PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIALITY TEA PROJECTS IN KERICHO COUNTY, KENYA

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND TOURISM IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE IN MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (PROJECT MANAGEMENT) OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in or any other awards in any other university. The project should not be reproduced without the permission of the author

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Declaration by Supervisor

I confirm that the work in this project was completed by the candidate under my/our supervision

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my mum and dad MR & Mrs. Mithamo, my family and friends on their warm and great support, prayers and encouragement.

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To the Almighty God I give glory and honor for giving me the energy and resources to push on in every step of this project.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ACT	Anderson's Adaptive Control of Thoughts
BIM	Building information model
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CPM	Critical Path Method
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
GOK	Government of Kenya
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
GDP	Gross Domestic product
KARI	Kenya Agricultural Research Institute
KTDA	Kenya Tea Development Agency
KSFs	Key Success Factors
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTIP	Mega Transport Infrastructure Projects
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
PM	Project Management
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
PMTT	Project Management Tools and Technique
TBK	Tea Board of Kenya

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Speciality Tea Is tea that primarily feature whole leaf teas or flowers inherently ethically sourced, the tea is picked and treated with optimum care to preserve the leaf characteristics and be able to derive maximum benefit from it. The processing is determined by the type of speciality tea required.

Monitoring and Evaluation skills skills exercised by the project manager in gathering, analyzing and appraisal of data and intelligence by in a project to follow up on the project flow against laid down work plan and constantly provide direction, plan of action and policy option on project implementation.

Project Implementation It is administration of the project plan by managers in tea industry to achieve the set objectives and satisfy the interests of the stakeholders. It is gauged by time, budget, scope and quality.

Risk Management skills these are skills exercised by project managers in tea sector to point out potential risks which may hinder achievement of set objectives and come up with relevant mitigation plans to enhance smooth implementation of projects.

Stakeholder Management skills Involves how project managers in tea industry actively engage stakeholders, getting their support and working together to plan, device and develop new ways of managing and implementing projects as per the set budget, cost and satisfy the customer.

Project management skills these are developmental or interpersonal skills that managers in tea industry utilizes in day-to-day activities making interactions effective. They are non-technical skills and include skills in communication, risk management, stakeholder management and monitoring & evaluation skills.

ABSTRACT

Project managers are very crucial in the design, development and implementation of a project. To work effectively on their day-to-day tasks, they have to be well equipped with skills that enable them implement projects as per the plan. Project implementation is crucial to survival of a company or organization, well-implemented projects are able to satisfy the customer and stakeholders wants and enhance competitiveness. Lack of relevant skills by the project managers has led to failed projects. Misallocation of resources, poor stakeholder managements, high costs of implementation of projects, projects running beyond their set time and poor productivity have led to many projects' failures, and are highly attributed to how competent and skilled is the project manager. The study purposed to find out how implementation of speciality tea projects is influenced by project management skills with the reference being Kericho County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to establish how application of skills in stakeholder management, risk management, communication and monitoring and evaluation impact on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County. Three theories helped guide the study and these includes; skills acquisition theory, institution theory and project management theory. A descriptive research design was embraced with target population being speciality tea projects in Kericho county where 21 projects were targeted. The unit of observation was project managers, assistant managers, engineers, general staff and supervisors working in the projects. A population of 462 individuals was targeted. The research used census to obtain a representative sample from different groups in the target population. The Statistical package SPSS was used in data analysis. Descriptive statistics which include standard deviation, frequencies, means and percentages and inferential statistics with multiple regressions were applied in data analysis. A diagnostic test was carried out which included a normality test, multicollinearity test and a heteroscedasticity test. The study established that stakeholder management skills, risk management skills, communication skills and monitoring and evaluation skills had a positive significant influence on speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The study concludes that the Tea companies should invest in frequent training of its staff on necessary skills to learn a project. Skills in risk management when well applied facilitate more informed decision-making and planning for project managers. Communication skills when utilized appropriately, makes it easy for project participants to understand what is expected of them by their superiors and the organization. Managers should frequently be trained on monitoring and evaluation and be encouraged to take short courses on the same. This will upgrade their skills in planning for; early monitoring of the project tasks and then evaluates these tasks to obtain precise and succinct information on each accomplishment made. The study found skills in stakeholder management critical in implementation of speciality tea projects. These skills assist in scanning both internal and external environment and how to communicate relevant information to different parties to ensure proper implementation of the projects.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In the world today competitiveness has become a crucial factor in molding the future of a company, how a company positions itself among the competitors determines its prosperity, its survivor in the industry, or its failure. To be competitive, organization opts to ensure implementation of its projects is on top notch and investments are on effective technology. Globally, customer needs have become so dynamic prompting organizations and companies to seek new technology projects to enable new product and process development to satisfy the customer (NGO *et al*, 2016). Implementation of different projects has been rampant in the agricultural sector, advancement in technology has been pivotal in agricultural development and firms can be able to meet global food demand and be competitive (OECD & FAO, 2015).

Tea industry being part of the agricultural sector has had massive development in technology. Today, tea companies have highly invested on projects in product diversification to maintain the sustainability of the industry and remain competitive (FAO 2021). Tea companies around the globe are embracing speciality teas as a diversification from the common black tea which is most popular especially in Africa. These teas fetch higher prices compared to black tea with the most expensive speciality tea going for $1.2 million per kilo i.e. the Da Hong Pao tea and other varieties fetching up to an average of $4 compared to an average of $2 for black tea (Akriti, 2022). Speciality teas processing require integrity, extra care and ethically sourced and processed; they are broad in number and include green tea, purple tea, oolong tea, white tea, orthodox tea, peur tea among others. According to FAO (2021) the future of tea is highly dependent on innovations which will promote product diversification which will offer alternative markets and increase income in the sector, and speciality tea is the future.

Globally acceptance of speciality teas is on a rising trajectory with the market growth expected to rise by 4% compared to projected 1.4% rise in black tea. China, Vietnam and Japan expecting an increase of 3.6%, 7% and 6.5% respectively (ITC 2023). China, being the highest exporter of speciality tea i.e.80% of the global speciality tea

in the market (FAO 2021), has heavily invested on construction of speciality tea factories, Zhejiang Tea Group recently opened a fully modern Specialty Tea Center, where the factory is fully automated and robot labor is used and is heavily equipped with artificial intelligence to check on the quality and consistency of the product (Dan, 2019). The construction of speciality processing plants around the globe is on the rise and companies are heavily investing on these projects so as to grab a share of the market and remain competitive (Dan, 2019).

In Africa there has been slow growth of the speciality teas, a study by FAO (2022) on the tea sector in Mauritius pointed out on the over reliance of the industry on black tea and recommended adoptions of projects in speciality teas as diversification strategy. Other countries in Africa like Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda among others have less than 10% of their teas being speciality teas.

In Kenya there has been progressive acceptance of speciality teas and companies and individuals are constructing speciality teas production lines and cortage industries. There have been an initiative from Tea board of Kenya to encourage individuals and companies to embrace speciality teas projects (Kimuri, 2022). According to KTDA (2023) there has been an increase in quantities of speciality teas manufactured by its managed companies, where 11 million Kgs was manufactured in 2022 compared to 3 million in 2021. According to TBK (2023) more than 20 speciality processing factories have been constructed between 2019 and 2023. Those companies who traditionally were specialized in black tea are now constructing speciality processing lines in their premises or building a new factory all together to venture on the speciality market nitche (Kimuri, 2022).

