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FACTORS INFLUENCING IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMMES' PROJECTS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

Njiru, C.R.W.
Department of Extra Mural Studies, University of Nairobi, Kenya
crwnjiru@gmail.com

Rambo, C.
Department of Extra Mural Studies, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

The study aimed to establish factors influencing implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya. Specifically, the study examined the effect of resource allocation and technical skills of staff on implementation of the said projects. All the 126 stakeholders working with these projects in Nakuru County constituted the target population. A sample of 56 respondents was drawn using stratified random sampling method. The study employed a set of structured questionnaires to collect data. The data collected were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. The study results were presented in form of tables. It was revealed that resource allocation and technical skills of staff positively and significantly influenced implementation of ASDSP projects. It was inferred that it was unclear whether the project budget reflected the requirements of ASDSP project's implementation. The study further concluded that a significant number of employees working with ASDSP projects were highly experienced in project implementation. It is recommended that resources should not only be sufficient, but they should be sourced and allocated to respective ASDSP projects timely. Lastly, the study recommends that ASDSP should continuously build capacity of the existing employees through training and development.

Keywords: ASDSP, project implementation, resource allocation, technical skills, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Projects are variously described as sets of activities that are related to a specific period of time which end by accomplishing certain pre-set goals (Lowery, 1994). A project can also be said to be a complex and temporary organizational system that results in production of goods and/or services which contribute towards satisfying a given goal or goals within a stipulated period of time, budget and in line with given specifications (Thullier & Diallo, 2005). Several projects face challenges which range from time, costs, and resources constraints particularly in their implementation according to Morley (2006) cited in Zouaghi and Laghouag (2012).

According to Morley (2006) project implementation is influenced by the effectiveness of the project management. The author further observes that managing a project ought to factor in time, resources and production management. Bhatti (2005) identifies some of the critical success factors (CSFs) of project implementation to include user training, change management, team work, user engagement, risk management, top management support, and communication. The project implementation success is premised on project outcomes. Basamh, Huq and Dahlan (2013) examined project implementation success and change management practices in State firms in Malaysia. The authors asserted that project success is subject to a number of factors. These include project schedule and plan, top management support, project change objective, communication, stakeholders' acceptance, and project team members. Their study noted that top management support in resources allocation and its sharing of responsibilities are necessary in project implementation.

Globally, various authors have put into perspectives various issues pertinent to agricultural projects. For instance, Pan et al (2006). Thomas (2008) and Conant (2010) observed that the major benefit accruing from implementation of improved cropland management practices is anticipated to be higher and more stable production, increased system resilience. This in turn, is bound to enhance livelihoods and food security, and also minimizing production risk. Some of the project management practices include agronomy, integrated nutrient management, tillage and residue management, water management, and agroforestry (IPCC, 2007).

It is lamented according to statistical evidence that, implementation strategies of the World Bank assisted agricultural development programme policy have led to near stagnation of the agricultural sector. In the case of such agricultural development programme in Nigeria, it was revealed that the project had adopted a policy approach that excluded the intended beneficiaries from taking part in the project design, planning and implementation (Chukwuemeka & Nzewi, 2011). More so, there was the challenge of extension employees

recruitment which, it was argued that it was based on political considerations at the expense of factoring in professionalism and expertise.

It is noted that the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries has the fiduciary mandate to implement the Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' across all the 47 counties in Kenya. It is further stated that the coordination and management structures of the programme encompass the National Programme Secretariat (NPS) and County Coordination Units (CCUs) in each of the counties in Kenya. According to Republic of Kenya (2013, p 31), "The CCUs simultaneously act as the county structures for ASDS coordination in general, and more specifically as focal points for coordinating interventions pursued by programmes active within Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' programmatic focus areas. The NPS and the CCUs comprise staff sourced from key sector agencies.

