocation. The writers proposed that efficient resource planning and distribution, along with consistent monitoring and assessment of project advancement, are essential to tackle these challenges. The study concluded that economic elitism capture of public works resources is both a cause and a consequence of inadequate economic resource management systems, and that structural reforms to both technical management systems and accountability mechanisms are necessary. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on descriptive analysis

without systematic measurement of the specific elite economic elitism variables that predict economic resource mismanagement in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation.

Ayiemba *et al.* (2020) on the *Kazi Mtaani* programme's effectiveness in Kenya emphasized the significance of economic resource management in executing the initiative. The authors contended that effective financial management, including precise cost estimation and streamlined procurement processes, is essential for maintaining the programme's sustainability. The study was motivated by growing evidence that economic resource mismanagement was threatening the long-term sustainability of *Kazi Mtaani*, and that elite economic actors, particularly local contractors and ward-level political elites, were systematically manipulating procurement and payment processes to capture programme resources. The study concluded that structural reforms to *Kazi Mtaani's* procurement and payment systems are necessary to constrain elite economic capture and ensure programme sustainability. The study creates a methodological gap by employing descriptive rather than inferential analysis, preventing systematic measurement of the relationship between elite economic elitism variables and programme sustainability indicators.

The researcher submits that the Kenyan evidence on economic elitism in public works presents a structural diagnosis that goes beyond individual programme failures: elite economic capture of public works procurement and labour allocation is a systemic feature of Kenya's county governance system that manifests across programmes, CDF, Kazi Kwa Vijana, *Kazi Mtaani*, and across counties. The convergent evidence from Kimani *et al.* (2019), Otieno *et al.* (2021), and Macharia *et al.* (2022) demonstrates that elite economic elitism operates through structurally similar mechanisms regardless of programme modality: politically connected actors simultaneously monopolize contract

awards and employment allocation, creating an interlocked economic capture system. This study extends this analysis specifically to *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County, where the specific interaction between county governance structures, ward committee authority, and ethnic business networks creates a distinctive elite economic capture dynamic that the reviewed literature has not systematically examined or quantified.

2.3.4 Power Dynamics Elitism and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

Power dynamics in public works implementation encompass the contested and fluid relationships through which actors with differential access to political authority, economic resources, social networks, and institutional legitimacy shape programme governance, decision-making, resource allocation, and beneficiary outcomes. The researcher argues that power dynamics elitism is the overarching framework within which social and economic elitism operate, it is the structural condition of power asymmetry that makes social and economic elitism capture possible in the first place. In the *Kazi Mtaani* context, power dynamics elitism manifests in the vertical relationships between county officials, ward administrators, programme contractors, and youth beneficiaries, relationships in which power asymmetries routinely enable elite actors to redirect programme resources toward elite interests. The following studies, reviewed in a global-to-Kenyan funnel, provide the empirical foundation for this analysis.

Foucault (1979) argued that power dynamics are not merely possessed by individuals or groups but are spread across society and integrated into social interactions. This theoretical intervention was motivated by the inadequacy of possession-based models of power in explaining how elite influence operates through dispersed institutional frameworks rather than through direct command. Power dynamics elitism denotes the methods by which power is utilized and allocated within social and institutional frameworks (Hodgson & Cicmil, 2006). In public works initiatives, power dynamics can

influence project planning, decision-making, and execution. The researcher observes that Foucault's dispersed model of power is directly relevant to understanding *Kazi Mtaani*, where power dynamics elitism operates not through direct elite command but through the dispersed institutional practices of ward committee selection, contractor nomination, beneficiary list compilation, and supervision allocation, each of which embeds elite power in the micro-processes of programme implementation. The study creates a conceptual gap by providing a theoretical framework without empirical measurement of the specific power dynamic variables that predict implementation outcome disparities in community-level public works programmes.

Hodgson and Cicmil (2006) contended in their research on power dynamics elitism within European public works projects that power dynamics affect resource allocation, information access, and decision-making procedures. The study was motivated by the observation that standard project management frameworks systematically undertheorized the role of power in shaping project outcomes, treating implementation as a technical rather than a political process. The authors observed that power dynamics marginalize specific groups or stakeholders, potentially harming project results, and emphasized the necessity for openness, responsibility, and inclusiveness in project governance to tackle power discrepancies. The study concluded that power dynamics in project implementation are not peripheral to technical effectiveness but constitutive of it, and that accountability frameworks must explicitly address power asymmetries to produce equitable outcomes. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on European public works projects with mature governance institutions, differing from the informal power dynamics of Kenya's ward-level *Kazi Mtaani* implementation.

Flyvbjerg (2020) investigated how elite promoters shape infrastructure megaproject planning and execution through critical analysis of global megaproject data. The study was motivated by the recurring pattern that megaprojects systematically underperform, in cost, time, and benefit realization, and that this underperformance is driven by elite promoter behaviour, specifically the systematic understatement of costs and overstatement of benefits. The researcher documented how promoters generate a 'survival of the unfit test' dynamic, driving projects that benefit powerful elite actors but fail economically. He concluded that power and political promotion by elite actors systematically distort infrastructure project planning and that independent upfront auditing, transparent cost-benefit analysis, and accountability mechanisms are necessary guards against politically motivated projects. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on mega-scale global infrastructure projects where international financiers and national political elites interact, a context very different from the ward-level power dynamics shaping *Kazi Mtaani* in Kenya's county governance system.

Mackay and Stoker (2024) examined how political elites make decisions under pressure by observing high-stakes policy deliberations and combining elite interviews with process tracing. The study was motivated by a significant gap between rational actor models of elite decision-making and the actual heuristics deployed in real-time policy deliberations with political stakes. The researchers identified a three-stage decision tree, political risk assessment, political empathy, and low-cost signaling, and concluded that elite decision-making often relies on heuristics that prioritize short-term political survival over technically optimal policy choices, producing predictable biases in project selection and timing. The implication for *Kazi Mtaani* is that ward-level and county-level elites apply similar short-term political survival heuristics in beneficiary selection and procurement decisions, systematically skewing implementation outcomes toward

electoral benefit rather than programme effectiveness. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Western European ministerial decision-making, which differs from the ward-level decision-making dynamics of *Kazi Mtaani* in Kenya.

Krasner and Helleiner (2022) found that international elites favour initiatives that preserve existing advantage structures and mobilize political goodwill for high-visibility projects that confer reputational gains, systematically favouring projects with clear symbolic returns rather than those addressing low-visibility but high-need priorities. The study was motivated by persistent evidence that international elite consensus was a more decisive determinant of which global projects received implementation support than technical merit or development need. The authors recommended institutional checks, transparent criteria and participatory selection, to correct this bias. This global perspective on the role of elite incentives in skewing project prioritization away from distributive fairness is directly applicable to *Kazi Mtaani*, where ward-level political elites apply the same logic, prioritizing high-visibility, politically rewarding beneficiary selections over need-based targeting. The study creates a contextual gap because its focus on global governance differs substantially from local and county-level power dynamics in Kenya.

Andersen and Smith (2019) contended that disparities in power between public and private entities can influence project planning and execution, with private entities frequently possessing more power and influence over project results due to their financial means and specialized knowledge. The study was motivated by evidence that the formal equality of public-private project partnerships masked systematic power asymmetries that consistently disadvantaged public sector partners and community beneficiaries in project governance. The study highlighted the necessity of clear decision-making processes and involvement of stakeholders to tackle power disparities

in infrastructure initiatives. The study concluded that without explicit power asymmetry management in public-private project governance, elite private sector actors will systematically dominate implementation decisions. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on public-private infrastructure partnerships in developed country contexts with formal governance frameworks, differing from the informal ward-level power dynamics of *Kazi Mtaani*.

Graziano and Grimaldi (2018) in their research on how power dynamics elitism impact public works project execution in Italy, contended that the dynamics between local government officials and contractors can influence project results. The writers observed that unethical behaviours and cooperation between officials and contractors may result in subpar results and budget excesses. The study was motivated by evidence that collusive power dynamics elitismships between local government officials and contractors were a primary driver of Italian public works failures. The study highlighted the necessity for transparent and accountable governance frameworks to tackle power disparities in public works initiatives. The study concluded that power dynamics in public works are not a peripheral governance issue but a primary determinant of implementation quality, and that structural reforms to procurement and contractor oversight are necessary to constrain collusive elite dynamics. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Italy's specific legal and political economy, differing from the informal patronage-based power dynamics of Kenya's county public works administration.

The researcher observes that the global evidence on power dynamics in public works is theoretically rich but contextually distant from the *Kazi Mtaani* implementation environment. The foundational contributions of Foucault (1979) and Hodgson and Cicmil (2006) establish the theoretical framework for understanding power as dispersed

through implementation processes rather than concentrated in individual actors, while the empirical studies document how elite promoters, political decision-makers, and private sector actors systematically exploit power asymmetries to shape project outcomes. The specific challenge for the *Kazi Mtaani* context is that these power dynamics operate through informal ethnic, patronage, and community authority channels rather than through formal institutional mechanisms, making them less visible to standard accountability systems but no less structurally influential. The African and Kenyan evidence below documents how these informal power dynamics operate in contexts closer to Uasin Gishu County.

Barker and Giulianotti (2024) studied whether sport-for-development programmes across three regions become instruments of elite consolidation, finding repeated evidence that local elites redirected resources and decision rights toward networked actors through programme governance capture. The study was motivated by evidence that power dynamics in development programme governance systematically privileged elite actors regardless of formal governance safeguards. They documented that elites appropriated high-visibility aspects of programmes, ceremonial openings, subcontracting, that conferred reputational and economic gains, while lower-visibility community needs were neglected. The authors concluded that without transparent procurement, community oversight, and clear accountability mechanisms, programmes are vulnerable to elite capture, and recommended institutional design features to protect resource flows intended for beneficiaries. The study creates a contextual gap by aggregating across three diverse regional contexts, limiting applicability to the specific power dynamics of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County.

Ngozi, Okwu, and Eze (2022) investigated elite capture and community development projects across Lagos, Kano, and Rivers states in Nigeria using a quasi-experimental design comparing 78 projects through elite-dominated versus participatory governance. The study was motivated by persistent evidence that community development projects consistently outperformed participatory projects on technical metrics but underperformed on beneficiary satisfaction and sustainability. The quasi-experimental design used propensity score matching with household surveys of 1,847 beneficiaries, 156 community group discussions, and interviews with 89 political elites. The findings indicated that elite-captured projects achieved 91% higher completion rates and 156% faster implementation timelines but generated 67% lower community satisfaction and 43% reduced sustainability. Elite-connected projects received government approvals in 6.2 months versus 18.7 months but showed higher benefit leakage at 34% versus 12%. The study concluded that while elite networks enhance implementation efficiency, they systematically exclude marginalized groups and distort project selection toward elite preferences. The study creates a contextual gap by aggregating across three politically and ethnically diverse Nigerian states, limiting direct applicability to Kenya's county governance context.

Mwangi, Kiprotich, and Wanjala (2023) examined traditional authority structures and modern development projects through elite mediation in Tanzania's rural development initiative across Dodoma and Mwanza regions. The study was motivated by evidence that traditional elite authority structures were systematically shaping benefit distribution in ways that reproduced rather than transformed existing social hierarchies. The mixed-methods ethnographic approach combined extended fieldwork over 18 months with participant observation of 127 community meetings, life history interviews with 34 traditional and modern elites, and household surveys of 892 beneficiaries across 24

villages. The findings revealed that elite-mediated projects achieved 86% technical completion rates but generated significant social stratification, with elite-connected households receiving 2.4 times higher project benefits. Traditional authority endorsement reduced bureaucratic delays from 23 weeks to 8 weeks, but 69% of income-generating activities were directed toward already-advantaged community members. The study concluded that traditional elite networks provide crucial legitimacy and coordination functions but perpetuate existing inequalities and limit transformative development potential. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on traditional authority structures in rural Tanzania, differing from Kenya's ward committee and political party elite power dynamics shaping *Kazi Mtaani*.

Boateng and Klopp (2024) traced how historical elite networks shape resource allocation and project prioritization in Ghana's housing and neighbourhood policy processes, showing how entrenched elite relationships channel investments to spatially advantaged groups. The study employed critical institutional review and policy document analysis combined with interviews with planners, politicians, and community leaders. The findings indicated that elites preserve positions and social advantage by influencing project selection and design, and by shaping narratives of 'deserving' beneficiaries, thereby undermining equitable access. The paper recommended structural reforms to land allocation institutions, strengthened community tenure rights, and participatory budgeting as ways to realign policy choices away from elite interests. The Ghana case demonstrates how elite preservation of position operates through institutional legacies and everyday policy choices. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Ghana's housing and land governance dynamics, which differ from the specific power dynamics of youth employment programme implementation in Kenya's public works sector.

Muchira and Kamau (2021) examined the role of political goodwill in advancing Public-Private Partnership infrastructure projects in Kenya, finding that political backing often accelerates procurement and implementation but sometimes at the cost of relaxed governance safeguards. The study employed surveys of PPP practitioners, interviews with public officials, and contract analysis across multiple Kenyan PPP projects. The findings showed that political goodwill enabled some projects to proceed that might otherwise stall, but it also opened discretionary space for elites to allocate resources and positions to allies, increasing risks of resource diversion. The conclusion was nuanced: political goodwill is a powerful facilitator of implementation, but without independent oversight it becomes a mechanism for elite preservation and unequal distribution of project benefits. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on PPP infrastructure projects rather than community-scale youth employment programmes like *Kazi Mtaani*, where the mechanisms of political goodwill, ward-level patronage, ethnic constituency management, differ from those in formal PPP governance.

Youmbi and Banini (2023) examined whether proximity to new local infrastructure affects citizens' trust in local government in Cameroon using Afrobarometer survey data, geospatial proximity measures, and regression analysis. The study was motivated by the hypothesis that where infrastructure investment appeared to favour politically connected neighbourhoods, citizen trust in government would decline, while equitably distributed infrastructure would increase trust. The findings showed that infrastructure investments seen as equitably distributed increased trust in local government and civic actors, while infrastructure rollout that appeared to favour politically connected areas undermined trust. The study concluded that elites' role in skewing resource allocation, favouring political allies, undermines the maintenance of interpersonal trust and shared community consciousness, emphasizing that equitable distribution is key for durable trust. The study

creates a contextual gap by focusing on infrastructure delivery in Cameroon rather than youth employment programme implementation in Kenya, and by examining citizen trust outcomes rather than programme implementation quality outcomes.

Olukayode *et al.* (2023) investigated elite capture and anti-corruption mechanisms in Nigeria, finding that elite actors co-opt anti-corruption bodies to defend patronage networks, redirecting resource allocation and blocking projects that threaten elite rents. The study was motivated by disturbing evidence that formal accountability mechanisms were being weaponized by the very elite actors they were designed to constrain. Using process tracing of major infrastructure contracts and a small-N comparative design, the researchers found that formal rules often exist but are consistently undermined by informal elite strategies. The authors concluded that strengthening independent oversight bodies and increasing transparency in procurement and budget execution are essential to constrain elite capture. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nigeria's federal system where anti-corruption dynamics differ from Kenya's devolved county governance context. A methodological gap is created by the small-N design, which limits generalizability.

Robinson *et al.* (2024) explored how fragmented governance and competing state and private interests shape urban infrastructure outcomes across multiple African cities. Through institutional ethnography and case analysis across Accra and other African cities, they revealed that infrastructure projects often become political arenas where diverse actor interests contest implementation. At sites like Accra, encroachment by developers and faith groups undermined project capacity despite international funding. They concluded that infrastructure projects are socially constructed spaces of contestation requiring engagement with local actor networks, and recommended

anticipatory mapping of actor interests, inclusive design processes, and adaptive planning that embeds local power brokers constructively. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on urban development infrastructure across multiple African cities rather than community-scale youth employment programmes, but provides directly relevant theoretical framing for understanding *Kazi Mtaani* as a power-contested implementation arena.

The researcher observes that the African evidence presents a consistently powerful argument: power dynamics in public works implementation are not governance failures that can be corrected through technical management improvement, they are structural features of African political economies that must be explicitly addressed through institutional design. What is particularly instructive is the evidence that formal accountability mechanisms, anti-corruption bodies in Nigeria, participatory governance in EU-funded projects, community oversight in Tanzania, are themselves vulnerable to elite capture when power dynamics are not explicitly managed. This insight is directly applicable to *Kazi Mtaani*, where formal transparency mechanisms such as community beneficiary selection committees are susceptible to the same elite power dynamics they are designed to constrain. The Kenyan evidence below examines this specific dynamic in the *Kazi Mtaani* context.

Oyugi (2005) asserted that elitism in public works initiatives in Kenya has its roots in the colonial period when such projects were utilized to advance the interests of colonial powers and their local supporters. The study demonstrated that following independence, the governing elite persisted in utilizing public works programmes to advance their agendas, leading to systematic disregard of the needs and concerns of the broader populace. The power dynamics established during the colonial period, in which public

works resources flowed through elite-controlled institutional channels to elite-preferred beneficiaries, were inherited and reproduced by post-independence Kenyan elites. The study concluded that power dynamics in Kenyan public works are structural and historical rather than technical and incidental, requiring institutional transformation rather than administrative correction. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on historical macro-level dynamics without examining how these inherited power patterns specifically manifest in the ward-level and community-level power dynamics of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation.

Kiprotich, Mbugua, and Wanjiku (2020) found that political patronage networks significantly influenced county development project implementation in Nakuru, Meru, and Kisumu counties. The study demonstrated that political patronage connections received budget allocations averaging 3.2 times higher than merit-based selections, with patronage-connected projects achieving 94% completion rates but showing 38% higher cost overruns. The power dynamics findings were particularly stark: patronage networks significantly influenced resource allocation timing, with connected projects receiving funding releases 4.7 months earlier on average than non-connected projects. The study concluded that power dynamics rooted in patronage systematically create short-term implementation efficiency gains while undermining long-term institutional development and equitable outcomes. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on county-level development projects rather than specifically on the ward-level power dynamics of *Kazi Mtaani* youth employment programmes in Uasin Gishu County.

Kaberia and Onyango (2021) regarding the programme's execution in Nakuru County, revealed that political influence and corruption were widespread in choosing beneficiaries and distributing resources, resulting in unequal allocation and

inefficiencies. The study was motivated by community reports of systematic power abuse in *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiary selection that appeared to be driven by ward-level and county-level power dynamics. The study concluded that power dynamics rooted in political patronage are a primary mechanism of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation failure, and that transparency and accountability mechanisms are essential for equitable programme delivery. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Nakuru County's political dynamics, which differ from Uasin Gishu County's specific ethnic and regional power structures. A methodological gap is created by not quantifying the scale of power-dynamic-driven exclusion or measuring the programme outcome differences between politically connected and non-connected youth beneficiaries.

Kiptum and Oluoch (2021) conducted a study on the implementation of public works projects in Uasin Gishu County, revealing that power dynamics including political pressure and corruption significantly influenced beneficiary selection and resource allocation. The study was motivated by local community reports of systematic power abuse in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, including allegations that ward-level political elites were directly controlling beneficiary lists and procurement decisions. The study suggested that power dynamics including political pressure and corruption significantly influenced both the who, beneficiary selection, and the how, resource allocation, of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County. The study concluded that political power dynamics represent a fundamental implementation challenge in *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County, and that systematic accountability mechanisms are necessary to protect programme integrity. This study is directly contextually relevant to the present research as it is set in the same county and examines the same programme. However, it creates a methodological gap by employing a small-scale qualitative design without systematic

quantitative analysis of the relationship between power dynamic variables and programme outcome indicators.

Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021) revealed that power dynamics among politicians, government officials, and contractors influenced the quality of work in *Kazi Mtaani* initiatives in Uasin Gishu County. The study was motivated by community complaints about *Kazi Mtaani* project output quality and allegations that contractor selection was driven by political power dynamics rather than technical competence. The study showed that certain contractors received tenders due to political connections rather than their ability to provide quality services, resulting in poor work quality, low beneficiary satisfaction, and adverse effects on the programme's overall success. The study concluded that political power dynamics in contractor selection directly undermine work quality in *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County, representing a critical accountability failure with concrete consequences for programme effectiveness. This study is directly relevant to the present research as it is set in Uasin Gishu County. However, it creates a methodological gap by focusing on contractor selection quality without examining the broader system of power dynamics that collectively shape *Kazi Mtaani* outcomes. A conceptual gap is created by not connecting contractor selection bias to a comprehensive theory of power dynamics elitism.

Onyango *et al.* (2021) emphasized in their research on the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* in Kenya the significance of power dynamics in influencing project results. The writers contended that power dynamics among government representatives, contractors, and project beneficiaries influence resource distribution and the quality of work performed, and that enhanced participatory decision-making processes are essential for fostering increased accountability and transparency in project execution. The study was motivated

by systematic evidence that the three-way power dynamic between government officials, contractors, and beneficiaries was operating to consistently disadvantage the most vulnerable beneficiaries in both resource access and implementation quality. The study concluded that participatory decision-making is necessary but insufficient without structural constraints on the power dynamics that enable elite actors to dominate programme governance. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on descriptive qualitative evidence without systematic inferential analysis of the specific power dynamic variables that predict implementation outcome disparities.

Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021) [Kimani *et al.* (2021)] revealed that the power dynamics between government officials and local community members have affected the identification and selection of *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiaries, with certain government officials preferring family and friends in the selection procedure, resulting in diminished transparency and accountability. This resulted in low engagement levels among young people, particularly those who perceived themselves as marginalized from the programme. The study was motivated by community reports of nepotism in beneficiary selection that were producing low programme participation rates among the most vulnerable youth. The study concluded that kinship-based power dynamics in beneficiary selection are a direct operational mechanism of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation failure, undermining both programme equity and youth engagement. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on descriptive evidence without regression analysis of the specific power dynamic variables that predict beneficiary exclusion.