1.1.1 Project Implementation

Project management involves initiation, planning, implementation, monitoring, controlling and closing; it helps the manager in organizing and managing the effort to accomplish a successful project (Harold, 2017). Project management has been associated with major development in different sectors. The biggest concern by a project manager is ensuring that objectives set for a project are achieved and this requires high skills from stakeholders (Crispin, 2020). Successful or effective project implementation can be defined as meeting the project's mission and still attain a high level of satisfaction by relevant stakeholders (Kamau & Mungai, 2019). A successful

project implementation is attained when set targets are met by the relevant parties together or individually (Atkinson et al, 2009). Stevens (2016) acknowledges that project success can be positioned on how complex a project is, process involved in contracting, relationship between relevant parties, the leadership qualities and skills of the project manager and the competence of the stakeholders.

Project implementation and success has been a point of concern in the global arena, Busiliru & Pedo (2021) posit that according to statistics most projects hardly meet their set objectives. The recognition of management of projects in the corporate world is growing pace and increasing rapidly (Gomes j & Romao M, 2016). According to Ali & Rahmat, 2014 a lucrative project is one that is finished in time, on set budget and satisfies the relevant stakeholders' wants. Most of the projects in tea industry are construction projects, where a new processing plant is being constructed, a new line is being installed or replacement of old technologies. Globally implementation of projects has grown pace but it has not been all smooth, Waterhouse Coopers (PwC 2014), through a survey in various industries in different states observed that most projects up to 86% were not being delivered within budget, cost and time. Kiarie &Wanyoike (2016) observed that globally projects were indicating very high time and cost overruns.

In Africa, project management is still growing and a lot is to be learned. Africa being a developing continent, has numerous projects in all sectors of the economy all aimed at bringing development and improving livelihoods. Implementation of construction projects has been found to be experiencing challenges in the continent, the performance of contractors in Zambia are found to be wanting and below expectation as most of their projects are not complete or significantly past their implementation time (Zulu *et al* 2022). Project implementation cannot be effective without the relevant skills, the skills of using project management tools and techniques significantly affect how successful a project is implemented among ICT firms in South Africa (Chauma, 2017). In Sierra Leone, Crispin (2020) assets that project management enable management to plan, organize and control financial, human and physical resources in a firm which require high skills and capability. Hence, project management skills efficiently and effectively improve how projects are implemented in private and public institution.

In Kenya, there is a significant improvement in projects in different sectors. Infrastructural projects in road, rail, water, agriculture and general industrialization as pointed out by GOK report (2014) has positively impacted the citizens of Kenya. The tea industry is growing and fast, projects on mechanizations of processes are being adopted, new processing plants are being constructed, old technologies are being replaced by new, factories are constructing their own electricity generating plants and many more. With the increasing campaign by Tea board of Kenya for individuals and companies to embrace speciality tea, construction projects to lay down infractructure for the same has been on the rise. Doloi (2011) argues that implementation of most projects involved in construction in Kenya are prone to extreme price escalation risk which leads to extra additional funding needed and increased management conflict between mission parties.

In Kenya, tea industry like any other manufacturing sector is significantly dependent on communication, stakeholders' engagement, and leadership support and resource allocation when implementing its projects as asserted by Njiru (2018). Leadership skills of project manager in project management provides an avenue for the manufacturing industry to improve implemntation of projects. Another study in Kenya on environmental project implementation by Bosibori & Otieno (2021) avers that project monitoring and evaluation, project team competence, project design and stakeholder's engagement is important for sustainable implementation. Project management skills are crucial in risk management, communication, stakeholder management as well as monitoring and evaluation during implementation (Roque & Carvalho, 2013). These project management skills are skills in communication, risk management, stakeholder management and monitoring and evaluation skills. Hence, the project focused on these skills and how they influence speciality tea projects implementation in tea sector.

Project implementation effectiveness can be measured by using different aspects or outcomes and differs as per project, due to diversity of projects around the globe. Performance of a project is the scale of measurement of its success (Takim et al 2013). These measures are the methods that enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the project. Hence, project implementation success can be weighed on budget of the project, cost, time schedule, productivity performance, quality of the final output and whether it addresses consumer needs.

According to Wallace and Blumkin, (2007) as one move through the project cycle in a construction project, ability in handling or setting up cost control mechanisms, schedule and quality reduces rapidly. There has been numerous research focusing on project implementation, Chua, *et al.* (2010) notes that quality, right budget and better relationships between the stakeholders are critical in project success. Project implementation requires the manager to develop a schedule which is well-planned and an in-depth understanding of the key success factors. This study used quality, satisfaction of the stakeholder, cost, time and scope as indicator to measure effective implementation of speciality tea projects in tea industry.

Project implementation according Njiru (2018) was measured using quality, cost and completion time of the project where it was measured against resource allocation, leadership, communication and stakeholder participation. In a similar research Bosibori & Otieno (2021) used value for money, satisfaction of beneficiaries and time of delivery for the project as indicators for project implementation. The key concepts that is used to measure project implementation are cost, client satisfaction, quality, scope as well as time.

1.1.2 Project Management Skills

These are traits that a project manager exercises to ensure positive performance or returns by a project (PMDO, 2018). These skills are essential in determining how managers execute their mandate. A project manager should gain budgeting, interpersonal and emotional intelligence as soft skills (Sunindijo, 2015). Soft skills alone do not make any job done; hence, there is need for technical skills, in project management that is project management skills. These skills help in resources organization and management by the project manager and ensure project is completed on time; scope bound and satisfies the interest of stakeholders and customers. The project management skills include communication, leadership, monitoring & evaluation, risk management, conflict management, stakeholder management, planning skills, budget, time management and many more others (Roque & Carvalho, 2013). Project management skills remains crucial during planning as well as implementation process of the project to enable success. The tea firms require project manager with appropriate skills in social responsibility related projects as well as internal projects especially at implementation stage.

Risk management skill has been and continues to be a major concern to professional's involved with projects across the globe (Roque & Carvalho, 2013). Project risk is spelled out as events or conditions which are not certain and their occurrence has effects on one or more objectives of a project, the effect can be positive or negative (De-Meyer et al., 2012). Dalcher, (2012) argues that, the core purpose of having skills in risk management and practicing them is to improve on organizational value by competently reducing risk that can affect negative on implementation of the projects. Mechanization projects by tea factories and other sectors are highly linked with risk management skills hence demands the manager to be well competent on the risk management skills. Wallace and Blumkin, (2017) argue on the need of incorporating risk management skills in early planning stages of a construction project. In her study on how Project management skills influence Implementation of CDF, Lusesi (2018) measured risk management skills through project managers identified risk, planned for risk and monitored risk. This study used risk identification and planning by project managers to measure risk management skill.

Stakeholder management skill is beneficial to an organization or project in achieving its objectives. Stakeholders may become antagonistic when they work against projects objectives (Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010); hence project manager needs to be equipped with the relevant skills in handling stakeholders. Stakeholders are parties whose interests are impacted negatively or positively on how a project is executed or they can be active participants in a project (PMI, 2014). The tea industry has a big pool of stakeholders ranging from the farmer, workers, directors, politicians, buyers, management bodies, government, multinationals and others who their input has to be put in consideration when undertaking a project. It's not always possible to involve every single stakeholder in a project due to their large number, but it's advisable to involve the key stakeholders and be able to manage their wants effectively. Maina (2013) observes the importance of involving stakeholders in projects, but care should always be taken when handling them and this requires high skills.

Monitoring and evaluation is another key skill in day to day management of a project, it helps keep a project on track with its objective and scope through identification of problems, their causes and provides their solution. Shapiro (2011) observes the importance of incorporating monitoring and evaluation right from project inception so as to enhance performance and meet targets. In their study Ocharo & Kimutai (2018)

concluded that evaluation enables managers in project reporting, attaining the set objectives and development of a communication matrix by an organization.

