



**ROLE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRO – PRODUCE VALUE
ADDITION PROJECTS IN KISUMU COUNTY - KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The overall objective of this study was to establish role of project management practices on implementation of agro-produce value addition projects in Kisumu county - Kenya. The specific objectives of the study included: to determine the effect of Quality Management on implementation; to establish the effect of cost Management; to examine the effect of stakeholder participation and to determine the effect of change management on the implementation of agro – produce value addition projects in Kisumu County. The study adopted a correlational survey design. The target population for the study constituted 100 workers stationed in value addition projects in Kisumu County. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 100 respondents for the study. Data collection for the study was done using a structured questionnaire. The collected data was analyzed by generating frequencies and percentages. Means and standard deviations were also generated. Correlation analysis was undertaken to establish relationships between and among variables while regression analysis was undertaken to show the strength and direction of relationships among variables. The findings were presented using tables and figures. The study findings indicated that there is a positive and significant correlation between quality management, cost management, stakeholder participation and change management on the implementation of agro-value addition projects in Kisumu County. The unstandardized coefficients of the regression analysis showed that quality management(0.752) has the greatest effect on implementation of agro-value addition projects in Kisumu County, followed by stakeholder participation(0.562), then change management(0.490) and the least is cost management (0.305). The coefficient of determination was 0.553 meaning that quality management, cost management, stakeholder participation and change management all together accounts for 55.3% of implementation of agro-produce value addition projects in Kisumu County. The study concludes that more workers need to be involved in decision making in quality matters and monitoring and evaluation. Further, there is need to enhance the capacity of workers in embracing technological change to improve production processes. The study therefore recommends inclusion of workers in decision making and capacity building to improve workers' capabilities during implementation of agro-value addition projects in Kisumu County.

Key Words: Quality Management, Cost Management, Stakeholder Participation, Change Management

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of project management and its concepts are increasing by the day. The reason for the increase is the trickle down effects realized from successful projects and with the continuous rise in the local and global social problems that really need the attention of the public sector (Pells, 2021). Thus, successful implementation of projects is a topic of discussion not only to academicians and practitioners, but also to governments willing to uplift the economic lives of its people. According to (X, Wu, L, & Skitmore, 2014) the concept of project management practices has been applied since ancient times. However, there is no documentation on methodologies or techniques used until mid-1950s, which saw emergence of new ideas, which resulted in modern project management practices tools. Since then, the concept of modern project management practices has gained much admiration and wide acceptance both in the private and public sectors.

However, the idea of project management practices has remained elusive in many organizations both in the developed and developing countries. In spite of their experience, many organizations still struggle to translate project management practices into action plans to enable organization achieve their strategic objectives successfully. According to (PMI, 2013) project management is “an application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements. (S & M, 2013) further expound the definition that project management practices are those fundamental issues inherent in the project, and which must be maintained for an efficient and effective implementation.

Many developed countries have invested in agricultural projects. Mrema, Baker and Kahan (2008) reveal that in some developed countries like U.S.A the government through the ministry of agriculture places a high emphasis on the performance of the agricultural project. In the United Kingdom, the government policy on agriculture reforms was aimed upon basic

research which provides evidence - based recommendations drawn from the holistic analysis of contemporary top project performance in different agricultural sectors (Balckstock, et al., 2007).

Africa, as part of the developing nations, has a myriad of project management challenges both technical and non-technical. Primarily, there is a dearth of empirical studies on the success or otherwise of project management in Africa, thus leaving no documentation on the best practices in that field. Secondly, whilst projects in general have their challenges regarding implementation and consequently success, projects face unique set of problems and challenges. For example, the very nature of project funding in Africa poses a significant challenge for governments as well as non-governmental agencies. The funding provided by donors for development projects is so extensive until referred to as development partners, a reflection of how dependent Africa’s development is on donor support (Ofori, 2006)

Many organizations and companies in Kenya are undertaking huge projects that require the hands of skilled professionals. The devolved system of Government in Kenya has also increased the implementation of development projects at the grassroots. This has seen the demand for local skills in project management rise as these companies set up their infrastructure (Muli, 2013). The Government on the other hand, has established numerous projects aimed at improving the livelihoods of its citizens in specific areas where development project necessitated by the needs of citizens outlined as part of the project checklist measuring the outputs of successful completion of projects (Nalinya, 2018).

Kenya Vision 2030 identifies agriculture as a key sector through which annual potential economic growth rates of 10 percent. In the Vision, smallholder agriculture should transform from subsistence activities, low productivity to value addition, for ‘an innovative, commercially-oriented, internationally competitive and modern agricultural

sector. According to the National Agribusiness strategy, the global exposure could provide an opportunity to international standards and develop highly valued food products that fetch a higher income (Government of Kenya, 2012). In Kenya, the majority of agricultural commodities are marketed in their raw forms, hence losing the opportunities for higher earnings and generating employment.