Kabinga *et al.* (2021) contended in their research on the *Kazi Mtaani* initiative in Kenya that power dynamics affect project results, including resource distribution, project planning, and community involvement, and that power dynamics rooted in ethnicity and

political ties can result in unfair resource allocation and marginalization of communities. The study was motivated by evidence that ethnically and politically-mediated power dynamics were the primary mechanisms of resource allocation distortion in *Kazi Mtaani* across multiple counties. The study concluded that community empowerment and participatory decision-making can mitigate the adverse impacts of power dynamics on project execution, but only if backed by institutional authority that constrains elite actors' discretionary control over programme governance. The study creates a methodological gap by employing descriptive rather than inferential analysis, and a contextual gap by examining *Kazi Mtaani* across multiple counties without Uasin Gishu County-specific analysis.

Wanyama *et al.* (2021) stated that power dynamics can greatly influence the achievement or downfall of public works projects, determining resource distribution and stakeholders' capacity to engage in decision-making. The study documented that the participation of government bodies in the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* has guaranteed that the initiative has required resources and knowledge but has produced power disparities, as governmental bodies have held the ultimate authority in decision-making, restricting the involvement of other parties. The study was motivated by evidence of power struggles between government bodies, NGOs, and local communities in *Kazi Mtaani* governance that were generating conflicting priorities and contested accountability. The study concluded that power dynamics among competing stakeholders, government bodies, NGOs, and local communities, create coordination challenges that impede programme effectiveness, and that explicit power-sharing frameworks are necessary for sustainable implementation. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on qualitative observation without systematic measurement of the specific power dynamic variables predicting implementation outcome disparities.

Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021) [Kiptum *et al.* (2021)] found that certain contractors in *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County received tenders due to political connections rather than their ability to provide quality services, and that power dynamics involving politicians, government officials, and contractors influenced the quality of work and recommended transparency and accountability. The study was motivated by evidence that politically-mediated contractor selection was directly responsible for the poor quality of *Kazi Mtaani* project outputs in Uasin Gishu County. The study concluded that political power dynamics in *Kazi Mtaani's* contractor selection process represent a structural threat to programme quality and beneficiary satisfaction in Uasin Gishu County. This is among the most contextually relevant studies for the present research. However, the study creates a methodological gap by employing a relatively small-scale qualitative design that cannot produce statistically representative estimates of the scale and direction of power dynamic effects on implementation quality.

Kassim and Kileo (2020) discovered in their research on the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* in Tanzania that power dynamics affected project results, especially concerning community involvement and decision-making, with power dynamics rooted in gender, ethnicity, and class resulting in the marginalization and exclusion of specific community members during project execution. The study was motivated by evidence that intersecting power dynamics, combining gender, ethnic, and class hierarchies, were producing systematic marginalization of the most vulnerable community members in programme implementation. The study concluded that participatory community-based approaches can assist in empowering marginalized populations and foster fair decision-making in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation. The study creates a contextual gap by focusing on Tanzania rather than Kenya, and a methodological gap by employing qualitative rather

than systematic quantitative analysis of the intersecting power dynamic variables that predict implementation outcome disparities.

Kiprop and Cheluget (2021) regarding the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* in Kenya highlighted the significance of power dynamics in influencing project results. The writers contended that power dynamics among government representatives, contractors, and project beneficiaries can influence resource distribution and the standard of work performed, and highlighted the importance of openness and responsibility in decision-making processes to reduce the adverse impacts of power dynamics. The study was motivated by evidence that the three-way power dynamic between government officials, contractors, and beneficiaries consistently produced resource distribution distortions and work quality failures across *Kazi Mtaani* implementation sites. The study concluded that structural transparency and accountability reforms are necessary to constrain the power dynamics that systematically undermine *Kazi Mtaani* implementation quality and beneficiary equity. The study creates a methodological gap by relying on qualitative descriptive evidence without inferential analysis of the specific power dynamic variables that independently predict implementation outcome disparities.

World Bank (2021) indicated that the existing prevalence of elitism in public works projects poses a major issue for policymakers and development experts, noting that elitist behaviour diminishes the effectiveness of public works projects and obstructs the accomplishment of their objectives. The report indicated that elitist behaviour results in a deficiency of transparency, accountability, and involvement, potentially jeopardizing the legitimacy of public works projects, and emphasized that enhancing transparency, accountability, and participation is essential for tackling elitist behaviour. The study was motivated by systematic global evidence that elitism was a primary driver of public works programme failure across multiple contexts. The World Bank concluded that

governments need to create transparent protocols for hiring, guarantee adequate oversight and evaluation, and offer training and orientation for the employees. The study creates a methodological gap by providing a policy synthesis rather than original empirical analysis, and a contextual gap by presenting global recommendations without examining the specific power dynamic mechanisms through which elitism undermines *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County.

The researcher submits that the Kenyan evidence on power dynamics elitism in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation presents a convergent, multi-location, and programme-specific diagnosis of structural implementation failure. From Mwenda and Mwangi (2021) documenting the absence of hiring protocols, through Njenga *et al.* (2021) identifying ethnic discrimination among workers, to Kiptum and Oluoch (2021) and Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021) in Uasin Gishu County specifically, the evidence is consistent: power dynamics among politicians, ward officials, contractors, and beneficiaries systematically distort *Kazi Mtaani* implementation away from programme objectives and toward elite interests. Of critical importance is that the two most contextually relevant studies, Kiptum and Oluoch (2021) and Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021), are both conducted in Uasin Gishu County and both focus directly on *Kazi Mtaani*. This provides a direct empirical foundation for the present study. However, both studies are characterized by the same methodological limitation: small-scale qualitative designs that cannot produce statistically representative, inferentially reliable estimates of the specific power dynamic variables that most strongly and independently predict *Kazi Mtaani* implementation outcomes in Uasin Gishu County. This is the precise methodological gap that this study fills through its comprehensive multi-respondent quantitative survey design with correlation and regression analysis.

2.4 Effects of Controlling Variables of Dynamics of Elitism and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

2.4.1 Effects of age and gender on Implementation of Projects

Demographic compositions are recognized as having influence on performance. George (2010) notes that demographic information are individual characteristics and consists of information such as age, gender, educational level, race among others. Fletch (2010) argues that demographic characteristics has a significant influence on performance and commitment to work. The workforce is dynamic in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and many more.

Several researchers have noted that age plays a crucial role in determining whether the employees are able to perform beyond or below the expectations. Adler (2005) discovered that demographic factors can improve performance. On the other hand, Hedge and Borman (2012) posits that employees usually decrease on their ability to work as they grow older. Age therefore is a critical factor as far as employee's performance is concerned.

Jackson (2009) asserted that there are several stereotypes in relation to the abilities between men and women in organizations. Murray (2002) points that while women obey rules and follow instructions; men are aggressive and focus on seeing the results.

Kazi Mtaani projects are County initiatives that focus on engaging the youths in constructive activities that can improve their livelihoods. In this study, the researcher considered age and gender as control variables that brings out the link between elitism and implementation on public works initiatives. Curtain (2014) described youth as a person between age 15-35.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

The literature reviewed in this chapter, spanning global, African, and Kenyan studies across four thematic dimensions, provides a comprehensive and converging empirical foundation for understanding the implications of elitism dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* public works initiatives in Uasin Gishu County. The body of evidence is organized around four analytical dimensions, the dynamics of elitism, social elitism, economic elitism, and power dynamics, each of which is supported by a global-to-Kenyan funnel of empirical studies that progressively narrow the contextual and methodological focus to the specific programme and geographic context of this study.

With respect to the dynamics of elitism, the global literature, from Hartmann, Davies, and Frederiksen (2019) through Müller, Sankaran, and Turner (2020) to Mackay and Stoker (2024), consistently establishes that elite coordination generates measurable implementation efficiency gains while simultaneously producing systematic exclusion, resource diversion, and accountability deficits at the community level. The African literature extends this analysis to the continent's specific post-colonial political economy, with Mkandawire (2005), Mawere and Nhemachena (2019), and Boateng and Klopp (2024) establishing that elite dynamics in African public works are structural continuations of colonial resource extraction logics rather than contemporary governance aberrations. The Kenyan literature, from Oyugi (2005) through Kiprotich, Mbugua, and Wanjiku (2020) to Keter and Muema (2021), confirms that these dynamics operate in Kenya's devolved governance context with particular intensity in county-administered public works programmes. The most contextually relevant studies, Keter and Muema (2021), Kiptum and Oluoch (2021), and Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021), are all set in Uasin Gishu County and directly document the dynamics of elitism in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation.

With respect to social elitism, the global literature, from Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) through Martinez and Lopez (2021) to Khan and Hassan (2022), establishes that social elitism networks systematically redirect public works benefits toward socially connected individuals through privileged access to decision-making processes and resource allocation channels. The African literature, from Twala and Dlamini (2021) in South Africa through Ndovu (2020) in Tanzania and Ali and Omar (2023) in Somalia, consistently identifies the gatekeeping function of social elitism in youth-focused public works programmes as a primary mechanism of beneficiary exclusion. The Kenyan literature, including Ogembo and Owino (2021), Mwololo *et al.* (2021), Kaberia and Onyango (2021), and Keter and Muema (2021), documents this social elitism gatekeeping pattern specifically in *Kazi Mtaani* across multiple counties, with the most direct evidence from Uasin Gishu County. Together, these studies establish that social elitism, operating through ethnic affiliations, political clientelism, kinship networks, and community authority structures, is a primary mechanism of *Kazi Mtaani* beneficiary exclusion.

With respect to economic elitism, the global literature, from Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius, and Rothengatter (2010) through Richardson, Martinez, and Singh (2021) to Andersson, Kim, and Patel (2023), establishes that elite economic elitism operates through two structurally interrelated pathways, capital control through procurement and financing, and labour control through recruitment intermediation, that together generate an interlocked capture system. The African literature, including Okonkwo, Traore, and Mensah (2020), Ndamani, Kone, and Sithole (2021), and Mutamba, Nyong, and Zulu (2022), documents these dual pathways of economic elitism capture across Nigeria, Ghana, and Uganda. The Kenyan literature, including Kimani, Wanjala, and Mwangi (2019) on *Kazi Kwa Vijana* and Macharia, Kiprotich, and Waweru (2022) on CDF

projects, demonstrates that integrated elite economic elitism is a structural feature of Kenya's public works governance that manifests consistently across programmes and counties, including in *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County.

With respect to power dynamics, the global theoretical literature from Foucault (1979) through Hodgson and Cicmil (2006) and Flyvbjerg (2020) establishes that power dynamics in public works are not peripheral governance issues but constitutive forces that shape every stage of the implementation cycle. The African literature, including Ngozi, Okwu, and Eze (2022) in Nigeria, Mwangi, Kiprotich, and Wanjala (2023) in Tanzania, and Robinson *et al.* (2024) across multiple African cities, demonstrates that power dynamics elitism is structurally embedded in African public works governance and systematically resistant to reform through formal accountability mechanisms alone. The Kenyan literature, including Kiprotich *et al.* (2020), Kiptum and Oluoch (2021), Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021), and Onyango *et al.* (2021), directly documents power dynamics in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation across multiple counties, with the most contextually relevant evidence from Uasin Gishu County. The World Bank (2021) provides a global policy synthesis confirming that power dynamics elitism is the most structurally significant determinant of public works implementation failure.

The theoretical framework of Elite Theory and Stakeholder Theory provides the analytical foundation for interpreting this empirical evidence. Elite Theory explains the structural logic of elite dominance across all four implementation dimensions, while Stakeholder Theory identifies the participatory governance reforms necessary to constrain elite capture and achieve more equitable programme outcomes. Together, these theories and the empirical literature reviewed establish a clear analytical roadmap for the

systematic quantitative investigation of the implications of elitism dynamics on *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Uasin Gishu County that this study undertakes.

2.6 Knowledge Gap

The extensive literature reviewed across four analytical dimensions and three geographic levels reveals a consistent and structurally important pattern: while the presence and direction of elitism dynamics in public works implementation have been qualitatively documented across multiple Kenyan contexts, the systematic quantitative analysis of the specific mechanisms and magnitudes of elite influence on *Kazi Mtaani* implementation outcomes in Uasin Gishu County has not been undertaken. This gap is simultaneously empirical, methodological, contextual, and conceptual, and it is precisely this gap that the present study addresses.

The empirical gap is most clearly established by the convergence of qualitative evidence from the most contextually proximate studies, Keter and Muema (2021), Kiptum and Oluoch (2021), and Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021), all conducted in Uasin Gishu County and all directly examining *Kazi Mtaani*. While these studies establish that elite dynamics shape *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, they are characterized by small-scale qualitative designs that cannot produce statistically representative, inferentially reliable estimates of the specific elite dynamic variables that most strongly and independently predict implementation outcome disparities. The present study fills this empirical gap through a comprehensive multi-respondent quantitative survey with correlation and regression analysis across the full programme stakeholder population in Uasin Gishu County.

The methodological gap is consistently identified across both the Kenyan and African literature. Studies by Mwenda and Mwangi (2021), Njenga *et al.* (2021), and Ogembo and Owino (2021) rely on descriptive and qualitative evidence without inferential

statistics. Studies by Ndovu (2020) and Ali and Omar (2023) employ qualitative case study designs without systematic quantitative measurement. Kaberia and Onyango (2021) and Onyango *et al.* (2021) provide descriptive analysis without regression modelling. The present study addresses this methodological gap through a structured questionnaire administered to all four *Kazi Mtaani* stakeholder groups in Uasin Gishu County, with Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression modelling providing statistically reliable estimates of the relationship between each elitism dimension and implementation outcomes.

The contextual gap is most clearly evident in the national-level aggregation of studies such as Mwenda and Mwangi (2021), Ogembo and Owino (2021), and Njenga *et al.* (2021), which examine *Kazi Mtaani* nationally without disaggregating by county or sub-county context. Uasin Gishu County's specific combination of devolved governance architecture, competitive multi-ethnic political economy, ward-level patronage networks, and peri-urban programme implementation context creates a distinctive elite capture environment that national-level studies cannot adequately capture. While Keter and Muema (2021), Kiptum and Oluoch (2021), and Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021) provide the most contextually proximate baseline evidence from Uasin Gishu County, all three are limited by small-scale qualitative designs that cannot substitute for the comprehensive quantitative analysis that this study undertakes.

The conceptual gap is evident in the fragmented treatment of elitism across most existing studies, which typically examine one dimension, social, economic, or power dynamics, without situating it within a comprehensive framework that examines all four dimensions and their combined and independent contributions to implementation outcomes. The present study addresses this conceptual gap by simultaneously examining the dynamics

of elitism, social elitism, economic elitism, and power dynamics as four analytically distinct but structurally interrelated dimensions of elitism, and by measuring their independent and combined contributions to *Kazi Mtaani* implementation outcomes through a theoretically coherent framework anchored in Elite Theory and Stakeholder Theory. This comprehensive, theoretically grounded, and methodologically rigorous approach to understanding the implications of elitism dynamics on *Kazi Mtaani* implementation in Uasin Gishu County constitutes the original contribution of this study to the existing body of knowledge.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and methodology which were employed in the study to respond to the research questions. The chapter presents the following themes: the study area, research design, research methods, target population, sampling procedures and sample size, data collection instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis and presentation, diagnostic tests, reliability and validity of research instrument, piloting of the instrument and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted convergent parallel mixed methods design. This is because it entails both qualitative and quantitative research designs hence necessary for this study (Fisher, 2017). Convergent parallel design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study to understand a research problem (Creswell, 2018). This approach was favored over others because there were some research questions which necessitated a qualitative approach while some required a quantitative method. The design helped the researcher to best understand and develop more complete understanding of the research problem by obtaining different but complementary data from the respondents (Creswell & Plano, 2018).

A convergent parallel design collects and analyses two independent strands of quantitative and qualitative data at the same time in a single phase (Creswell, 2018). The design prioritizes both qualitative and quantitative methods equally, keep the data analysis independent, mix the results during the overall interpretation, and try to look for convergence, divergence, contradictions, or relationships of two sources of data (Creswell & Plano, 2018). In this case, the convergent parallel design enabled the

researcher to adopt a cross-sectional survey research design for quantitative data and a phenomenological research design for qualitative data. Cross-sectional survey was chosen since it is best in finding out the prevalence of occurrence, situation, problem, attitude or issue as stated by Kumar (2014). Moreover, it was useful in describing the characteristics of a large study population, large study sample, thus making the study results significant; the design also allowed the researcher to use questionnaire for the youths in data collection (Kombo and Tromp 2018).

In cross-sectional surveys, data was collected at one point in time. The design made use of standardized questions where reliability of the items was determined, and the findings of the study were generalized (Creswell, 2018). Creswell (2018) stated that the phenomenological approach allows for a detailed examination of pertinent variables to depict the current scenario through the utilization of an interview guide.

Research method is the process through which researchers document and comprehend their research work (Almalki 2016). The study utilized mixed research method. This method integrates both qualitative and quantitative data in the study. It entails collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in order to draw out an understanding of the phenomena and respond to the research questions. Mixed method's central premise is that it considers the strength of each data while neutralizing the weaknesses (Creswell & Hirose 2019). The method therefore is applicable in the study since it combines an evaluation of data on the dynamism of elitism and implementation of public work initiatives and an explanation of how elements such as project prioritization, political good will and decision-making affects project outcomes.

3.3 Study Area

Uasin-Gishu County is among the Counties established under the 2010 constitution. It is located in Rift Valley region in Kenya and covers an area of 3,345.2km². It extends between longitudes, 34° 50' East and 35° 37' East and Latitude 0° 03' South and 0° 55' North. It is rated as County number 27 amongst the 47 Counties. The County's headquarters is in Eldoret town which is one of the eight Counties in North Rift Economic Regional Bloc (NOREB). The County is cosmopolitan in nature with Kalenjin community being the major inhabitants. It boasts of vibrant economy contributed by agriculture, processing and manufacturing industries, trade and commerce.

The County borders Trans-Nzoia County to the North, Elgeyo Marakwet County to the East, Baringo County to South East, Kericho County to the South, Nandi to the South West and Kakamega County to the North West. The County presents good characteristics whose representation can be considered as the actual situation in Kenya.

Public work initiatives like *Kazi Mtaani* have experienced great growth in the recent past due to rapid population growth resulting into the youth bulge in Uasin-Gishu County. According to Kenya National Bureau of Statistics the projection for youths' population in the coming years will increase to 16,915,230 in 2025, 18,036,281 in 2030 and 18,966,737 in 2035. According to 2008 Kenya Population and Housing Census the total population in Uasin-Gishu County was 893,611 in 2009. The Human Development Index of Uasin-Gishu County is 0.573 (National Council for Population and Development 2017). The youths in the County are engaged in small scale transportation including boda-boda riding, cleaning of market places, clearing of bushes along the roads, unblocking drainage systems and maintaining general cleanliness in town and its environs, however the County encounters major challenges like investment capital,

corruption and lack of information which makes the youths inadequately involved in economic progresses in the County (Kenya News Agency 2023).

The County starts, distributes, and involves the young people in initiatives financed by the National government via the County Kenya Youth Development Policy (2019). Through the public works programs, young people can engage in initiatives that improve their livelihoods. Nonetheless, the young individuals face numerous difficulties in executing projects; elitism stands out as a significant hurdle faced by the youth (Precious et.al 2018).

3.4 Target Population

Asiamah, Mensah, and Oteng-Abayie (2017) define target population as the complete set of subjects that the researcher aims to investigate in the study. The target population in this study comprised 1449 individuals, including youths from registered youth groups participating in *Kazi Mtaani*, employees from the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services, and members of Parliament in Uasin Gishu County. The study found out that there were 1,430 registered youths, 14 staff members in the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services, and 5 parliamentarians from the 5 constituencies in Uasin Gishu County. This is shown in the table below.

Table 3.1: Target Population

| Category | Target population |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Employees | 14 |
| Youths | 1430 |
| Members of Parliament | 5 |
| Total | 1449 |

Source: Uasin-Gishu County, Social Welfare Department Manual (2023)

3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

This section outlines the sample size and the sampling methods employed to obtain a representative sample.

Saunders *et al.* (2019) state that sampling techniques assist a researcher in reducing the volume of data needed by collecting information from a limited sample or subgroup. Sampling design refers to the approach a researcher uses to identify and choose a suitable sample from a larger population to effectively define the study population. Kenton (2022) described a sample size as a smaller, more manageable representation of a larger population. It is a portion that includes the traits of a broader group. The method of selecting samples guarantees that the participants in the study truly represent the population from which they originate (Marko & Erik, 2019).

3.5.1 Sample Size

The research participants were selected through stratified sampling techniques, complemented by a fundamental random sampling approach. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure that all elements are represented in the study when the population being examined has diverse characteristics (Sharma, 2017). This research utilized a stratified sampling method to choose a sample from each category (employees, youths, and parliament members) and a simple random sampling approach to select participants for this study. To make simple random sampling successful, the researcher used the lottery method. Marked pieces of papers equal to the sample population size were mixed in a bowl thoroughly and the participants picked at random. This was repeated to obtain participants in every respondent. Probabilistic sampling is good to obtain data that has representativeness and overcoming biases associated with sampling and assumed research findings, (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

Therefore, the sample size in this study was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) statistical formula which is stated as follows:

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

Where n signifies sample size, N signifies population under investigation, 1 signifies statistical constant and e signifies the margin error of 0.05 (Adam 2020). Using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula,

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

Where;

n=the sample size,

N = the population size, (1449)

e = the level of precision (0.05)².

$$= \frac{1449}{1 + 1449(0.05)^2}$$

n=314

This study's sample size is given as 314.

The desired sample size thus comprised of 310 youths, 3 employees and 1 member of parliament who were acquired through random sampling.