The other key skill in project management that should not be taken for granted is communication, without it the project may stagnate or die out slow. These are skills in interchange of information intended to have cohesion and understanding between project stakeholders (Ruuska, 2016). Good communication on the objectives and scope of a project impacts positively the final output of a project. Communication if well done, creates attention and involvement from stakeholders, clarifies project tasks and harmonizes teamwork (Ssenyange, 2011). Hence communication skills are critical in project management process and it's essential to have good communication network from planning to implementation of the project.

1.1.3 Tea Sector in Kenya

Agriculture is the main pillar, major sector and contributor to the economy of Kenya. The sector contributes 25% directly to Gross Domestic product (GDP) and 27% from interconnection with agro-based and related industries (KARI, 2014). The sector is a major source of government revenue, employment, industrial raw material and generates 60% of export earnings. Being the major cash crop in Kenya, tea contributes to around 5% of the GDP (Tea directorate, 2020). In the year 2020, the country exported 575.3 million KGs of tea, which was an increase from the previous year which was 474.9 million KGs (KNBS, 2019). This was due to increase in area under tea to 163,000 hectares in 2019 from 141,800 hectares in 2018. The average price of tea in the year 2020 was 2$/KG which was a decrease compared to other years.

The tea industry in Kenya holds a special place in the agricultural sector as is its highest foreign exchange earner contributing up to 21% of the global tea exports and directly or indirectly provides employment to over 3 million people in the country (Kenya Tea, 2018). Increased costs and low market prices have forced the tea industry to adopt mechanization projects in farm level and processing sections so as to enhance their operation performance. Jared (2013) notes that mechanization projects by tea industry are essential in reducing production cost, but can also lead to higher productivity of labor, increased efficiency and increase the welfare of workers.

Kericho County is an agricultural dependent county with a population of 901,777 (2019 census) covering 2,111 km² in area. The county is known for its premium tea which is its major revenue earner and is ranked among the top tea producing counties Kenya. Tea sector in the county has attracted many firms, Ekaterra Tea Kenya (ETK), Finlay's, Williamson Tea Kenya (WTK) Ltd, Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) Ltd and private processors like Kuresoi, Kabianga e.tc.

Like other tea manufacturing companies in the country, tea companies in Kericho have been highly affected by the drop in market prices accompanied by increased production costs, the highest being labor costs hence a negative effect on economy of tea growers (TBK, 2011). This has compelled factories to adopt projects designed to lower their production cost, improve on the quality of their products and new product design to gain a competitive edge over other players. Some of these projects include; speciality tea projects, power generating projects, construction of new generation automated factories, mechanization projects to replace old technologies. Due to the increase adoption of speciality tea projects in the tea sector in the county, there was need to study their implementation and how they are influenced by project management skills.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Running projects that fail to contribute their objectives is not only a waste of resources and time, but also cripples the organization competitiveness. Effective project implementation ensures success of a project (Chua, et al, 2010) and improves the standard of result by giving optimal quality products and eventually leads to satisfying the stakeholders and customer needs. Across the world, the tea sector has been heavily affected by the rising cost of production and low market prices which pose as the major challenge. The average prices of black tea in 2022 for Kericho county was 1.8$ per Kilogram compared to an average of 4$ for the speciality teas in Kenya (KNBS, 2022). The favorable prices and increasing demand for the speciality teas has prompted tea companies and individuals to invest in construction of speciality processing factories and cottage industries aimed at gain competitive edge in the country and globally.

Poor implementation of projects has greatly affected the performance of agriculturally based projects in Kenya. Cannon & Ali (2018) asserts that, most projects are prone to

corruption, misallocation of resources and misuse of firms' infrastructure that is paying of ghost workers which affects the project implementation and success. Inadequate credit cost of production, fluctuating trends of tea prices in export market, lack of robust marketing strategies, poor regulatory policies, lack of value-added project and poor project management skills are some of the challenges that affect the implementation of projects in tea industry in Kenya (Nyaga, 2017). According to IIED 2022, interactions between stakeholders i.e., governments, companies and rural communities in low- and middle-income countries usually involve imbalances within value chains in terms of capacity, resources, influence and negotiating power and has greatly contributed to projects failure in tea industry. In Kenya, projects in tea industry are prone to cost overruns, lagging in completion time and sometimes failure to run in totality (Nyaga 2017), hence a need to investigate how implementation of these projects is affected by project management skills.

Skills in Project management are pivotal in any project by an organization as its key to its implementation and success. Unavailability of a well elaborated substructure that implants project management skills within the cultural values of an organization may eventually open on to poor performance (Kiioh, 2015). In their study, Ling & Ma (2014) established that most project administrators are not well equipped with relevant skills and capacity to deliver the project as per standard. Lugusa & Moronge (2016) attributed poor implementation of projects in Kenya sponsored by banks to lack of project management skills. Factual data (Chamoun, 2011) shows that in achieving project success, skills in project management in a major way enjoyed significant impact regardless of how complex a project might be. For a project to have functional success, the manager running a project has to be well coached, furnished with the right skills in management of day-to-day activities, aggressive control of cost and minimizing of risk through use of most appropriate technologies, hiring the right team, and using elaborate management practices. Cooke-Davies, (2010) clearly demonstrates that if a team is satisfactory trained, its output is more beneficial to the project than an undertrained team. True to this many projects fail to achieve their set objectives due to limited skills by the manager, thus this research study sought to find out how skills in project management impact on project implementation.

Research has been done on how project implementation is impacted by project management in different sectors. Kogola and Sang (2018) concluded that project

management factors determine the nice effects of imposing projects. Simiyu (2018) observed that strong connection exists between project management and the outcome of the organization. The two studies adopted a descriptive research design, other studies which adopted a different research design include Mwangi, (2015) combined both explanatory and descriptive research design, Amondi (2015) used a census survey. Current study adopted descriptive research design to gain vast knowledge on project management skills and projects execution and implementation.

Research has been carried on how project management practices impacts on project implementation on different sectors like construction (Muthoni & Ngugi, 2018), NGO's (Mkutano & Sang), power projects (Ocharo & Kimutai, 2018). Lugusa & Moronge (2016) researched on project management skills and their effect on project implementation in Kenya banking sector. Nyaga (2014) examined how skills in project management affect performance of construction projects. Despite many projects being adopted in the tea sector, there are not many studies focusing on their implementation hence there was need to investigate project management skills and their effect on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County.

1.3 Research Objective

1.3.1 General Objective

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of project management skills on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

i. To establish the extent to which stakeholder management skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya.

ii. To examine the level to which risk management skills influence implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.

iii. To determine the effect of communication skills on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.

iv. To find out the influence of monitoring and evaluation skills on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions;

i. How do stakeholder management skills influence implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.
ii. To what extent do risk management skills affect implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.
iii. To what level do communication skills influence implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.
iv. What is the relationship between Project monitoring and evaluation skill and implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would have a positive impact on manufacturing industry and agricultural sector in general as empirical results from this study would bring to clarity the project managers responsibilities in achieving reduction in cost, improved quality product, profitability assurance and sustained growth of the industry.

Tea manufacturing companies would benefit by having information on the importance and role of project management skills, and be able to plan on the relevant trainings to equip their managers with the same. Information from the study would help the companies in planning their future projects and understand key issues to address in order to achieve better performance and be rational when undertaking future projects.

The research would add to the body of knowledge on project management skills and implementation of projects. Results from the study would add on to theoretical and practical knowledge hence would be of great use to future researchers.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focused on the use of project management skills and how they influence implementation of speciality tea projects in the county of Kericho. The study focused on four independent variables which include: stakeholder management skills, monitoring & evaluation skills, communication skills and risk management skills and their influence on implementation of speciality tea projects. Three theories helped guide the study and these includes; skills acquisition theory, institutional theory and

project management theory. The speciality tea projects were the evaluation unit and the unit of examination was project team members who included project manager, assistant managers, engineers, supervisors and general staff in the project. Structured and semi-structured questionnaires were adopted as data gathering instrument where structured question adopted a Likert scale. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analysis of collected data. The study focused on projects implemented in the last 5 years.

