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EFFECT OF END USERS INVOLVEMENT IN THE PERFOMANCE OF ECONOMIC STIMULUS PROJECTS OF FISH FARMING IN KIRINYAGA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Economic stimulus programme (ESP) was an initiative by the Kenyan Government in the year 2009 to provide an impetus for economic recovery, growth and renewed opportunities.ESP was launched by the Kenyan Government to encourage expenditure of public funds in the whole Country through different projects. Some of the projects under this program were fish farming projects. The implementation of ESP was to be done through 2009/2010 budget entitled "Overcoming Today's challenges for a Better Kenya Tomorrow". The purpose of this paper was to determine the influence of end user involvements in the performance of ESP fish farming projects. The general objective of the study was to establish relationship between the end users involvement and the performance of economic stimulus projects in Kenya with reference to fish farming projects in Kirinyaga County. The specific objectives of this paper included; to determine the effects of initial planning involvements of end users to the performance of Economic Stimulus Projects of fish farming, to determine the effects of resource planning involvements of end users to the performance of Economic Stimulus Projects of fish farming, and to investigate the effects of training involvements of end users to the performance of Economic Stimulus projects of fish farming and to investigate the effects of marketing planning involvements of end users to the performance of Economic Stimulus projects of fish farming. The study focused on ESP fish ponds in Kirinyaga County in Kenya. Literature review was carried out based on the independent variables of the study. The methodology guidelines for the study was discussed under; research design, target population, sampling frame, sample and sampling technique for the study, instruments , data collection procedures, pilot test of the instrument and data processing and analyzing procedures. Data was collected using questionnaires. The data generated from the questionnaires was coded, and then analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequency tables and figures. In addition, regression model was used to determine the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The study found out that, majority of the farmers/ respondents were males and were above 50 years. It was also established that majority had not benefited in terms of improved livelihood from ESP fish projects in the area. It was evident that ESP fish farmers were not involved at the initial planning stage of the fish farming projects. Majority of the farmers indicated that they were not involved at the initial planning stage of the project but rather the projects were imposed to them. Lack of end users initial planning involvement was therefore revealed as one of the major factors affecting the performance of ESP fish farming projects in the area since most of them got in to it without understanding the anticipated direction of the project. It was clear that resources in terms of materials, equipment, tools and skills were provided to ESP fish farming projects and the farmers utilized them appropriately. The resources that were provided for the projects as enumerated by the respondents included; fingerings, feeds, liners, fertilizers and lime but the farmers indicated that the resources especially fish feeds were not adequate to run the projects for the intended period of six months.

Key Words: *Performance, Economic Stimulus Projects, Fish Farming*

INTRODUCTION

In response to global financial and economic crisis that started in 2008, most countries responded by announcing their fiscal intervention within five months of the collapse of Lehman brothers in order to cushion the fall of economic output and employment, (International Labour Organization, 2012). Many countries around the world embarked on an unprecedented level of intervention with the aim of keeping the economy buoyant and stop a full scale assault on the labour market.

In the year 2008-2009, there was a deep global economic slowdown as a result of the collapse of Lehman brothers due to market manipulation. Lehman brothers which is named after its founder Henry Lehman and his brothers, was the fourth largest US investment bank, with 25,000 employees worldwide at the time of collapse. The Lehman's collapse greatly intensified the 2008 crisis and contributed to erosion of close to $ 10 million in market capitalization from global equity market in Oct 2008, (International Labour Organization, 2012). According to Ringa and Kyalo, (2013) the global economic crisis increased world unemployment from 178 million in 2007 to 212 million in the late 2009, and it is predicted that it may remain high at the same level. In Kenya, for example, the challenge of unemployment with the youths being the main casualty is at the rate of 40% from 12%, (Ringa & Kyalo, 2013).Within the first months of the crisis, stimulus packages were announced ranging for example from 1.4% of GDP in UK, 6% of GDP in Unites States and over 12% in China, (International Labour Organization, 2012). Globally, many countries such as United States of America, Brazil, Japan and China have come up with Economic Stimulus Programmes to spur youth entrepreneurship and reduce reliance on formal employment, by catering for both demand and supply side supporting the entrepreneurial intentions (Ringa & Kyalo, 2013).

It is also clear that different economies dealt with the economic crisis differently, for example in Korea, the government was targeting to provide temporary jobs to 250,000 households whose income was below 120% of the minimum level considered necessary to cover basic costs, while in United States, an estimated cost of $48 billion was allocated to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme (SNAP) which was to provide assistance to low income families in form of food vouchers. It is also clear that Countries that showed relatively better GDP and employment recovery had also implemented a bigger stimulus package as a percentage of GDP (International Labour Organization, 2012).Most Countries with stimulus spending, channeled a sizeable chunk of their resources in to infrastructure development aimed at uplifting the aggregate demand and creation of employment opportunities. It is also clear that fiscal stimulus, in response to a major financial and economic crisis needed to be timely, targeted and temporary. (International Labour Organization, 2012). The overall result of global fiscal stimulus seems to be positive in most countries, although the speed of recovery differs from one country to another. It is also noted that although World Economic Growth has returned to a positive territory, the recovery is fragile and uneven and at the same time, massive public spending, depressed economic activity and reduced revenue are causing considerable fiscal pressure and therefore as part of stimulus measures, policy makers are urged to bring expenditures under control including scaling down programmes (International Labour Organization, 2012).