Statement of the Problem

Kisumu County favourable environmental and climatic conditions for diverse food production including rice, sugarcane, cotton, cereals such as maize, beans and sorghum, and an expansive shoreline of the Lake Victoria and rivers. Despite this potential, the county performs dismally in the sector of Crop, Livestock, fish production and Value Addition (County, 2018). Seventy one percent (71%) of Households in Kisumu County are found to be moderately or severely food insecure and in addition, limited diversity in the dietary norms is of equal measure; the way to move the county out of such a predicament is by encouraging food production to alleviate food insecurity (Obange, 2018). Consequently, Kisumu County is a deficient food producer and food processor erin the importation of its food from various Counties in Kenya, other countries such as Tanzania and Uganda and most recently fish from beaches outside Kisumu County and even China (Opiyo, 2018).

The lack of effectual implementation of agro-produce value addition projects in Kisumu County raises concerns about how government policies and projects can enhance citizens' lives, particularly since 95% of delivery stems from these projects (National Audit Office, 2013). There seems to be no evidence in large magnitudes of value addition projects reducing food insecurity in the county, creating employment, or entering new frontiers. There is therefore a growing need to look into the factors that are contributing to this ineffectiveness, which drives the focus of this study to assess the effect Project Management Practices (PMPs) on implementation of Agro-value added projects. So

far, there is no comprehensive study conducted to investigate the effect PMPs on implementation of agro value addition in Kisumu County. There is currently no substantial evidence showing that value addition initiatives have effectively reduced food insecurity, created jobs, or expanded market access. This demonstrates a pressing need to investigate the factors contributing to the inefficacy of these projects, guiding this study's focus on assessing the impact of Project Management Practices (PMPs) on the implementation of agro-value added projects. Currently, no comprehensive research has been conducted to explore the influence of PMPs on these initiatives in Kisumu County, making this study a crucial endeavor to address the existing gaps. This research was therefore a modest attempt to explore the effect of project management practices on implementation of agro-value addition projects in Kisumu County.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate the role of Project Management Practices on implementation of agro-produce value addition projects Kisumu County. The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- To determine the role of Quality Management on implementation of Agro-produce Value addition projects in Kisumu County.
- To establish the role of Cost Management on implementation of Agro-produce Value addition projects in Kisumu County.
- To examine the role of Stakeholder Participation on implementation of Agro-produce Value addition projects in Kisumu County.
- To determine the role of Change Management on implementation of Agro-produce Value addition projects in Kisumu County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality Improvement Theory

Deming (1986) was one of the pioneer quality gurus whose works significantly expended and transformed the concept of quality from a mere

technical system to a broader body of knowledge. Deming's Quality Improvement Theory offers vast lessons to enterprises on how to eliminate poor quality control issues through effective managerial techniques. According to (Kerzner, 2017) Deming deeply believed that eighty five percent (85%) of all quality problems in an organization were attributable to management and that quality improvement could only be stimulated through the management's action to change the process. He further believed workers at the operating level could solve the latter fifteen percent of the quality problems.

Deming (1986) used statistical sampling to improve quality and introduced the concept of the Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) Cycle. The PDCA is an iterative, four-stage approach for continually improving processes, products or services, and for resolving problems. It involves systematically testing possible solutions, assessing the results, and implementing the ones that have shown to work.

Kaizen Costing System

The principle behind Kaizen Costing application is on achieving small, gradual but continuous improvements in the production process at minimal cost (Rof, 2012). Kaizen Costing ensures that products meets or exceeds customer demands for 'quality, functionality, and prices' in order to sustain the product's competitiveness. This can be achieved through a sequential elimination of all the processes that would increase the product's cost of production without a corresponding increase in value. The philosophy emphasizes continuous improvement to a process through small incremental amounts, rather than through large innovations. Unlike target costing, Kaizen costing is applied during the production stage of the product life cycle. According to Adeniji (2011), Kaizen costing is the process of continuous improvement, encouraging constant reductions by tightening the 'standard'. The cost reduction objective is to set for each process, and then adopt value analysis and Value engineering to achieve the set objective. With target costing, the focus is on the product, and cost

reductions are achieved primarily through product design. This theory supports variable two.

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, as propounded by Edward Freeman, is a theory of organizational management and business ethics that addresses morals and values in managing an organization. Stakeholder theory promotes a practical, efficient, effective, and ethical way to manage organizations in a highly complex and turbulent environment (E, 1984). It is a practical theory because all firms have to manage stakeholders. It is efficient because well-treated stakeholders tend to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviors towards the organization, such as sharing valuable information (all stakeholders), buying more products or services (customers), providing tax breaks or other incentives (communities), providing better financial terms (financiers), buying more stock (shareholders), or working hard and remaining loyal to the organization, even during difficult times (employees). This theory is effective, when applied, because it harnesses the energy of stakeholders towards the fulfillment of the organization's goals. It is useful in a complex and turbulent environment because firms that manage for stakeholders have better information upon which to base their decisions and, because they are attractive to other market participants, they have a degree of strategic flexibility that is not available to competitors that do not manage for stakeholders (Harission & Wicks, 2007).