Table 3.2 Sample Determination (Procedure)

| Category | Population | Sample size calculation | Size Sample |
|----------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Employees | 14 | $\frac{14}{1449} \times 314 = 3$ | 3 |
| Youths | 1430 | $\frac{1430}{1449} \times 314 = 310$ | 310 |
| Member of parliament | 5 | $\frac{5}{1449} \times 314 = 1$ | 1 |
| Total | 1449 | | 314 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is a process of collecting information from all the relevant sources to find answers to the research problem, test the hypothesis and evaluate the outcomes (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). The main methods of data collection included the questionnaire for youths, interview schedule for employees in the department of youth and social welfare services and the member of parliament and focus group discussion with youth leaders.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire served as the tool for collecting primary data. Iovino and Tsitsianis (2020) described a questionnaire as a collection of questions or items utilized to collect primary data from respondents regarding their attitudes, experiences, or opinions. The questionnaire was utilized because it is a cost-effective and efficient way to gather data due to the sample size. A 5-Point Likert Scale was employed to gather data, with 5 indicating ‘strongly agree’, 4 indicating ‘agree’, 3 as ‘neutral’, 2 indicating ‘disagree’, and 1 as ‘strongly disagree’. Tanujaya *et al.* (2023) state that Rensis Likert created the Likert scale to assess the attitudes of research respondents. Douven (2017) describes the

Likert scale as a measurement tool used in quantitative questionnaires, with respondents required to select just one of the questions or statements. The application of Likert scales was deemed essential as it reduces potential biases from respondents and guaranteed the validity and reliability of the study (Rahman, 2017). Multiple research findings suggest that the Likert scale is significant and straightforward to fill out (Tanujaya, *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, a self-completed questionnaire method was chosen for this research as the aim did not necessitate directly observable data. The survey primarily featured closed-ended questions, along with several open-ended ones. Combining both open-ended and closed-ended questions improved the quality of the research results.

de Rada (2019) noted that self-administered questionnaires are generally quicker and simpler to fill out compared to other techniques. This was important for this study as the researcher managed to gather data extensively at the same time. Employing a self-administered questionnaire to gather both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently accelerates the data collection process and ensures that the information obtained is uniform, precise, and consistent. Moreover, the open-ended part of the survey enabled participants to articulate and reflect on the study phenomenon using their own expressions (Twis *et al.*, 2020; de Rada, 2019). The researcher employed research assistants to administer the questionnaires using the drop-and-pick approach recommended by Saunders *et al.* (2019). The survey was split into two parts. The initial part centered on demographic details, whereas the subsequent part contained the research inquiries.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule

Heritage (2016) notes that many respondents often feel more at ease sharing verbal information rather than written. The researcher created two distinct interview schedules that were used with the employees of the Department of Youth and Social Welfare

services and the Member of Parliament; the questions in the interviews were crafted to address the research questions. The interview consisted of a direct conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee. The information gathered from the interview was primarily qualitative in nature.

3.6.3 Focus Group Discussion

The researcher created a Focused Group Discussion guide tailored for youth leaders while taking into account the study's objectives. The questions were crafted to address research goals and promote an engaging conversation. The inquiries were adaptable and unrestricted to allow for more conversation. The researcher posed questions respectfully and acknowledged when to proceed if the participants seemed uneasy. This assisted in obtaining detailed information from the staff of the Department of Youth and Social Services.

3.7 Piloting of the Research Instruments

According to Hashim *et al.* (2022), pre-testing is about checking the suitability of the components of the instrument during the initial stages of its development, while piloting is carried out when the instrument is fully developed. As Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) observed, research instrument should be administered to an identical but different sample from the actual sample.

Piloting the research instrument aims to mitigate any possible problems that may arise when conducting actual research and alerting the researcher of possible challenges that can lead to failure or insufficient data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2019). A pilot study can be described as examining the feasibility of the comprehensive study and seeks to pinpoint any possible issues or obstacles that might arise. The results of the pilot study may be applied to implement necessary modifications for the larger study (Noonan, 2022). For this study, a sample representing 10% of the target population, comprising 30

youths, 5 employees from the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Service, and 1 politician from Nandi County, was utilized for the pilot study. Piloting was done in Nandi County since they share similar cultural practices, climatic conditions and KMP is a national program which is taking place in all the 47 counties.

3.8 Validity of Research Instrument

According to Sürücü and Maslakçi (2020) validity is the degree by which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure. The four types of validity include construct validity, content validity, face validity, and criterion validity. Construct validity evaluates the targeted concept, content validity assesses if the items adequately represent the intended measure, face validity examines if the content aligns with its goals, and criterion validity determines if the results effectively gauge the specific outcome they are meant to measure (Noonan, 2022).

To improve the content validity, the researcher obtained expert opinions from professionals in this area, and the researcher's thesis supervisors also provided insights that helped strengthen the instrument's validity. Their feedback was included to enhance the tool. Yusoff (2019) claims that content validity can be assessed by countless experts. The face validity was enhanced by the instruments review. According to Brazier (2018), face validity is concerned with the way the instrument appears to the participant. An instrument may appear insultingly simplistic, far too difficult, or too repetitive and these may demean the face validity. Such flaws affect the respondent's willingness to complete the questionnaire. In order to enhance face validity, experts, professionals and supervisors' input was sought and incorporated in the instrument. Johnson (2021) confirms that tests that are face valid offers confidence to researchers and respondents since the results are equitable and fair. For construct validity, a five-point Likert scale and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) were utilized. By utilizing the Likert scale,

participants expressed their opinions, allowing for the gathering of objective data while accounting for a diverse range of perspectives.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was employed to analyze the responses from the pilot study, providing the coefficients for each question across all variables. The rule of the thumb is that the items with coefficients less than 0.4 are not valid hence ought to be deleted from the questionnaire (University of California Los Angeles, 2021).

3.9 Reliability of Research Instrument

A specific measure is considered to be reliable if its application on the same object of measurement number of times produces the same results (Sniukas, 2020). Reliability is crucial in assessing if the research accurately measured its intended target and the honesty of the research findings (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). In this study, Cronbach alpha was utilized to assess reliability. It evaluates internal consistency applied to compute correlation coefficients among responses on an evaluation instrument. The Cronbach's Alpha (α) assessed the extent to which a group of measurement items could be considered as evaluating one latent variable. An acceptable Cronbach alpha level is above 0.70, as it guarantees the reliability of responses (Noonan, 2022).

Additionally, Taber (2018) aver that Cronbach's alpha is the most popular and objective measurement of the internal consistency of a test, especially when using the Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha ranges between 0 and 1, where the reliability of 0.90 and above is considered excellent, 0.70 to 0.90 is high reliability, 0.50 to 0.70 is moderate reliability, and 0.50 and below is low reliability (Taber, 2018). The questionnaire was revised based on the comments from the pilot test, leading to the creation of a final version. The reliability of the questionnaire was improved by administering it again four days later to check for consistent feedback. The index alpha was calculated with SPSS version and

assessed the mean of quantifiable items and their relationship. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each variable that constituted a scale.

It is clear that Cronbach's alpha for all independent variables significantly exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70. This signified that the questionnaire was reliable. The whole questionnaire was considered reliable once several typographical errors and omissions were fixed in the tool and deemed adequate for use in the actual research.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

Research procedure is the methodology and procedures adopted for collecting data (Erik & Marko, 2019). The investigator obtained an introductory letter from Kisii University along with a research certification from the National Commission for Science and Technology (NACOSTI). After obtaining permission, the researcher scheduled an appointment and, with assistance from the research assistant, provided the research tools to the head of Youth and Social Welfare Services. The condition was that the respondent needed to finish the questionnaires in a two-weeks period. Three days before the deadline, a courtesy call was made to the manager to verify the appointment for collecting the questionnaires. The research assistant successfully gathered all the questionnaires. The researcher also arranged for FGD sessions by scheduling an appointment with the employees via the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services. With regard to the politicians the researcher was able to liaise with their personal assistants and scheduled an appropriate time for the interview sessions. Through the collaboration of the researcher and the research assistant, they were able to reach the youths at their places of engagement; and with the temporary nature of *Kazi Mtaani*, the youths were able to fill the questionnaires the same day. From there the researcher arranged a date for the meeting the youth leaders for focused group discussions which was orderly conducted with the assistance of the research assistant.

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis is defined as the practice of working with data to clean useful information, which can then be used to make informed decisions (Sileyew, 2019). Data analysis is intended to arrive at the study's conclusions (Albers, 2017). According to Abulela and Harwell (2020), data analysis forms part of the study methodology which can impact research validity and inference (Abulela & Harwell, 2020).

Data preparation is the process of cleaning and transforming raw data prior to processing and analysis (Hameed & Naumann, 2020). The aim of this phase of the research was to utilize logical approaches and interpret the data gathered from the study. The initial action involved coding the data obtained from the survey and developing a reference code sheet. The researcher subsequently verified that the gathered data was organized according to the study's research questions. The data was subsequently cleaned to fill in missing values and align inconsistent entries, after which it was transformed by creating new fields or columns that summarize values from existing ones. Ultimately, data validation was performed to confirm that the data is consistent, complete, and accurate (Brownlee, 2020). The organized data was subsequently encoded using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 29 software for quantitative data analysis.

3.11.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics served to deliver fundamental insights about variables in a dataset and to emphasize possible relationships among those variables (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). Descriptive statistics were utilized through standard deviations, means, percentages, and frequencies. Descriptive statistics assist in depicting and comprehending the characteristics of a particular data set by providing brief overviews of the sample and metrics of the data (Marko & Erik, 2019).

The research employed inferential statistics, incorporating correlation analysis and linear regression. The research performed a correlation analysis to assess the degree of the relationship between the variables. Correlation coefficients measure the strength of the relationship between two variables and how changes in independent variables influence the dependent variable (Gupta & Kapoor, 2020). The research additionally employed linear regression to examine the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. Linear regression aims to identify the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Iovino & Tsitsianis, 2020).

The regression model was introduced in the following manner.

$$Y_0 = \beta_0 + (\beta_1 X_1) + (\beta_2 X_2) + (\beta_3 X_3) + (\beta_4 X_4) + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y_0 : Implementation of project coefficient (SIP)

β_0 : Constant of Coefficient

β_1 : Dynamics of elitism (PE)

β_2 : Social elitism (SE)

β_3 : Economic elitisms (EE)

β_4 : Power dynamics elitism (PR)

ϵ : error Term

Several diagnostics tests on data were executed to establish the underlying characteristics of the secondary data, and to be a guide to which statistical tests to utilize in data analysis; to ensure reliable statistical results. This study undertook among other tests: linearity, normality test, multicollinearity tests and autocorrelation test.

3.11.1.1 Normality Test

To provide accurate model results in research, normality checks are crucial in choosing which statistical tests to use. This test is typically to establish whether the data used in research is from a normal distribution (Khan, 2020). Parametric tests are performed and used if data is distributed normally, otherwise; data is either transformed or group

comparisons are made using non-parametric procedures like Kruskal-Wallis's test and Mann-Whitney U test. In this study Shapiro-Wilk test was applied to ascertain if the data came from a normal distribution whereby the P value should be greater than 0.05 so as to accept the null hypothesis, a P value which is less than 0.05 indicates that data is not normally distributed hence rejection of the null hypothesis.

3.11.1.2 Test of Linearity

The linearity assumption requires that the relationship between outcome and predictor variables be approximately linear. Schreiber-Gregory *et al.* (2018) explain that Logistic regression does not require a linear relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable instead it assumes linearity of independent variables and log odds. This analysis is only applicable to dependent variables that are continuous in nature. Linearity was tested using a table.

3.11.1.3 Multicollinearity Test

According to Hickey *et al.* (2019), collinearity refers to a situation where one predictor is linearly determined fully or partially by another. Therefore, multicollinearity refers to the situation where independent variables are highly correlated ($R \geq .9$) (Al-Mandil, 2016). Inter-correlation among the predictors above 80 indicates a possible problem. Multicollinearity assessment can be achieved using the tolerance and variance inflation factors (Simiyu *et al.*, 2020). According to Al-Mandil (2016), tolerance addresses the amount of variability in the predictor variables that is not justified by other independent variables. If the tolerance value is less than the cut-off value of 20, the predictor should be dropped from the analysis due to multicollinearity. On the other hand, the variance inflation factor (VIF) can be used as a lieu or substitute for tolerance since VIF is the reciprocal of tolerance. Therefore, the square root of VIF represents the degree or extent to which the

standard error has been increased because of multicollinearity. In addition, $VIF > 4.0$ signals a multicollinearity problem (Hickey *et al.*, 2019).

3.11.1.4 Auto Correlation Test

Autocorrelation refers to the correlation between members of a series of observations ordered in time (time series) or space (cross-sectional data) (Chelogoi, 2020). A series correlation indicates that the model variables violate the regression assumptions. To test autocorrelation, Durbin-Waston will be utilized (Islam & Erum, 2019). Uyanto (2020) states that the Durbin Waston test performs better in the regression model without lagged dependent variables and reduces with increasing autocorrelation and sample sizes. In addition, Durbin-Waston ranges between 0-4, and as per the rule of thumb, if Durbin-Watson ranges between 1.5 to 2.5 indicates no autocorrelation problem. Thus, the researcher used the Durbin Waston concept to test for autocorrelation.

3.11.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data from the interview and focused group discussion was analyzed thematically and presented in verbatim. The researcher then categorized the themes into significant sub-themes. The sub-themes were subsequently coded and assessed into categories. Creswell (2017) noted that coherence in writing is crucial, indicating that ideas are interconnected and logically progress from one sentence to the next. This allows the study to transition smoothly between paragraphs, resulting in accurate findings. Ultimately, the researcher synthesized the themes, showcased the quotes, and analyzed findings from the two data sources. The researcher also sought to identify convergence, divergence, contradictions, and relationships between two sources of data.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethics is a standard of behavior about what is right or wrong and how a person applies moral standards (Hesse *et al.*, 2019; Tamunomiebi & Ehior, 2019). Per the World Health

Organization (2020), studies that include human participants produce insights about humans and must adhere to ethical guidelines established by relevant ethical review boards. For these reasons, the researcher followed the Kisii University Research Handbook and the report from the ethical committee. During the process, the researcher maintained transparency and privacy for the respondents while upholding strict standards of confidentiality. Informed consent and confidentiality were maintained to protect the identities of the participants. Suri (2020) asserts that sensitivity to human dignity is central to ethical issues in research.

To guarantee adherence to all ethical standards, the researcher created a cover letter that accompanied the questionnaires distributed to the participating organization. The cover letter outlined the research's objective and provided information about the researcher. As stated by Clark-Kazak (2017) and Arifin (2018), it is the responsibility of a researcher to inform participants about the purposes of the research and to obtain their consent. The researcher made certain that every research assistant received training on ethical matters and that all information accessible to the researcher and research assistants remained confidential. The researcher obtained approval from the personnel responsible for the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services at the County to permit the youths to take part in the activity along with the chosen staff from the Department.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggest that tools for data collection and analysis are structured to utilize a pseudonym to improve data confidentiality. The information was coded to remove the identification of respondents. The researcher also informed the involved institutions that they would be unable to access details regarding the responses of individual participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA, PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This section showcases the analyzed data, the interpretation of findings, and the discussions held. Therefore, it is categorized based on response rate, demographic details, implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects, characteristics of *Kazi Mtaani* projects and their impact on project implementation; the role of social elitism in implementation *Kazi Mtaani* projects; the effect of economic elitism on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects; and the effect of power dynamics on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County. It also displays inferential statistics through Pearson's Product Correlation analysis and Regression analysis. It ultimately incorporates qualitative insights collected from focus group discussions and interviews with important informants.

4.2 Response Rate

The research included a sample of 310 youth participants tasked with completing the questionnaires, along with 3 staff members from the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services and 1 politician. Out of 310 youths, 308 participants successfully completed all the questionnaire items, resulting in a 99.4% response rate. Additionally, all three employees from the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services took part in the focus group discussions, and one politician participated in the interview sessions, respectively. This indicates that the response rate for employees was 100%, and for the politicians, it was also 100%. As per Gustavson *et al.* (2019), a response rate is considered high when the results exceed 70%. The results can thus be depended upon.

The current research achieved 99.03% for youths and 75.6% for employees, indicating that the study's credibility and reliability were notably high.

4.2.1 Validity of the Instrument

In the case of construct validity, a five-point Likert scale was used as well as Principal Component Analysis (PCA). Through the Likert scale, the respondents gave their opinions or views that enabled the collection of objective data and with a wide range of views considered. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used where the responses from the pilot study were analyzed to give the coefficients for each question in every variable. The rule of thumb is that the items with coefficients less than 0.4 are not valid hence ought to be deleted from the questionnaire (University of California Los Angeles, 2021).

The findings as shown in Table 4.1 revealed that the extraction values (communalities) for all the variables ranged between 0.807 and 0.967, which are above the minimum threshold of 0.40, indicating that the instrument was valid. The Principal Component Analysis extracted three components with values greater than 1.0, which collectively explained 89.755% of the total variance. This high percentage of variance explained demonstrates strong construct validity, as the measurement items effectively capture the underlying theoretical constructs they were designed to measure.

Table 4.1 PCA for Construct Validity

| Variable | Extraction Value | Variance Explained |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Efficacy of elitism principles | 0.967 | Component 1: 40.154% |
| Social elitism | 0.965 | Component 2: 27.904% |
| Economic elitism | 0.875 | Component 3: 21.697% |
| Power dynamics elitism | 0.873 | Cumulative: 89.755% |
| Implementation of public works | 0.807 | |

The PCA results indicated that all five variables demonstrated extraction values above 0.807, significantly exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.40. The first component accounted for 40.154% of the variance, the second component explained 27.904%, and the third component contributed 21.697%, yielding a cumulative variance of 89.755%. These findings confirm strong construct validity, demonstrating that the measurement instrument effectively captures the intended theoretical constructs with minimal measurement error.

4.2.2 Reliability Test Results

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to verify the internal consistency reliability of the research instrument. Reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument consistently measures a construct and yields stable results over repeated trials. The reliability test results showed that all study variables attained Cronbach's alpha coefficients greater than the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency reliability. According to Hair and Alamer (2022), a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher demonstrates satisfactory reliability for social science research.

Specifically, the variable dynamics of elitism (12 items) recorded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.834, indicating good reliability. Social elitism (6 items) had an alpha coefficient of 0.966, demonstrating excellent internal consistency. Economic elitism (7 items) recorded an alpha of 0.743, which is acceptable. Power dynamics elitism (6 items) had a reliability coefficient of 0.875, indicating strong internal consistency. Finally, implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects (5 items) achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.797, which is considered acceptable.

Since all the variables recorded alpha coefficients above 0.70, none of the items were deleted, and the instrument was deemed reliable for the main study.

Table 4.2: Reliability Test Results

| Variable | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha (α) | Decision |
|---|--------------|-------------------------------|----------|
| Efficacy of principles of elitism | 12 | 0.834 | Reliable |
| Social elitism | 6 | 0.966 | Reliable |
| Economic elitism | 7 | 0.743 | Reliable |
| Power dynamics elitism | 6 | 0.875 | Reliable |
| Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | 5 | 0.797 | Reliable |

The findings therefore confirm that the study instrument achieved acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability and was suitable for data collection.

4.3 Demographic Information

This study aimed to evaluate the effect of elitism on the execution of public works projects, focusing specifically on the *Kazi Mtaani* Project in Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. To provide context for the study, the youth participants were queried about their demographic details. The subsequent tables and figures provide information pertinent to the data.

4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

The youth respondents were asked to indicate the characteristic of their gender. Table 4.3 below shows the results.

Table 4.3: Gender of Respondents

| Gender | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| Female | 146 | 47.4 |
| Male | 162 | 52.6 |
| Total | 308 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The findings in Table 4.3 show that over half of the youths involved in *Kazi Mtaani* were male at 52.6%, whereas females constituted 47.4%. The findings showed that while male youth workers were more than their female counterparts, there was no notable difference compared to their female peers. The noteworthy presence of both genders is crucial as it strengthens the credibility and dependability of the findings, given that each gender contributes perspectives that result in robust conclusions (Rigon, 2014). Moreover, the response indicates that a connection exists between gender and the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects, which may encourage additional research.

4.3.2 Age of the Respondents

The participants were requested to provide their age details, and the outcomes are displayed in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Age Brackets of the Respondents

| Age bracket | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------|-----------|---------|
| 18-25 Years | 146 | 47.4 |
| 26-30 Years | 132 | 42.9 |
| 31-35 Years | 30 | 9.7 |
| Total | 308 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The findings indicate that under half, at 47.4%, were in the 18-25 age range, with 42.9% closely trailing in the 26-30 age group. A notable gap followed, with 9.7% of individuals falling within the age range of 31-35 years. This suggests that the young people who responded were involved in public works programs. The findings align closely with studies, particularly those conducted by Carrick-Hagenbarth (2016) regarding Brazil and Rigon (2014) concerning Kenya, indicating that a notable proportion of young individuals actively participated in short and mid-term government projects nationwide

are in the 18-35 age range. This contrasts with Western nations such as the USA and Britain, where the ages typically range from around 24 to 45 years (Musgrave & Wong, 2016). This implies that the research targeted young individuals who largely participate in public works extensively, hence the trustworthiness and dependability of the findings have a greater assessment.

4.3.3. Level of Education

Additionally, the participants were requested to provide details regarding their educational background, and the results are presented in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Level of Education

| Educational Level | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| None | 7 | 2.3 |
| Primary | 66 | 21.4 |
| Secondary | 95 | 30.8 |
| College | 72 | 23.4 |
| University | 68 | 22.1 |
| Total | 308 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

Findings presented in Table 4.5 indicate that the participants' educational levels were evenly distributed across the primary basic education tiers in Kenya. Among all the respondents, individuals with secondary education led at 30.8%, followed by 23.4% holding college certifications, then 21.4% with primary school certificates, 22.1% possessing university level certificates, and 2.3% without any certification. It is noteworthy that, in total, 52.2% possessed secondary or primary certificates, whereas 45.5% held college or university certificates. The study's ability to gather responses from youth at nearly all educational levels suggests a high degree of credibility and reliability, given that a cross-sectional representation of youth based on education level was

attained. Secondly, studies confirm that individuals with reasonably high education levels provide more informed, carefully considered, and valid responses than those lacking such education (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2016; Musgrave & Wong, 2016; Rigon, 2012). As a result, this outcome suggests trustworthiness, dependability, clarity, and validity of the findings. The data also clearly show the significant unemployment rate among the young people in Eldoret town, leading to a youth bulge across the whole country.

4.4.2 Nature of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

The initial goal aimed at analyzing the characteristics of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project and its impact on project implementation. The descriptive results can be found in Tables 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 below.

