



**MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE, CHANGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND
PROJECT COST MANAGEMENT IN YOUTH LIVELIHOOD
PROJECTS IN PALLISA DISTRICT**

BY

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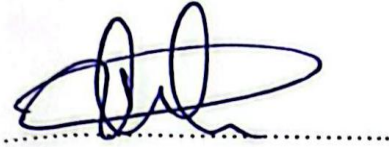
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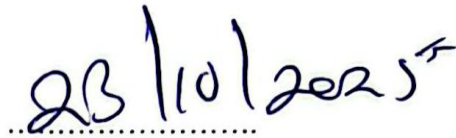
OCTOBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I, Masaba Dennis, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other academic award in any institution of higher learning. Where other people's work has been used, proper acknowledgment has been made.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large loop followed by a smaller loop and a horizontal stroke, positioned above a dotted line.

Masaba Dennis

A handwritten date in blue ink, written as '23/10/2025' with a superscript 'r' at the end, positioned above a dotted line.

Date

APPROVAL

This research dissertation entitled “The Mediating Role of Change Management Practices in the Relationship between Managerial Competencies and Project Cost Management among Youth Livelihood Projects in Pallisa District”, has been submitted with the approval of the undersigned supervisors:

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved family, my wife and children whose unwavering support and encouragement have been my constant source of strength. I also dedicate this dissertation to all those who cherish the value of education, especially those striving for knowledge amidst adversity.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how change management practices influence the association between management competences and project cost management of youth livelihood projects in Pallisa District Local Government. The study was premised on four core objectives; to examine the relationship between managerial competences and project cost management, to assess the connection between managerial competences and change management practices, to establish the association of change management practices and project cost management, and to determine the mediating role of change management practices on managerial competences and project cost management by anchoring the study on the Human capital theory and theory of planned behavior. A cross-sectional research design was employed, utilizing a quantitative approach with a sample size of 136 projects being drawn from a target population of 207 youth livelihood projects from Pallisa District Local Government. The data were collected using structured, closed-ended questionnaires and analyzed for reliability and validity using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis further involved descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression testing for the direct relationships. To assess mediation, or indirect effect, the study utilized Hayes' Process Macro model 4. The findings did not only reveal that managerial competences significantly predict change management practice and project cost management, change management practices significantly predict project cost management, but it also indicated that change management practice partially mediate managerial competences and project cost management. The study concluded that the direct relationship of managerial competences and project cost management can be further enhanced by effective project change management practices. In light of these findings, the study recommends that YLPs should focus and prioritize developing their managerial competence developments. This can be through training development programs targeting imparting of technical skills, financial acumen, and leadership competence.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research objectives, hypothesis, scope of the study, significance of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background to the study

Project cost management is a fundamental function in project execution and sustainability (Kavuma & Jang, 2019; Siva, 2025). In livelihood projects, effective cost management minimizes waste, maximizes value-for-money, and ensures that limited public resources are useful to intended beneficiaries (Littell, 2024). According to Project Management Institute (2021) project cost management refers to the processes of cost estimation, budgeting, financing, funding, and controlling costs so that a project can be completed within the approved budget. Samo et al (2024) and PMI (2021) suggest that project cost management is measured using cost estimation, budgeting, and cost control. Evidence recorded world over suggest that many projects continue to experience budget overruns, poor cost estimation, and ineffective cost control especially in publicly funded projects.

Globally, poor cost management practices have been widely documented (Cheng *et al.*, 2020; najeeb zaidan *et al.*, 2025; Oyekunle *et al.*, 2024). In the United Kingdom, Oyekunle *et al.* (2024) reported that 69% of large government infrastructure projects were delivered over budget,

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