1.7 Limitation

The study was restricted to speciality tea projects in Kericho County, since different projects across regions have unique challenges, handling of the findings and generalizing them to other projects across country will need care.

Respondents could be unwilling to participate in the study, they were guaranteed on the prudence of the data collected as its intended for research purpose only; this helped increase their willingness to participate and enhance reliability.

1.8 Organization of the Study

Chapter one outlines the background of the study, problem statement, objective, hypothesis, significant, scope and limitation of the study. It summarizes information concerning project management skills and implementation of mechanization projects. Chapter two lays out the theoretical, empirical and gaps review along with the conceptual framework, while the chapter three entails the research design, target population, sample framework, reliability of the study, data analysis techniques, ethical consideration and the diagnostic tests to be adopted in the study. Chapter four gives the research findings and discussions. Chapter five provides the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendation and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter outlays an exploration of theoretical, empirical and knowledge gaps relevant to the study. The information reviewed assist in conceptualization of project management skills and implementation of projects. A conceptual framework is also provided showing how variables under study relate.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Theoretical review provides concepts on project management skills and also convictions on project implementation. The study uses skill acquisition theory, project management theory and institutional theory.

2.2.1 Skill Acquisition Theory

A theory proposed by Chapelle in 2009. According to Chapelle (2009) the theory contributes to human learning theories which expands the significance of human skills development through knowledge, experience and training. Acquisitions of skills which can be acquired or developed over time remain crucial aspect in management especially in running mega projects. The theory is anchored on knowledge adopted from Anderson's Adaptive Control of Thoughts (ACT) model in 2007 where knowledge contributes to achievement of skills (Ellis & Shintani, 2013). It was contended that the theory utilized the ACT model which is a comprehensible instigation-response theory. Skills can be acquired through human development or experience through continuous practices.

Dekeyser & Criado (2013) viewed skill acquisition theory as a scientific based theory that is supported with psychology. It also explains the need of knowledge from behaviorism, connectionism and cognitivist concepts. Project management skills can be acquired through knowledge development through cognitive, connection and behavior. Project manager should go through training, coaching, mentoring and education in communication, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder management and risk management skills.

Trofimovich & McDonough (2013) pointed out thatskill acquisition theory is crucial in development of cognitive continuous exposure to specific skill. Skill acquisition theory enabled direct and indirect training and learning process which are comprised in the general learning theories. Explicit or direct learning is advantageous to adult employees who have undergone skill enhancement system of education. The training will increase the skills and expertise knowledge of employee leading to efficiency and effectiveness. On the other hand, implicit or indirect processes make it possible to teach a new technique that is not familiar among the common or an outside the box way or skills of doing things. In project management, skills can be acquired from education or special training. Hence this theory champions for the adoption of communication, monitoring and evaluation, risk management and stakeholders' management skills.

2.2.2 Institutional Theory

The theory came into being in the year 1991 through Scott, he pointed out that design and performance of an organization is highly determined by institutions around it and these institutions give definition to what life is (Scott 2004). The institutional theory stretches out the increased acumen to learn more about the organizations and how their operations are affected by the environment or ecosystem surrounding them. It deliberates about how organizations and government make adjustments to pressure emanating from the projects under implementation and specifically the reactions by the organization in order to stay on course with its objectives (Scott, 2004).

According to Brammer and Walker, (2012) the theory gives a discourse on the efficacy of stratified heritage, benefit of organizational surrounding and how the surrounding atmosphere promotes a worth and coherent project management. This theory plays a great part with regard to the implementation of projects especially those that are of service to the general public. Tea industry in Kenya directly serves the general society, as most of the tea crop in the country is owned by the small-scale tea farmers. Kenyan government has given authority to the Tea Board of Kenya to be the policing unit in tea industry, making it part of many institutions which the Tea companies has to clear with before undertaking any project (TBK 2011). Projects in tea industry are dependent on many other institutions which include, political circles, county and national governments, farmers organizations and many more, hence the

institution theory help guide the project manager in tea industry to manage and relate with all these institutions and other factors in the environment of his work.

Project management skills are essential as helps the manager to scan the surrounding and suggest changes to be adopted and enhance success in project implementation. How frequently the manager exercises his skills in managing institutions around the project helps the project team in adapting faster on changes brought by institutions on project implementation in relation to the environment (Brammer and Walker, 2021). Hence the study is anchored on institution theory as implementation of project is highly influenced by the internal and external institutions which require elaborate skills to manage.

2.2.3 Project Management Theory

Lock in 1996 postulated the concept that led to project management theory which was further refined in 1999 by Lientz and Rea. The theory postulates that project management entails formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Every stage in project management is crucial in achieving success of the project where each stage plays an important role. Different research has indicated that each stage contributes to overall accomplishments by a project. A project life circle affects the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes in projection management (Erik, 2000).

Erick (2000) also pointed out that project management possesses a life cycle that ensures the life time success in a project. The project management theory explains the need for project implementation as part of life cycle which is important for its success. Project has four stages which include establishment phase of the project, project development, main program phase and phase-out. The stages were also pointed as conceptualization, planning, execution and termination. The main program or execution stage represents the project implementation phase.

Christensen and Kreiner (1991) also discussed on the four phases and provided an alternative conventional expounding on the role of each stage of the project cycle. From this literature project implementation which is project execution or the main phase, remain crucial in ensuring a project attains its objectives. Hence the theory

supports project implementation which is part of project life cycle as crucial stage in project success.

2.3 Empirical Review

Stakeholders' management skills, communication skills, risk management skills and monitoring and evaluation skills reviewed in relation to implementation of speciality tea projects. The reviewed literature was synthesized and gaps extracted in the section together with the development of a conceptual framework.

2.3.1 Stakeholders' Management Skills and Implementation of Projects

Rajablu, Marthndan & Yusoft (2015) examined stakeholder-based management with respect to successfulness implementation of the project. The role of project management is crucial in improving organizational development through value creation, innovation and vision realization. The study was anchored on stakeholder theory to examine stakeholder practices on project triumph. Quantitative survey was used where data collected were analysed using Structured Equation Models statistics. Findings revealed that new flow of stakeholder authoritative attribute and models in project management which focus on the stakeholder assisted in stakeholder management. The current study examined stakeholders' management skills in relation to implementation of speciality tea projects.

Dekkar & Qing (2014) looked into the effect of stakeholders management issues on leadership in project management. The intent of the survey was to examine the purpose of project manager leadership in managing stakeholders' aspect for favourable outputs. Success of the project is viewed in different lense by stakeholders hence, there is need to assess perception of stakeholder to success of project. The traits and qualification of project maanger plays a role in stakeholders' management skills in enhancing effective communicating, consultation, collaboration and cooperation with different stakeholder. The current study examined stakeholders skills on implementation of speciality tea projects.