A Programme Steering Committee (PSC) has been established at the national level while County Steering Committees (CSC) will oversee Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' operations in each county. The national PSC will be integrated with the anticipated ASDS Steering Committee if and when this has been instituted by the GoK." It is admitted that interests of various stakeholders relative to the Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' may conflict, a factor that is likely to compromise the implementation of the programme at county levels. Indeed, the implementation of the project has been reported to be facing hurdles. In particular, governance and institutional structures have been blamed in delaying implementation of the programme (Chipeta, Henriksen, Wairimu, Muriuki & Marani, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Agriculture is the mainstay of Kenya's economy. Millions of households in the country depend on agricultural produce especially for their subsistence uses. A report by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2015) indicated that the agriculture sector contributed 24% and 27% directly and indirectly respectively to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The report further indicates that not only is the sector the driver of Kenya's economy, but millions of Kenyans depend on it for their livelihoods. More so, there are many farmers who get significant income from agriculture-related activities. More than 80% of Kenya's population get their income from agriculture, 40% are employed by the sector, while more than 70% of the rural people derive their livelihood from agriculture-related activities. From cash crops such as tea, coffee, horticultural produce to dairy products, the agricultural sector tops the foreign earners in Kenya.

Nevertheless, according to UNEP (2015), the agriculture sector is facing key challenges. The problems facing the sector include static or declining productivity levels, under-exploitation of arable land, supply chain inefficiencies resulting from poor or inadequate storage facilities, lack of post-harvest services, poor access to markets, and indeed low value addition of agricultural produce and products exported. A previous report by UNEP (2014) indicated that the government is coming up with measures of addressing the various challenges facing the sector. For instance, the government is allocating resources towards the sector in order to boost irrigation, distribute drought-resistant seeds. Also, people are being encouraged to venture into agribusiness.

As indicated in the Kenya's national budget for financial year 2015/2016, the government has come up with a number of crucial interventions to address challenges facing the sector. These include propositions to have Ksh 3 billion for inputs subsidy, Ksh 3.1 billion for fisheries department, and Ksh 2.7 billion for the strategic grain reserves, amongst other interventions (Republic of Kenya, 2015). In spite of the fact that, the importance of the Agriculture sector has been underlined, challenges facing the sector identified, and fundamental interventions outlined, there is a knowledge gap regarding the effectiveness of the mentioned interventions. More so, it is not quite clear how successful the implementation of those initiatives has been. The Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme is one of the government interventions with the support of donor countries aimed at addressing challenges facing the agriculture sector in Kenya. The programme which was launched in 2012 is currently being implemented.

Nevertheless, as at 2015, the success of the programme is noted to be facing a number of challenges. It is reported that, the changes in the governance and institutional structures and specifically the collapse of ASCU have resulted in serious delays in the implementation of the programme. Statistically, the programme is at least one year behind schedule (Chupeta et al., 2015). More so, lack of or insufficient technical skills amongst employees working with the aforesaid projects, is an impediment to the success implementation of the same. The scarcity of empirical studies on the programme's success has not helped the situation either. The admission that the agricultural sector is still facing problems (UNEP, 2015) partly indicates that Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' which are present in all 47 counties are likely to be facing implementation challenges. It is in the view of the foregoing concern that this study was necessitated in order to address the question, "What are the factors influencing implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' in Nakuru County, Kenya?"

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine factors influencing implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

i. To assess how resource allocation influence implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.
ii. To determine how technical skills of staff influence implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Research Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant influence of resource allocation on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

H_A: There is significant influence of resource allocation on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

H_{02}: There is no significant influence of technical skills of staff on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

H_A: There is significant influence of technical skills of staff on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by a set of three theories. These include resource dependency theory, Adam's equity theory and implementation theory.

Resource Dependency Theory

The resource dependency theory was proposed by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) from the works of Emerson (1962), Blau (1964) and Jacobs (1974). It states that resources are fundamental to organization success. According to the theory, organizational resources are usually scarce and as a result, such an organization depends on the outside environment therefore creating organizational interdependence and networks (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). County governments usually lack enough resources to undertake projects and therefore rely on donors such as foreign governments. As such, the theory can be used to explain the allocation of resources marshaled by the county governments to such projects. Further, units within the county government can exert their power and influence to source for funds in case of budget shortfalls.

Adams' Equity Theory

Adams (1963) put forward the theory. The theory concerns with job motivation. Adams states that individuals seek a balance between what they put into a job and the outcomes. Adams refers to what is put into the job as inputs and the outcomes as the outputs. Whereas inputs include the skills, ability, personal sacrifice, determination, adaptability, flexibility among others, outputs comprise remuneration in form of salary, pay, perks, pension, bonuses and commissions. It also includes self-actualization needs such as recognition and reputation, training and development, sense of achievement, promotion among others. Individuals or staffs feel motivated when the inputs are fairly and adequately rewarded by outputs. As such the staff would continue inputting the same level of inputs.