Kurt Lewin's Change Theory

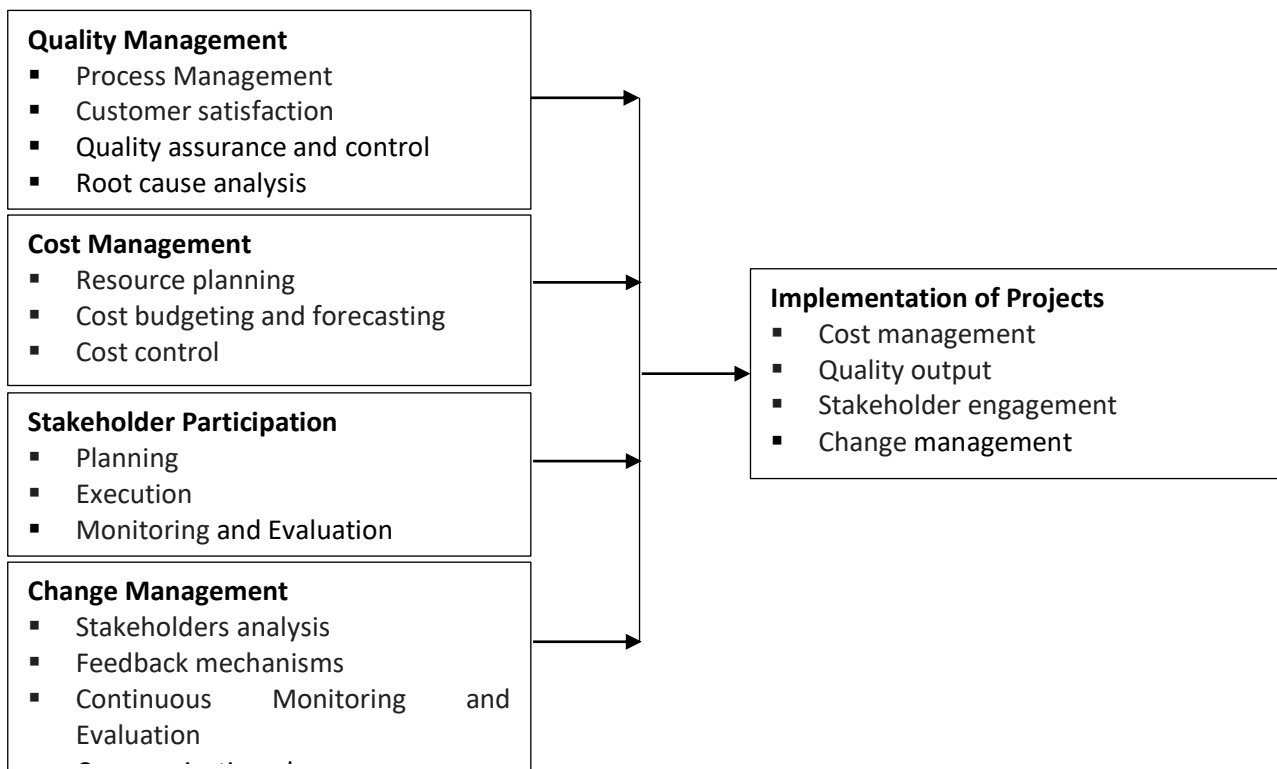
As one of the fathers of change management, Kurt Lewin is widely known for his unfreeze-change-refreeze or "change as three steps" (CATS) theory. The theory suggests that changing the current state to the required state calls for introducing changes in an organization. According to this theory, an organization must go through three different phases when implementing changes; unfreeze, transitional and freeze stages. During the unfreeze phase, individuals recognize that for the betterment of the organization, things cannot continue the way

they are and involved in preparation to migrate from the existing comfort zone into a situation where making change desirable (Uriarte, 2008).

The second phase indicates that the firm has to go into a transitional period once upon initiation of change. In this phase, the success of the change process requires sufficient leadership and constant reassurance (Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish, &

Difunzo, 2014). The freezing phase involves changes of conduct. This is both informally and formally within the organization and people expected to follow the newly established strategies in accordance with the change development. During change process in an organization, the staff resistance (Stanely , Meyer, & Topolnytsky, 2005) and openness to change are two features that play a significant role (Wanberg & Banas, 2000).

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

A study done by Fernandes, Ward, & Araujo (2013) was aimed at identifying valuable project management practices. Their research employed a mixed-methods approach to understand practitioners' perceptions of the most effective PM practices for enhancing project performance. The study began with 30 interviews with project management professionals in Portugal, followed by a global survey that yielded 793 completed questionnaires from practitioners across 75 countries. The study revealed that the top 20 most

useful tools and techniques were predominantly well-established and widely used methods, including progress reports, requirements analysis, progress meetings, risk identification, and project scope statements. These top-ranked PM practices spanned the entire project lifecycle, from initiation to closure, with a particular emphasis on planning tools and techniques. Notably, the knowledge areas of scope, time, risk, communication, and integration were highly relevant, each represented by at least three practices within the top 20.