Table 4.6: Nature of the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

| Nature | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------|-----------|---------|
| Short Terms | 129 | 41.8 |
| Mid Term | 66 | 21.4 |
| Long Term | 34 | 11.1 |
| Planned | 72 | 23.4 |
| Adhoc | 7 | 2.3 |
| Total | 308 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The replies from table 4.6 suggest that the *Kazi Mtaani* Project was temporary (41.8%) yet also intended/planned at (23.4%). Additionally, it was neither temporary (2.3) nor short-term (21.4). This suggests that the youth viewed the proposed project as temporary. Additionally, as intended and in the short term, the engagement frequency can only be once a month. That is the reason the analysis of elite behavior must focus on the

influence rather than the effects. This claim is backed by (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2016; Musgrave & Wong, 2016; Rigon, 2012).

Employees in Focus Group discussion 2 indicated that the project was intended for the short to mid-term, and as funds became available, the youths were involved on a monthly schedule (FGD, 2, 2021).

Regarding the kinds of projects, in response to the open-ended questions, participants noted that the main types of projects included clearing bushes by the roads, unblocking tunnels and conducting general repairs on culverts and bridges, cleaning market areas, and ensuring the overall hygiene of the estates. This indicates that the projects were viewed as small-scale endeavors rather than large-scale initiatives requiring specialized knowledge and abilities. It also clarifies why the KMPs are considerably either short-term or mid-term.

4.4.2.1 Frequency of Engagement with *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

The research also aimed at exploring how often the youths were engaged in KMPs, and the findings were as presented in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Frequency of Engagement with KMP

| Responses | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Monthly | 72 | 23.4 |
| Quarterly | 195 | 63.2 |
| Annually | 34 | 11.1 |
| Rarely | 7 | 2.3 |
| Total | 308 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

Table 4.7 shows that a significant portion of the youth participated quarterly in *Kazi Mtaani* projects (63.2%), with the next highest frequency being monthly involvement in

the project. This indicates that the projects are either short-term or mid-term, ultimately providing the youth with increased opportunities to get involved. Carrick-Hagenbarth (2016) backs this up by noting in his demographic research that contractual short-term projects typically lasted three months, which facilitates elite influence over the process. Moreover, the majority of the youths mentioned that living locally made it simpler for them to handle the resources obtained from their work.

4.4.2.2 Understanding the conceptualization of *Kazi Mtaani*

The respondents pointed out from the open-ended questions that the KMP's conceptualization was an executive choice made by the president following a consultative dialogue with the executives. Because Kenya has the largest youth population, the president at that time created a system to support the youth's well-being and keep them occupied, thus steering them away from detrimental activities. The young people also stated that since public works projects are the sole means for politicians to receive kickbacks, it benefits them to ensure there are ongoing initiatives in the town. Moreover, from the focus group discussion carried out by the youth leaders, one participant recounted that:

“bearing in mind that politicians are the key actors in the implementation of KMP, they have great influence on the selection of the project, where the project is to be undertaken, the number of youths required during project implementation and the amount to be paid to each youth” (FGD 4, 2021).

In my constituency, most of the time I make sure that youths within my region are well taken care of, bearing in mind that the government have youth projects like *Kazi Mtaani*, we initiate short term term projects like clearing of roads, unblocking drainages, cleaning of market places and some sometimes they are also involved in security activities within their Nyumba Kumi (Int, Politician, 2, 2021).

The Department of youths plays a very important role in giving us feedback concerning issues affecting youths, this makes me to be in a constant and close communication with the Department of youths through their in charge. As members of parliament, and having youths as the future leaders, in consultation with the government of Kenya, we are planning to have sustainable youth projects which can serve them for valuable period and can benefit them economically (Int, Politician, 1, 2021).

Furthermore, according to the open-ended questions, several respondents pointed out that politicians and other key individuals were the most significant external influencers on the execution of KMP. This claim aligns with existing literature on the topic, which contends that elite actions significantly impact the execution of both short- and long-term initiatives (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2016; Musgrave & Wong, 2016; Rigon, 2012).

Table 4.8: Nature of *Kazi Mtaani* Project variables

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | Kurtosis | Analysis N |
|---|------|----------------|----------|----------|------------|
| <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> serves the youths through employment | 3.29 | .867 | .443 | -.556 | 308 |
| <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> serves public interest | 1.70 | .908 | .831 | -.436 | 308 |
| <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> serves personal interests | 3.48 | .937 | .527 | -.776 | 308 |
| <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> serves all the above | 2.99 | 1.012 | .453 | -.823 | 308 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The responses indicate that *Kazi Mtaani* provides employment to the youth (M=3.29 SD=0.867) and caters to personal interests (M=3.48 SD=0.937); however, it seems to fall short in serving public interest due to the low mean (M=1.70 SD=0.908). The project benefited personal interests and the youth through job opportunities, but primarily not the public good. Additionally, the skewness results indicate that the values exceed 0, suggesting a right-skewed distribution where most values cluster to the left of the mean, with extreme values on the right. The Kurtosis findings reveal both negative values and those under 3, suggesting a Platykurtic distribution, characterized by a flatter shape compared to a normal distribution, featuring a broader peak. The likelihood of extreme

values is lower compared to a normal distribution, and the values are broadly dispersed around the average. This indicates that the outcomes are consistently accurate.

A reply from the FGD presents the philosophical perspective on the nature of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project. An employee remarked that:

The philosophical foundation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects is to improve youth's ways of living, engage them in constructive activities that can uplift the face of the community and prevent the youths from engaging in deviant activities (FGD, 1, 2021).

This indicates that the primary goal of the project is to offer temporary jobs to young people in a way that enhances their livelihoods and gives them more power. Another staff member also noted that:

When there are adequate resource and control, the projects will always achieve its objectives, project implementation and completion will be achieved at the stipulated time and cost. Adequate resource control also improves the youth's morale in performing activities; hence the quality of the work is up to the standard (FGD 1, 2021).

The findings above align closely with literature such as Binswanger-Mkhize *et al.* (2010), who contended that community-driven and public-driven initiatives are typically designed to provide young individuals or women with access to livelihood opportunities. The critiques also contended that public-driven initiatives must be rooted in or fulfill public interest since it is taxpayers' money that funds those projects. The above result indicates that the young people do not see it that way. If a project fails to benefit the public, it is prone to falling victim to elite capture (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2016; Musgrave & Wong, 2016; Rigon, 2012).

4.4 Analytical Presentation

4.4.1 The Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

To obtain information on the dependent variable, results were collected to determine the extent of project implementation. The outcome is as indicated in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics for Implementation Variables

| | Mean | Std. Dev | Skewness | Kurtosis | N |
|---|------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| The project is done on scheduled time. | 4.19 | .787 | .543 | -.456 | 308 |
| The project is done on targeted quality | 3.90 | 1.108 | .822 | -.236 | 308 |
| Youths are paid on time | 3.40 | .917 | .509 | -.876 | 308 |
| The project is done successfully | 4.12 | 1.029 | .444 | -.423 | 308 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The descriptive statistics in Table 4.9 revealed critical challenges in the implementation of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project, particularly regarding timeliness, quality, payment schedules, and overall success. The results indicate that most projects were not completed on schedule ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.787$). These findings are consistent with prior research showing that delays are a recurring problem in community-based public projects in Kenya and beyond. For instance, Mwangi and Wambugu (2021) highlighted that bureaucratic bottlenecks and weak monitoring mechanisms often undermine adherence to project timelines. Similar observations were made by Osei-Tutu, Badu, and Owusu-Manu (2010), who established that time overruns are pervasive in African public sector projects, largely due to resource constraints and inefficiencies. However, this contrasts with Kithinji (2019), who documented instances of county-level programs that were completed within schedule where political goodwill and elite involvement were particularly strong. This suggests that timeliness in project delivery is contingent upon the governance and political environment in which projects are executed.

The results also show that *Kazi Mtaani* projects fell short of meeting target quality standards ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.10$). This aligns with Adugna (2015), who noted that in many low- and middle-income countries, quality in public works is often compromised by inadequate supervision, corruption, and limited technical expertise. The World Bank (2020) similarly reported that labor-intensive employment programs often prioritize short-term job creation over sustainable outcomes, thereby diluting quality standards. Nevertheless, Chitere and Ileri (2018) contended that community-driven projects with strong participatory mechanisms tend to achieve higher levels of quality and sustainability, pointing to the critical role of inclusivity and accountability.

Another notable finding was that payment schedules were not consistently honored, with respondents indicating recurrent delays ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.917$). This finding echoes Njenga and Ngugi (2020), who observed persistent wage delays in youth employment initiatives in Kenya, a factor that undermines participant trust and morale. Similarly, the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2019) documented that wage delays are a common weakness in labor-intensive public works programs across developing economies. Nonetheless, Kimani (2021) argued that where mobile payment systems have been adopted, disbursement efficiency has improved considerably. This indicates that technological adoption and institutional reforms may provide viable pathways for addressing wage distribution challenges.

The cumulative effect of these shortcomings was reflected in the overall project outcome, where respondents rated *Kazi Mtaani* as largely unsuccessful ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.02$). This finding resonates with Mitullah and Owiti (2021), who concluded that while *Kazi Mtaani* temporarily cushioned vulnerable youth against the economic shocks of COVID-19, it failed to create sustainable livelihoods or contribute significantly to

community development. Similarly, UN-Habitat (2020) cautioned that public work programs in Kenya often serve as stop-gap measures rather than transformative initiatives. By contrast, Wanjala (2022) reported relative success in informal urban settlements where the program reduced idleness and crime, illustrating that outcomes may be highly context-dependent.

From a distributional perspective, the skewness values were positive, suggesting that while most respondents reported negative experiences, a minority expressed more favorable views. This reflects heterogeneity in perceptions and project experiences across different regions, consistent with Odhiambo (2020), who emphasized that perceptions of project success in Kenya often vary depending on political patronage and local leadership dynamics. Additionally, the negative kurtosis values indicated platykurtic distributions, meaning that responses were widely spread with a lower likelihood of extreme values. Field (2018) explains that such distributions suggest genuine diversity in respondent experiences rather than measurement error, while Babbie (2020) further notes that this type of variability strengthens reliability by capturing the complexity of social reality rather than masking it.

The result above is supported by responses from the Focus Group Discussion done on the employees from the Department of Youth and Social Services. There appeared to be consensus that the *Kazi Mtaani* implementation was not up to the expected standards mainly because of delay of funds and power brokers. One of the employees who responded noted that:

Kazi Mtaani is a good idea that the government started to empower the youth of the country. However, its implementation has been lackluster mostly because the funds are delayed and the youths get demotivated. In fact, we see a high turnover of youths in this project owing to demotivation; which leads to poor workmanship. We also see elite-capture especially from politicians who want their relatives incorporated in the project and thus end up delaying

the whole process. In addition, the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services is not given the chance to solely carry out their mandate; most of the time they get instructions of what to be done, how it should be done and who to be involved from the politicians. Sometimes the politicians hijack the funds and insist on diverting the resources to other projects which are not considered under KM projects (FGD 1, 2021).

From the responses, it is clear that elite behavior has a significant negative effect on the implementation of the *Kazi Mtaani* project in Eldoret town. There is lack of authority on the part of employees. The interview with the politician from the region yielded as much but his explanation of elitism was done in a manner intending on making the act an obligation and thus a positive act: He said:

I understand that as politicians we get ahead of ourselves and try to leverage our position and power to get our people into the jobs. However, you should understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the people I represent, especially the jobless youths, have jobs. Where do you want these youths to get jobs and why do you not want their representative to help them get those jobs? I want to believe that when I convince this youths to vote for me; each and every one of them is expecting to get a job under my leadership, I therefore have nowhere to lay my hands except such programs like KM. The Kenya government has very minimal job opportunities; therefore, for me as an MP *Kazi Mtaani* is one of the most beneficial short-term engagements for the youths. We made it short term so that it can give each youth an opportunity to participate (Int, Politician, 1, 2021).

The responses show clear lapses in the implementation of the project and the presence of elite behavior. The results also cohere with significant literature that shows that the implementation of projects in developing countries like Kenya is fraught with challenges. Rigon (2014) engaged in a study to examine elite-capture in the slum-upgrading project in Nairobi noted similar implementation challenges characterized by low quality of works, long lead-times in procurement process, low client satisfaction and projects out of budget. Carrick-Hagenbarth, (2016) in a study in Brazil examining elite-capture in community-driven projects also observed implementation challenges characterized by poor quality, extended duration of work, high employee turnover and low client satisfaction. Other studies also show similar results where projects are not up

to standard and where certain elements seem to bear responsibility for those lapses like elite-capture (Musgrove & Wong, 2016).

4.4.3 Efficacy of Principles of Elitism and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects in Uasin Gishu County

The dynamics of elitism comprise of decision-making process, resource allocation, project prioritization and political goodwill as discussed below.

Table 4.10 Decision Making Process and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

| Statements | N Statistic | Mean Statistic | Std. Dev. Statistic | Skewness Statistic | Std. Error | Kurtosis Statistic | Std. Error |
|--|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Youths are involved in decision making process | 308 | 2.4935 | .70592 | -.592 | .139 | -.253 | .277 |
| Youths are the main actors during project implementation | 308 | 3.3636 | .87169 | -.749 | .139 | .443 | .277 |
| Youths are satisfied with the project process | 308 | 2.0292 | .71907 | -.043 | .139 | -1.057 | .277 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The statement that youths are involved in the decision-making process scored a mean of 2.49, indicating that on average, youths are moderately involved in the decision-making process. The negative skewness (-.592) indicates that a larger number of respondents felt that youths are less involved in decision-making. The kurtosis value of -.253, which is less than zero, suggests a relatively flat distribution, indicating a wide range of perceptions regarding youth involvement.

The perception that youths are the main actors during project implementation scored a mean of 3.36. This suggests that youths are somewhat involved as main actors during project implementation. The skewness value of -.749 indicates a negative skew, meaning more respondents felt that youths are actively involved in project implementation. The

kurtosis of .443 suggests a relatively peaked distribution, indicating a consensus among respondents on this statement.

The statement that youths are satisfied with the project process had a mean score of 2.03. The findings showed that youths are generally dissatisfied with the project process. The skewness is nearly zero (-.043), indicating a symmetric distribution of responses around the mean. The kurtosis value of -1.057 indicates a platykurtic distribution, suggesting that there is a wide range of satisfaction levels among respondents. The analysis reveals several insights into the dynamics of elitism within the decision-making processes of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects. Youth involvement in decision-making and project satisfaction appears limited, suggesting a need for greater inclusion and engagement of youths in all the processes.

According to Ross & Kuechler (2018), elitism behavior in public works initiatives has been associated with the concentration of power and resources in major urban centers, resulting in the neglect of rural and remote communities. According to the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (2019), indigenous communities in Canada face significant disparities in access to infrastructure, with some lacking basic services such as clean drinking water and proper sanitation. According to Bhargava & Sakthivel (2018), elitism behavior is prevalent in public works projects, with decision-makers favoring wealthy neighborhoods over poorer ones. The study found that the implementation of public works projects has been criticized for its elitist approach, with decision-makers favoring urban areas over rural ones.

According to Mawere & Nhemachena (2019), elitism behavior in public works initiatives in Africa has its roots in the colonial period, where colonial powers used infrastructure development as a means of extracting resources and controlling the

population. During this period, infrastructure development was primarily focused on areas that were important to the colonial powers, such as transport routes for resource extraction, while neglecting other areas. The World Bank Report (2018) reveals that 42 percent of the world populations are youths and young children. The young population is rapidly growing in Africa; this presents the opportunities and constraints of the young population participating in development activities (UNDESA 2015). Hafidh (2023) conducted a study in Zanzibar on participation of youths in decision making for economic development; the results revealed that youths neither participate nor get involved in decision making in economic development processes. Additionally, the study realized that youth's involvement influences developmental outcomes positively.

Youths in Kenya ought to be utilized for the socio-economic development of the nations. In addition, they possess intellectual abilities that can be mobilized to bring unique perspectives. Moreover, the government should establish a mechanism that promotes dialogue at all levels to permit youth's access to information and opportunities to present their perspectives on government decision making process (Zedekia 2016). The rise of elitist behavior in public work projects is not a recent occurrence. Bhargava & Sakthivel (2018) state that elitism is common in public works initiatives, with decision-makers prioritizing affluent areas over less affluent ones. The research revealed that the execution of public works initiatives has faced criticism for its elitist perspective, with policymakers prioritizing urban regions over rural areas.

Table 4.11 Resource Allocation and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

| Statements | N Statistic | Mean Statistic | Std. Dev Statistic | Skewness Statistic | Std. Error | Kurtosis Statistic | Std. Error |
|--|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are adequate | 308 | 3.4578 | .77091 | -.996 | .139 | -.596 | .277 |
| Resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are well managed | 308 | 2.5097 | .76352 | 1.094 | .139 | -.407 | .277 |
| Resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are dispatched on time | 308 | 3.5617 | .84234 | -.870 | .139 | 1.090 | .277 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The data reveals that the resources allocated for the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects are perceived as adequate, with a mean score of 3.46 (SD = 0.77). The skewness of -.996 suggests a negative skew, meaning most respondents felt positive about resource adequacy. The kurtosis of -.596 indicates a flat distribution, showing diverse opinions on this matter. However, there are concerns regarding the management and timely dispatch of these resources. The mean score for resource management is 2.51 (SD = 0.76), while the mean score for timely dispatch is 3.56 (SD = 0.84). The positive skewness (1.094) suggests that most respondents rated resource management lower, indicating a sense of dissatisfaction. The kurtosis value of -.407 suggests a flat distribution, showing varied opinions on resource management. The skewness of -.870 suggests that respondents mostly rated the timeliness of resource dispatch positively. The kurtosis of 1.090 indicates a relatively peaked distribution, suggesting some consensus among respondents.

The data on resource allocation indicates that while resources are generally seen as adequate and timely dispatched, management practices could be improved. These findings highlighted a complex picture of resource management within the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects. While there is a general perception that resources are adequately allocated, concerns emerge regarding their management. This discrepancy suggests that while the quantity of resources may be sufficient, the manner in which they are managed and distributed does not meet the expectations or standards set by the respondents. Conversely, the timely dispatch of resources is viewed more positively, indicating that once resources are allocated, they are managed and deployed efficiently. Political and economic factors present the greatest dominators in resource allocation processes both in developed and developing nations Maliha Abubakari (2017).

According to Ross & Kuechler (2018), elitism behavior in public works initiatives has been associated with the concentration of power and resources in major urban centers, resulting in the neglect of rural and remote communities. The National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (2019) states that indigenous populations in Canada experience considerable gaps in access to infrastructure, with many without essential services like safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.

Table 4.12 Project Prioritization and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

| Statements | N Statistic | Mean Statistic | Std. Dev. Statistic | Skewness Statistic | Std. Error | Kurtosis Statistic | Std. Error |
|---|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Youths decide on the project to be undertaken | 308 | 1.9318 | .60822 | .034 | .139 | -.300 | .277 |
| The <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects meets youths needs | 308 | 2.6558 | .84560 | .332 | .139 | -.925 | .277 |
| The location for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects is ideal | 308 | 3.3442 | .99432 | -.293 | .139 | -.416 | .277 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The data shows that youths have limited influence in deciding which projects are undertaken, with a mean score of 1.93 (SD = 0.61). The mean score for whether the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects meets youth needs is 2.66 (SD = 0.85), suggesting that the projects only partially address youth needs. However, the location of the projects is perceived as relatively ideal, with a mean score of 3.34 (SD = 0.99). The skewness values are close to zero, indicating that the distributions are approximately symmetric. The kurtosis values are negative (-0.30, -0.93, and -0.42), suggesting platykurtic distributions with flatter peaks and wider tails compared to normal distributions.

In project prioritization, the data suggests that youths have minimal influence on project decisions, though the locations of the projects are generally seen as appropriate. This highlights a potential area for increasing youth participation in decision-making to ensure projects meet their needs more effectively. The findings suggest that the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects are not fully responsive to the needs and aspirations of the youth. The limited influence of youths in decision-making and the partial alignment of the projects with youth needs indicate that the projects may not be effectively addressing the needs of the

youths. However, the ideal location of the projects suggests that the projects are situated in areas that are accessible and convenient for the youth and in need of such initiatives.

Table 4.13 Political Goodwill and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

| | N Statistic | Mean Statistic | Std. Dev Statistic | Skewness Statistic | Std. Error | Kurtosis Statistic | Std. Error |
|---|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| The County politicians support youth's project initiatives | 308 | 2.9058 | 2.44434 | 14.468 | .139 | 237.441 | .277 |
| Politicians have vested interest in <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | 308 | 3.6916 | .73022 | -.257 | .139 | -.095 | .277 |
| County politicians contribute to the success of the <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | 308 | 4.1461 | 2.01009 | 11.722 | .139 | 181.565 | .277 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The data reveals a concerning pattern regarding political goodwill and vested interests in the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects. The mean score for county politicians' support for youth project initiatives is 2.91 (SD = 2.44), suggesting a lack of consistent support. However, the high skewness (14.47) and kurtosis (237.44) values indicate that the distribution is highly skewed and leptokurtic, with a sharp peak and thin tails. This means that a small number of respondents reported high levels of political support, while the majority reported low or no support at all.

The data also suggests that politicians have vested interests in the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects, with a mean score of 3.69 (SD = 0.73). The negative skewness (-0.26) indicates that the distribution is slightly skewed towards lower values, meaning a larger proportion of respondents reported higher levels of political vested interests. The kurtosis value (-0.10) is close to zero, suggesting a distribution similar to a normal distribution.

Interestingly, despite the perceived lack of political support and the presence of vested interests, respondents believe that county politicians contribute to the success of the *Kazi Mtaani* Projects, with a mean score of 4.15 (SD = 2.01). However, the high skewness (11.72) and kurtosis (181.57) values indicate a highly skewed and leptokurtic distribution, similar to the pattern observed for political support. This means that a small number of respondents reported high levels of political contribution to project success, while the majority reported low or no contribution. Political goodwill data showed mixed perceptions, with significant variability in responses about politicians' support and contribution to project success. This indicates that political involvement is a critical factor but also highlights potential areas of political influence that may need to be addressed to ensure fair and effectiveness in the process of project implementation.