In Kenya, Economic Stimulus Programme was an initiative of the Kenyan government in 2009 to provide an impetus for economic recovery, growth and renewed opportunities, (Yohi, 2010). Gitonga (2013) notes that; the 2007/2008 post-election violence in the Kenyan economy coupled with prolonged drought, oil and food crisis and the effects of 2008/2009 global economic crisis called for quick measures to jumpstart the Kenyan economy which slowed down to 1.7% as compared to 7.1% at the end of 2007 ,towards long term growth and development. The shrinked economy was characterized by decline in

agricultural production and slowing down of economic activities in the key growth sectors of tourism and construction that necessitated an immediate action by the government to salvage the situation, (Yohi, 2010). The ESP in Kenya was intended to be short term-medium term, high intensity and high impact project in which resources were to be invested to bear short term and long term benefits to stimulate the growth of Kenyan economy through rapid creation of jobs and business opportunities, (Yohi, 2010). The Economic Stimulus Programs were funded by the government in collaboration with Official Development Aids donors (Gitonga, 2013).

In order to come up with the Economic plan ,experts assessed two critical components ;the potential of the different sectors for economic impact and the feasibility of unlocking that potential for the benefits of economic growth ,employment and poverty eradication (Government of Kenya, 2009).So the programme was focused on sections that would generate maximum benefits, restore confidence of Kenyan's and assist the business community to weather the storm, while also protecting the livelihood of the poor and creating employment for the youths. Gitonga (2013) indicate that the Ministry of finance came up with Economic Stimulus Program with a total of 22 Billion Kenya shillings (260 million US$), with the money going towards the construction of schools, horticultural markets, jua kali sheds, fisheries projects among others in order to boost the Country's economy, invest in long term solution to food security challenges, expand economic opportunities in rural areas among others. This would transform the state of Kenyans in which Cooper (2013) says that an average man in Kenya earns less than US$ 1.50 per day and work is even scarce at that rate.

The guiding principle for the ESP was therefore the expansion of opportunities for economic engagement to ensure food security and diversification, wealth and employment creation and human capital investment, (Yohi, 2010).ESP was meant to be a bold step to address existing imbalances in regional development in relation to youth and women who remain unemployed despite numerous efforts, reforms and other mitigations undertaken to culminate it. According to Amenya et al (2013), the ESP in Kenya was intended to be in line with Vision 2030 which strives to; reduce the number of people living in poverty and guarantee equality of opportunities, increase the opportunities for the youth, women and disadvantaged groups, improve delivery of social services among others. Gitonga (2013), notes that the Kenya government has invested a lot in projects all over the Country targeting the youth and women in achieving its Vision 2030 goals. The constitution of Kenya also reaffirms the government commitment to deal with unemployment challenges for instance, in Chapter 41 of the constitution; every person has a right to fair labour practices, (Republic of Kenya, 2010). Hence, following the promulgation of the new constitution on 27th August 2010, it was expected that the standard of living for Kenyans was going to improve as a result intended increase in job opportunities.

The ESP was envisaged as a short tem intensive programme that was to be implemented within a period of six months commencing from 1st July 2009 to 31st December 2009 (Yohi, 2010). The objectives of the ESP included; to boost the Country's economic recovery and return the economic back to the envisioned medium term growth path, to invest in long term solutions to the challenges of food security, to expand economic opportunities in rural areas for employment creation ,to promote regional development for equity and social stability, to improve infrastructure and the quality of education and healthcare for all Kenyans, to invest in conservation of the environment and to expand access to ,and build the ICT capacity in order to expand and accelerate economic growth. In order to implement the programme, the respective Ministries were to provide overall leadership for the whole programme. At constituency level, the ESP projects were to be managed either by District Infrastructure

Coordination Team (DICT) for all education projects, while the Stimulus Project Management Committee (SPMC) was to manage projects in all other sectors (Yohi, 2010)

One of the areas that would generate maximum benefits was in commercial fish farming. Mwamuye et al (2012) states that owing to the prominence of fish farming ,the Kenyan government in the 2009/2010 financial year under ESP introduced commercial fish farming in Kenya, initially in 140 political constituencies and later rolled out in 20 additional constituencies. In general each constituency benefitted with funds for 300 fish ponds, 15 kilograms of fertilizer per pond and 1000 fingerlings per pond. The project was done in two phases: phase one in 2009/2010 financial year where 200 fish ponds were constructed in 140 political constituencies , phase two in 2011/2012 financial year where an additional 20 constituencies were brought in board with 300 fish ponds and adding an extra 100 fish pods to the first 140 constituencies. But just like many of the ESP projects, fish farming ESP project has not been successful resulting to losses to the government and the beneficiaries (Gitonga, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Initial planning involvement

Involvement of stake holders in the initial planning of a project is key to the success of a project. There is need for active sponsor involvement specifically during project planning stages and in turn, projects sponsor should ensure that the customer is fully involved in planning and he/she understands the value of the project (Debbie *et al*, 2011). If the fish farmers were involved properly and adequately during the initial planning of the project, they were likely to understand the objectives of the project, own it in turn, become committed and this is likely to have enhanced the performance of the project.