Hodžić & Hrůzová, (2018) conducted a study examining project management practices in the Czech Republic, aiming to systematically analyze the current state of the field. Their research focused on four key areas: stakeholder demands, project management characteristics, the utilization of project management methods, and respondent profiles. Employing both primary and secondary data, the study utilized an explanatory approach. Primary data was gathered through a 2016 online cross-sectional survey of Czech organizations, comprising four sections aligned with the research areas. The survey, combining quantitative and qualitative elements, consisted of 20 questions and yielded 118 usable responses from a random but expert sample of project management professionals. Secondary data, comprising similar surveys from the preceding five years, was used for comparative analysis, enriching the study's theoretical foundation. Results revealed a strong relationship between project success definition, success factors, stakeholder demands, and problematic areas, highlighting the complex nature of project management. A poorly defined project scope emerged as a major obstacle impacting project success. The study concluded with recommendations for enhancing project management in the Czech Republic, including the development of a project governance framework and increased adoption of existing project management methodologies. These improvements, the authors argue, would not only optimize project management but also foster entrepreneurship and enable innovative start ups to compete effectively in the market.

(Gitonga, 2018) Conducted a study on project management practices and implementation of projects in manufacturing companies in Nairobi County. The study's specific objectives were to examine how stakeholder participation, leadership support, communication and resource allocation influenced project implementation. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 49 manufacturing companies from

the industrial area of Nairobi City County, identified through stratified sampling and use of simple random sampling method to select the respondents. The study established a positive and significant relationship between stakeholder participation, leadership support, communication and resource allocation and project implementation.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a correlational research design. The target population for this study comprised of eight (8) agro-value addition projects that have one hundred and thirty nine (139) ongoing projects identified by the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation, Livestock and Fisheries in the Kisumu County Government.

This study adopted the use of purposive sampling to select the respondents.

From the entire target population of one hundred and thirty nine (139) projects, one hundred (100) respondents were subjected to the study.

Two main data collection instruments for the study were questionnaires and interview guides.

The data collection instruments was pre-tested on 10 respondents, which represented 10% of the sample size.

The study adopted content validity by way of reviewing the instruments, where assistance was sought from my academic supervisor.

This study used the test-retest method at intervals thus ensuring reliability of the instruments.

Data editing was undertaken by looking at the instrument of data collection, (in this case questionnaire) and ensuring the data is all legible and complete, if not the researcher clarified with the respondents. The researcher coded the data and keyed it in spreadsheets using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS V.26) for analysis.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

A total of 100 questionnaires were administered for the study. Results indicated that out of the 100 questionnaires administered, a total of 81 were returned giving an overall response rate was found to be 81% which is above average. According to

Kothari (2004), a response rate of 50% and above is adequate and acceptable for data analysis.

Quality Management

The study sought to examine the extent to which respondents agreed with the statements below concerning quality management within the organizations. The results are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Quality Management

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Workers are well trained on quality matters to enhance efficiency.	6	29	28	10	8	2.81	1.074
Management involves workers on decision making on quality matters.	2	13	30	25	11	3.37	0.993
High quality administrative systems are in place to support project efficiency.	0	16	30	25	10	3.36	0.940
Project provides quality and pocket friendly products to customers	6	7	35	29	4	3.22	0.949
Project ensures products meets customers' expectations through feedback	4	22	39	10	6	2.90	0.943
Production ensures fewer defects and less wastage	10	30	26	10	5	2.63	1.054
There is continuous monitoring and improvement of quality systems and procedures to enhance performance	8	38	26	5	4	2.49	0.937
There is continuous root cause analysis of the various issues that may arise	4	26	20	19	12	3.11	1.162

The results indicate that workers are moderately well-trained on quality matters, with a mean score of 2.81 out of 5. While 6 respondents strongly agreed that workers are well-trained, 10 respondents disagreed, and 8 strongly disagreed. This suggests that there is room for improvement in providing workers with adequate training on quality matters to enhance efficiency. Moreover, the results show that management involvement of workers in decision-making on quality matters is

limited, with a mean score of 3.37 out of 5. Only 2 respondents strongly agreed that management involves workers in decision-making, while 25 respondents disagreed, and 11 strongly disagreed.

Cost Management

The study sought to establish the respondent's level of agreement with the statements below concerning cost management. The results are as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Cost Management

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Measures are taken to determine cost elements of manpower	4	15	36	25	1	3.05	.865
Measures are taken to determine cost elements of materials	2	23	36	16	4	2.96	.887
Budgeting done before sourcing for manpower	2	32	37	6	4	2.64	1.064
Budgeting done before sourcing for materials	14	21	28	16	2	2.93	.997
Cost controls performed at every stage to avoid over expenditure	6	19	37	13	6	2.42	1.171

The survey results indicate that organizations are taking measures to determine the cost elements of manpower and materials. However, the level of agreement varies between the two. For manpower, 4 respondents strongly agree, 15 agree, 36 are neutral, 25 disagree, and 1 strongly disagrees, resulting in a mean score of 3.05 and a standard deviation of 0.865. In contrast, for materials, 2 respondents strongly agree, 23 agree, 36 are neutral, 16 disagree, and 4 strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 0.887. These results suggest that organizations are more focused on determining the cost elements of manpower than materials. This may be due to the fact that manpower costs are often more significant and complex to manage, requiring more attention and effort to control.