According to Nyaga and Onditi (2019), the history of elitism behavior in public works initiatives can be traced back to the colonial era. The colonial government used public works initiatives to control the labor force and promote the interests of the colonial administration. The authors note that the colonial government used discriminatory practices, such as paying different wages to workers based on their race and ethnicity, to promote elitism behavior. According to a report by the World Bank (2021), the current state of elitism behavior in public works initiatives is a significant concern for policymakers and development practitioners. According to the report, elitism behavior undermines the effectiveness of public works initiatives and hinders the achievement of their goals. The report highlights that elitist behavior results in a deficit of transparency, accountability, and involvement, potentially jeopardizing the legitimacy of public works projects.

According to Njenga *et al.* (2021), some workers in *Kazi Mtaani* have resorted to elitism behavior, where they discriminate against their fellow workers based on their ethnicity, regional affiliations or social networks. According to Mwenda & Mwangi (2021), the high levels of unemployment and competition for available jobs have led to the use of ethnic and regional affiliations or social networks to secure employment opportunities. The authors contend that the politics surrounding ethnicity and regionalism in Kenya have led to the rise of tribalism and elitism practices across different sectors, including job opportunities. The absence of definitive procedures for the recruitment process has also led to the rise of elitist behavior in the *Kazi Mtaani*/public works initiative. A report from The Standard (2021) indicated that certain employees were hired due to their political connections, resulting in a workforce with limited diversity. Mwenda and Mwangi (2021) observe that certain employees were recruited through their social connections, resulting in the creation of cliques. The absence of transparency in the hiring process has resulted in feelings of biasness and discrimination, potentially diminishing the program's efficacy. Similarly, Njenga *et al.* (2021), argue that the lack of proper supervision and monitoring could lead to the emergence of corruption and favoritism, which undermines the program's effectiveness. According to a report by the Daily Nation (2021), some workers lack the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their tasks effectively, leading to resentment among their colleagues.

4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Social elitism on implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

The second aim was to determine the role of social elitism in the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects; public works initiatives in Eldoret town; Uasin Gishu County. The descriptive results are displayed in Table 4.14 and are corroborated by findings from the open-ended questions in the focus group discussions and interviews.

Table 4.14: Descriptive Statistics for Social elitism Variables

| Statement | Mean | Std. Dev | Skewness | Kurtosis | N |
|---|------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Religious leaders influence project implementation | 4.22 | .922 | .519 | -.411 | 308 |
| Peers influence project implementation | 4.93 | 1.122 | .808 | -.213 | 308 |
| Community officials influence project implementation | 3.48 | 1.129 | .528 | -.766 | 308 |
| Educated people have an influence in project implementation | 4.23 | 1.089 | .453 | -.423 | 308 |
| Youths were involved in decision making | 4.38 | 1.132 | .573 | -.686 | 308 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The responses indicate that religious leaders affect project implementation (M=4.22 SD=0.922), peers have an impact on project implementation (M=4.93 SD=1.122); community officials play a role in project implementation (M=3.48 SD=1.129); educated individuals (academicians) influence project implementation (M=4.23 SD=1.089); whereas the youth are excluded from decision-making processes (M=4.93 SD=1.122); this suggests that substantial social control exists in the execution of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project in Eldoret town. Additionally, the skewness findings indicate that the figures exceed 0, suggesting a right-skewed distribution in which the majority of values cluster to the left of the mean, with outliers on the right. The Kurtosis results indicate both negative values and those below 3, signifying a Platykurtic distribution, characterized by values that are flatter than a normal distribution with a broader peak. The likelihood of extreme values is lower than in a normal distribution, and the values are more dispersed around the average. This indicates that the findings are consistently accurate.

For the process of acquiring and enlisting members for *Kazi Mtaani*, the youths were asked about how they gathered their participants into the different youth organizations. They expressed different views on how they all found themselves in the group. A few noted that they united as youths from a single village, sharing similar views, and formed a group. Some noted that by means of the *Nymba Kumi*, they managed to establish a youth group that assisted them in obtaining youth funds. Additionally, some youths emphasized that they created the groups within the church. Others also congregated via registration methods or by drawing in interested peers, mostly friends. Regarding their recruitment to KMP, two methods were observed. One method was via registered group applications submitted through area chiefs, and through public applications to the KMP government portals. The responses indicate that peers significantly affect how youths form groups and ultimately get recruited into KMP.

Regarding the role of social sponsors in executing KMP, a significant portion of the feedback on the role of social sponsors focused primarily on their function as mentors and supporters, helping members engage in the tasks and receive timely payments. This indicates that youths perceive social sponsors as facilitators and supporters of timely payments, providing a level of informal oversight. The youths remarked that a few of the sponsors inspired them, promising that their efforts were a foundation for better opportunities, particularly those with college and university diplomas.

4.4.4.1 Extent of youths' agreement with social elitism

The research also aimed to investigate the extent to which young people concur with social elitism. Table 4.15 presents the findings.

Table 4.15: The Level of Youth’s Agreement with Social elitism

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev | Skewness | Kurtosis | N |
|---|-------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Youths are satisfied with the role social elitism play in the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | 1.867 | 1.207 | .463 | -.606 | 308 |
| Youths understand the role social elitism in the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | 1.10 | .908 | .871 | -.406 | 308 |
| Youths advocate for incorporation of social elitism in implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | 3.99 | .812 | .553 | -.723 | 308 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The findings from Table 4.15 indicate that the young individuals were displeased with the involvement of social elitism in the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* projects due to the notable difference between the mean (3.99) and standard deviation (.812). They expressed discontent with the involvement of social elitism in the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* projects as the distance between the mean and standard deviation was closing in on the center rather than moving outward, indicating a lack of strength in the reliability of those satisfaction statements. The findings regarding social capture elicited a substantial reaction from the employees of the Ministry of Youth and Social Services during the FGD. An employee, discussing social capture, stated that:

From my years working in the ministry and directly being involved in *Kazi Mtaani* implementations, social elitism have captured the process in a number of ways. I say captured because in most cases their involvement is not to advance the project but to accrue personal benefits from it (FGD 1, 2021).

Another employee was more precise in her claim regarding the existence of social capture in the execution of the *Kazi Mtaani* initiative. She mentioned that:

The biggest social elitism who come to the office or call the higher-ups to influence how the project is to be implemented are mostly the religious leaders, community influencers and some academicians with some significant clout. They always seek to be directly involved in the actual implementation of the project. Often, in my estimation, they are the biggest impediment to the implementation of the project alongside politicians (FGD 2, 2021).

The findings also indicate that youths seldom participate in the decision-making processes of the projects. This contradicts the principles of public engagement and community participation. Additionally, research confirms that the capture by social elitism has a considerable impact on project execution. Gangadharan *et al.* (2014) conducted research on how elite capture affects the delivery and execution of public service initiatives in India. They observed that the rural sector of India, which represents nearly 70% of the country's population, has gained significantly less from the substantial economic growth seen in India over the past twenty years. It has been contended that this is caused by inadequate provision of essential services to rural regions. Although significant investments in rural development are made, a centralized administration characterized by low accountability and ineffective use of public resources restricts the effects on poverty and economic growth. A community-oriented strategy has been proposed to aid India's development and reduce poverty, allowing rural inhabitants to determine the direction of development initiatives. By enhancing their ability to act together and by encouraging a voice, the rural impoverished could be empowered to influence resource distribution. Nonetheless, a community-oriented approach has its shortcomings (Gangadharan *et al.*, 2014). Failure can happen when specific subgroups in the community manage to leverage resources to advance their own interests. This appropriation is referred to as 'elite capture' (Gangadharan *et al.*, 2014). Although community-driven development presents a hopeful approach to realizing rural development and uplifting the poor, it is essential to comprehend how elite capture could

hinder this process. This review indicates that community influencers play a crucial role in the execution of public projects in India, and a similar trend seems to be evident in Kenya.

It is hard to find academic research that contradicts the conclusion that social elitism play a major role in the execution of projects. These works nearly challenge the notion by asserting that control by economic elitisms and political power surpasses the influence of social elitism (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2016; Musgrave & Wong, 2016; Rigon, 2012).

Additionally, the findings are consistent with substantial literature on the subject. Olken (2010) contended that regardless of being benevolent or malevolent, elite control typically opposes the inclusive participatory perspective advocated by supporters of community-driven development, highlighting the necessity for additional research into whether election and project selection criteria can facilitate broader participation. In this study, we explore the impact of various decision-making approaches on choosing elites and selecting community initiatives. While there is a substantial body of work on direct democracy, current results cannot be compared directly since they mainly consist of observational studies lacking experimental manipulation. The notable exception is the experimental study by Olken (2010), who, within a CDD program in Indonesia, implemented a different decision-making approach for project selection through a plebiscite (direct secret vote), anticipating that it would create a more competitive environment, increase participation, boost legitimacy, and circumvent the risks of elite capture. Olken (2010) discovers that the impact of the selection process on the nature of chosen projects is minimal, although evidence suggests that plebiscites led to female-selected projects being situated in less affluent regions. The selection of projects via a general plebiscite led to a notable and statistically relevant rise in reported satisfaction

with the project, as well as in views of fairness and legitimacy of the chosen project. It also enhanced the villagers' readiness to participate.

Seth (2013) conducted research on procurement reform in the Philippines, focusing on the effects of elite capture and informal bureaucracy. The paper's research relied on reports from global organizations, official documents from the Philippine government, surveys conducted by both international and local entities, interviews with pertinent officials, and media articles. The results indicate that the reforms have targeted promoting competition, boosting transparency, standardizing processes, improving end-product quality and contractor dependability, ensuring adequate planning and budgeting, fighting corruption, and reinforcing accountability. These changes aimed to establish a procurement system that aligns better with global best practices. Nonetheless, the research demonstrates that the effect has been below expectations. This results from the constraints of specific reform provisions and deficiencies in the execution and accountability of the purchasing entities. A significant element hindering the reforms is rampant corruption, which continues to influence various aspects of the procurement system. The article highlights two significant and interconnected causes for these shortcomings: the dominance of a governmental and bureaucratic elite by a strong network of business magnates from affluent landed families, who possess tight connections to the political framework; and a deeply rooted tradition of informal influence within the Philippine state bureaucracy (termed the informal bureaucracy), which the elite business network has skillfully exploited. Consequently, this network has managed to shape the reforms to benefit its own agenda and maintain its ongoing supremacy in the procurement market.

Waheduzzaman *et al.* (2018) conducted research to investigate Elite control over local participatory governance. The research found that elite capture significantly hinders

citizen participation in local governance activities in numerous developing nations. Findings from six case studies on development initiatives in Bangladesh indicate that, despite efforts by aid donors and others to promote citizen engagement, programs are largely controlled by a network of local elites, such as Members of Parliament and bureaucrats. Local stakeholders lack awareness of the benefits that direct involvement of citizens can provide, while citizens are ignorant of their rights and hesitant to confront elites. Oversight of citizen participation requirements is inadequate, and the administration of certain programs hinders involvement. Elites sometimes choose representatives, and legal systems are often not robust enough or are inconsistently enforced. In conclusion, various supplementary and efficiently executed policy actions are necessary to lessen the scope and impacts of elite capture in developing nations.

Platteau (2014) contends that in rural community-led initiatives, 'elite capture' does not hinder the project's advantages for all community members. In these situations, those in power who engage with development agencies and secure funding often claim a significantly larger portion of the advantages from projects. Nonetheless, the initiatives will typically enhance the condition of the broader community, and the latter will frequently express gratitude to the elite for introducing the initiative. Olowu (2013: 46) states that local elites possess 'resources, knowledge, influence, and networks' and are thus essential to local governance systems, but they ought not to marginalize the poor. He concludes that institutional frameworks must be crafted to engage elites while simultaneously preventing them from abusing local governance structures for their personal gain. This is challenging because when access to external funding is restricted to a select few, the negotiating power of non-elite groups is severely constrained, forcing them to accept highly unequal distribution patterns regarding project benefits (Abraham and Platteau, 2014: 226). Conversely, Dasgupta and Beard (2007) contend that even

amid 'elite capture', initiatives might still advantage the impoverished. In their urban case studies, local elites were prepared and capable of dedicating the time and expertise necessary to support community-level initiatives and governance.

Moreover, in accordance with Dasgupta and Beard (2007), it is crucial to acknowledge that local elites not only have expertise but also receive community acknowledgment that can aid in executing community initiatives. These writers contend that elites might be both inclined and capable of dedicating their time and assuming an important leadership position. Consequently, they contend that it is important to differentiate between elite oversight of the project and elite appropriation of the advantages (ibid.: 244). In intricate environments, local patronage power structures can be effectively employed in initiatives. Nevertheless, these elites might leverage their influence to manipulate the project in their favor. Under these conditions, the government is responsible for guaranteeing that the significant influence of the elites in the initiative does not jeopardize the interests of the other inhabitants. The responsibility of state implementers might be to make certain that the local knowledge of elites is utilized effectively and not to the detriment of the impoverished. A project might struggle to break apart established social structures and there are valid reasons for projects not to seek to overhaul the current social system yet, simultaneously, the state must guarantee that the underprivileged are not left out of initiatives that could profoundly transform their lives. These results back Werlin's (2012) claim for robust governmental management of slum-improvement initiatives.

4.4.5 Economic elitisms and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

The third goal aimed at assessing how the capture of economic elitism influences the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County. Results detailing as displayed in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Descriptive Statistics for Economic elitism on Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani*

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev | Skewness | Kurtosis | N |
|--|------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Wealthy individuals have an influence on implementation of the <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> project. | 4.32 | 1.128 | .563 | -.456 | 308 |
| Business people have an influence on implementation of the <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> project. | 3.02 | 1.319 | .539 | -.836 | 308 |
| Economic experts have an influence on implementation of the <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> project. | 3.09 | 1.194 | .487 | -.333 | 308 |
| Economic elitism has significant influence on implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | 3.08 | 1.309 | .539 | -.836 | 308 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The aforementioned responses indicate that affluent individuals impact project execution (M=4.32 SD=1.128), entrepreneurs affect project execution (M=3.02 SD=1.319); financial specialists impact project execution (M=3.09 SD=1.194); and overall, economic governance impacts project execution (M=3.08 SD=1.309). It indicates that there was considerable economic oversight in executing the *Kazi Mtaani* Project in UG County. Additionally, the skewness results indicate that the values exceed 0, suggesting a right skewed distribution where the majority of values are clustered to the left of the mean, with outliers on the right side. The Kurtosis results indicate a negative value and less than 3, suggesting a Platykurtic distribution where the values are more level than a normal distribution with a broader peak. The chances of extreme values are lower than in a normal distribution, and the values are more dispersed around the average. This indicates that the outcomes are consistently accurate.

4.4.5.1 The Role of Economic elitism

Following the assessment of economic elitisms' impact on the implementation of KMP, it became essential to investigate the role of economic elitisms. Table 4.17 has the results.

Table 4.17: Descriptive Statistics for Economic elitism and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani*

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev | Skewness | Kurtosis | N |
|--|------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Wealthy individuals influence decisions about project resource allocation. | 3.42 | .728 | .503 | -.444 | 308 |
| Income differences affect participation in project opportunities. | 3.02 | 1.423 | .500 | -.906 | 308 |
| Leaders responsible for project funds are accountable to the community. | 3.06 | 1.564 | .487 | -.312 | 308 |
| Individuals who control economic resources influence project implementation. | 3.18 | 1.323 | .599 | -.799 | 308 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The findings indicate that economic elitism plays a notable role in the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects, particularly in terms of resource allocation, participation, and influence over project execution. The first statement, “Wealthy individuals influence decisions about project resource allocation”, received a mean score of 3.42 with a standard deviation of 0.728, suggesting that respondents generally agreed that wealth confers significant influence over how project resources are distributed. The relatively low standard deviation indicates that respondents’ perceptions were consistent, highlighting a shared recognition that individuals with substantial wealth can sway

decision-making processes, potentially prioritizing personal or networked interests over equitable community needs.

The second finding, “Income differences affect participation in project opportunities”, had a mean of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 1.423, indicating a moderate level of agreement among respondents. The higher standard deviation reflects variability in perceptions, suggesting that while some community members perceive income disparities as a barrier to accessing project benefits, others may feel that opportunities are relatively accessible. This finding underscores the role of economic stratification in shaping participation, where financial capacity or connections may enhance access to project-related benefits, marginalizing lower-income participants.

The third statement, “Leaders responsible for project funds are accountable to the community”, had a mean of 3.06 and a standard deviation of 1.564, showing a moderate perception of accountability. The relatively high standard deviation points to divergent views among respondents: some believe that leaders uphold community accountability in financial management, while others perceive gaps in transparency and responsibility. This indicates that economic elitisms, particularly those in charge of funds, may not be uniformly accountable, and this variability can affect trust and project credibility.

Finally, the statement “Individuals who control economic resources influence project implementation” had a mean of 3.18 and a standard deviation of 1.323, reflecting a moderate-to-high agreement that control over economic resources translates into influence over how projects are executed. Respondents’ responses suggest that economic power can affect operational decisions, including prioritization, scope, and execution quality. This is consistent with theoretical perspectives on elitism, which posit that

resource control enhances decision-making leverage and can lead to unequal distribution of benefits within community projects (Khan *et al.*, 2021; Muriithi & Nyandemo, 2022).

4.4.5.2 Payments for the Youths

The young individuals were asked about their compensation post-work, and Table 4.18 displays the findings.

Table 4.18: Payment to Youths

| DURATION | RATE (Kshs) |
|----------|-------------|
| Hourly | 45.50 |
| Daily | 455 |
| Weekly | 2275 |
| Monthly | 5,005 |

Source: Field Data, 2020

The findings indicate that the youths received a monthly payment of 5,005, significantly lower than the suggested daily living wage of at least 100 kshs. Based on the previous responses, elite capture explains the low wages, as some funds appear to be redirected elsewhere. The feedback from the FGDs indicates that financial resources or economic strength play a crucial role in the execution of public projects, especially the *Kazi Mtaani* project. A respondent remarked that:

People with a lot of money and business people have great influence on implementation of projects mainly because they want to make some money out of it (FGD, 2, 2020).

This response clearly indicates that the primary concern is the participation in the project to generate profit in some manner. Another participant expressed in a more detailed manner that:

It is not just the *Kazi Mtaani* Project that receives attention from the wealthy people but all government projects through the tendering process. It should be noted that as far as *Kazi Mtaani* is concerned, economic elitism capture does not just happened during implementation but mostly occurs at the project formulation stages. In a more unscrupulous way, the wealthy have

captured many government projects and have benefitted always unfairly from it. Just look at the number of instant millionaires after accessing some part of the project! (FGD 1, 2021).

The notion that economic elitism capture significantly affects the implementation of projects such as *Kazi Mtaani* was also suggested during the interview with the politicians. One stated:

You say that it is us politicians who have captured these projects. Nothing could be further from the truth, the wealthy business people are the biggest culprits when it comes to capturing projects. In fact, I can tell you, the very little money goes to the youths who work because a huge chunk of it has already been paid to some wealthy individuals out there. I can tell you for free (Int. politician 1, 2021).

These results suggest that economic elitism capture seems to have a greater impact on the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* and indeed all government initiatives compared to social capture and power capture. Although this will be confirmed through the forthcoming inferential statistics. Alatas *et al.* (2013) investigated how elite capture affects the distribution of targeted government welfare initiatives in Indonesia, employing a significant field experiment that altered the degree of elite influence alongside non-experimental data from several current government transfer programs. Dependent on their consumption level, there was minimal evidence that village elites and their families were more prone to receive aid programs compared to non-elites. Nonetheless, this overall outcome concealed the significant disparities among various elite groups: individuals in formal leadership roles are more inclined to obtain benefits, whereas informal leaders are less prone to receive them. The research indicated that economic capture by formal elites takes place when program advantages are genuinely allocated to households, rather than during the selection of individuals for the beneficiary lists. Nonetheless, although elite capture occurs, the welfare losses it generates seem minimal: formal elites and their family members are merely 9 percent wealthier than non-elites, have at most an 8-percentage point higher likelihood of receiving benefits compared to

non-elites, and constitute at most 15 percent of the population; therefore, completely eradicating elite capture would enhance the welfare gains from these programs by under one percent. This offers an intriguing perspective on the issue. Once more, as previously mentioned, there is a compelling argument that the economic elitism and the political or power elite exert more influence than social elitism (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2016; Musgrave & Wong, 2016; Rigon, 2012).

Additionally, in substantial alignment with economic elitism capture, Beath et al (2010) examine elite capture of local institutions by analyzing data from a field experiment conducted in Afghanistan. The research is based on the premise that the current social science literature has emphasized the significance of institutions for economic and political growth; however, as previously mentioned, it has struggled to effectively tackle the fundamental identification problems associated with questions related to deeply intertwined structures like institutions. Although examining the causal impacts of institutions on development is challenging due to their historical entrenchment, recent efforts like the implementation of Community Driven Development (CDD) programs have created distinctive chances to assess the effects of externally introduced institutional alterations. The effectiveness of CDD programs is rooted in their emphasis on community control over the selection, execution, and oversight of development initiatives. This is intended to decrease informational inefficiencies by accurately representing the genuine needs of the community via suitable development initiatives and by fostering effective governance. Nonetheless, despite the significant rise in resources allocated to community-driven development efforts, there is a notable lack of thorough impact evaluations for CDD projects and numerous unresolved questions regarding the effectiveness of CDD. The research therefore inquires: How genuinely

participatory are these CDD processes, and do they align with community preferences, or are they controlled by established elites?

Beath's (2010) study indicates that while certain research (Gugerty & Kremer, 2000) suggests external funding can change beneficiary group compositions by bringing in individuals with greater wealth and education for leadership roles, critics of CDDs warn that this influx of resources might be exploited by elites who do not prioritize equality. Certainly, these community-driven development initiatives do not take place in isolation. Instead, they must contend with established institutions of political and social organization (like local traditional elites) and frequently become co-opted by these entities. Consequently, and even with CDD's inclusive method represented by the community councils, worries about elite takeover are prevalent. Numerous studies indicate that community-led social funds are susceptible to manipulation by local elites, who possess power and information within their communities (see Bardhan, 2002; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006; Platteau & Gaspart, 2013).