Debbie et al (2011) quote Flannes and Lenn (2001), that projects exist because of internal and external customers and so projects success must include meeting customer requirements and use of the project products. Debbie *et al* (2011) also notes that project sponsors should demonstrate interest in project by devoting time and energy and ensuring that all stakeholders are identified. Customer success in a project leads to enhanced satisfaction on the part of the customer, which is using a project to address customer needs. Debbie *et al* (2011) note that by working closer with customer stakeholders ,the project sponsors will ensure that customers receive deliverables that they will successfully use to meet their needs. Stakeholders play a significant role in the project process and so by ensuring that they have a good understanding of the objectives of the project can lead to enhanced performance. Mwamuye *et al*, (2012) observed that one of the reasons as to why fish farming in Côte D'ivoire failed is because of separation of ownership of the project and management. According to Tashchener and Mathias (2009), involvement of stakeholders is important because their eagerness is the key factor to the success of the project despite its lack of formal project practices. The willingness of stakeholders therefore to perform the activities assigned to them during the project planning process greatly contributes to the success or failure of the project.

According to Tashchener and Mathias (2009), stakeholders may need to be personally addressed and involved for behavioural changes to be achieved, while other stakeholders may not be aware which role they play. So the benefit of stakeholder involvement is to create a widespread support which increases the acceptance and legitimacy of policy plans (Tashchener & Mathias, 2009). By making citizens responsible for the achieved results, resistance against incorporated decisions can be avoided, because they would understand better the need for a certain project and perhaps be more willing to accept compromises. If stakeholders are not involved in the project planning, important issues may be overlooked or underutilized (Munns & Bjeirmi, 2006).As such, it is possible to have some stakeholders involved in policy development and

implementation process. In fact efficiency and effectiveness of any given policy implementation, largely depends on the level of agreement between the stakeholders concerned, which makes cooperation necessary condition for success (Tashchener & Mathias, 2009).

Involvement of stake holders will also reduce the lack of trust in government institutes. A thorough understanding of the users would contribute to a better handling of the project implementation and thus increasing the chances of its success and this will enable them own the project so that it is not perceived as a project imposed from outside. If a project has to be effective, planning must be done by people who will be affected so that, there is an understanding of the implications, appreciate positive opportunities, come to terms with negative aspects and plan their own coping strategies. According to Munns and Bjeirmi, (20066), the completion of a project requires input from a variety of groups including the client, the project team, the producer, and the end user, all of whom have specific tasks and responsibilities to fulfill in order to achieve success. Also significant opposition could arise as people feel that they had the opportunity to be involved or designing a scheme that does not best address the concerns and the priorities of every one affected by the project. Also ownership from stakeholders of the process and support for subsequent decisions could be lost if stakeholders are excluded.

According to Tashchener and Mathias (2009), a set of stakeholders should be identified at an early stage to contribute to engagement planning process failure to which may resent the decisions made and subsequently could delay or may even stop the project from being implemented. Identifying the stakeholders for a project will determine the engagement activities that will be undertaken, if this fails to take place, the activities may be targeted at the wrong audience. However in some cases, other stakeholders may be identifiable once design options have been generated. Further it is important to indicate all different types of stakeholders throughout the whole process, addressing their specific requirements. Tashchener and Mathias (2009), also note that for a project to succeed, it requires well-structured involvement of all stakeholders throughout all the stages of the process. A planning culture needs to be created, based on regular communication, mutual consultation and cooperative decision making. Also suitable decision making stages, formats and methods for involving all different stakeholder groups have to be identified and scheduled planning of the involvement activities.

According to Tashchener and Mathias (2009), in order to avoid potential problems in stakeholder involvement, the following should be done; a commitment should be given to provide consistent and transparent information to all stake holders throughout the life time of the process. If there is no follow up and flow of information after the stakeholders are together, the sense of involvement ceases. Also stakeholders are vital source of information and should be encouraged to participate in a process, even when they are fundamentally opposed to it. There should be constant communication between the team responsible for the process and the decision makers and trying to understand what motivates the stakeholders in order to overcome external barriers.

Resource planning involvement

When fish farmers are involved in resource planning, they are able to know the resources in terms of materials and skills required for the project. It is therefore possible to have them utilize the available resources effectively and satisfactory especially when such enormous funds are provided for the project, as a result of their commitment to the project.

It is also possible to identify the loopholes in terms of the skills required by the fish farmers in order to be able undertake the project. This is likely to trigger the performance of the project. Mwamuye *et al* (2012) indicated that the key problems identified with fish farming in Lagos state Nigeria included inappropriate pond construction techniques occasioned by poor

supervision and training by poorly resourced extension service providers. Fish farming failed in other parts of Africa due to little or no-pre stocking preparation of ponds occasioned by poorly resourced extension agents. Mwamuye *et al* (2012) argued that initially the Kenya government funds towards fish farming was inadequate, however this changed because under ESP program, enormous amount was invested in to the project.