The survey also examined the budgeting practices within organizations. The results show that budgeting is done before sourcing for manpower and materials, but the level of agreement differs between the two. For manpower, 2 respondents strongly agree, 32 agree, 37 are neutral, 6 disagree, and 4 strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 2.64 and a standard deviation of 1.064. In contrast, for materials, 14 respondents strongly agree, 21

agree, 28 are neutral, 16 disagree, and 2 strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 2.93 and a standard deviation of 0.997. These results indicate that organizations are more likely to budget before sourcing for materials than manpower. This may be due to the fact that material costs are often more predictable and easier to manage, allowing for more effective budgeting.

Finally, the survey assessed the cost control measures in place within organizations. The results show that cost controls are performed at every stage to avoid over-expenditure, but the level of agreement is relatively low. 6 respondents strongly agree, 19 agree, 37 are neutral, 13 disagree, and 6 strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 2.42 and a standard deviation of 1.171. These results suggest that organizations are not as effective in controlling costs as they are in determining cost elements and budgeting. This may be due to the lack of robust cost control systems or inadequate monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Stakeholder Participation

The study sought to find out the effect of stakeholder participation on performance of organizations.

Table 3: Stakeholder Participation

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stakeholders analysis is undertaken to understand their expectation and interests	15	39	13	6	8	2.42	1.171
Stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the project at every stage	23	40	11	4	3	2.06	.979
There is regular communication to and among project stakeholders	16	46	4	13	2	2.25	1.031
Stakeholders receive adequate information about project performance	27	34	11	4	5	2.09	1.109
Stakeholders feedback is taken periodically through various means	16	42	16	2	5	2.23	1.003
Stakeholders are actively engaged in monitoring and evaluation	16	40	16	8	1	2.23	.926
Engagement of stakeholders promotes their satisfaction, ownership and sustainability of outcomes.	20	45	10	5	1	2.04	.858

The statement "There is regular communication to and among project stakeholders" received a mean score of 2.25, with 16 respondents strongly agreeing and 46 agreeing. This suggests that firms are making an effort to communicate regularly with stakeholders. However, the standard deviation of 1.031 indicates that there is some variation in the responses, suggesting that not all firms are equally effective in communicating with stakeholders.

The statement "Stakeholders receive adequate information about project performance" received a mean score of 2.09, with 27 respondents strongly agreeing and 34 agreeing. This suggests that firms are providing stakeholders with adequate information about project performance. However, the standard deviation of 1.109 indicates that there is some variation in the responses, suggesting that not all firms are equally effective in providing information.

The statement "Stakeholders feedback is taken periodically through various means" received a

mean score of 2.23, with 16 respondents strongly agreeing and 42 agreeing. This suggests that firms are making an effort to solicit feedback from stakeholders. The standard deviation of 1.003 indicates that there is some variation in the responses, suggesting that not all firms are equally effective in soliciting feedback.

The statement "Stakeholders are actively engaged in monitoring and evaluation" received a mean score of 2.23, with 16 respondents strongly agreeing and 40 agreeing. This suggests that firms are actively engaging stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation process. The low standard deviation of 0.926 indicates that there is a high level of consistency in the responses, suggesting that firms are generally effective in engaging stakeholders.

Finally, the last statement that "Engagement of stakeholders promotes their satisfaction, ownership and sustainability of outcomes" received a mean score of 2.04, with 20 respondents strongly

agreeing and 45 agreeing. This suggests that firms believe that stakeholder engagement is essential for promoting satisfaction, ownership, and sustainability of outcomes. The low standard deviation of 0.858 indicates that there is a high level of consistency in the responses, suggesting that

firms are generally in agreement on the importance of stakeholder engagement.

Change Management

The study sought to find out the respondent's level of agreement with the statements below on change management. The results are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Change Management

	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is commitment by top management to change initiatives	13	40	19	8	1	2.31	.903
Employee engagement is measured to gauge employees sentiment throughout the change process	15	49	11	4	2	2.12	.857
There is clear and consistent communication of the reasons for change to employees and stakeholders	12	35	22	10	2	2.44	.975
There is training and development to employees and measurement of competency levels at various stages of a change process	13	38	17	10	3	2.41	1.022
The culture in the project help the workers to embrace change	5	36	27	8	5	2.65	.964
The culture in the project facilitate conflict resolution arising from change initiatives	12	30	26	10	3	2.53	1.013
There is measurement of the speed and extent to which employees adopt new technologies and processes	0	20	47	10	4	2.98	.758

The survey results above reveals that top management commitment to change initiatives is a significant area of strength, with 53 respondents (13 strongly agreeing and 40 agreeing) indicating that senior leaders are dedicated to driving change. This is reflected in a mean score of 2.31, which suggests a positive perception of top management's commitment. However, the standard deviation of 0.903 indicates some variability in responses, suggesting that not all employees share the same

level of confidence in their leaders' commitment to change.