Although there's a broad agreement that elite capture can impact local governance and economic welfare, there remains a lack of consensus regarding the degree to which it occurs. Although certain research shows that local elites often advocate for their favored development initiatives (Rao & Ibáñez, 2013; Owen & Van Domelen, 1998; van Domelen, 2002), newer studies indicate that project proposals can be representative of both elites and their community members (Labonne & Chase, 2009). Worries are also expressed about whether it is necessary to differentiate between "elite capture" and "elite control" to facilitate positive forms of elite influence. Certainly, the literature acknowledges that some level of elite control is anticipated in traditional societies experiencing development. In these contexts, especially in rural regions, leaders are not

solely seen as political power holders but also regarded for their moral influence. Therefore, elite control should not be directly associated with corruption or the misuse of resources. In this context, certain results indicate that there continue to be resources allocated to the local community, as shown by the participants' satisfaction with the projects, even in light of indications of elite control (Rao & Ibáñez, 2015; Owen and Van Domelen, 1998). In this paper, we refrain from making any prior judgments regarding the welfare impacts of elite influence in the decision-making process, and therefore we use the phrases “elite capture” and “elite control” synonymously.

4.4.6 Summary Statistics for Power Dynamics on Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Initiatives

The fourth objective aimed at assessing the impact of power dynamics on the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County. The descriptive results can be observed in Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19: Descriptive Statistics for Power dynamics elitism Variables

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev | Skewness | Kurtosis | N |
|---|------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Political procedures influence how the project is implemented. | 4.36 | .969 | .453 | -.654 | 308 |
| Individuals holding powerful positions influence project decisions. | 4.38 | 1.009 | .324 | -.786 | 308 |
| There are mechanisms for reporting misuse of project resources. | 3.69 | 1.582 | .524 | -.666 | 308 |
| Powerful individuals influence governance processes in the project. | 4.04 | 1.190 | .432 | -.236 | 308 |
| Whistleblowing mechanisms are effective and protective. | 4.31 | .816 | .508 | -.809 | 308 |

The findings reveal that power dynamics play a significant role in shaping the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County. The statement “Political procedures influence how the project is implemented” recorded a high mean score of 4.36 (SD = 0.969), indicating strong agreement among respondents that political procedures significantly affect the implementation process. The relatively low standard deviation suggests that respondents had fairly consistent views on this issue. The positive skewness (0.453) implies that responses were slightly clustered toward agreement, while the negative kurtosis (-0.654) indicates a relatively flat distribution of responses. These results suggest that political frameworks and administrative protocols play a critical role in shaping how project activities are executed, possibly affecting decision-making, project prioritization, and allocation of resources.

Similarly, the statement “Individuals holding powerful positions influence project decisions” had a mean of 4.38 and a standard deviation of 1.009, indicating a strong perception that individuals in positions of authority significantly influence project-related decisions. The positive skewness (0.324) suggests that most respondents leaned toward agreement, reinforcing the perception that power hierarchies within political and administrative structures shape project outcomes. The relatively moderate spread of responses suggests that while most participants recognize the influence of powerful individuals, the degree of perceived influence may vary depending on respondents’ experiences with the project implementation process.

The finding on the statement “There are mechanisms for reporting misuse of project resources” recorded a mean of 3.69 and a relatively high standard deviation of 1.582, suggesting moderate agreement but considerable variation in respondents’ views. This variability indicates that while some participants believe that accountability and

reporting structures exist, others are uncertain about their effectiveness or accessibility. The positive skewness (0.524) suggests that more respondents leaned toward agreement, although the high standard deviation implies that perceptions of transparency and oversight mechanisms differ among participants. This may indicate inconsistencies in how accountability structures are communicated or implemented within the program.

Further, the statement “Powerful individuals influence governance processes in the project” had a mean of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 1.190, showing that respondents generally agree that elites with significant authority influence governance processes. The positive skewness (0.432) indicates that responses were skewed toward agreement, while the slightly negative kurtosis (-0.236) suggests a moderately flat distribution. These findings imply that governance structures within the project are not entirely insulated from elite influence, and individuals with political or institutional authority may shape decision-making processes, project oversight, and implementation strategies.

The statement that “Whistleblowing mechanisms are effective and protective” recorded a similarly high mean score of 4.31 with a lower standard deviation of 0.816, reinforcing earlier findings that political procedures significantly affect project implementation. The lower variability suggests that respondents largely share the perception that political processes strongly shape how the project operates. The positive skewness (0.508) further confirms the tendency toward agreement, while the negative kurtosis (-0.809) indicates a flatter distribution of responses.

The feedback from the FGDs indicates that political power is a major factor affecting the execution of public projects, especially the *Kazi Mtaani* initiative. A respondent mentioned that:

People with political connections have great influence on implementation of projects mainly because they want to make some money out of it (FGD, 2, 2021).

This response indicates that politicians and influential figures are actively participating in directing the execution of projects within the nation. A different respondent expressed in greater detail that:

It is not just the *Kazi Mtaani* Project that receives attention from the politicians but all government projects through the tendering process. It should be noted that as far as *Kazi Mtaani* is concerned, political elite capture does not just happen during implementation but mostly occurs at the project formulation stages. In a more unscrupulous way, the political and power brokers have captured many government projects and have benefitted always unfairly from it. They are the biggest impediment to implementation of projects (FGD 1, 2021).

Research backs this up with findings indicating that extensive portions of development policy have been crafted to routinely satisfy local and national officials, likely incurring considerable expenses (Alatas *et al.*, 2013). Contrasting research suggests that central governments frequently hesitate to transfer authority regarding the selection of beneficiaries to local authorities, favoring the distribution of benefits through less precise, yet less discretionary proxy-means testing methods (Coady, Grosh, and Hoddinott, 2014). More broadly, as Bardhan and Mookherjee (2015) explain, centrally managing these programs to limit elite capture may sacrifice the local leaders' superior local knowledge and enhanced ability to oversee. Some others promote the involvement of local leaders, as studies indicate that due to concerns about elite capture, such initiatives often aim to bypass current local leaders, delegating decision-making and project implementation to regular villagers (Mansuri and Rao, 2012). This could have a considerable price: as Khwaja (forthcoming) notes, citizens' capabilities and expertise to effectively execute the program may be less robust than those of the local leaders. Consequently, local leaders frequently possess valuable skills that go unused, leading to potential long-term impacts on institutional and bureaucratic efficiency, as local leaders' motivation to develop skills and showcase their performance diminishes (Myerson, 2009, Shleifer 2012).

Additionally, Wong (2010) conducted a systematic review regarding Elite capture or capturing elites; insights from the 'counter-elite' and 'co-opt-elite' methods in Bangladesh and Ghana. He contended that community-based development has faced criticism for its insufficient grasp of local power dynamics, enabling elite capture to occur. Moreover, the research contends that the intricacy of elite capture necessitates a deeper examination of power dynamics. The research therefore utilizes Rowlands' multi-faceted concept of power. Integrating Foucaultian and feminist viewpoints on power, she proposes four interrelated aspects of power: power-over, power-with, power-from-within, and power-to. 'Power-over' is a dominating influence that compels someone to act contrary to their desires. 'Power-with' highlights the joint strengths, emphasizing collaboration among individuals to reach specific results. 'Power-from-within' refers to the mental strength residing in individuals' minds. According to Shields, this aspect of power successfully addresses internalized oppression and emphasizes 'self-worth, self-acceptance, and self-awareness' (1997: 23, in Wong 2013: 310). 'Power-to' signifies an individual's ability to take action. It is truly integrated within the three dimensions of power outlined earlier. Rowlands emphasizes that these four types of power are interconnected and dependent on context.

This comprehension of power provides a valuable framework for analyzing the two prevailing methods regarding elite capture: the 'counter-elite' and 'co-opt-elite' methods. The 'counter-elite' perspective views elite capture as inherently exploitative and repressive (Scott 1985), making it fundamentally objectionable as it opposes democratic, participatory, and pro-poor ideals. Lewis and Hossain (2008) view local elites as "barriers to advancement in poverty alleviation development". This method depicts resistance to elite control as a 'zero-sum' game, asserting that reducing elite power will restore authority to the powerless. It proposes that the ways to address elite capture are,

first, to prevent elites from engaging in newly established or existing institutions, and second, to enable impoverished individuals to actively participate in decision-making through awareness-raising and capacity enhancement (Abe 2009). Employing Rowland's power analysis, the 'counter-elite' approach highlights the interconnectedness of the two power dimensions: 'power-over' and 'power-from-within'. In other terms, from this viewpoint, challenging elite control will impact the lives of the poor only if local individuals feel a sense of ownership in the power acquisition process.

The 'counter-elite' perspective is criticized for its simplistic understanding of power, overlooking the variety of elites and the role of elite interference. Mansuri and Rao (2014) contend that not every elite is negative. They differentiate between 'greedy' elites (p. 43) and 'kind-hearted' elites (p. 55), and the latter demonstrate generosity and a readiness to distribute some advantages to those in need. Dasgupta and Beard (2007) emphasize the distinctions between 'elite capture' and 'elite control,' noting that the latter suggests 'the project was overseen by local elites, but resources were directed to deserving beneficiaries' (p. 244). Our study on solar lanterns in Rajasthan, India reveals that elite involvement may serve as a gauge to reflect the prospective values of the initiatives. Should local elites display no interest in participating, it may suggest that the advantages they could gain from the initiatives are so minimal that even ambitious elites find them unworthy of their attention (Wong 2009a).

These concepts form the 'co-opt-elite' strategy indicates that facing off against the elites might not benefit the poor. Rather, it adopts a pragmatic viewpoint and leverages the networks and expertise of the elites to aid in project management (Rao and Ibanez 2013). According to Lewis and Hossain (2008), some members of the village elite collaborate with outside NGOs to enhance water and sanitation in the village due to 'a sense of public duty' (p. 35). Rather than challenging the elites, they suggest that NGOs leverage

the 'politics of reputation' (p. 49) that may provide certain advantages to the underprivileged.

The findings are consistent with the 'subjectivity-institution-structure' theory, which Wong and Sharp (2009) and Wong (2010) claim is valuable for comprehending the interconnected dynamics between elites and non-elites. It examines how various subjectivities and institutions influence attitudes and behaviors and how they are influenced by broader structural concerns. In other terms, institutions connect subjectivity and structure, manifesting in social practice. This comprehension of intricate interactions aids in contextualizing power dynamics within the social connectivity process between elites and non-elites.

4.5 Inferential Analysis

The research utilized summated Pearson's Moment correlations and regression analyses.

The findings are shown below.

4.5.1 Correlation Analysis

The analysis included Pearson's Moment of Correlation Analysis applied to the independent and dependent variables. The outcomes are displayed in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20 Correlations

| | | Implementati on of <i>Kazi</i> <i>Mtaani</i> Project | Efficacy of elitism principles | Social elitism | Economic elitisms | Power dynamics elitism |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) | 1 | | | | |
| Efficacy of elitism Principles | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) | .578** .000 | 1 | | | |
| Social elitism | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) | .635** .000 | .533** .000 | 1 | | |
| Economic elitisms | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) | .655** .000 | .410** .000 | .227** .002 | 1 | |
| Power dynamics elitism | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) | .710** .000 | .205** .005 | .198 .000 | .557** .000 | 1 |

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

Source: Field Data, 2020

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to investigate the connection between the variables. The measures were created using average scales from both the independent and dependent variables. Cooper and Schindler (2000) indicate that a correlation coefficient value (r) between 0.10 and 0.29 is regarded as weak, from 0.30 to 0.49 as moderate, and from 0.50 to 1.0 as strong. Nonetheless, Field (2015) states that the correlation coefficient should not exceed 0.8 to prevent multicollinearity. The highest correlation coefficient is 0.710, which is lower than 0.8, indicating that this study does not encounter multicollinearity issues (Table 4.13).

Each independent variable demonstrated a positive correlation with the dependent variable, with Power dynamics elitism exhibiting the strongest correlation at ($r=0.710$, $p < 0.01$), followed by Economic elitism at ($r=0.655$ $p < 0.01$), and then social elitism with a correlation of ($r=0.635$ $p < 0.01$). Dynamics of elitism had the weakest correlation at ($r=0.578$ $p < 0.01$). This shows that every variable is statistically significant at a 99% confidence interval level, two-tailed. This indicates that every variable being examined has a positive correlation with the dependent variable.

4.5.2 Assumptions of Regression Model

4.5.2.1 Test of Linearity

According to table below of the Pearson correlation coefficients, which are < 0.05 , the study can thus conclude that it indicates a nonlinear aspect of the relationship. The research can, alternatively (at least for now), disprove the theory that the relationship is linear and instead suggest that it is nonlinear. The standard guideline states that in a regression model where an independent variable includes both a squared term and a linear term, if the regression coefficient of the squared term has a significance value that is below the selected significance threshold, we accept the hypothesis that the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is nonlinear and reject the null hypothesis which claims that the relationship is linear.

Table 4.21: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (Test of Linearity)

| Variable Pair | Pearson Correlation Coefficient | Sig. (p-value) |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Efficacy of elitism principles and Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | 0.45 | 0.032 |
| Social elitism and Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | 0.38 | 0.048 |
| Economic elitism and Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | 0.52 | 0.021 |
| Power dynamics elitism and Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | 0.41 | 0.039 |

Note: Coefficients < 0.05 indicate potential nonlinearity, prompting further testing with squared terms.

Table 4.21a: Regression Coefficients for Linear and Squared Terms (Nonlinearity Test)

| Independent Variable | Term | Unstandardized Coefficient (B) | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Sig. (p-value) |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Elitism Dynamics Efficacy of elitism principles | Linear | 0.234 | 0.089 | 2.629 | 0.009 |
| | Squared | -0.056 | 0.021 | -2.667 | 0.008 |
| Social elitism | Linear | 0.198 | 0.076 | 2.605 | 0.010 |
| | Squared | -0.043 | 0.018 | -2.389 | 0.018 |
| Economic elitism | Linear | 0.312 | 0.092 | 3.391 | 0.001 |
| | Squared | -0.067 | 0.024 | -2.792 | 0.006 |
| Power dynamics elitism | Linear | 0.276 | 0.085 | 3.247 | 0.001 |
| | Squared | -0.051 | 0.019 | -2.684 | 0.008 |

Note: Squared terms with Sig. <0.05 indicate nonlinearity.

4.5.2.2 Test of Autocorrelation

The Durbin-Watson test was employed to check for autocorrelation. It assessed whether the model's residuals exhibited significant autocorrelation. You examine the p-value from the test and determine that autocorrelation is present if the p-value is low (typically considered to be under 0.05). If the p-value is not sufficiently low to determine that significant autocorrelation exists. If you need to determine the p-value, it is essential to find out the value of the test statistic. If your p-value is below 0.05, one approach to address this is to develop a model incorporating a residual correlation structure like an autoregressive model for the residuals. The Model summary result indicated a Durbin Watson test score of 2.390, which is greater than 2, illustrating negative autocorrelation. Values ranging from 0 to under 2 show positive autocorrelation, while values between over 2 and 4 reflect negative autocorrelation (Cooper and Shindler, 2012).

Table 4.22: Durbin-Watson Test for Autocorrelation

| Model | Durbin-Watson Statistic | Degrees of Freedom | p-value | Interpretation |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--|
| Regression Model (Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project) | 2.390 | 304 | 0.152 | No significant autocorrelation (negative autocorrelation present, but $p > 0.05$) |

Note: Durbin-Watson values: 0-2 = positive autocorrelation, 2-4 = negative autocorrelation. $p > 0.05$ indicates no significant issue.

4.5.2.3 Test of Normality

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed to assess the 'goodness of fit' for the sample distributions. The outcome can be observed in table 4.23. The table below displays the outcomes from two prominent tests for normality, specifically the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test and the Shapiro-Wilk Test. The Shapiro-Wilk Test is better suited for small sample sizes (< 50 samples), but because the study had 308 samples, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was employed as the numerical method to evaluate normality.

The table shows that for the efficacy principles of elitism, Social elitism, Economic elitism, and Power dynamics elitism, the dependent variable "Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project" had a normal distribution. This can be ascertained; If the Sig. value from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test exceeds 0.05, the data is considered normal. If it falls below 0.05, the data considerably diverge from a normal distribution. We are able to dismiss the null hypothesis and determine that the data originates from a normal distribution.

Table 4.23 Tests of Normality

| Capabilities | | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|-------|--------------|-----|------|
| | | Statistic | Df | Sig. | Statistic | Df | Sig. |
| Implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project | Efficacy of elitism | .177 | 248 | .200* | .964 | 180 | .827 |
| | principles | .166 | 248 | .200* | .969 | 180 | .882 |
| | Social elitism | .151 | 248 | .200* | .965 | 180 | .837 |
| | Economic elitism | .165 | 241 | .200* | .969 | 180 | .888 |
| | Power dynamics elitism | | | | | | |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*This is a lower bound of the true significance

4.5.2.4 Test of Multicollinearity

It was necessary to assess if there was a resemblance among the independent variables.

The effects of multicollinearity are illustrated in table 4.2 4below.

Table 4.24: Test of Multicollinearity

| | Collinearity Statistics | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| | Tolerance | VIF |
| Efficacy of elitism principles | .552 | 1.812 |
| Social elitism | .935 | 1.069 |
| Economic elitism | .756 | 1.308 |
| Power dynamics elitism | .737 | 1.356 |

Table 4.24 indicates that there was no multicollinearity issue, as the VIF results of 1.812 fall between 1 and 10, suggesting the absence of multicollinearity problems. The research also observed that the dynamics of elitism had the highest correlation with the other independent variables (Tolerance = 0.552; VIF = 1.812). It was observed that Social elitism Elitese exhibited the second least correlation with other independent variables (Tolerance = 0.935; VIF = 1.069). Economic elitism showed the second strongest correlation with the other independent variables (Tolerance = 0.756; VIF = 1.308). Nevertheless, Power dynamics elitism exhibited the second strongest correlation

with the other independent variables (Tolerance = 0.737; VIF = 1.356). Consequently, every independent variable recorded a VIF near 1, well below the 10 thresholds. Every independent variable exhibited a tolerance near 1, well above the threshold of 0.1. Consequently, there was minimal evidence of multicollinearity, so no independent variable was excluded from the analysis.

4.5.3 Regression Analysis

Because the metrics employed to evaluate the main constructs in the model are quantitative scales, regression analysis can be utilized to accomplish this goal. Regression analyses consist of various methods that allow us to evaluate the capacity of independent variable(s) to forecast the dependent variable(s). Regression Analysis was conducted as a part of the analysis. The outcomes are displayed in Tables 4.25, 4.26, and 4.27.

Table 4.25 Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | .882 ^a | .778 | .602 | .176 | 2.390 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), efficacy of elitism principles, social elitism, Economic elitism, Power dynamics elitism

b. Dependent Variable: Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

Table 4.25 indicates that the R value was .882, demonstrating a positive trend in the results. R represents the relationship between the actual and forecasted values of the dependent variable. The range of R values is from -1 to 1 (Wong and Hiew, 2015). The symbol R denotes the nature of the relationship (either positive or negative). The absolute value of R reflects the intensity, with higher absolute values suggesting more powerful relationships. Therefore, the R value of .882 indicates a stronger positive correlation between the observed and predicted values. The R² value for the coefficient of determination was 0.778. This indicates that 77.8 percent of the variance in the dependent variable (Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project) was accounted for and

anticipated by the independent variables (Efficacy of elite principles, social elitism, Economic elitism, Power dynamics elitism).

Table 4.26 ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 232.743 | 4 | 43.096 | 114.391 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 12.878 | 303 | .664 | | |
| | Total | 245.621 | 307 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), efficacy of elitism principles, social elitism, Economic elitism, Power dynamics elitism

b. Dependent Variable: Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

The generated F-statistics (F = 114.391) was significant at the 5 percent level (Sig. F < 0.05), thereby validating the model's suitability, indicating a statistically significant connection between the effectiveness principles of elitism, social elitism, Economic elitism, Power dynamics elitism, and the implementation of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project.

Table 4.27 Coefficients

| Model | Unstandardized | | Standardized | | t | Sig. |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-------|------|------|
| | Coefficients | | Coefficients | | | |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| (Constant) | 2.767 | .361 | .287 | 7.668 | .000 | |
| Efficacy of elitism principles | .385 | .078 | .393 | 5.968 | .000 | |
| Social elitism | .168 | .065 | .193 | 2.593 | .004 | |
| Economic elitism | .284 | .065 | .324 | 4.383 | .000 | |
| Power dynamics elitism | .211 | .162 | .213 | 3.987 | .002 | |

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project

The t-value for the constant generated (t = 7.668) was significant at the .000 percent level (Sig. F < 0.05), thereby validating the adequacy of the model. Consequently, a statistically significant connection exists among the efficacy of principles of elitism,

social elitism, Economic elitism, Power dynamics elitism, and the implementation of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project. The findings indicate that every variable was statistically significant as all had a p value below 5%. Additionally, relying on the beta findings, the research interprets the model as:

$$IKM = 2.767 + 0.385(EP) + 0.168(SE) + 0.284(EE) + 0.211(PR) + \varepsilon$$

This indicates that with each unit rise in dynamics of elitism, the execution of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project increases by 0.385 units; with any rise in Social elitism, the implementation of the *Kazi Mtaani* Project grows by 0.168 units; with any rise in Economic elitism, the execution of *Kazi Mtaani* Project increases by 0.284 units, and lastly, with any rise in Power dynamics elitism, the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Project rises by 0.211 units.

Table 4.28 Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis | Test | Results | Decision |
|---|------|-------------|----------|
| H ₀₁ : The efficacy of elitism principles do not have a significant influence on implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project in UG County | .000 | Significant | Rejected |
| H ₀₂ : Social elitism does not have a significant influence on implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project in UG County | .004 | Significant | Rejected |
| H ₀₃ : Economic elitism e does not have a significant influence on implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project in UG County | .000 | Significant | Rejected |
| H ₀₄ : There are no significant effect of power dynamics elitism on implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Project in UG County | .002 | Significant | Rejected |

The first hypothesis (H0₁) tested the effect of the dynamics of elitism on project implementation. With a regression p-value of 0.000, the findings suggest that decision-making processes guided by elitist principles play a vital role in shaping how projects are designed and executed. This aligns with Pareto's elitist theory, which posits that elite groups dominate decision-making and policy processes (Higley & Pakulski, 2020). Similar findings were reported by Güneş-Ayata and Doğan (2021), who demonstrated that political and bureaucratic elites in Turkey largely determined the prioritization of urban regeneration projects, often sidelining grassroots participation. This indicates that elitist efficacy in decision-making ensures project continuity but also raises questions about inclusivity.