Zhang, Chong, & Zhang (2022) investigated the role of stakeholders as effective mediators in the relationship between implimentation of Build Information Model (BIM) and project performance. Building information modeling (BIM) has benefited project output and accomplishment significantly. Nevertheless, BIM has also

contribured to growth of project intricacy. For BIM adoption to attain a beneficial influence on this revolutionaly context, research indicates that BIM must be synced with stakeholder management. Incorporating stakeholder management theory into BIM-incooperated projects and determining the part played by the theory as a mediator between achievements by the projects and BIM deployment are the objectives of this study. A comprehensive literature analysis revealed 13 key success factors (KSFs) for BIM deployment, 29 KSFs for stakeholder management, and 6 KSFs for BIM project performance. A questionnaire was used in the surveys to evaluate these measuring items and analysis done using structural equation modeling. The study focused on megaprojects especially those run by the chinesse and complicated projects with an advanced BIM evolution, a potential indicator of the complexity of stakeholder relationships and BIM implementation for project performance. The study output demonstrated that utilizing BIM effectively isdirectly propotional to an increase in project performance. In addition, stakeholder management as intermediator cannot be assumed in relation to BIM and how its incooporated in projects or how a projects achieves their objectives. The mediation is achieved through stakeholder dynamics (SD) and stakeholder engagement or empowerment (SE). The skills of stakeholder and participation are required in the engagement process where the project benefit from imputs as well as enhance the quality and scope of the project. A stakeholder is examined as a mediator rather direct effect on project performance. The current study tested the direct effect of stakeholder management skills in relation to implementation of the speciality tea projects.

Erkul, Yitmen, & Celik (2016) investigated stakeholder involvement in megatransport infrastructure projects. Globally, mega transport infrastructure projects (MTIPs) with deep rooted unreliability and complexity are being implemented. Regarding their sum and substance, these projects exhibit conciousness of the political environment and involve a varied range of stakeholders with conflicting wants. In such circumstances, decision-making becomes exceedingly difficult due to the absence of the requisite knowledge basis for making appropriate decisions, which is a result of uncertainty and conflicting interests. This study intended to point out characteristics of the stakeholders and their wants, as well as analyze their linkages, evaluate their influence, and implement stakeholder engagement (SE) in MTIP. Various approaches, including operational, practical, and conceptual, was examined in the SE literature.

A framework model was given to give forth new views for discovering the exact correration between the SEs, to give support to the complicated processes, and provide direction to top management in achieving project goals. The suggested framework help put in place a worthwhile SE strategy to incorraborate stakeholder analysis in MTIP for project planning, decision-making, and implementation in order to define clear project priorities. Hence, the framework showed that SE enable the organization to success in implementaiotn of MTIPs. The study at hand made use of primary data rather than secondary data.

Concerning stakeholder management, Buertey, Amofa, & Atsrim (2016) investigated its effect on implementation of construction projects. Stakeholder management ensures that the participation of stakeholders in terms of people's ideas, feelings, and decisions about their development are fully represented. It has been noticed that after implementation, the majority of initiatives fail not because they are execution is below par, but rather due to poor skills in managing stakeholders leading to inadequate stakeholder input and involvement. This study was conduct seeking to highlight the hinderances to stakeholder participation in grassroots development initiatives and to explore the impact of stakeholder participation on good performance of executed programs. Through the distribution of standardized questionnaires to common residents, leaders, and local authority personnel in marked district assemblies in Ghana, data was collected. Analysis of the gathered data found that stakeholders were not adequately informed about the project's historical, technical, and material justifications prior to project launch. Stakeholders believed they had trouble participating in technical conversations, and there was a perception that project implementers were unwilling to include them in decision-making; hence, the contribution of stakeholders on objectives accomplishment by a project was substantial. In addressing the difficulty of stakeholder participation and its significant effects on projects, stakeholders must acquire the skills in sensibly having developmental conversations or put forward a frontman who is a professional to air their concerns. For this reason, managers who are on the front line in project implementation must recognize the importance of stakeholders and engage them professionally to elicit their participation in order to increase project success. The current study proposed to examine stakeholders skills in implementation of speciality tea projects.

2.3.2 Risk Management Skills and Implementation of Projects

Fakhratov, Chulkov, Kuzhin, & Akbari (2020) examined risk management implementation as well as methodology that is applicable at implementation process in projects dealing with construction. The manager must watchout for risk from the inception of the projects to execution. This require apppropriate experience, skills, knowledge and approach to risk management. A six stage risk management in project implementation was used on an experimental case study of "Lala Residential Complex" in Kabul. The systemetic risk management with forms well crafted for follow-up as well as evaluations were utilized based on PMBOK standards. This was to ensure that risk management optimization goal was achieve. The current study examined implementation of speciality tea projects in tea sector rather than construction related projects.

Odimabo & Oduoza (2018) examined the guidelines to help project manager in practicing risk management in building projects. Skills in risk management are crucial in construction organization to reduce loosing investments and improving project success. Integrated risk management approach improves proactiveness in risk management leading to superior output. It is important to provide project managers with implementation guidelines and engage stakeholders for collaboratie risk management. The study assist project managers to gain risk management skills through capacity building and collaboration with other practitioners. The current study focused on risk management skills in respect to implementation of speciality tea projects.

An empirical study in Brazil by Roque & Carvalho (2013) evaluated the contribution of project risk management on projects success. It also purposed at establishing at what extent is risk management being practiced by companies within Brazil with 415 projects in industrial section being targeted. The findings were positive and concluded tha risk management practices had a good statistical effect on success of the project. This was highly contributed by availability of risk manager resulting to positive influence on success of the project. Risk management practices as adopted through demanding attention to project and risk managers, understanding business environment, using risk management methods and increase attention to uncertainities. Risk manager soft skills and risk management practices contributed to positive effect

on success of the project. The current study adopted multiple linear regression model rather than binary logistics model.

Risk management practices was examined by Muthoni & Ngugi (2018) on performance of construction projects. Government funded project are mega project that take high amount of revenue and time. The study specifically focused on design, legal, construction and contract risk management practice on Nairobi City County Government's projects in Kenya. Uncertainity and agency theory were used in the study and a targeted 10 construction project adopted with 380 respondents. A sample of 190 respondents were give questionnaires. Findings indicated that risk management practices association with contruction project were land dispute, construction dispute, project designing and project costing. Contract, construction legal risk management had inverse relationship with achievements delivered by construction projects. However, design risk management had a definite impact on construction projects' performance. The current study focused on risk management skills rather than risk management practices.

2.3.3 Communication Skills and Implementation of Projects

Zulch (2014) examined communication skills an important concept of project management. The main focus of his research was to find out the role of communication in project management as well as to determine communication role in coordination and combination of processes on project management activities. Quantity surveyors, engineers, construction managers, architects and project managers were given questionnaires. Finding revealed that project managers' communication skills did affect project management and are beneficial. Quality, scope and cost of project were improve through adoption of effective communication. A good foundation of communication in project management integrates time, cost and scope to realize quality product. The study concluded that effective communication ensure improve in quality, time, scope and cost of the project. The current study examined communication skills in relation with implementation speciality tea projects.

An overview of communication in project management was investigated by Taleb, Ismail, Wahab, Rani, & Amat (2017) on projects in construction industry. Communication contribute to 90% of project manager task in constrution industry.

Barriers of communication has been found to affect information transfer leading to low performance in projects. The study aimed at outlining these constraints as well as provide a guide to project manager on solving this contraints. Empirical literature were reviewed in this study. Most of the challenge or barrier are found during information exchange among project stakeholders. Communication management planning aid in keep the project on track bring success to the projects. This provides a guideline on how effective communication is achieve in project life. The current study adopted primary data, questionnaire will be administered in gathering of data.

Muszynska (2015) examined communication management in patterns and teams-practice of project. Communication management remain to be a primary aspect in project management in particilar IT related projects. The aim of the study is to single out actual project communication management practices and come up with a procedure of choosing the project communication management patterns, term and environment. Results indicated that effective communication in identifying responsibilities for project team members, project information storage, distributing, collecting, creating, communication plan and project stakeholders. Communication also should obeys fundamental rules of clear, develop positive relationships, good one on one relationship between members and positive communication. The current study examined communication skills on implementation of speciality tea projects.