Measuring employee engagement is essential to gauge sentiment throughout the change process. The survey results indicate that 64 respondents (15 strongly agreeing and 49 agreeing) believe that employee engagement is measured effectively. The mean score of 2.12 and standard deviation of 0.857 suggest a positive perception of employee engagement measurement, with most employees feeling that their sentiments are being considered.

Similarly, clear and consistent communication of the reasons for change is vital to ensure that employees and stakeholders understand the rationale behind change initiatives. While 47 respondents (12 strongly agreeing and 35 agreeing) believe that communication is effective, the mean score of 2.44 and standard deviation of 0.975 suggest some room for improvement. The fact that 22 respondents are neutral and 10 disagree or strongly disagree highlights the need for more effective communication strategies.

Providing training and development opportunities to employees is critical to equip them with the necessary skills to adapt to change. The survey results indicate that 51 respondents (13 strongly agreeing and 38 agreeing) believe that training and development are adequate. The mean score of 2.41 and standard deviation of 1.022 suggest a generally positive perception of training and development initiatives.

The culture within a project can either facilitate or hinder change initiatives. The survey results reveal that 41 respondents (5 strongly agreeing and 36 agreeing) believe that the culture helps workers to embrace change. However, the mean score of 2.65 and standard deviation of 0.964 suggest that there is room for improvement in creating a culture that supports change. Similarly, while 42 respondents (12 strongly agreeing and 30 agreeing) believe that the culture facilitates conflict resolution, the mean

score of 2.53 and standard deviation of 1.013 highlight the need for more effective conflict resolution mechanisms.

Finally, measuring the speed and extent to which employees adopt new technologies and processes is essential to evaluate the success of change initiatives. However, the survey results indicate that this is an area of weakness, with 0 respondents strongly agreeing and only 20 agreeing that this is done effectively. The mean score of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.758 suggest a significant gap in measuring employee adoption of new technologies and processes.

Correlation Analysis

The study used Pearson's product moment of correlation to test the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Quality Management was found to be positive and significantly related to the implementation of the projects ($r = 0.634$, $p\text{-value}=0.000<0.05$). Cost Management was found to be positive and significantly related to the implementation of the projects ($r = 0.300$, $p\text{-value}=0.041<0.05$). Stakeholder participation was found to be positive and significantly related to implementation the projects ($r = 0.410$, $p\text{-value}=0.006<0.05$). Change management was found to be positive and significantly related to the implementation of the projects y ($r = 0.425$, $p\text{-value}=0.003<0.05$) as indicted in table 5.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis Results

		Quality management	Cost management	Stakeholder participation	Change management
Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.634**	.300*	.410*	.425*
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.041	.006	.003
	N	47	47	44	47

Regression Analysis

Linear regression analysis was carried out to determine the influence of the independent variables (quality management cost management, stakeholder participation and change management) on the dependent variable (implementation of

agro-value addition projects). The study presented R square which is a statistical measure of the closeness of the observed data to the fitted regression line. The results are presented on Tables 6, 7 and 8.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.315	.101		3.112	.003
	Quality management	.752	.139	.651	5.403	.000
	Cost management,	.305	.143	.235	2.127	.001
	Stakeholder participation	.562	.136	.402	4.135	.000
	Change management.	.490	.126	.347	3.895	.000

Dependent Variable: Implementation of Agro-produce value addition projects

Source: Survey Data, (2024)

The regression model fit becomes:

$$= 0.315 + 0.752QM + 0.305CM + 0.562SP + 0.490CM$$

The constant term has a value of 0.315 with a significance level of 0.003. This suggests that when all independent variables (quality management, cost management, stakeholder participation, and change management) are held constant, the baseline level of implementation of agro-produce value addition projects is approximately 0.315. The significant p-value indicates that this is a reliable estimate.

The coefficient for quality management is 0.752, with a standard error of 0.139 and a significance level of 0.000. This high coefficient suggests that a one-unit increase in quality management practices is associated with a 0.752 increase in the implementation of agro-produce value addition projects. The standardized beta of 0.651 implies that quality management has the strongest impact compared to other factors, making it a critical area for organizations to focus on to improve project implementation.

The unstandardized coefficient for cost management is 0.305, with a standard error of 0.143 and a significance level of 0.001. This signifies that for each unit increase in cost management, implementation is expected to rise by 0.305 units, which is noteworthy, albeit less impactful than quality management. The standardized beta of

0.235 indicates that while important, its influence is relatively lower in comparison to quality management. Similarly, the coefficient for stakeholder participation is 0.562 with a standard error of 0.136 and a significance level of 0.000. This shows that a heightened level of stakeholder engagement leads to a robust increase of 0.562 in the implementation of projects. The standardized beta of 0.402 implies that stakeholder participation is the second most important influence after quality management.