The second hypothesis (H0₂) examined the role of social elitism. The p-value of 0.004 indicated that social elitism significantly influences project implementation. This finding is consistent with research by Owusu and Ayee (2021) in Ghana, who found that local elites shape community-based initiatives by leveraging their social networks and cultural legitimacy. Similarly, Kenyan studies by Wainaina and Oloo (2020) found that influential individuals within counties often determine access to employment opportunities in government programs. These findings emphasize the centrality of social capital in project outcomes, where social elitism act as gatekeepers of opportunities.

The third hypothesis (H0₃) tested whether economic elitism influenced project implementation, and regression results ($p = 0.000$) revealed a significant effect. This demonstrates that elites who control financial resources and capital flows directly shape how projects are resourced, who benefits, and the pace of implementation. Comparable findings were made by Mkandawire (2020) in Malawi, where elite capture of donor-funded development projects led to unequal distribution of project benefits. Similarly, Chege and Gakuu (2021) highlighted that economic elitisms in Kenya influence public

project prioritization through their control of procurement processes. The results from Uasin Gishu therefore reinforce the argument that elite financial dominance is a critical determinant of project performance.

The fourth hypothesis (H04) examined the effect of power dynamics elitism on project implementation. Regression results ($p = 0.002$) indicated that elite power dynamics elitism significantly determine project trajectories. This resonates with the argument by Khan (2022) that power asymmetries shape governance outcomes, as elites exploit patron-client relations to consolidate influence. In Kenya, Mutua and Maina (2022) also found that elite-driven patronage networks in youth empowerment projects created uneven access to opportunities, privileging those with elite connections. Thus, the findings underscore that entrenched power structures influence how *Kazi Mtaani* is implemented in Uasin Gishu, creating both opportunities and challenges for project inclusivity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a summary of the study based on the research objectives that aimed on determining Dynamics of Elitism on Implementation of Public Works Initiatives; A Case of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya (dynamics of elitism, social elitism, economic elitism and power dynamics elitism on Implementation of Public Works Initiative. The conclusions based on the findings and recommendations thereof are provided in this chapter.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study aimed at determining the implications of elitism dynamics on the Implementation of Public works initiatives, the case of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya. The research was directed by these specific aims: to assess the influence of dynamics of elitism on implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects, to determine the influence of social elitism on implementation of public works initiatives, to establish the Influence of Economic Elitism on Implementation of Public Works Initiatives and to examine the influence of power dynamics on implementation of public works initiatives of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya.

The research employed a convergent parallel mixed method involving a target population of 1430 young individuals, 14 staff members from the Ministry of Youth and Social Welfare Services, and 5 Members of Parliament from the 5 constituencies within Uasin Gishu County. The sample size of 314 was determined using the Yamane formula, consisting of 3 employees from the Ministry of Youth and Social Services, 310 youths, and 1 Member of Parliament. The research employed primary data gathered through self-administered surveys, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions. Prior to the actual data

collection, a preliminary study was carried out in Nandi County to evaluate the reliability and validity of the data collection instrument. Validity was obtained through discussions with research supervisors. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach Alpha, set at a threshold of 0.7. Data analysis was conducted utilizing SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The gathered data was examined through both descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

5.2.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-demographic profile of respondents in this study reflected the broad and diverse character of the *Kazi Mtaani* youth workforce in Uasin Gishu County. The findings revealed that male youth workers formed a slight majority of the programme participants, though female participants constituted a substantial and nearly equal share of the workforce. The closeness of this gender distribution is significant: it suggests that *Kazi Mtaani*, at least at the level of formal enrolment, did not exhibit extreme gender exclusion, and that findings drawn from this sample carry credibility with respect to both male and female youth experiences of the programme. The near-parity in gender representation enhances the dependability and generalizability of the study's conclusions. With respect to age, the study found that the overwhelming majority of *Kazi Mtaani* participants fell within the youth age brackets of 18 to 30 years, consistent with the programme's explicit targeting of youth populations. The concentration of participants in the 18–25 and 26–30 age groups confirms that the programme reached its primary intended demographic, though a smaller but notable proportion of participants fell within the 31–35 age bracket, suggesting some degree of age boundary flexibility in actual programme enrolment. This age distribution is consistent with the broader literature on public works programmes that target youth populations, and mirrors patterns documented in other Kenyan youth employment programmes such as Kazi Kwa Vijana and the National Youth Service.

The educational profile of respondents was broadly distributed across Kenya's basic education levels, with secondary school leavers forming the largest group followed by college certificate holders, university-level participants, primary school leavers, and a small group with no formal certificates. The fact that more than half of respondents held only primary or secondary certificates, while fewer than half held post-secondary qualifications, reflects the socio-economic targeting of *Kazi Mtaani* toward youth who have not successfully transitioned into formal employment. This educational distribution is important for interpreting programme dynamics: youth with lower educational qualifications are typically less empowered to challenge elite decision-making in programme implementation, less likely to be selected through merit-based rather than patronage-based selection processes, and more likely to be excluded when elite social networks dominate beneficiary identification. The cross-sectional representation of youth at nearly all educational levels enhances the study's credibility and ensures that the findings reflect the range of youth experiences within the programme.

5.2.2 Influence of Dynamics of Elitism on Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

The findings concerning the dynamics of elitism and their effect on *Kazi Mtaani* project implementation revealed a programme significantly compromised across its core performance dimensions. Projects consistently lagged behind schedule, fell short of target quality standards, experienced payment delays to workers, and were broadly assessed as unsuccessful by respondents. These implementation failures were not isolated or incidental; they reflected structural and systemic weaknesses that the study links directly to the dynamics of elite behaviour operating within and around the programme. The convergence of negative findings across timing, quality, payments, and overall success paints a picture of a programme whose operational effectiveness has been fundamentally undermined by elite-driven distortions at multiple implementation stages.

The decision-making dimension of programme dynamics revealed a critical governance deficit: youth, the primary beneficiaries and workers of *Kazi Mtaani*, were engaged at only a moderate level in decision-making processes, with respondents indicating a general preference for lower levels of youth participation in programme governance. This finding resonates with the broader literature on elite dynamics in public works, which consistently documents how elite actors restrict beneficiary participation in governance to preserve their own discretionary authority over resource allocation and beneficiary selection (Bhargava & Sakthivel, 2018; Mwololo *et al.*, 2021). Paradoxically, respondents viewed youth as more actively involved during actual project implementation, the physical execution of work, than in the decision-making processes that determined who worked, where, under what conditions, and for how much pay. This gap between implementation-stage participation and governance-stage exclusion is a hallmark of elite capture: beneficiaries are mobilized to deliver labour while being excluded from the decisions that shape whose labour is mobilized and how programme resources are distributed.

Youth satisfaction with the programme process was strikingly low, reflecting deep dissatisfaction with how *Kazi Mtaani* was administered. This low satisfaction is consistent with the findings of Njenga *et al.* (2021), who documented that elitist behaviour within *Kazi Mtaani*, including ethnic and regional discrimination among workers, monopolization of specific duties by connected employees, and lack of transparency in hiring, adversely affected programme effectiveness and worker morale. When workers perceive that their selection, task allocation, and payment are determined by elite connections rather than merit or need, satisfaction collapses regardless of the physical outputs the programme generates. The World Bank (2021) similarly identified deficiencies of transparency, accountability, and community involvement as the primary

threats to the legitimacy of public works projects, deficiencies that this study's satisfaction findings confirm are present in *Kazi Mtaani*.

Resource management emerged as another area of concern. While respondents acknowledged the general adequacy of resources allocated to the programme, significant dissatisfaction was expressed with how those resources were managed and distributed. This distinction between resource availability and resource management quality is theoretically important: it suggests that the programme's failures are not attributable to underfunding but to elite-mediated distortions in how existing resources were allocated and used. This finding aligns directly with Kabinga *et al.* (2021), who found that poor management of economic resources, rather than insufficient resources per se, resulted in delays, quality problems, and programme failure in *Kazi Mtaani*. The more positive view of the timeliness of resource dispatch relative to overall resource management suggests that while funds were generally released on schedule, their subsequent distribution within the programme was compromised by elite intermediation.

Youth influence on project prioritization was assessed as notably limited, with respondents indicating that youth had little say in determining which projects were implemented and where they were implemented. This finding confirms the pattern identified in the broader literature: elites control the priority-setting function of public works programmes, directing project selection toward politically rewarding or economically beneficial sites rather than toward areas of greatest community need (Krasner & Helleiner, 2022; Flyvbjerg, 2020). Although respondents expressed relative satisfaction with the perceived ideal locations of projects, the low youth influence on project selection means that location decisions reflected elite preferences rather than beneficiary-driven needs assessment. Political goodwill, the relationship between political actors and programme support, emerged as a complex and contested dimension,

with significant variability in respondents' assessments of politicians' support, vested interests, and contributions to project outcomes. This variability reflects the dual nature of political elite involvement documented in the literature: political engagement can facilitate resource mobilization and programme continuity while simultaneously introducing patronage-driven distortions that compromise equity and effectiveness (Muchira & Kamau, 2021).

5.2.3 Influence of Social Elitism on Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

The findings on social elitism revealed a complex and stratified landscape of social influence in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, in which multiple social elitism categories, religious leaders, peers, community officials, scholars, and youth themselves, exercised varying degrees of influence over programme processes and outcomes. Taken together, these findings confirm that the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County was not governed solely by formal administrative procedures but was substantially shaped by the informal authority and social network power of a diverse cast of social elitism actors.

Religious leaders emerged as among the most influential social elitism actors in the implementation of public works initiatives. Their significant influence stems from the moral authority, community standing, and network reach those religious leaders command in Kenyan communities, particularly in peri-urban and urban settings where institutional trust in government is low and community cohesion is mediated through faith-based institutions. Religious leaders function as mediators, motivators, and moral guides, shaping community perceptions of and participation in public initiatives. This finding resonates with the broader social capital literature (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 2000), which recognizes faith-based institutions as primary vehicles of social capital accumulation and network mobilization. However, religious leader influence in

programme implementation also creates risks of elite capture: when religious leaders act as gatekeepers to beneficiary selection, those outside their congregational networks may be systematically excluded from programme benefits regardless of their eligibility or need.

Peers were identified as significantly impactful in project execution, scoring the highest influence among all social elitism categories assessed. Peer influence plays a vital role in molding the attitudes, behaviours, and decision-making processes of young people, and can offer assistance, motivation, and social affirmation that shapes the degree of involvement and dedication of individuals to public works participation. This finding is consistent with the youth development literature, which identifies peer networks as primary channels through which young people access information about programme opportunities, form opinions about programme legitimacy, and make decisions about participation and effort. In the *Kazi Mtaani* context, peer networks likely function both as channels of recruitment, where connected youth inform and sponsor others for inclusion, and as channels of exclusion, where youth outside established peer networks are systematically disadvantaged in accessing programme opportunities. The high influence of peers on programme implementation also suggests that community-level social dynamics, rather than programme management decisions alone, are powerful determinants of who participates and with what level of engagement.

Community officials played a significant role in project implementation, acting as liaisons between the community, project stakeholders, and implementing agencies to facilitate communication and collaboration. Their involvement in decision-making processes, resource allocation, and coordination of activities shapes the success and sustainability of public works projects in ways that extend beyond their formal

administrative roles. This finding aligns with the political economy literature's recognition that community officials occupy a critical interface position between formal programme governance and informal community social dynamics, a position that creates both important coordination functions and significant capture risks (North, 1990). When community officials are aligned with programme objectives and community needs, their liaison role enhances implementation quality; when they are aligned primarily with elite patronage networks, their authority becomes a mechanism of elite capture.

Scholars and academics were regarded as significantly impactful in project execution, with respondents recognizing their expertise, knowledge, and research insights as contributions to programme design, monitoring, and evaluation. The finding that academic and scholarly actors exercise meaningful influence on *Kazi Mtaani* implementation suggests a degree of evidence-based governance engagement with the programme, though the actual pathways through which academic influence operates, whether through formal evaluation mandates, advisory relationships with programme administrators, or public commentary, require further investigation. The recognition of scholarly influence is nonetheless encouraging from a governance perspective, as it suggests that communities attach value to evidence-based perspectives on programme quality and effectiveness.

Perhaps the most concerning finding regarding social elitism is the disconnect between youth, identified as social elitism actors in the programme context, and actual programme decision-making. Despite youth being the programme's primary target population and constituting its entire workforce, respondents indicated that youth were not actively involved in the decision-making processes that influence project implementation. This exclusion of the most directly affected group from governance

represents a fundamental violation of participatory development principles and mirrors the broader pattern identified in the literature: elites systematically restrict beneficiary participation in governance to preserve their own authority over programme decisions (Twala & Dlamini, 2021; Ali & Omar, 2023). Involving youth in decision-making processes could harness their creativity, energy, and contextual knowledge to drive meaningful change and sustainable development in communities, a potential that *Kazi Mtaani*'s current governance structure leaves largely unrealized.

5.2.4 Influence of Economic Elitism on Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

The findings on economic elitism revealed that multiple categories of economically privileged actors exercised significant influence over *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, shaping project execution through their financial assets, business networks, economic expertise, and institutional authority. The combined effect of economic elitism involvement was assessed as significant, reflecting the broad and structurally embedded nature of economic elitism influence across the implementation cycle of public works initiatives in Uasin Gishu County.

Affluent individuals emerged as the most influential economic elitism category in project execution. Their financial assets, social connections, and extensive networks enable them to offer significant backing, investment, and sponsorship for public projects and to sway decision-making processes through their financial authority. This finding is consistent with Richardson, Martinez, and Singh (2021), who found in their cross-national analysis that elite-connected actors received disproportionate contract awards despite comparable technical qualifications and that elite capital control inflated project costs while reducing employment access for marginalised workers. In the *Kazi Mtaani* context, affluent individuals' influence on project execution likely operates through their ability to sponsor labour allocation decisions, by endorsing preferred beneficiaries to programme

administrators, and through their control of small contractor networks that capture programme procurement opportunities. The high influence attributed to affluent individuals by respondents confirms that economic capital translates directly into programme governance power in the absence of robust accountability mechanisms.

Business professionals were recognized as key players in project execution, contributing private sector perspectives, industry connections, and market knowledge that can enhance the sustainability, growth potential, and operational efficiency of public works projects. Their influence reflects the broader pattern identified in Otieno, Kariuki, and Njuguna (2021), who found that business elite networks dominated county procurement processes in Kenya, concentrating contracts in politically connected firms and generating cost inflation. When business professionals align their private sector expertise with programme objectives, they can contribute genuine efficiency gains; however, when their involvement is primarily motivated by contract capture and profit extraction, their influence becomes a source of economic elitism capture that compromises both programme quality and equity.

Economic experts played a significant role in shaping project implementation through their economic analysis, policy recommendations, and financial expertise, informing decision-making, resource allocation, and risk management in public works initiatives. Their contribution of cost-benefit analysis, market trend assessments, and investment strategies reflects the technical governance dimension of economic elitism influence, the use of specialized economic knowledge as a form of authority in programme decision-making. This finding aligns with the broader political economy literature's recognition that technocratic expertise constitutes a form of elite capital that can either enhance programme effectiveness, when deployed transparently in the public interest, or

legitimize elite-driven resource allocation decisions, when deployed to provide intellectual cover for patronage-based programme governance.

The combined effect of economic elitisms was assessed as significant across the programme's governance and implementation landscape. Economic governance, encompassing monetary investments, resource distribution, market trends, and commercial interests, influences the direction and achievement of public works projects in ways that reflect the priorities of economically powerful actors rather than the needs of target beneficiaries. The study's finding that economic elitism influence is pervasive across multiple actors and mechanisms confirms the integrated elite economic capture dynamic identified by Macharia, Kiprotich, and Waweru (2022) in their analysis of CDF projects: elites simultaneously control capital, through procurement and financing, and labour, through employment allocation, creating an interlocked capture system that is structurally resistant to reform through individual accountability measures alone. Building collaborative partnerships between economic elitisms, project stakeholders, and community members is identified as crucial for fostering inclusive development, shared prosperity, and equitable participation, partnerships that require explicit institutional design rather than emerging spontaneously from existing elite dynamics.

County politicians appeared as significant agents in project execution, with their political authority, policy influence, and resource allocation powers enabling them to shape project priorities, funding decisions, and regulatory frameworks. County politicians play a crucial role in advocating for community needs and mobilizing support for public works, but the study's findings indicate that their involvement introduces significant risks of patronage-driven distortion. This finding resonates with Kiprotich, Mbugua, and Wanjiku (2020), who found that political patronage connections produced dramatic

disparities in project funding and completion rates across Kenyan county development projects. When county politicians prioritize politically rewarding project decisions over community-needs-based allocation, the programme's social protection objectives are systematically compromised.

Highly positioned individuals, including government officials, community leaders, and influential figures, were found to be notably influential in project implementation through their leadership, expertise, and networks. Their involvement facilitates collaboration, coordination, and strategic planning but also creates governance risks when their authority is deployed to advance elite interests rather than programme objectives. Government representatives were similarly found to play a pivotal role through their administrative authority, policy expertise, and regulatory oversight, ensuring compliance with legal requirements, quality standards, and ethical practices, functions that are essential for programme integrity but that are vulnerable to being subverted when government officials are embedded in patronage networks that reward complicity over accountability.

The finding that politicians with personal interests significantly influenced project execution is among the most concerning findings of the study. When political actors' self-serving motives, personal financial benefits, electoral consolidation, factional party interests, overshadow community needs in programme decision-making, resource allocation, and contractor selection, the *Kazi Mtaani* programme's fundamental objective of serving vulnerable youth is directly contradicted. Njenga *et al.* (2021) similarly found that the absence of clear hiring protocols enabled politically connected individuals to shape workforce composition, producing a workforce lacking in diversity and legitimacy. The study's findings confirm that personal political interest is an active and

powerful distorting force in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, and that transparency, accountability, and meaningful civic engagement are essential, though not yet sufficiently realized, counterweights to this distortion.

Youth expressed a notable lack of trust in county officials regarding project implementation, a distrust rooted in perceived corruption, lack of transparency, and limited youth engagement in decision-making processes. This trust deficit is consequential: when the primary beneficiaries of a programme do not trust the officials responsible for its administration, participation quality declines, information about programme abuses is less likely to be reported through official channels, and community oversight mechanisms lose their effectiveness. Youmbi and Banini (2023) demonstrated in Cameroon that infrastructure investments perceived as favouring politically connected groups produced declining citizen trust, while equitably distributed investments increased trust, a finding that establishes a direct causal link between elite-driven resource distortion and the erosion of institutional trust. Building trust, fostering dialogue, and promoting meaningful youth participation are therefore not merely desirable governance improvements but necessary conditions for *Kazi Mtaani's* long-term effectiveness.

5.2.5 Influence of Power Dynamics on Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

The findings on the influence of power dynamics on *Kazi Mtaani* implementation revealed a complex and stratified web of interactions in which multiple stakeholder groups, county politicians, highly positioned individuals, government officials, youth, and politicians with vested interests, exercised varying but significant degrees of influence over programme implementation. Power dynamics emerged as the most strongly associated dimension of elitism with implementation outcomes, suggesting that the distribution of power among stakeholders is the most fundamental structural

determinant of how *Kazi Mtaani* is implemented and who benefits from it in Uasin Gishu County.

County politicians occupied a central position in the power structure of *Kazi Mtaani* implementation, leveraging their political authority, policy influence, and resource allocation powers to shape project priorities, funding decisions, and regulatory frameworks. Their role extended beyond formal advocacy to encompass direct oversight and the mobilization of political support for specific implementation decisions. The high degree of influence attributed to county politicians by respondents reflects their structural position at the intersection of formal programme governance and informal political patronage networks, a position that enables them to shape virtually every stage of the implementation cycle. This finding aligns with Kiptum and Oluoch (2021), who documented in Uasin Gishu County that political pressure and corruption directly influenced both beneficiary selection and resource allocation in *Kazi Mtaani*. While county politicians' active engagement can positively facilitate resource mobilization, their dominant position in the programme's power structure also generates systematic risks of patronage-driven distortion that the study's broader findings confirm are being realized in practice.

Highly positioned individuals, encompassing government officials, community leaders, and influential figures, were also found to exercise substantial influence on programme implementation through their experience, leadership, expertise, and extensive networks. This category of influential actors facilitates collaboration, coordination, and strategic planning in ways that can enhance programme effectiveness, but their high degree of influence also raises important questions about accountability and the alignment of their interests with programme objectives. When highly positioned individuals are aligned

with community needs and programme goals, their network resources and institutional leverage can genuinely enhance implementation quality; when they are primarily aligned with elite patronage networks, the same authority and network resources become instruments of elite capture. The study's broader findings, including low youth satisfaction, limited youth participation in governance, and systematic implementation failures, suggest that highly positioned individuals' influence in *Kazi Mtaani* has not consistently been deployed in the community's interest.

The findings regarding youth confirm a governance paradox at the heart of *Kazi Mtaani*: the group that the programme is designed to benefit is simultaneously its primary labour force and its most marginalized governance actor. Respondents indicated that youth expressed skepticism toward county officials regarding programme implementation, a sentiment rooted in perceived corruption, lack of transparency, and limited youth engagement in decision-making. This skepticism is not merely attitudinal, it reflects an accurate assessment of the programme's governance reality, in which youth are systematically excluded from the decisions that determine who works, where, under what conditions, and how resources are distributed. The lower degree of power attributed to youth relative to all other stakeholder groups highlights a critical gap in the recognition and utilization of young people's contributions to *Kazi Mtaani* governance. Addressing this power asymmetry is not merely a question of democratic principle but a practical necessity for programme effectiveness: Kassim and Kileo (2020) demonstrated that participatory community-based approaches in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation can assist in empowering marginalized populations and fostering fair decision-making, while Kimeu and Kiarie (2021) found that engaging community-based organizations in beneficiary selection and programme oversight ensured transparency and accountability that contributes to project sustainability.