Requisite skills regarded as inputs by Adams are essential in the implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects. The staffs involved in project implementation, therefore, need to adequately have such skills as project management skills, information technology skills, expertise and capacity to handle challenges without affecting negatively the outcome of the implementation process. Therefore according to the theory, the more the staff have necessary inputs in terms of technical skills then the higher the chances of being motivated and successful implementation of the project. In the same vein, rewarding fairly and adequately for what the implementers give in the project will ensure successful project implementation.

Implementation Theory

The implementation theory is part of game theory and is also a component of mechanism design. The theory lays a framework where resources have to be allocated among different agents or users but necessary information required to allocate the resources is privately held. Further, the users in possession of the information are rational and therefore maximize their utility. In such situations where information to make decisions is dispersed and privately held, it necessitates information exchange process between the users holding the information. It is after which the information exchange process ends when the decisions to allocate resources are made (Kakhbod, 2013).

The theory is based on the objectives that for any given performance metric, the determination of existence or not of an information exchange process and allocation rule to achieve optimal allocations where the agents hold information privately should be made. The theory further aims to determine methodologies for designing information exchange process and allocation rules that achieve optimal allocations where there exists an information exchange process and allocation rules. It also identifies the alternative criteria for designing- information exchange processes and allocation rules that lead to optimal allocation for situations where

there is neither information exchange processes nor the allocation rules (Kakhbod, 2013). The implementation theory outlines the importance of communication and information sharing amongst project stakeholders, where it shows the essence of the foregoing in project implementation.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

This section covers a review of empirical studies hitherto conducted in respect to resource allocation, technical skills of staff and implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme.

Resource Allocation and Implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes

The theme of resource allocation was examined (Nair, Suma & Kumar, 2012). Specifically, the authors analyzed the impact of allocation of resources by project managers on the success of software projects in India. The findings of the study indicated that project success is akin to resources allocated. The results showed that indeed resource allocation has a significant impact on the success of the software and on the company adopting the software. It was further indicated that it is the duty of project managers to ensure that resources such as time, cost are allocated efficiently in order to ensure quality outcomes of the project.

In another study, Basamh, Huq and Dahlan (2013) empirically examined project implementation success and change management practices in Government linked companies in Malaysia. The study focused on project managers, project team members, change managers and other top managers involved in a project. The findings indicated that top management allocated resources and necessary funds even during changes but the project was not in with the plan. The authors therefore emphasized that resource allocation, communication among other factors needed to be addressed in order to be compliant to the best practices and resolve certain project team expectations.

Ashuma, Nganga and Kagiri (2015) embarked on the factors that influence implementation of agricultural research projects in Kenya with a special focus on International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Descriptive research design was employed. Judgmental sampling method was used to select a sample of 32 respondents from the departments of ILRI that were used in the implementation of the research projects. The study findings indicated that donor requirements, user involvement influenced the projects. Notably, resource planning influenced the implementation of the agricultural research projects. It was concluded that for organizations that want to implement agricultural research projects ought to consider human

capital and financial resources and engaging fully the personnel that directly or indirectly influence or are influenced by the project.

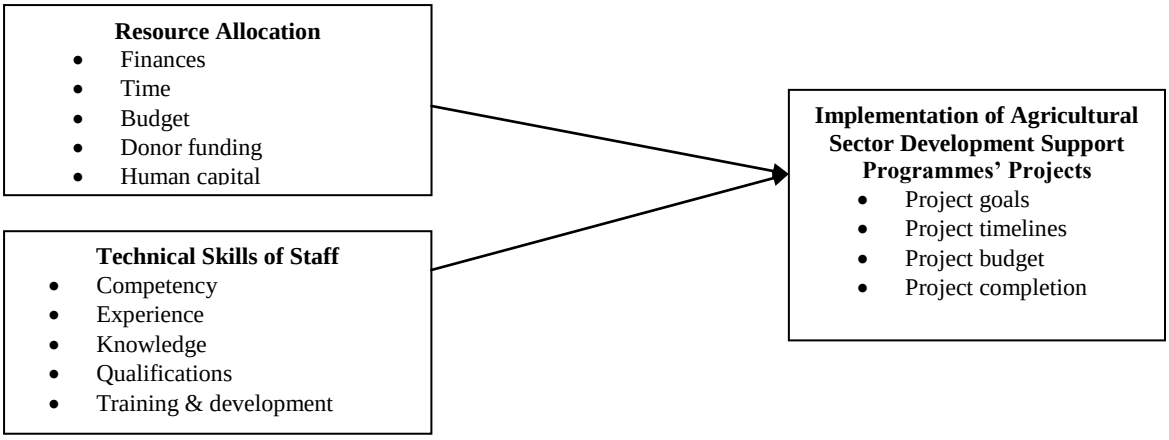
Technical Skills of Staff and Implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes

While empirically examining the critical success factors for World Bank projects, Ika, Diallo and Thuillier (2012) underscored the essence of project managers, project supervisors having requisite knowledge and skills for successful implementation of projects. In Tanzania, Kilewo and Frumence (2015) assessed the factors that hinder community participation in developing comprehensive council health plans. The authors note that implementation of decentralization strategies of health sector remain poorly achieved despite the availability of policies, guidelines and community representative organs. The lack of implementation of the strategies was attributed to poor management capacity and weak planning skills among the health facility governing committees.

The influence of organizational staff capacity on the implementation of Electronic Project Monitoring Information System (E-PMIS) was investigated (Mburugu, Mulwa & Kyalo, 2015). The study focused on the implementation of the project in public tertiary institutions in Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish the organizational internal context on the implementation of E-PMIS while focusing on the effect of staff capacity. The mixed mode approach and cross sectional research design was adopted. A sample of 210 staff selected using stratified and simple random sampling was used. The findings indicated that staff capacity largely influenced the implementation of E-PMIS in public tertiary institutions. The author emphasized on the need to upgrade staff capacity through training on new technologies in order to improve effective implementation of new electronic based systems.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



As indicated in Figure 1, each of the study variables has distinct parameters or indicators. On the theme of resource allocation, leadership style, policies and guidelines, management involvement, and commitment coordination are the indicators. Technical skills of staff constitute a construct that is operationalized by five parameters which include competency, experience, knowledge, qualifications, and also training and development. Lastly, is the Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects implementation that is manifested by project goals, project timelines, project budget, and how successful the project is completed.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design is described as the blueprint or roadmap of carrying out a research study (Kothari, 2008). It shows the procedure of conducting a research study. The present study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. This is informed by the fact that the study sought opinions of the staff working with the Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' in Nakuru County regarding various factors influencing the project implementation. The aspect of survey is attributed to the fact that the study was carried out over a specific period of time and cut across various Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects within the said county.

Target Population

The target population comprises an aggregate of individuals with similar characteristics and in respect to a particular study. This is the population to which the study findings are ultimately generalized. In this respect, therefore, all the 126 stakeholders working with Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County constituted the target population (ASDSP, 2016). The distribution of the study population constituted 43 Pyrethrum Value Chain staff, 43 Dairy Value Chain staff, 19 Fish Value Chain staff, 5 County Coordinating Unit staff, and 16 County Steering Committee members.

Sample Size

A sample is defined as a subset of the target population. A good sample, according to Kothari (2004), should be a representative of the target population. To arrive at the sample size, Nassiuma's (2008) theory of sampling was employed. The formula was used to calculate the size of the sample as outlined below.

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$ Where

n = Sample

N = Target population

C = Coefficient of variation (21% ≤ C ≤ 30%)

e = Error rate (2% ≤ *e* ≤ 5%)

Therefore,

$$n = \frac{126\ (0.25)^2}{0.25^2 + (126-1)0.025^2}$$

n = 56 respondents

The sample size, as shown, comprised of 56 respondents.

Sampling Procedure

The 56 respondents were drawn from the target population (126) using stratified random sampling method. All the 3 value chains, County Coordinating Unit, and County Steering Committee as shown in Table 1 represented 5 strata.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Departments	Study Population (N)	Ratio	Sample Size (n)
Pyrethrum Value Chain	43	0.34	19
Dairy Value Chain	43	0.34	19
Fish Value Chain	19	0.15	9
County Steering Committee	16	0.13	7
County Coordinating Unit	5	0.04	2
Total	**126**	**1.00**	**56**

The stratified sampling technique was employed. This sampling method was chosen due to the fact that there is heterogeneity in the distribution of staff in each of the aforesaid value chains, County Steering Committee (CSC), and County Coordinating Unit (CCU). This method ensured fair and equitable distribution of respondents.