Lastly, change management has a coefficient of 0.490, a standard error of 0.126, and a significance level of 0.000. This suggests that improving change management practices could lead to a 0.490 enhancement in project implementation. Its standardized beta is 0.347, indicating that it plays a significant but lesser role compared to the other factors.

The beta coefficients indicate the relative effect of each independent variable (quality management, cost management, stakeholder participation and change management.) in influencing the dependent variable (implementation of agro value addition projects). Quality management is the most important variable in implementation of agro-value addition projects ($\beta=0.651$), followed by stakeholder participation ($\beta=0.402$), then change management ($\beta=0.347$) and the least is cost management ($\beta=0.235$).

Table 7: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.743	.553	.496	.75706

Source: Survey Data, (2024)

- Predictors: (Constant), Quality management, Cost management, Stakeholder participation and Change management.
- Dependent variable: Implementation of projects

Model and Performance Indicators:

The results above show that in the model, the R value of 0.743 indicates a strong positive correlation between the independent variables (Quality Management, Cost Management, Stakeholder Participation, and Change Management) and the dependent variable (Implementation of Projects). This suggests that as these predictors improve, so does the implementation of projects.

The R Square value was 0.553 meaning that approximately 55.3% of the variance in project implementation can be explained by the independent variables in the model. This level of explanation reflects a moderate level of predictive power of the model. The adjusted R square was at 0.496, and it accounts for the number of predictors

in the model and provides a more stringent measure of fit. This indicates that, after adjusting for the number of predictors, roughly 49.6% of the variance in project implementation remains explained by the independent factors. The slight decrease from R Square suggests that while the model reasonably explain the data, there might still be more other factors not included in this analysis.

The Standard Error stands at 0.75706, which quantifies the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line. A lower standard error indicates better fit, implying this model provides a good prediction of project implementation outcomes.

The ANOVA table in Table 8 indicates that the overall model was a good fit since (F-value=8.060 and p-value=0.000<0.05).

Table 8: ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.477	4	4.619	8.060	.000
	Residual	22.352	39	.573		
	Total	40.829	43			

Source: Survey Data, (2024)

- Dependent Variable: Implementation of Agro-value addition projects
- Predictors: (Constant), Quality management, Cost management, Stakeholder participation and Change management.

In the Anova table above, the P-value indicates the probability that the observed relationship is due to chance. A lower p-value like in the table above (typically less than 0.05) suggests that the predictors significantly explain the variance in the dependent variable. Although the ANOVA table does not provide the individual contributions of

each predictor, the significance of the overall model suggests that at least one of the included factors (quality management, cost management, stakeholder participation, and change management) must be effectively enhancing the project's implementation success.

Discussion of the Findings

Quality Management

The study established that the projects workers were well trained on quality matters to enhance efficiency. However, interview responses indicated that apart from the training, the management did not fully involve workers on decision making on quality matters. Involving the workers in decision making is necessary to enable those exploring superior approaches during process of transformation of inputs into outputs in an endless improvement loop as recommended by Butler, Szweyczewsk and Sweeny (2018). Also, the responses indicated that project efficiency and ensuring products are of good quality and are pocket friendly was not highly supported by management. The findings in this study agreed with the empirical works of Mizanbekova, *et al* (2017) who investigated the improvement of quality management systems to enhance the competitiveness of agricultural production, specifically focusing on food quality control challenges in transition economies particularly focusing on agricultural enterprises in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The study compared the effectiveness of various quality management elements to identify the most suitable components for a comprehensive quality management system in agricultural food production within transition economies and the findings indicated that inadequate state regulation in Kazakhstan and other countries with economies in transition (CEIT) led to the prominence of raw material, energy-intensive, and technologically-driven industries, while simultaneously weakening high-value production capabilities. Moreover, the study highlighted the dynamic nature of competitiveness, influenced by numerous factors whose intensity and relevance fluctuate throughout the product lifecycle.

Cost Management

The study established that measures were taken to determine cost elements including budgeting before sourcing for both manpower and materials.

Cost controls were also performed at every stage to avoid over expenditure. This is supported by Schwalbe (2015) who asserts that project cost management is a function of major processes including cost estimation, budget setting and cost control. The findings of this study also concurred with works of Bondina, Bondin, and Pavlova (2021) who conducted a comprehensive study on cost management models in agricultural businesses. Their study established that standard costing and absorption costing emerged as the most adaptable choices for this industry, providing a framework for responsible decision-making and potential efficiency gains.