Pavlenko & Pavlenko (2020) investigated teamwork and communication skills in project technology. The motive of this research was to develop skills in communication among specialists in IT in days to come and sharpen teamwork skills through the use of project-based instruction in their day to day work of managing computer systems and networks. The study highlighted the importance of proffesionals of the future more so in IT sector embracing communication skills and working as a team since these are among the most desired and essential skills. It is proposed to incooporate training project technology for their development. This technology encompasses the methodologies and application tools utilized in practical software development. The study propose using mind maps for design purposes in order to implement this technology. Trello, Asana or Jira Software are utilized to organize the project's work process. Video chats like Google Meet, Skype or Zoom and corporate messengers for written communication should be used to facilitate communication among project participants such as Slack and Zulip. The experimental

validation of the proposed design technology implementation has demonstrated its effectiveness. The current survey leaned towards implementation of speciality tea projects.

Anupama & Swasti (2015) examined soft skills and how important they are in project management. Its wholy a responsibility of a project manager to without fail run project within the field of project management, which is a subfield of business management. Consequently, a project manager must possess a variety of skills in order to successfully manage a project. Even if project manager acquires formal education and experience prior to becoming a project manager, soft skills are still required as part of managerial skills. Despite being indirectly related to the project's output, soft skills are extremely important in all phases of a project. Technical or hard skills, like creating a work breakdown structure, preparing a work timetable, preparing a budget plan, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder management and risk management are extremely important. The forth comings of such arrangements cannot be implemented unless one incooporate the previously mentioned skills. Communication skills is an important aspect of soft skills that allow efficient coordination and collaboration during the project. The current study centered on communication rather as one of the project management skills.

2.3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Skills and Implementation of Projects

Tecla, Egesah & Ngeywo (2017) investigated monitoring and evaluation in project sustainability.The study aimed at examined monitoring and evalution on sustainability of CDF related projects in Kenya. Project management requires an excellent monitoring and evaluation process to ensure prudence utilization of resources and keeping tract of implementation of project. A team of four peer reviewed empirical literature was utilized to collect information. The results of the study indicated that monitoring and evaluation greatly affected project feasibility of CDF funded projects implementation. The current study was done on tea industry.

Mthethwa & Jili (2016) investigated the difficulty in implementing monitoring and evaluation. Local government in collaboration with other government agencies in South Africa is tasked with the role of providing primary services, such as regular waste removal, proper hygiene standards, clean water access, and dependable supply of electricity, as a democratic rights to the citizens and improving quality of life. To

make service conveyance better, municipalities come up and make use of well structured monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to be able to follow up and evaluate its laid down structures, institutions, and processes in accordance with their integrated development plans (IDPs), service delivery outcomes, and operational plans for budget implementation. The study revealed that a lack of M&E skills and unavailability of required financial resources play part in the inefficiency of M&E. Having a pool of workers with high level of skills from a labor market that is becoming increasingly diverse and mobile is recommended as a solution to the identified challenges. Additionally, inclusion of the local community by the municipality in projects planning and implementation is emphasized. The current study examined the relationship between monitoring and evaluation skills and implementation of speciality tea projects.

Fransisko (2016) did a research on the implementation of M&E on efficiency and effectiveness of projects. Over budget and schedule delayed are some of the issue faced by project activities which are associated with poor M&E. M&E weakeness was assessed using Fishbone diagram in CINTA Corpis project activities. The study used Earned Value Analysis as technical analysus of efficiency and effectiveness of CINTA projects' performance. Findings indicated that monitoring and evaluation procedures as well as management commitment improve project implementation performance. The current study focused on monitoring and evaluation skills on efficiency and effectiveness project.

Chege & Omondi (2020) studied project monitoring and assessment in Kenya. This study examined how the skills and expertise of the M&E team affect the output of development initiatives as well as the pertinency of M&E methodologies used. The study used a descriptive survey strategy and adopted use of questionnaire to collect data. The target units of staudy comprised 156 individuals executing education initiatives in Nairobi County, where 90 responded to questionnaires from a sample of 112(80.4%). Narrative analysis was adopted to find themes in qualitative data per study objectives while descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted in analysing and presentation of data collected. Simple linear regression tested descret associations among the dependent and independent variables, whereas multiple linear regression tested the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable. With a p-value of 0.000, the capabilities of the M&E team was found to be an important

determinant of project success, explaining 19.4% of the changes in project performance. The researcher drew the inference that M&E approach applicability, and M&E team strength had a relationship with development of project performance. It was advised that the M&E team and other workers to continue building up on their abilities and keep up with M&E trends and methods. This study indicated that management must completely adopt and support the M&E team's work and sufficiently provide the necessary resources required for the team to operate well, which this study indicated influences project performance and result accomplishment. The current study examined M&E skills impact on how speciality tea projects are implemented in the tea industry.

2.4 Knowledge Gaps

The summary of knowledge gaps is shown in table 2.1 below

Table 2.1: Summary of the Research Gaps

Author	Topic Theme	Findings of the research	Research Gap	Focus of the Current Study
Rajablu, Marthndan & Yusoft (2015	Stakeholder-based management and success of project.	Adoption of new typology of stakeholder-based project management model as stakeholder management.	Conceptual gap on stakeholder management as examined on success of the project.	The current study focused on stakeholders' management skills and implementation of project.
Dekkar & Qing (2014)	Stakeholder management and leadership in project management.	Traits and qualification of project manager assisted in stakeholders' management skills assisted to success of the project.	Conceptual gap was established where the study focused on stakeholder management issue in relation to leadership.	The current study established stakeholders' management skills on implementation of project.
Fakhratov, Chulkov, Kuzhin, &Akbari (2020)	Risk management was examined on implementation of projects.	The study observed that step by step risk management designed base on PMBOK optimized goals and reduced risks.	There was contextual gap since the research was concerned with construction projects.	The current study concentrated on speciality tea related projects.
Odimabo	Guideline used	Firms integrated	Conceptual gap	The study looked

& Oduoza (2018)	by project manager in implementation of risk management in building projects.	risk management approaches which improve risk management to higher performance in the project.	was established risk management in implementation of building project.	into risk management skills on implementation of the speciality tea projects.
Roque & Carvalho (2013)	Empirical study of project risk management and performance of project.	Risk manager soft skills and risk management practices had positive significant influence on project success.	There was analytical gap where the study uses binary logistical model.	The current study used multiple linear regression models.
Muthoni & Ngugi (2018)	Risk management practices and performance of construction projects.	Contract, construction and legal risk had inverse relationship with project performance while design risk had positive relationship.	Conceptual gap existed since risk management was measured using construction, contract, legal and design risk management.	The current study focused on risk management skills.
Zulch (2014)	Communication as foundation of project management.	Effective communication is a function to quality, time, scope and cost in project management.	Their existed conceptual gap where the study concentrated on communication and project management.	The current study focused on communication skills in relation to project implementation.
Taleb, Ismail, Wahab, Rani, & Amat (2017)	Overview of project communication management in project of construction industry.	Communication management planning provided guideline through project life.	Methodological gaps were associated with the use of desk review of literature.	The current study used primary data.
Muszynska (2015)	Communication management on patterns and teams-practices.	Effective communication entails team responsibility, storage of project information, distribution, collection and creation of information.	Communication management was examined on pattern and teams-practices projects resulting to conceptual gap.	The current study focused on communication skills and implementation of project.
Tecla,	Monitoring and	Monitoring and	Contextual gap	The current study