Research Instruments

The study employed a set of semi-structured questionnaires to collect data from the sampled respondents. Various authors assert that questionnaires are the most appropriate data

collection tools particularly in survey studies (Olsen & George, 2004; Kothari, 2004; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). Given that the present study was a survey study and focused on a relatively large number of respondents, then the choice of questionnaires was warranted. The questionnaire contained both open and close-ended questions. In respect to study constructs (resource allocation, technical skills of staff, and implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects), the questions were on a Likert scale. The questionnaire was divided into six major sections which facilitated collection of data pertinent to respondents' background information and study objectives.

Pilot Testing

A pilot study was carried out before the main study. This piloting of the research instrument was carried out amongst a few selected staff working with Agricultural Sector Development Programmes' projects in Nyandarua County. The rationale behind the pilot study was to assess both the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

A valid instrument is asserted to be one that measures what it purports to measure. The content validity of the research questionnaire was determined through consultation with university supervisor who was deemed to be an expert in the field of research. The supervisor's opinion was deemed adequate in validating the research instrument. Reliability is a measure internal consistency of the research instrument. It is the degree to which a measurement technique or instrument can be depended upon to secure consistent results upon repeated application. Reliability was tested using the Cronbach alpha coefficient which according to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008), is the most widely used and recommended test of reliability. The reliability threshold is alpha coefficient equal to or greater than 0.7 ($\alpha \geq 0.7$). Table 2 shows the results of the reliability test.

Table 2: Reliability Test Results

Constructs	Test Items	Alpha Coefficients
Resource allocation	5	0.761
Technical skills of staff	6	0.793
Implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme	5	0.791

As indicated in Table 2, the three study constructs namely resource allocation, technical skills of staff, and implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme returned alpha coefficients greater than 0.7. This implies that the research instrument containing the aforesaid study variables was found to be reliable enough to be used in collecting data for the study.

Data Collection Procedure

The data were collected from the sampled respondents after obtaining consents and permits from the relevant authorities. A formal letter from the University of Nairobi to be allowed to go ahead with data collection was obtained. This was followed by seeking a permit from the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST) in order to be allowed to collect the data. The questionnaires were administered on the respondents by the researcher in person in order to enhance response rate. The filled questionnaires were collected from the respondents after a period of time that was mutually agreed on between the researcher and the respondents.

Data Analysis Techniques

After collecting filled questionnaires from the respondents, the data collected were validated by ensuring that the questionnaires considered in the study were filled completely and according to instructions. The data collected were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 software.

Descriptive statistics described the views of the respondents regarding project implementation and were in form of measures of distribution (frequencies and percentages), central tendencies (means) and variation (standard deviations). Inferential statistics, on the other hand, showed the relationship between the various independent variables and the dependent variable and also the extent to which the identified factors influenced implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects. In this respect, inferential statistics were in form of Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. The study results were presented in form of tables. The following multiple regression model was employed.

$Y= \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$

Where:

Y, X_1, and X_2, represent implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects, resource allocation, and technical skills of staff respectively. The beta values β_1,and $\beta 2$ represent the regression coefficients.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

A total of 56 questionnaires were issued to the sampled respondents. From this figure, 44 questionnaires which had been filled according to instructions were returned. This translated to 78.57% return rate which was deemed sufficient for the study according to Nulty (2008) who argued that response rate of 70% in survey studies is adequate.

Resource Allocation and Implementation of ASDSP Projects

The second objective of the study was to determine the extent to which resource allocation influenced implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme projects. This was measured using a Likert scale of 1 – 5 where strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4 and strongly agree = 5. The respondents were, therefore, requested to select statements that reflected their option. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Resource Allocation

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev
Finances allocated to Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects are available	3(6.8%)	2(4.5%)	0(0.0%)	15(34.1%)	24(54.5%)	4.25	1.144
Allocation of resources to projects is effected timely to avoid delay in projects implementation	5(11.4%)	19(43.2%)	7(15.9%)	9(20.5%)	4(9.1%)	2.73	1.188
The resources budget reflects the requirements for Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects' implementation	1(2.3%)	22(50%)	12(27.3%)	8(18.2%)	1(2.3%)	2.68	.883
Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects' implementation get donor funding	2(4.5%)	7(15.9%)	5(11.4%)	15(34.1%)	15(34.1%)	3.77	1.217
There is inadequate number of employees to implement Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects in our county	5(11.4%)	15(34.1%)	24(54.5%)	12(27.3%)	6(13.6%)	3.00	1.291
Composite mean for resource allocation						**3.29**	