Gitonga (2013) says that according to 2012/2013 budgetary allocation, a lot of money had been set aside for ESP fish farming project. However, he notes that, the much anticipated returns from ESP fish farming project is not evident but on the contrary farmers are increasingly incurring losses as a result of unsuccessful fish ponds projects in terms of money used in the projects, time spent in project implementation, and land that could have been otherwise utilized for food. This act as a proof that it is not only funds that may fail a project, other factors can contribute to the failure (Mwamuye *et al*, 2012). Mwamuye et al (2012) observes that fish farming prerequisites included bio-technical feasibility, and economic viability and failure of one lead to failure of a whole project. Shortage of human capacity and poor technical expertise lead to failure of fish farming project. Mwamuye *et al* (2012) observed that before a fish farmer could successfully grow the fish, he needed specialized training in water quality management, aquatic weed control, parasite and disease, nutrition and feeds, cultural techniques, marketing and processing skills. Although a trained fish farmer can minimize the potential risk as associated with commercial fish farming, the untrained fish farmer continually faces the possibility of unpredictable failure.

Mwamuye *et al (*2012), stated that the main constraint of commercial fish farming in Kenya is limited practical skills. There is also need to have the local champions involved in project implementation because they play a very significant role in mobilizing resources and creating alliances due to their personal skills and recognition they receive among local actors. The local champions can have an extra ordinary influence both positively and negatively and so the role requires an early strategic assessment (Tashchener & Mathias, 2009). Accordingly, stakeholders can provide valuable inputs to the development of a project, for example, they can provide specific knowledge on their needs (Tashchener & Mathias, 2009). Stakeholder involvement in projects is therefore important because they provide a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience to the project. If managed well, it can make the project more successful. Stakeholders also play a significant role in the project process. Good management of relationships with stakeholders is an important way to ensure that opinions are based on the project itself. In summary, the fish farmer's opinions over the project, skills and resources required for the project and the areas of deficiency should have been considered at the resource planning stage by adequately involving them; this would in turn enhance easier implementation of the project.

Gitonga (2013) points out that poor resource planning of ESP fish farming project was evidenced in Gatundu in Kenya due to lack of Agro shops to provide the recommended fish feeds resulting to farmers obtaining unpleasant fish feeds in terms of quality and so low performance in terms of profitability due to fish retarded growth as a result . He also points out that fish farming is a new farming technology and so training for the beneficiaries which was necessary was not factored in the initiation phase of the project which further contributed to the project failure as farmers were left to consult their colleagues who did have little or no expertise in pond management.

Gitonga's (2013) recommendation is have all stakeholders including the farmers who are the beneficiaries of the projects, Ministry of Fisheries staff, Agro product stockiest ,local population and the administration to be involved in mapping (in this case market planning) out the project. But Gitonga points out that even as the Government committed itself to expand fish farming, lack of structures to manage changes in ESP fish farming was contributed highly by

laxity of the field staffs who were the supervisors of the project. Gitonga (2013) found out that 63% of ESP fish farming projects failed with very many challenges in Gatundu but this is very alarming considering the government commitment to expand fish farming .So accordingly, a lot of work must be done to the fish farmers to ensure that they are adequately involved in the projects. Gitonga (2013) point out that the scope of the project should have been adequately defined to include among others, the training of farmers on pond management.

Performance of Economic Stimulus Programs

Adequate initial planning involvement, resource planning involvement and market planning involvement of the fish farmers into the ESP fish farming project will lead to increased performance in terms of profitability, sustainability and growth. Debbie et al (2011), define project success as meeting planning goals such as requirements, schedule, and budget, achieving end user benefits such as improved capabilities, user, satisfaction, and achieving benefits such as new markets, products technologies, profits and knowledge. According to Munn, and Bjeirmi (2006), success of a project is dependent upon a realistic goal, competition, client satisfaction, a definite goal, profitability, market availability, the implementation process, and the perceived value of the project. Accordingly, the client (considered to be the same as end user in this research), is expected to be the main party concerned about the success of the project in the long term (Munn & Bjeirmi 2006). So according to all the above literature, primary stakeholders planning involvements are very important for the project success. Mwamuye *et al* (2012), notes that technological advancement of staff and farmers could influence the performance of a project since information could be accessed and shared at low costs.

Department of fisheries, Kenya (2011) point out that some of the factors which have hindered the development of aquaculture include lack of quality seeds and affordable feeds, poor extension services and subsistence mentality of the fish farmers due to poor or lack of fish farmer involvement in marketing planning. In fact the shortfall in the fish supply against the demand for the commodity cannot be overestimated and the gap can only be filled with fish production from fish farming (Department of fisheries, Kenya, 2011).This means that the market is there which can lead to profitability and growth of the venture. If water resource is utilized effectively, the Department of Fisheries (2011) state that Kenya is endowed with optimum conditions for fish farming and various types of the project water bodies are suitable for various fish species so, the ESP fish farming project would be sustainable in terms of water supply. But water resource can only be utilized properly if fish farmers are involved in water resource planning. Department of Fisheries (2011), point out that formation of cluster groups formed the basis of the fish farming initiative, but the level of involvement in planning is still very low and so the possible reason for poor performance (Medeiro *et al*, 2009).