Egesah & Ngeywo (2017)	evaluation on sustainability of CDF projects.	evaluation had positive influence on CDF projects' sustainability.	in sustainability of CDF project.	examined implementation of speciality tea projects.
Fransisko (2016)	Monitoring and evaluation on efficiency and effectiveness project.	Monitoring and evaluation in implementation on efficiency and effectiveness of project.	Contextual gap where CINTA Corpis project activity.	The current study examined implementation of speciality tea projects.
Zhang, Chong & Zhang (2022)	Stakeholders' role as a mediator between BIM deployment and performance of the project.	Stakeholder engagement has a mediating role to positively intermediate implementation BIM and project performance.	Conceptual gap where mediating role of stakeholder management was tested.	The study angled more on direct effect of skills in stakeholder management on implementation of the project.
Erkul, Yitmen & Celik (2016)	Stakeholder engagement in MTIPs	The framework developed for stakeholder engagement strategy was efficient in implementation of MTIPs.	The study had a methodological gap in developing a framework model for stakeholders' engagement.	The current study adopted primary data.
Buertey, Amofa, & Atsrim (2016)	Stakeholder management and implementation of construction project.	Stakeholders were not engaged due lack of technical skills impacting on implementation of the projects.	Concept gap was found where the study assessed stakeholder's management.	The current study focused on stakeholder's management skills.
Pavlenko & Pavlenko (2020)	Teamwork and communication skills on project technology.	Teamwork and communication skills can be incorporated as soft skills in future IT professional where software can be used in project's work as well as in communication.	Contextual gap where communication is enhancing in relation to project-based instruction technology.	The context of the current study was on implementation of speciality tea projects in tea industry.
Anupama & Swasti (2015)	Application of Soft skills in project management.	Soft-skills that are management skills required beside hand or technical skills.	The concept that was examined was soft skills which have communication	The current study focused on communication skills.

			skills.	
Mthethwa & Jili (2016)	Monitoring and evaluation implementation.	The Mfolozi municipality had inefficient M&E due to lack of M&E skills among employees.	Conducted implementation of M&E	The study tried to find out how M&E skills contribute to implementation of project.
Chege & Omondi (2020)	Project monitoring and evaluation in Kenya.	M&E team, M&E approach suitability had positive effect on performance of the project.	Conceptual gap was found since the study did stakeholder management and project performance.	The current study examined stakeholder management skills and project implementation.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Stakeholder management skills, communication skills, risk management skills and monitoring and evaluation skills were used as independent variables which represented the project management skills and their influence on the dependent variable given by effective implementation of tea companies' projects which were measured using cost, quality, time, scope and productivity.

Independent variables

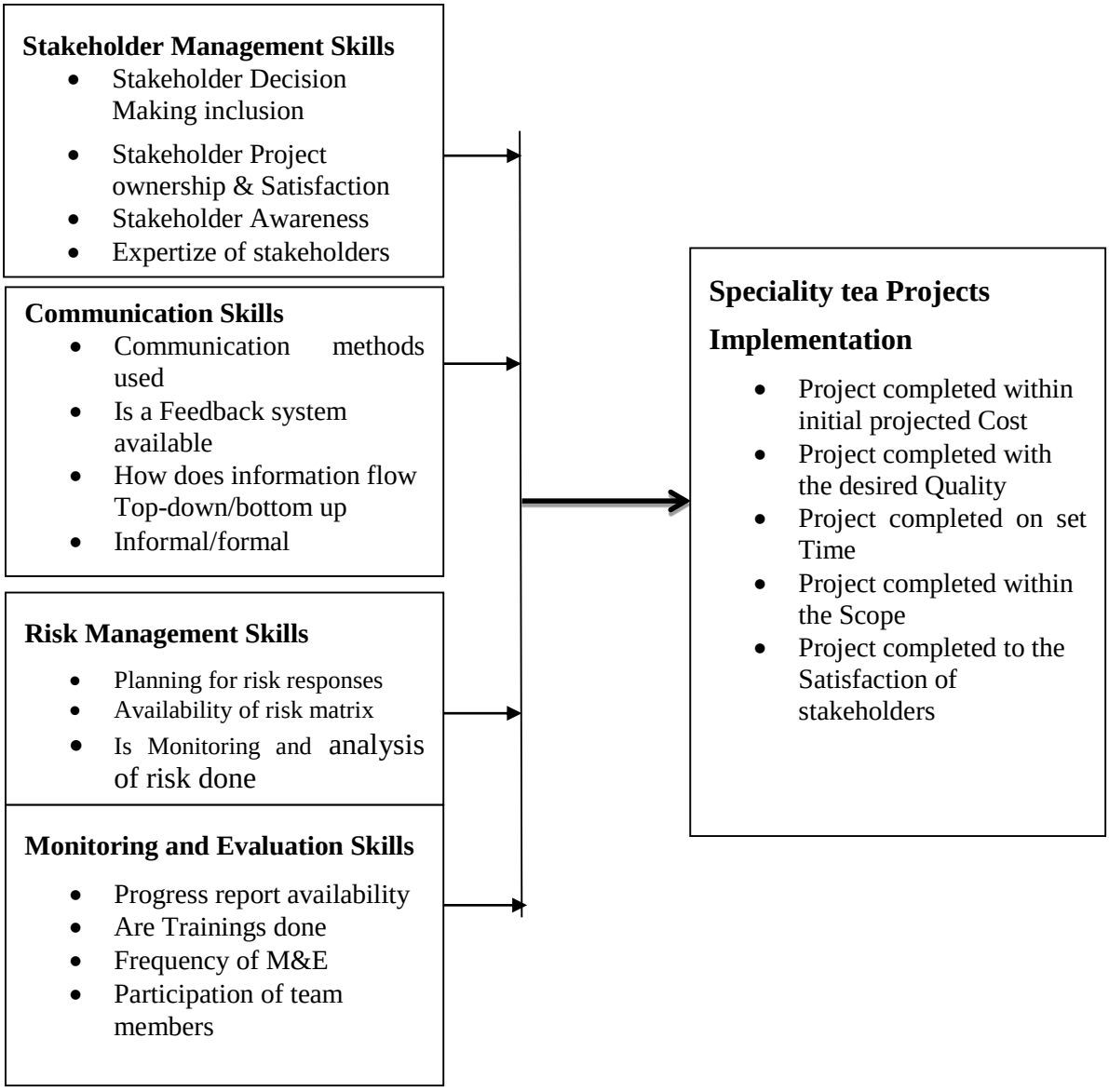

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: ***Researcher, 2023***

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter sets out the blue print of procedures used in collecting, instrument used, location, sampling and analyzing of data. It comprises information on research design to be adopted, population that is being targeted by the researcher and ethical consideration to ease the data collection process was laid out. Procedures on sampling and data collection are also included in the chapter together with information on data collection instruments and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

To achieve the study purpose, the research embraced a descriptive survey research design to make assertions on how skills in risk management, stakeholder management, communication and monitoring and evaluation affect implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County. Descriptive design is effective in addressing the specific distinctions and traits of a population at a given point in time having the intention of correlation (Rice, 2013), with an aim of giving details about a phenomenon within the target population in a manner which is orderly (McCombes, 2019). This assisted in giving answers for the research questions and in obtaining data from different speciality tea projects in tea sector within Kericho County.

3.3 Target Population

Population as outlined by Mugenda & Mugenda (2013) is a complete array of fitting units of data or analysis. Kasomo (2017) define target population as the summation of all manifestations that comply with the set parameters adopted by the study to draw a conclusion on the results. The population of focus for this study was the speciality tea projects implemented in the last five years within Kericho County where 21 projects were targeted. The unit of observation were those individuals who are directly involved with the projects in their companies. These individuals included project managers, assistant managers, project engineers, supervisors and staff.