The study findings as shown in Table 3 revealed that respondents concurred (mean ≈ 4.00; std dev > 1.000) with the opinion that finances allocated to ASDSP projects were available and that ASDSP projects' implementation obtained donor funding. Regarding the foregoing, it was observed that some respondents held extreme opinion as indicated by the relatively large standard deviation (std dev > 1.000). More so, 54.5% of respondents strongly concurred with the proposition. This could have been as a result of some stakeholders having full information regarding sources and allocation of finances while some had very little information regarding the same. Respondents were, however, non-committal (mean ≈ 3.00; std dev ≈ 1.000) to the views that allocation of resources to projects was effected timely to avoid delay in projects implementation; and that the budget reflected the requirements for Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects' implementation and that there was inadequate number of employees to implement Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects in the county (neutral = 27.3%). The fact that the respondents as shown in Table 3 were on average, indifferent regarding these propositions shows a relatively huge disparity between what stakeholders knew regarding ASDSP projects implementation. In general, respondents remained neutral (mean = 3.29) in relation to resource allocation and implementation of ASDSP projects in Nakuru County. This meant that in respect to various propositions characterizing resource allocation, respondents either agreed or disagreed on the same. The findings of this study tallied with the findings of a previous study by Ashuma et al (2015) on the factors influencing implementation of agricultural research projects in Kenya. The findings had indicated that donor requirements influenced project implementation, and that financial resources were important in project implementation.

The study further evaluated how resource allocation influenced implementation of ASDSP projects. Table 4 shows the results of correlation analysis.

Table 4: Relationship between Resource Allocation and Implementation of ASDSP projects

		Implementation of ASDSP Projects
Resource Allocation	Pearson Correlation	.751**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	n	44

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

The findings as illustrated in Table 4 indicated that the relationship between resource allocation and implementation of ASDSP projects was strong, positive and statistically significant (r =

0.751; $p < 0.01$) at 0.01 significance level. Interpretively, resource allocation largely influenced implementation of ASDSP projects. That is, the more resources allocated to ASDSP projects, the better the project implementation. It can, therefore, be deduced that it is imperative to adequately allocate resources to projects in order to ensure that smooth and successful implementation of ASDSP projects is realized. The foregoing findings as reflected in Table 4 concurred with Ashuma et al.'s (2015) emphasis that financial resources influence project implementation.

Technical Skills of Staff and Implementation of ASDSP Projects

The fourth objective of the study was to determine the extent to which technical skills of staff influenced implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme projects. This was measured using a Likert scale of 1 – 5 where strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4 and strongly agree = 5. The respondents were, therefore, requested to select statements that reflected their option. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Technical Skills of Staff

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev
There are some staff members working with Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects who are not sufficiently competent	6(13.6%)	25(56.8%)	8(18.2%)	3(6.8%)	2(4.5%)	2.32	.959
A good number of employees working with Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects are highly experienced in projects implementation	0(0.0%)	2(4.5%)	0(0.0%)	28(63.6%)	14(31.8%)	4.23	.677
Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects employees are not sufficiently knowledgeable on issues of projects implementation	7(15.9%)	19(43.2%)	1(2.3%)	10(22.7%)	7(15.9%)	2.80	1.391

Table 5...