The fish farming project has a lot of market potential in terms of growth and profit and so the government of Kenya through the Ministry of Fisheries has provided enormous support to aquaculture. In fact it is one of the flagship programmes in the vision 2030 aimed at improving livelihoods but so far just like many of the ESP projects, fish farmers are increasingly incurring losses as a result of unsuccessful fish ponds projects in terms of money used in the projects, time spent in project implementation, and land that could have been otherwise utilized for food. The performance of the project in terms of growth, profitability and sustainability is negatively influenced by lack of involvements of fish farmers during initial project planning, resource planning and marketing planning.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study was a case study. This type of study design is the most appropriate for this research in order to obtain information, answer research questions and

describe the current status of the ESP fish farming projects phenomenon and determine the nature of the situation as it was. This type of research design attempts to describe such things as possible behavior, attitudes, values and characteristics.

Target population

The target population or absolute population refers to the population to which the results of the study are generalized (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The target population included all the ESP fish ponds in the whole County which cover a very wide geographical area. According to Kirinyaga County Director of Fisheries (2013), there were 1345 ESP fish ponds that were constructed in Kirinyaga County between the year 2009-2013 and these formed the accessible population from which the sample was drawn.

Sampling frame

In order to make the sample representative, an elaborate list of all the 1345 ESP fish ponds in Kirinyaga was obtained from the Kirinyaga County Director of Fisheries (2013). Table 1 below shows how the sample for the study was obtained.

Table 1: Sample frame

Constituency	Ward	Total no .of ponds	Active ponds	Inactive ponds	Total number of fish ponds sampled per constituency
Central	Inoi	59	37	22	
	Mutira	45	30	15	
	Kerugoya	80	60	20	
	Kanyekini	119	90	29	
					32
Mwea	Tebere	55	24	31	
	Nyangati	76	33	43	
	Murinduko	32	19	13	
	Thiba	18	8	10	
	Kangai	23	15	8	33
Ndia	Mukure	91	48	43	
	Kiini	130	88	42	
	Kariti	123	70	53	36

Gichugu	Karumande	50	30	20	
	Kabare	113	69	44	
	Baragwi	62	26	36	
	Njukiini	60	41	19	
	Ngiriama	43	27	16	34
Total		**1345**	**763**	**582**	**135**

The researcher ensured that the sampled ESP fish ponds were randomly selected from each of the four constituencies of Kirinyaga County in proportion to the ESP ponds in each in order to obtain a comparable representation.

Sample Size

Subgroup of one hundred and thirty five (135) ESP fish ponds was randomly selected to give a representative of the accessible population with the relevant characteristics.

$$n = \frac{10}{100} * 1345 \quad = 134 \ .5 \text{ ESP fish ponds}$$

The researcher rounded it to form a sample size of 135 ESP fish ponds.

Instruments

Primary data was collected using questionnaires which are commonly used to obtain information about a population. Questionnaires with both open and closed ended questions were administered by the researcher. The Secondary data was collected through review of published literature such as journals articles, scholarly materials, published theses and textbooks related to subjects being studied. Under this method the researcher used already recorded data in order to come up with necessary information of the study. This method allowed the researcher to analyze what have been done to avoid repetition and it also assisted in data comparison.

Data Collection Procedure

Self-administered questionnaires were used in which the drop and pick method was used as. This was done in a period of 10 days.

Data Analyzing and Presentation

The data generated from the questionnaires was coded, and then analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequencies tables and figures. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. In addition, inferential statistics correlation coefficient was also used to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Correlation coefficient is the measure of strength of relationships between of variables. To analyze the respective relationships of the variables pearson correlation coefficient analysis was used.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Response rate

The sample group that was administered with questionnaire by the researcher was 135 and 70

questionnaires were returned representing 52% responsive rate. The presentation was done based on the research questions.

Bio Data Information

Age

The results revealed that majority 60% of the respondents were aged over 50 years, one percent were below 20 years, while 6% were between 21 – 30 years, 24% were between 31 – 40 years and those in between 41 - 50 years recorded percentage of 9%. This implied that all age groups participated in the study but those who were much involved in ESP fish farming projects in the area were aged over 50 years. The researcher established that most ESP fish farmers were retirees who were in a position to devote all the energy and time to the project and so the reason for the highest percentage.

Gender

The results revealed that majority of the respondents were men, (70.6%), women were (29.4%). This indicates that the number of men who participated in the study was more than women. It can be interpreted therefore more men were more involved in the ESP fish farming projects than women. This is because fish farming in the area was viewed as an activity for men more than for women.

Performance of ESP fish farming project

Marital Status

The results from the study indicated that 97% of the respondents were married 3% were single.

Level of Education

Thirty five percent of the respondent had Tertiary/ University education, while 18% had secondary education, 38% had primary education and the rest 9% had no formal education. Majority of the respondents had the basic education .So they were considered literate and were able to participate in the study. The researcher ensured that help was accorded to the few who were in need of interpretation of the questionnaire for the purpose of this research.