Stakeholder Participation

The study established that management of the projects involved stakeholders in project implementation. Stakeholder participation is important in promoting ownership and sustainability of outcomes. The interviews revealed that stakeholders were actively engaged in monitoring and evaluation and that their engagement by management has promoted satisfaction, ownership and sustainability of outcomes. According to Usadolo and Caldwe (2016), decisions regarding the degree of participation from various stakeholders are a significant issue that project management should consider regardless of the type of project. The results also concurred with the findings of Njiru (2018) who conducted a study on project management practices and project implementation in manufacturing companies within Nairobi County, Kenya and concluded that stakeholder involvement is crucial for successful project outcomes, fostering stakeholder ownership and reducing project costs.

Change Management

The study established that the culture in the projects help the workers to embrace change including conflict resolution arising from change initiatives. This is supported by Wanza and Nkuraru (2016) who point out that people can positively accept changes that adversely affect them only if they believe that the change is right and procedural

justice followed. However, management was not very keen on the measurement of the speed and extent to which employees adopt new technologies and processes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that Quality Management is an important practice in implementation of agro-value addition projects. It was found that the project workers were found to be well trained on quality matters which enhanced efficiency. Further, continuous monitoring was necessary for improvement of quality systems and procedures. The study also concluded that implementation of the projects could be improved if the management involved more workers in decision making on quality matters and ensured standardization of quality and costs to enable a project reach new frontiers.

From the findings, the study concluded that budgeting was done before sourcing for materials and manpower in agro-value addition projects in Kisumu County. Measures were also taken to determine cost elements of manpower including performing cost controls at every stage to avoid over expenditure.

The study concluded that effective management of agro-value addition projects hinges significantly on the active involvement of stakeholders throughout the implementation process. It further concluded that Engaging stakeholders is crucial for fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Furthermore, their participation in monitoring and evaluation not only enhances project satisfaction but also reinforces both ownership and sustainability, ultimately contributing to the overall success and impact of the initiatives. By integrating stakeholders at every stage, the projects are better positioned to meet their goals and deliver lasting benefits to the community.

The study concludes that fostering a culture of change within projects is crucial for helping employees adapt to new circumstances, ultimately

leading to increased productivity. Additionally, a project culture that facilitates conflict resolution related to change initiatives enhances work quality. However, project change management could be more effectively embraced if leadership tracked the pace and degree of employee adoption of new technologies and processes, allowing for better timeline management and predictability during the implementation of changes.

In light of the findings from this study, it is recommended that the project managers actively involve workers in the decision-making processes related to quality management through fostering an inclusive environment where employees are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their roles. This can also make organizations cultivate a sense of ownership and accountability among workers. This engagement not only enhances reliability and productivity but also opens avenues for creative thinking and problem-solving, as employees who feel valued are more likely to contribute innovative ideas and solutions in the workplace.

Additionally, the management should prioritize an investigation into the underlying reasons behind the workers' perceptions of inadequate representation in discussions regarding manpower costs. Management should understand and address these concerns is essential to mitigate any feelings of disenfranchisement and dissatisfaction within the workforce. They should also acknowledge workers' perspectives and provide avenues for their input to foster a more harmonious work environment, ultimately leading to improved morale and productivity.

To further strengthen stakeholder engagement and commitment, management should implement comprehensive monitoring and evaluation measures that incorporate feedback and participation from all relevant stakeholders, including workers, management, and community members. They should involve stakeholders in these processes, not only enhance accountability but also ensure that resources are appropriately

allocated to support project initiatives. The inclusion of diverse perspectives fosters a sense of collective ownership, which is vital for the sustainable success of agro-value addition projects.

Moreover, management should facilitate training and educational resources that enhance workers' understanding of technological advancements and their impact on efficiency in production processes. By equipping employees with the necessary knowledge and skills, organizations can empower workers to embrace change rather than resist it. Promoting an awareness of how technology can streamline operations will not only improve individual productivity but will also contribute to the overall success and competitiveness of agro-value addition projects.

Areas for Further Research

This study focused on the role of project management practices on implementation of agro-value based projects in Kisumu County in Kenya. While it addressed four critical project management principles quality management, cost management, stakeholder participation, and change management, it revealed the necessity to broaden the scope to include additional factors that may influence the success of agro-value addition projects. One prominent area ripe for exploration is the impact of leadership skills in the context of project management. Future research could

investigate the specific leadership qualities and styles that resonate best with stakeholders in this sector, providing insights into how transformative leadership can drive project success in agricultural initiatives.

Another essential aspect that warrants further examination is the role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in agro-value addition projects. Research in this area could focus on the development of robust M&E frameworks tailored to the unique environments of Kisumu County's agricultural landscape. Such studies could explore how effective M&E practices contribute to better resource allocation, enhanced accountability, and improved project outcomes.

Additionally, research that delves into the identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks associated with these projects could equip project managers with the tools needed to navigate potential pitfalls. Understanding how different risk management strategies impact project implementation would be invaluable for stakeholders looking to fortify their initiatives against unforeseen challenges. Furthermore, the interaction of factors such as leadership, monitoring and evaluation, and risk management within the broader context of project management practices deserves scrutiny.

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