All the staffs working with Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects have high education qualifications on projects implementation	1(2.3%)	6(13.6%)	2(4.5%)	22(50%)	13(29.5%)	3.91	1.053
Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes organize training and development of new and existing employees respectively from time to time	3(6.8%)	6(13.6%)	13(29.5%)	13(29.5%)	9(20.5%)	3.43	1.169
Composite mean of Technical skills of staff					**3.34**		

It was reported as reflected by Table 5, that respondents admitted (agree = 63.65; mean = 4.23; std dev = 0.667) that a good number of employees working with ASDSP projects were highly experienced in projects implementation and at the same time, it was refuted (disagree = 56.8%; mean = 2.32; std dev = 0.959) that some employees were not sufficiently competent. It was also agreed (mean = 3.91; std dev = 1.053) that all the staffs working with ASDSP projects had high education qualifications on projects implementation. The large standard deviation shows that though on average respondents agreed with this, there those who strongly disagreed on this proposition. It was unclear (mean ≈ 3.00; std dev > 1.000) on whether Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes organized training and development of new and existing employees respectively from time to time (neutral = 29.5%); and if ASDSP projects employees were not sufficiently knowledgeable on issues of projects implementation. Regarding technical skills of staff, in general, respondents remained indifferent (mean 3.34). The foregoing implied that there are certain statements that the respondents agreed with while there were others that they disagreed with. The findings of this study as indicated in Table 5 supported earlier findings that underscored the essence of project managers, project supervisors having requisite knowledge and skills for successful implementation of projects (Diallo & Thuillier, 2012).

In tandem with the second study objective and hypothesis, the study assessed the relationship between technical skills of staff on implementation of ASDSP projects.

Table 6: Relationship between Technical Skills of Staff and Implementation of ASDSP Projects

		Implementation of ASDSP Projects
Technical Skills of Staff	Pearson Correlation	.582**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	n	44

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

The study found as shown in Table 6 that there existed a moderately strong, positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.582$; $p < 0.01$) relationship between technical skills of staff and implementation of ASDSP projects. The results implied that technical skills of staff positively influenced implementation of ASDSP projects in that, the more technical skills possessed by staff, the better the project implementation. The significance of technical skills of staff meant that requisite technical skills were fundamental to the implementation of the ASDSP projects. The foregoing findings tally with Ika et al.'s (2012) study findings that staffs with requisite knowledge and skills are likely to enhance the success of project implementation.

Implementation of ASDSP Projects

The general objective of the study was to determine the extent to which various factors under investigation influenced implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme projects. This was measured using a Likert scale of 1 – 5 where strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4 and strongly agree = 5. The respondents were, therefore, requested to select statements that reflected their option. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Implementation of ASDSP Projects

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev
There is evaluation of Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects' implementation	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(2.3%)	19(43.2%)	24(54.5%)	4.52	.549
Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects implementation goals are often met	0(0.0%)	3(6.8%)	3(6.8%)	26(59.1%)	12(27.3%)	4.07	.789

Table 7....

Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects' implementation timelines are not always met	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(2.3%)	33(75%)	10(22.7%)	4.20	.462
Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects are implemented according to the stipulated budget	3(6.8%)	10	2(4.5%)	20(45.5%)	9(20.5%)	3.50	1.248
Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects implementation phases are completed according to set expectations	13(29.5%)	24(54.5%)	4(9.1%)	1(2.3%)	2(4.5%)	1.98	.952
Composite mean for project implementation						**3.65**	

It was strongly agreed (54.5%) as shown in Table 7 that there was evaluation of Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects' implementation (mean = 4.52; std dev = 0.549). It was further admitted (mean ≈ 4.00; std dev < 1.000) that ASDSP projects' implementation goals were often met (agree = 59.1%); and that ASDSP projects' implementation timeliness were not always met (agree = 75%). This was in spite of Nair et al.'s (2012) emphasis that it is the duty of project managers to ensure that resources such as time, cost are allocated efficiently in order to ensure quality outcomes of the project. Respondents further agreed (agree = 45.5%; mean = 3.50; std dev = 1.248) that ASDSP projects were implemented according to the stipulated budget. It was disagreed (disagree = 54.5%; mean = 1.98; std dev = 0.952) that ASDSP projects implementation phases were completed according to set expectations. The study also found that respondents on average agreed (mean = 3.65) with all propositions touching on project implementation. This might have been as a result of the statements being largely affirmative in respect to implementation of ASDS projects.

Hypotheses Testing

The study was guided by a set of two null hypotheses.

H_{01}: There is no significant influence of resource allocation on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

H_{02}: There is no significant influence of technical skills of staff on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes' projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance ($p < 0.05$). The results of multiple regression analysis were used to test the null hypotheses. Table 8 presents the results.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.387	.479		-.808	.424
	Resource Allocation	.533	.076	.579	6.995	.000
	Technical Skills of Staff	.344	.104	.326	3.301	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of ASDSP Projects

As indicated in Table 8, the extent to which resource allocation and technical skills of staff influenced implementation of ASDSP varied. It is noted that the influence of resource allocation, and technical skills of staff were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The findings led to the rejection of the first, and second hypotheses.