Rearing of fish before the start of ESP projects

Majority (68%) were not practicing fish farming before the start of ESP fish farming projects. This is a clear indication that many farmers started fish farming as a result of start of ESP fish farming projects. The main reason why many farmers were not practicing fish farming was attributed to lack of information/knowledge about fish farming. It was evident that the implementation of ESP fish farming projects took place since the financial year 2009/2010. Therefore majority of the ESP farmers had been in fish farming for at least 5 years meaning that information given concerning the project was credible.

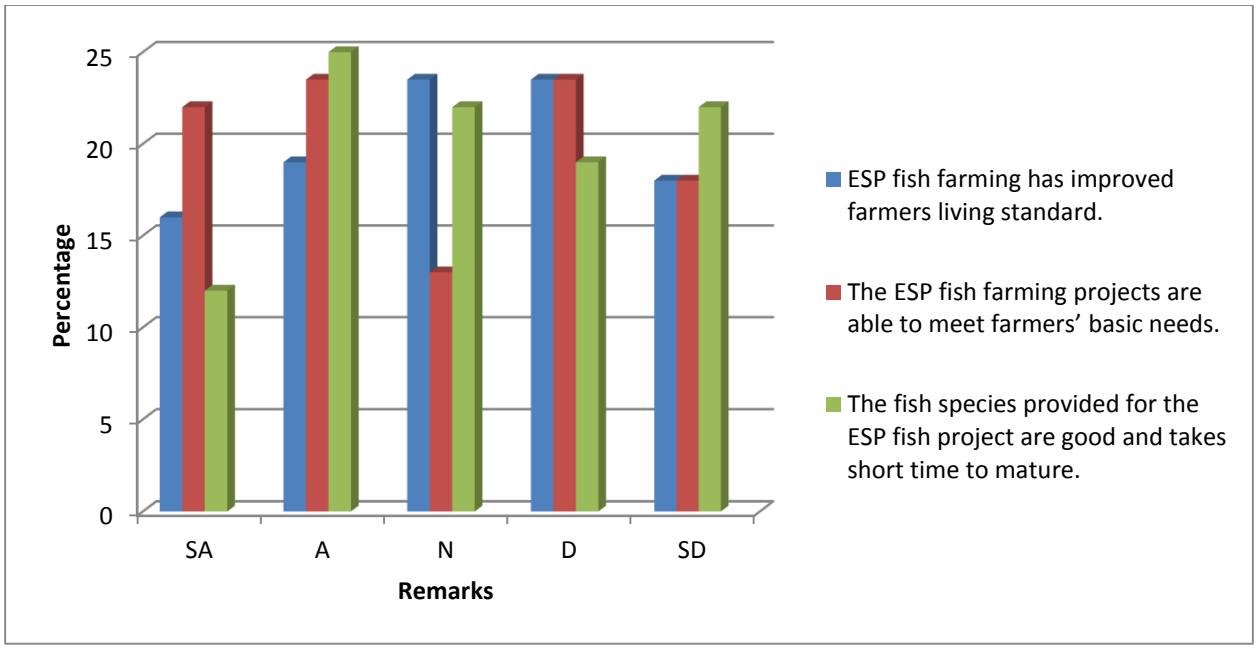

Figure 1: Performance of ESP fish farming project

The study revealed that majority 41.5% disagreed that ESP fish farming had improved farmers living standard. It was also established that a big number of the respondents 45.5% disagreed that the ESP fish farming projects were able to meet farmers' basic needs. In addition, most respondents 41% disapproved that fish species provided for the ESP fish project were good and take short time to mature.

ESP Fish Ponds Constructed for Farmers

Table 2: ESP Fish Ponds Constructed for farmers

	Ponds Constructed	Operational Ponds	Percentage
No of Respondents	68	23	33.8

The number of ESP fish ponds constructed for farmers (respondents) were 68, indicating that every farmer had one fish pond courtesy of ESP. Out of all the dug ESP fish ponds only, 33.8%were operational, meaning while 66.2% had been abandoned by the farmers as at the time of this research. The results therefore revealed that more than half of the ESP fish ponds were not working and hence they were not benefiting farmers. In fact most of the farmers whose ponds were not operational complained bitterly that the project had led to wastage of their land which would otherwise been used for other beneficial projects. An establishment by the researcher indicated that almost all the 66.2% had renounced the project completely.

The types of fish ponds that were constructed to farmers were mainly earthen and liner. The proportion of income from ESP fish farming was rated below 30%

of the total family yearly income. This shows that majority of the ESP fish ponds have not benefited the end users in the area in terms of returns.

Initial planning of ESP fish farming project

Table 3: Initial planning of ESP fish farming project

Remarks	SA	A	N	D	SD
	Percentage				
The objectives of the ESP fish farming project were clear from the planning stage.	9	12	41	28	10
Fish farmers were identified and fully involved at the planning stage.	4.4	7.4	26.5	41.2	20.5
The project sponsor had understood farmers' needs at the planning stage of the project.	53	20.6	7.4	9	10
At the planning stage there was adequate communication through empowerment, active listening and conflict resolution between stakeholders.	4.4	28	38	20.6	9
Planning of the ESP fish projects was well executed to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.	6	15	25	35	19

The researcher sought to know how the initial planning of ESP fish farming projects was conducted. The data obtained showed that majority of the farmers (41%) had no opinion whether the objectives of the ESP fish farming project were clear to them or not from the planning stage. On the other hand, 38% of the farmers disagreed that the ESP fish farming project objectives were clear to them from the planning stage. This clearly indicated that a total of 79% did not have enough information concerning ESP projects from the initial planning stage. It was also evident that 61.7% of the respondents disagreed that fish farmers were identified and fully involved at the planning stage. In regard to whether the project sponsors had understood farmers' needs at the planning stage of the project, 73.6% of the respondents agreed while 54% disagreed that planning of the ESP fish projects was well executed to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. The table above shows the summary of the data obtained.