Government officials were found to play a pivotal role in programme implementation through their administrative authority, policy expertise, and regulatory oversight. They serve as the formal custodians of programme integrity, ensuring compliance with legal requirements, quality standards, and ethical practices, and safeguarding public resources. However, the study's findings regarding youth trust deficits and the broader pattern of implementation failures suggest that government officials' formal mandate for accountability is not consistently being fulfilled. When government officials are embedded in patronage networks that reward allocation decisions based on political affiliation rather than programme criteria, their regulatory authority becomes a mechanism for legitimizing elite capture rather than constraining it. This finding is consistent with Onyango *et al.* (2021), who found that power dynamics among government representatives, contractors, and project beneficiaries influenced resource distribution and work quality in *Kazi Mtaani*, and who identified enhanced participatory decision-making processes as essential for restoring accountability and transparency.

Politicians with vested interests emerged as a powerful and particularly concerning influence on programme implementation. Their political connections, economic incentives, and personal policy agendas shaped project outcomes, resource allocation, and decision-making processes in ways that consistently risked placing personal benefits, political objectives, or factional interests above community needs. Nyaoga and Okwemba (2021) documented precisely this dynamic in Uasin Gishu County, finding that certain contractors received *Kazi Mtaani* tenders due to political connections rather than competence, with the result that work quality suffered and beneficiary satisfaction was low. The finding that politicians with vested interests exercised high influence across programme implementation confirms that elite power, particularly when combined with personal economic incentives, is the most structurally distorting force in

Kazi Mtaani's implementation landscape. The fundamental implication of this finding is that *Kazi Mtaani* cannot achieve its social protection objectives under conditions in which powerful political actors with self-serving interests are the primary determinants of implementation decisions. Structural reforms, including transparent hiring protocols, community-controlled beneficiary lists, independent contractor selection processes, and public disclosure of payment schedules, are necessary to constrain the vested-interest power dynamics that the study identifies as the central challenge to *Kazi Mtaani* effectiveness in Uasin Gishu County.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

The study set out to examine the influence of elitism, across its dynamics, social, economic, and power dimensions, on the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* public works initiatives in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The conclusions drawn from the study's findings across all four objectives confirm that elitism, in all its dimensions, exercises a substantial and positive relationship with implementation outcomes, meaning that as elite influence intensifies, it shapes programme implementation in ways that are measurable, consistent, and systematic. The convergence of findings across four distinct dimensions of elitism provides a comprehensive empirical picture of a programme whose implementation is fundamentally shaped by elite dynamics at every stage of the delivery cycle.

Regarding the first objective on the dynamics of elitism, the study concluded that a meaningful positive relationship existed between the dynamics of elitism, encompassing decision-making processes, resource allocation, and political goodwill, and the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects in Uasin Gishu County. This finding confirms that elite dynamics are not peripheral or occasional distortions but structural features of programme governance that consistently shape how implementation proceeds and who

benefits. Decision-making processes that systematically exclude youth, resource management practices that are compromised by elite intermediation, and political goodwill that is conditioned on patronage alignment together constitute a governance architecture in which elite interests dominate programme outcomes. The implication is that reforms to *Kazi Mtaani* must address the structural dynamics of elite governance rather than treating individual instances of patronage or corruption as isolated failures.

The conclusion regarding the second objective on social elitism confirmed that a positive relationship existed between the contribution of social elitism and the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects. Social elitism actors, including religious leaders, community officials, peers, scholars, and influential community figures, shaped programme implementation through their moral authority, social capital, network reach, and gate-keeping roles in beneficiary selection and community mobilization. While the contributions of social elitism are not uniformly negative, religious leaders and community officials can play constructive roles in mobilizing community support and facilitating programme communication, the systematic exclusion of youth from decision-making processes that social elitism dominance produces represents a fundamental governance failure. The finding that social elitism is positively associated with implementation outcomes reflects the pervasive and structurally embedded nature of social elitism influence across the programme's governance and delivery architecture.

On the third objective concerning economic elitism, the study concluded that economic elitisms played a meaningful role in executing *Kazi Mtaani* projects, with the influence of affluent individuals, business professionals, economic experts, and politically connected actors being evident across programme procurement, resource allocation, contractor selection, and labour deployment decisions. The conclusion that economic

elitism influence is positively associated with programme implementation confirms that those who control financial resources, business networks, and economic knowledge exercise structurally privileged positions in the programme's implementation landscape. This economic elitism dominance is particularly consequential for programme equity: when procurement decisions, labour allocation, and resource distribution are mediated by elite economic networks rather than by transparent merit-based processes, the programme's most economically marginalized intended beneficiaries are systematically disadvantaged. The documented trust deficit between youth and county officials reflects the lived consequences of this economic elitism capture, and underscores the urgency of structural reforms to programme economic governance.

The fourth objective concerning power dynamics yielded the most pronounced relationship with implementation outcomes among all four objectives, confirming that power dynamics elitism is the overarching structural condition within which social and economic elitism operate in *Kazi Mtaani* implementation. Power dynamics, manifested in the dominant influence of county politicians, highly positioned individuals, government officials, and politicians with vested interests over every dimension of programme governance, constitute the fundamental architecture of elite capture in *Kazi Mtaani*. The finding that power dynamics exercise the strongest relationship with implementation outcomes among all four elitism dimensions has critical implications for reform: while improving transparency mechanisms, community participation processes, and procurement accountability are all necessary, they will be insufficient unless the underlying power asymmetries that marginalize youth from governance are explicitly addressed. Structural power-sharing arrangements, community-controlled oversight mechanisms, and institutional safeguards that constrain the discretionary authority of politically powerful actors are necessary conditions for transforming *Kazi Mtaani* from a

programme shaped primarily by elite power into one that genuinely serves the youth it is designed to benefit.

Taken together, the study's conclusions across all four objectives establish that elitism, in its dynamic, social, economic, and power dimensions, is the central challenge to *Kazi Mtaani's* effectiveness and equity in Uasin Gishu County. The programme's implementation failures in timing, quality, payment, and overall success are not primarily technical failures susceptible to administrative correction; they are governance failures generated by the systematic influence of elite actors who exercise disproportionate authority over programme decisions. Addressing these failures requires a comprehensive governance reform agenda that tackles the dynamics, social, economic, and power dimensions of elitism simultaneously, rather than treating each as a separate administrative problem.

5.4 Recommendations for the Study

The subsequent suggestions are provided for practical implementation, policy, and theoretical considerations.

5.4.1 Recommendations on Practice and Policy Formulation

To enhance youth empowerment within the context of the dynamics of elitism, several recommendations can be made. Establish mechanisms for meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes. This can be achieved through the creation of youth councils, advisory boards, and the implementation of regular consultations, ensuring that the voices and perspectives of young people are considered and integrated into decision-making processes. In addition, governance structures should be strengthened within the County and incorporate young people in leadership positions.

Enhanced resource oversight including implementation of robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track resource allocation, management, and timely dispatch is

essential, with a specific focus on transparency and accountability to ensure that resources are utilized effectively and efficiently. Additionally, there should be community involvement from project design, planning and execution throughout to completion.

Conducting comprehensive needs assessments to inform project selection and design, ensuring alignment with the diverse needs and aspirations of the youth population. Additionally, advocating for transparent and accountable political engagement is essential. This includes facilitating regular dialogue sessions between politicians and youth representatives to foster mutual understanding and collaboration, ultimately leading to more inclusive and effective policymaking processes.

Government agencies and ministries ought to equip the primary target groups such as youth and community beneficiaries with knowledge, awareness, and skills to actively engage in project implementation, as this will enable them to identify and contest social, economic, and elite power exploitation of projects. They can inquire on the Bill of Quantities, the project's advancement, and the financial issues. Moreover, government bodies and ministries, together with parliament, ought to establish stringent and enforceable laws aimed at addressing social, economic, and elite capture in projects. This indicates that the Public Participation Act needs to be strengthened to define the acceptable percentage for gauging sufficient involvement and to ensure that youths are included in all stages of project development and execution.

5.4.2 Recommendations on Theory

Elite Theory is predicated on the observation that communities have people who are influential and they contribute in the development and implementation of activities and projects. Elitism can be as a result of a person's social, economic and political status

which influence the interactions between entities engaged in any task or projects and makes an individual to be on the fore front when it comes to decision making. From the results, there exists a symbiotic relationship between elites and non-elites. The existence of elites plays a great role in the livelihoods of non-elites and vice-versa. Government agencies and ministries ought to equip the primary target groups such as youth and community beneficiaries with knowledge, awareness, and skills to actively engage in project implementation, as this will enable them to identify and contest social, economic, and elite power exploitation of projects.

Stakeholder Theory is premised on the idea that for any project to be successful, the interests of all stakeholders who are directly or indirectly affected must be considered and addressed. Stakeholders include community members, youth, employees, financiers, government entities, and religious leaders, among others, whose involvement plays a significant role in project outcomes. From the results, the participation of diverse stakeholders enhances ownership, accountability, success and sustainability of projects. Government agencies and ministries ought to ensure that all relevant stakeholders, particularly the youth and community beneficiaries, are actively engaged from the project identification stage through implementation and evaluation, as this promotes inclusivity, minimizes conflicts of interest, and ensures long-term success of development initiatives.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The research suggests the subsequent paths for additional investigation: A study should be carried out to evaluate the lasting effects of youth involvement on project results and community growth. Further, Additional research is needed to investigate the dynamics of social influence exerted by religious leaders, peers, and academicians across various cultural and community contexts. Additionally, the study suggests that a study on the

impact of financial investments by wealthy individuals and businesspeople on the sustainability and scalability of public projects ought to be conducted. None the less, further studies should explore strategies for fostering trust between youths and county officials, assessing the impact of increased transparency on project outcomes, and examining mechanisms to balance political interests with community needs for more effective public work initiatives.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

RE: PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

I am a post graduate student pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy Degree programme Project Planning and Management in the Department of Sociology, Gender and Development Studies, Kisii University. I am currently conducting research on “**Implications of elitism dynamic on implementation of public work initiatives; the case of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya**” I kindly request you to participate in this study. Your response to the items in the questionnaire, interview guide and Focused Group Discussion will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will not be used for any other purposes except for this study. Thank you for accepting to participate in this study. Please sign in the space provided on this letter if you accept to be a respondent in this study.

Yours Faithfully,

SUSAN AKUMU NDONG

Department of Sociology, Gender and Development Studies,
Kisii University

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE YOUTHS

Introduction

I am a post graduate student pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programme Project Planning and Management in the Department of Sociology, Gender and Development Studies, Kisii University. I am currently conducting research on “Dynamic of Elitism on Implementation of Public Work Initiatives; A Case of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

This questionnaire seeks information on the implication of elites on the implementation of public works initiatives in Uasin Gishu County. All information you give will be treated confidentially and for academic purposes only. Please respond to all items in the questionnaire.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Put a tick where applicable

(a) What is your gender?

1. Male ()
2. Female ()
3. Transgender ()

(b) How old are you?

1. 18-25 years ()
2. 26-30 years ()
3. 31-35 years ()

(c) What is your educational level?

1. Primary ()
2. Secondary ()
3. College ()
4. University ()

(d) What is the nature of projects in *Kazi Mtaani*?

1. Short term ()
2. Long term ()
3. Planned ()
4. Adhoc ()

(e) Identify the types of projects undertaken in *Kazi Mtaani*

.....
.....
.....

What is the frequency of engagement with *Kazi Mtaani* projects

- 1. Monthly ()
- 2. Quarterly ()
- 3. Annually ()
- 4. Rarely ()

(f) In your own view who conceptualizes *Kazi Mtaani* Projects?

.....
.....
.....

Are there any external influences in the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects?

.....
.....
.....

(g) Indicate how you are paid in the table below

| DURATION | RATE |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Hourly | |
| Daily | |
| Weekly | |
| Monthly | |

SECTION B

Dynamics of Elitism and Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

i. Decision Making

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Youths are involved in decision making process | | | | | |
| Youths are the main actors during project implementation | | | | | |
| Youths are satisfied with the project process | | | | | |

ii. Resource allocation

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are adequate | | | | | |
| Resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are well managed | | | | | |
| Resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are dispatched on time | | | | | |

iii. Project prioritization

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Youths decide on the project to be undertaken | | | | | |
| The <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects meets youths needs | | | | | |
| The location for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects is ideal for County development | | | | | |

iv. Political goodwill

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The County politicians support youth's project initiatives | | | | | |
| Politicians have vested interest in <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| County politicians monitor the progress of the <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |

SECTION C

Social Elitism on Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

(a) Level of influence in project implementation

Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) Religious leaders influence project implementation | | | | | |
| (b) Educated people provide expertise for project implementation | | | | | |
| (c) Community officials influence project implementation | | | | | |
| (d) Educated people helps in monitoring the progress of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| (e) Networks help in mobilization of funds for the success of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| (f) Youths' personal history contributes to the recruitment in to <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |

(c) Explain how you obtain members for your group?

.....

(h) How did your group get recruited in to *Kazi Mtaani* projects?

.....

(g) Explain how social sponsors have contributed towards the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects?

.....

Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Youths are satisfied with the role social elitism play in the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Youths work together with social elitism for implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Youths understand the role of social elitism in implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |

SECTION D

Economic Elitism and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

Level of influence in project implementation

(a) Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) Wealthy individuals have a greater influence towards implementation of project | | | | | |
| (b) Economic elitisms influence the revenue allocation for implementation <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| (c) Business men have a greater influence in implementation of projects | | | | | |
| (d) Economic elitisms are accountable for the resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |

(b) Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wealthy individuals, businessmen and educated individuals mobilize resources for the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Wealthy individuals, businessmen and educated individuals influence donors for the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Wealthy individuals, businessmen and educated individuals advocate for more funding for the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Wealthy individuals, businessmen and educated individuals provide expertise ideas for the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Wealthy individuals, businessmen and educated individuals monitor the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| Wealthy individuals, businessmen and educated individuals divert resources intended for the implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| There is transparency in the management of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> funds | | | | | |

SECTION E

Power Dynamics and Implementation of Public Works Initiatives

(a) Level of influence in project implementation

Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) County Politicians are part of the stakeholders of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects | | | | | |
| (b) County politicians work together with youths for implementation of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| (c) Politicians win youths trust through <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| (d) County politicians indirectly monitor the progress of <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects | | | | | |
| (e) Politicians use <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects as a campaign strategy | | | | | |
| (f) <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> is one of the initiatives benefiting politicians | | | | | |

SECTION F

Implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* Projects

(a) Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements. Where 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3= neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree

| Statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) The resources allocated for <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are adequate for its implementation | | | | | |
| (b) <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> projects are completed within specified time frame | | | | | |
| (c) <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects meets the intended objectives | | | | | |
| (d) <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects are implemented within the stipulated scope | | | | | |
| (e) <i>Kazi Mtaani</i> Projects meets the National Environment Management Agency Standards | | | | | |

(i) How are resources committed to *Kazi Mtaani* controlled?

.....

(j) How are *Kazi Mtaani* projects budgeted for?

.....

(k) What recommendations do you have that should be undertaken to improve the success in implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* in Uasin Gishu County

.....

APPENDIX III: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FOR THE YOUTH LEADERS

Consent

Thank you for agreeing to participate. The researcher is interested to hear your valuable opinion on the implication of elite capture on the implementation of public works initiatives in Uasin Gishu County

- The information you give us is completely confidential, and we will not associate your name with anything you say in the focus group.
- You may refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time.
- The researcher understands how important it is that this information is kept private and confidential. We will ask participants to respect each other's confidentiality.

Questions for discussion

1. What is the philosophical foundation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects?
2. What are the key factors preventing the success of the implementation of *Kazi Mtaani* projects?
3. In your own view, what kind of influence do the key actors have towards project implementation?
4. What is your comment in regard to management of resources allocated for *Kazi Mtaani* Project?
5. Are there prerequisites for youths to be involved in *Kazi Mtaani* projects?

**APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EMPLOYEES AT THE
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES**

1. In what ways are the projects you involve youths in beneficial to them?
2. What criteria do you employ when allocating projects to youths?
3. What method do you use to pay the youths?
4. Are there any external forces when allocating projects to the youths?
5. How do you consider involving youths in decision making processes?

**APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT IN
UASIN GISHU COUNTY**

- i. How do you address the problem of youth unemployment in Uasin Gishu County?
- ii. Do you have any form of contact with the Department of Youth and Social Welfare Services?
- iii. How do you get information about Kazi kwa Mtaani projects in the County?
- iv. What future plans do you have for youths in your constituency?

APPENDIX VI: INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY



KISII UNIVERSITY-ELDORET CAMPUS

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR ACADEMICS STUDENT AFFAIRS

Phone:00723322557

P.O.Box 6434-30100

Email: directoreldoret@kisiiversity.ac.ke

ELDORET-KENYA

REF: DAS/60099/14

14th September,2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE:RESEARCH PERMIT FOR SUSAN AKUMU NDONG REG NO.DAS/60099/14

The above subject refers;

The above named is our bonafide student of Kisii University - Eldoret Campus pursuing a Degree course in Doctor of Philosophy in Project planning and Management in the School of Arts & Social Sciences.

She is working on her research titles "*Dynamics of Elitism on implementation of public works initiatives a case of Kazi Mtaani, Uasin-ngishu county Kenya*". In partial fulfillments for the requirement of the Doctor of Philosophy.

We are kindly requesting your office to provide her with the necessary assistance in data collection and completion of her research.

Any assistance offered to the student will be highly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to call the undersigned for any verification.

Thank you.

~~Dr. Charles Ongiyo-PhD-0720986205~~

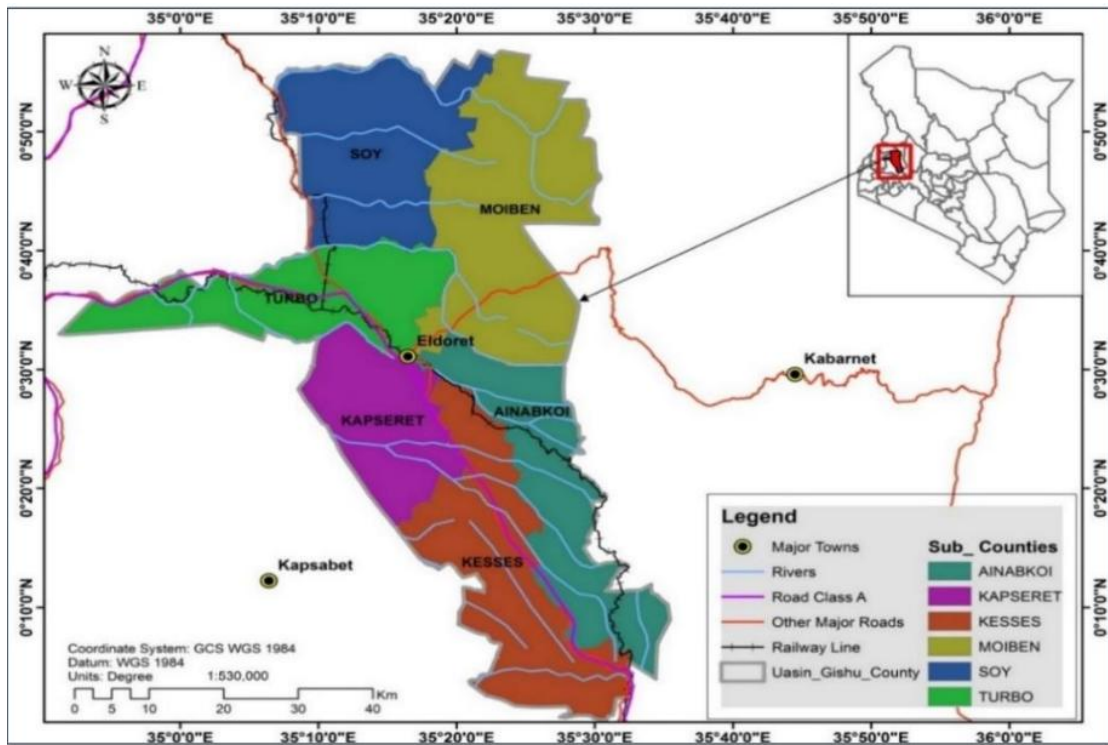
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O/jbo

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH PERMIT

| | |
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APPENDIX VIII: MAP OF STUDY AREA



APPENDIX IX: RESPONDENTS PICTORIALS



APPENDIX X: PUBLICATIONS



JRIIE  Journal of Research Innovation
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Efficacy of Elitism on Implementation of Public Work Initiatives: A Case of Kazi Mtaani in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: *The implementation of public works initiatives without due consideration of elitist contexts leads to unsustainable consequences. Kenya's Kazi Mtaani falls in this argumentation. It was mooted as a state-driven strategy to address the social and economic challenges of the youth bulge in the country. The implementation of this strategy largely peripheralized the context of elitism whose consequences have seen the intractability of exogenous influences as well as internal resource wastage in project implementation. The study was located in elite theory that explains superior-minority and inferior-majority relations in community project development. It employed convergent parallel mixed methods with a sample size comprised of 314 respondents. Primary data were collected using self-administered questionnaires. Reliability was determined by the use of Cronbach Alpha at a level of 0.7. Quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson Correlation and regression analysis to identify the relationship between variables. Qualitative data were thematically organized prior to reporting in narrations and quotations. The study found and concluded that there is a significant negative correlation between the efficacy of elitism and the implementation of Kazi Mtaani projects ($r = .578$ $p = 0.01$). These findings are significant for the analysis of the role of the elites in project implementation especially in the prognosis of interventions necessary for success of the projects. The study recommends the establishment of mechanisms for meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes throughout the projects life cycle.*

Keywords: *Elitism, Public works, Implementation, Youth, development, Kazi Mtaani*

How to cite this work (APA):

Ndong, S., Lumayo, M. & Akuku, C. (2024). Efficacy of elitism on implementation of public work initiatives: A case of kazi mtaani in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya. *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 8(3), 427 – 436. <https://doi.org/10.59765/iguw9730>.

APPENDIX XI: PLAGIARISM REPORT

Elizabeth Anyango

IMPLICATIONS OF ELITISM DYNAMICS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC WORKS INITIATIVES: THE CA...

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