In addition, it was noted that 0.533 and 0.344 unit changes in resource allocation and technical skills of staff respectively in addition to -0.387 constant resulted in 1 unit change in implementation of ASDSP projects. Therefore, resource allocation ($\beta = 0.533$) and technical skills of staff ($\beta = 0.344$) respectively were fundamental factors that influenced ASDSP project implementation. As such, policy makers of ASDSP projects should prioritize the issue of resource allocation in order to ensure that projects are implemented successfully.

SUMMARY

It was noted that finances allocated to ASDSP projects were available and that ASDSP projects' implementation obtained donor funding. It, however, remained inconclusive whether the allocation of resources to projects was effected timely to avoid delay in projects implementation. Furthermore, it was not clear whether the resources budget reflected the requirements ASDSP project's implementation and whether there was inadequate number of employees to implement ASDSP projects in the county. The findings further indicated that the relationship between resource allocation and implementation of ASDSP projects was strong, positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.751$; $p < 0.01$) at 0.01 significance level.

The study ascertained that a good number of employees working with ASDSP projects were highly experienced in projects implementation and that all the staffs working with ASDSP projects had high education qualifications on projects implementation. It was, nevertheless, not clear if there were some staff members working with ASDSP projects that were not sufficiently competent and if ASDSP projects employees were not sufficiently knowledgeable on issues of projects implementation. It was also not clear whether ASDSP organized training and development of new and existing employees respectively from time to time. The study found that there existed a moderately strong, positive and statistically significant ($r = 0.582$; $p < 0.01$) relationship between technical skills of staff and implementation of ASDSP projects.

The study further deduced that there was evaluation of implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects in Nakuru County. It was further noted that ASDSP projects' implementation goals were often met and that ASDSP projects' implementation timeliness were not always met. The study further found that ASDSP projects were implemented according to the stipulated budget. However, it was disputed that ASDSP projects implementation phases were completed according to set expectations.

CONCLUSIONS

The existence and allocation of resources is important for project implementation. The study inferred that resource allocation positively and largely influenced implementation of ASDSP projects. Though resource allocation was crucially important in project implementation, it was not clear whether the project budget reflected the requirements of ASDSP project's implementation, it was deduced that allocation of resources to projects was timely in order to avoid projects implementation delays. It is further inferred that there is enough number of employees needed to implement ASDSP projects in the Nakuru County.

The study concluded that a significant number of employees working with ASDSP projects were highly experienced in project implementation. The staff in addition, had relatively high education qualifications with only very few who had secondary school certificate. From the observations, it was concluded that members of County Coordinating Unit, and County Steering Committee were highly educated. Technical skills of staffs were inferred to be imperative for the success of ASDSP project implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is also recommended that resources should not only be sufficient, but they should be sourced and allocated to respective ASDSP projects timely. It is advised that the crafters of the budget should address the requirements for Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes'

projects' implementation. More so, there should be a provision for adequate number of employees to implement Agricultural Sector Development Support programmes' projects.

It is further recommended that in order to ensure successful implementation of ASDSP projects, sufficiently competent and knowledgeable staff should be involved in the implementation process. The ASDSP should continuously build capacity of the existing employees through training and development.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study faced a couple of limitations. Some of the sampled respondents were reluctant to participate in the study where in some instances respondents completely rejected to divulge the requisite information. There was the risk of correcting inaccurate information since some stakeholders lamented that they were not conversant with certain issues relating to Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes projects. Regarding the first challenge the researcher assured respondents that the study was for academic purpose and that their identity would be concealed. They were further cautioned against indicating their names on the questionnaire. More so the importance of the study to Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes was explained to respondents. Some respondents failed to fully understand and interpret the questions contained in the research instrument. This limitation was addressed by taking through the respondents who found it quite difficult to understand the questions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The study suggested areas in relation to ASDSP projects that can be carried out in future. These include studies on the following topics:

i. Effect of devolution on implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes projects in Kenya
ii. The role of national and county governments in implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes projects
iii. The influence of donors in implementation of Agricultural Sector Development Support Programmes project in Kenya

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