According to the study findings, it was established that the selected ESP fish farmers were not involved in the initial planning of ESP fish farming projects. This was clear from how majority of the respondents seemed to know very little about the process involved, stakeholders involved and the project components considered during initial planning. Majority of the farmers also complained that their views were not sought before the projects were implemented. Initial planning was therefore revealed as one of the major factors affecting the performance ESP fish farming projects in the area.

Debbie *et al*, (2011), stated that involvement of stake holders in the initial planning of a project is key to the success of a project. There is need for active sponsor involvement specifically during project planning stages and in turn, projects sponsor should ensure that the customer is fully involved in planning in order to understand the value of the project. If the farmers are involved properly and adequately during the initial

planning of the project, they are likely to understand the objectives of the project, own it, become committed and this is likely to enhance the performance of a project.

Resource planning of the ESP fish farming project

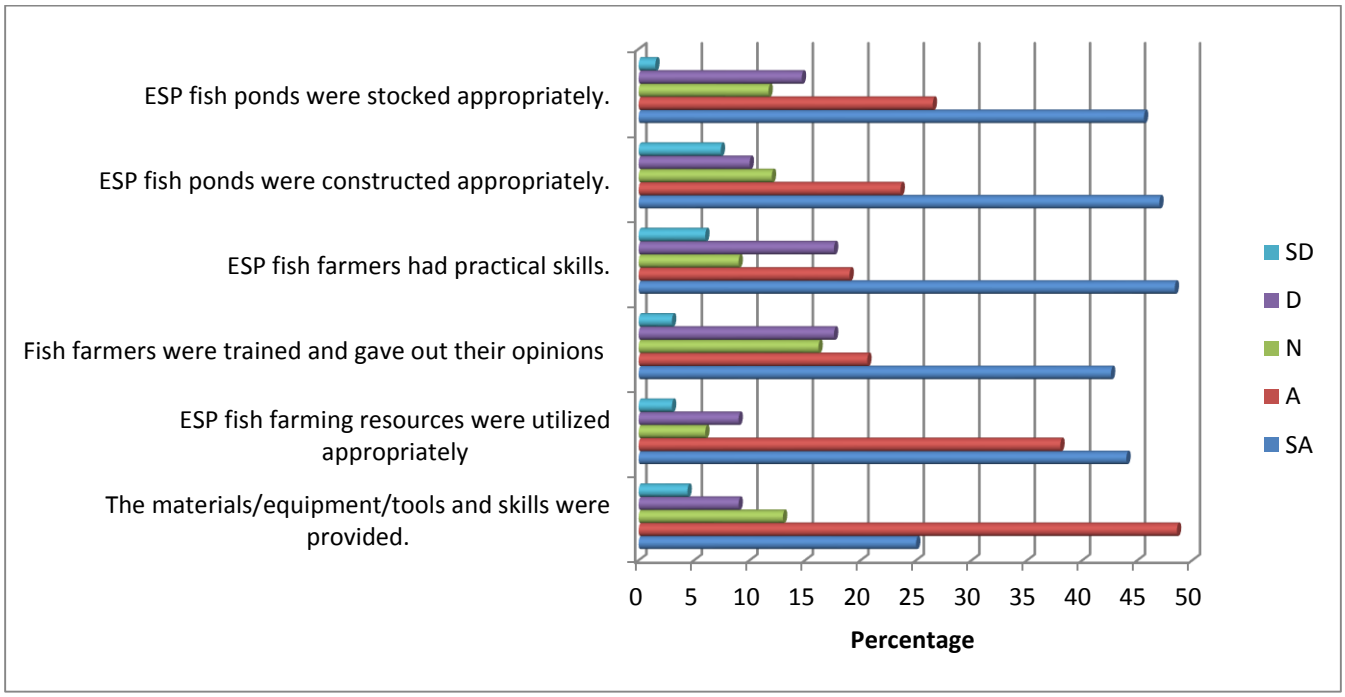

Figure 2: Resource planning of the ESP fish farming project

As indicated in Fig 2: above, 73.6% of respondents agreed that resources in terms of materials/equipment/tools and skills were provided for the ESP fish farming projects. In additional to this, 82% of respondents agreed that farmers utilized the ESP fish farming resources appropriately; 63.2% of Fish farmers were trained on important issues related to the ESP fish farming project as the implementation of the project continued; 67.4 % of ESP fish farmers had the required fish farming practical skills; 70.6% of the ESP fish ponds were constructed appropriately and 72.1 % of the ESP fish ponds were stocked appropriately.

Table 4: Fish Resources Provided

Remarks	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	57	83.8
No	11	16.2
Totals	**68**	**100**

83.8% supported that fish resources were provided for ESP fish farming projects. The resources that were provided to ESP fish projects as enumerated by the respondents included: fingerings, feeds, liners, fertilizers and lime. The farmers indicated that the resources especially fish feeds were not adequate to run the projects for the intended period. When fish farmers are involved in resource planning, they are able

to know the resources in terms of materials and skills required for the project. It is therefore possible to have them utilize the available resources efficiently, effectively and satisfactory especially when such enormous funds are provided for the project. According to Mwamuye *et al* (2012), fish farming failed in other parts of Africa like in Lagos Nigeria due to little or no-pre stocking preparation of ponds occasioned by poor resources. Gitonga (2013), pointed out that poor resource planning of ESP fish farming project was evidenced in Gatundu due to lack of Agro shops to provide the recommended fish feeds resulting to farmers obtaining unpleasant fish feeds in terms of quality and so low performance in terms of profitability due to fish retarded growth as a result.

Correlation of study variables

Table 4. 1: Pearson correlation of the variables

		Initial planning	Resource planning	Marketing Planning	Overall performance of economic stimulus fish farming
Initial planning	Pearson Correlation	**1**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.			
Resource planning	Pearson Correlation	.613(**)	**1**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.		
Marketing Planning	Pearson Correlation	.479(**)	.584(**)	**1**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	
Overall performance of economic stimulus fish farming	Pearson Correlation	.626(**)	.597(**)	.593(**)	**1**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.

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

In order to determine whether there were relationships among the main variables, Pearson moment Correlation coefficients were computed for each pair of variables. The results are shown in the correlation matrix (table 4.8). The findings revealed that overall performance of economic stimulus fish farming and initial planning were highly correlated (r = .626, p-value <0.001). This showed that a positive change in initial planning resulted into an increase in performance of economic stimulus fish farming. Likewise, projects that had good resource planning, recorded better performance as indicated by a significant correlation value of (r = .597, p-value <0.001). The findings also indicated that performance of economic stimulus fish farming and Marketing Planning had significant relationship (r =.593, p-value < 0.001). In all the variables tested, increase in the rating significantly resulted to increase in performance of economic stimulus fish farming at 95% confidence interval.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The main challenges facing ESP fish farming projects in Kirinyaga as was stated by the respondents include initial and marketing planning involvement of the end - users. This indicated that there were measures that needed to be put in place in order to improve the performance of ESP fish farming projects in the area. There was no initial and market planning involvement of the end users and this so the possible reason for poor performance ESP fish farming projects. Most farmers did not know where they could sell their fish products. Adequate initial planning involvement, resource planning involvement and market planning involvement of the fish farmers into the ESP fish farming projects would lead to increased performance in terms of profitability, sustainability and growth.

The fish farming project has a lot of market potential in terms of growth and profit but lack of fish farmers' involvement affected the performance of the projects. Fish farmers are increasingly incurring losses as a result of unsuccessful fish ponds projects in terms of money used in the projects, time spent in project implementation and land that could have been utilized for other agricultural activities. Success of a project is dependent upon a realistic goal, client satisfaction, profitability, market availability, the implementation process, and the perceived value of the project. The client (the end user) is the main party of concern about the success of the project in the long term and hence farmers' involvements are very important for the project success. Users' involvement allows farmers to give their attitudes and opinions regarding precisely defined issues, problems or opportunities and hence they also support the initiatives.

Finally, more youth are needed to make ESP projects sustainable. Farming offers the young people a chance to make a difference by providing enough food to feed the world. Those who become farmers have the opportunity to be the generation that end world hunger and alleviate malnutrition, as well as helping to fight food insecurity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are the researcher's recommendations:

In all areas of planning, all involved groups including farmers and interested citizens should be invited and encouraged to participate. The broad representation of all members will enhance the credibility of the process, projects support and the success in the outcomes. Youth should be encouraged to join the agriculture sector for they are vital in improving sustainability of fish projects. This can be achieved through offering young people education in agriculture, giving them a voice at policy level, and in the media, and engaging them with agriculture innovations. Young people should also be encouraged that farming can be a rewarding career and agriculture play an important role on a global scale.

Agricultural extension officers should be more committed/ involved in ESP fish farming projects to make the projects successful. Reaching marginalized farmers or those who have little access to information and extension services would help farmers to become more self-reliant, independent hence improve the famers' livelihoods with the increase in production and productivity.

In addition, analysis should be conducted two or three times a year as a normal part of the ESP in order to assess ESP projects performance or identify areas where farmers are not meeting required targets and standards, and this will also indicate the training needs. Appraisal should be used to improve current performance, provide feedback, increase motivation, identify training needs, identify potential, let individuals know what is expected of them and solve existing problems.

Suggestions for Further Research

From the findings of this research, the researcher's suggestions for further study are:

A similar study can be done in other Counties in Kenya to find out if similar results would be realized. This would facilitate comparison and comprehensive results on the findings.

This research dealt only with establishing the relationship between the end users involvement and the performance of economic stimulus projects in Kenya with reference to fish farming projects in Kirinyaga County. However there could be other factors that could be considered for further study, another study can be done dealing with such other factors involving ESP fish farming projects.

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