Table 3.1 Target Population

Category	Population	Percentage
Project managers and Assistant Managers	42	9.1
Project Engineers	63	13.6
Supervisors	42	9.1
General Staff	315	68.2
Total	**462**	**100**

Source: *TBK, 2022*

3.4 Sampling Procedures

Kothari (2014) noted that sampling as a process entails approach used by the researcher to breakdown the target population and retrieve a small-scale population. Sampling procedures are crucial to a research as they assist in obtain the relevant sample. The research used census to pick sample from the target population. The use of census is beneficial to the research as its findings can easily be generalized and are decisive (Mugenda and Mugenda. 2013).

Cooper &Schindler, (2019), points out that, if choices are made rightly, a reliability, which is good, can be achieved from samples of about 10% of a population; As Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) places it, 10% and 30% sample size is a good presentation of the objective population. The researcher used 30% of the population as the sample. The table below shows the sample size for the study.

Table 3.2 Sample Size

Category	Population	Ratio	Sample	Percentage
Project managers and Assistant Managers	42	0.3	6	5
Project Engineers	63	0.3	19	15
Supervisors	42	0.3	6	5
Staff	315	0.3	95	75
Total	**462**		**126**	**100**

Source: ***Researcher 2023***

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

Primary data was gathered from project managers, assistant managers, engineers, supervisors and general staff working in the speciality tea projects. Semi-structured questionnaires were used in collecting information from the sample of interest. The questionnaire used both structured and unstructured questions. The structured

questions were closed ended to make sure the collected data is dependable on and consistent across the respondents. The structure question adopted a Likert scale. The unstructured question helped give detailed answers bringing forth more information on the study aspects.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Pilot study was conducted before embarking on the actual data collection. This helped check questionnaire quality, data validity and reliability. Questionnaires were given to the respondent and collected within three to five days to give time for respondent to answer the question. Screening of data was done and the questionnaires which pass the check were coded and data recorded through SPSS. Necessary document was also required prior to data collection to ensure that ethics are considered.

3.6.1 Validity

Validity shows if the data collection instrument evaluates what they are designed to evaluate (Mbwesa 2016). Validity of the instruments is significant in ensuring practical and rational content for a well-founded study (Oso & Onen 2018). Content validity was embraced for this study to ensure the characteristics and content the study sought to measure are understandable. To achieve this, continuous consultation with the supervisor as the expert was exercised. Piloting of the instruments was also done.

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability is carried out to test how consistent the questionnaire is. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), described reliability as the level of consistent results or data yielded by the instruments after repeated trials. Yue, (2016) observes that importance of iterations of piloting and testing a research instrument to help improve on its reliability. A pilot study was run to help detect parts of the questionnaire that requires correction and improvement and also makes it easily understood and relevant. Testing of the questionnaires was done on a sample of 15 respondent sampled from the target population and was omitted from final study sample. Being a common method in measuring internal consistency reliability coefficient, Cronbach alpha was used to measure the results of the pilot test. A minimum limit of satisfactoriness of Cronbach alpha of 0.6 was adopted as it constitutes a tolerant cut off in social research (Bujang *et al* 2018). The results of reliabity tests are presented in Table 3.3. The reliability

results for the study gave an aggregate score of 0.771 which satisfied a minimum limit of satisfactoriness of Cronbach alpha of 0.6 of the study. As a result, it was concluded that the questionnaire was reliable.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected was screened for competency and finality, then coding and classification was done through Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 23 for analysis. Data analysis is a process which involves summarizing raw data, putting it into categories, repositioning and arranging data to yield a presentation of the data which is easy to understand and is meaningful (Mbwesa, 2006). On which analysis procedures to adopt, the compatibility and suitability of the techniques to the aim of the research and unit of measuring hypothesis are critical (Kothari, 2004).

Data presentation was through charts, bar graphs and tables. Analysis of the qualitative data was through content analysis, while descriptive analysis containing mean, standard deviation together with inferential data analysis was used in analyzing quantitative data. Pearson Correlation Coefficient and multiple linear regression analysis was the preferred inferential data analyses techniques in making conclusions on the level of significance among the independent and dependent variable in the study.

The model adopted was given by;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where

Y = Implementation of speciality tea Projects

β_0 = Constant Term

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Beta coefficients

X_1 = stakeholder management skills

X_2 = Communication skills

X_3 = Risk management skills

X_4 = Monitoring and evaluation skills

e = Error Term

3.8 Diagnostic Test

3.8.1 Normality Test

Normality is a dispensation of prospects that is congruous about the mean, the data with is not far from the mean emerged frequently than data far from the mean. When put on a graph, the normal distribution is a curve which is bell shaped. The normality test was checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

3.8.2 Multicollinearity Test

To check collinearity among the explanatory constructs, Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) was used. The approach is that the VIF values are supposed to be less than 10 for all independent values, an indicator of low correlation between the values, while VIF above 10 signifies a high correlation. Carrying out multicollinearity test was important in ensuring the statistical significance of the independent variable is not distorted.

3.8.3 Heteroscedasticity Test

The Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey test was used to determine heteroscedasticity. To accept the null hypothesis without heteroscedasticity, the value of the chi-square probability must be greater than 0.05. Test for heteroscedasticity was crucial in detecting existence of outliers in the dataset, ensuring data collected is not from different scales and ensuring specification of the model was correctly done.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

To preserve ethics, researcher obtained an introductory letter from the university and permission letter from Tea Board of Kenya. Researcher applied for a research permit approval from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) before undertaking the study. Consent from respondents was asked before administering of the questionnaire and only those willing to participate were incorporated in the study. Assurance was made to the interviewee that the data collected is for the purpose of research and is confidential.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter primarily presents the findings drawn from the data collected from the field. Results of descriptive statistics and regression analysis are presented after the response rate.

4.2 Response Rate

The result of response rate based on a sample size of 126 respondents is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Administered	Percentage
Response	120	95.2%
Non response	6	4.8%
Total	**126**	**100**

Source: Researcher Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 4.1 show that the study achieved an overall response rate of 95.2% and a non-response rate of 4.8%. A response rate of 80% or higher, according to Baruch and Holtom (2014), is sufficient for data analysis. As a result, a study response rate of 95.2% was deemed appropriate for data analysis. The high response rate of the study led to acceptance and credibility of the research findings.

4.3 General Information

The general information was analyzed on the basis of the respondents' gender, age, education level, work experience and position held. These are discussed as follows;

4.3.1 Gender

The result of gender distribution of the respondents is presented in Figure 4.1.

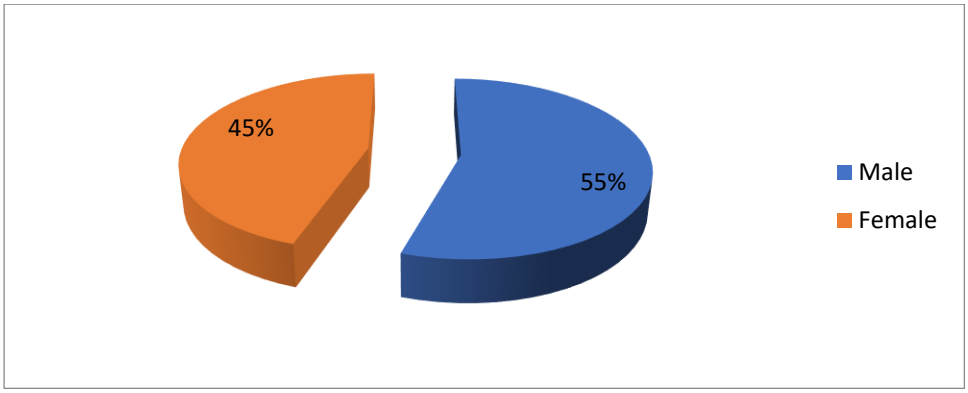

Figure 4.1: Gender

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Figure 4.1 show that the male respondents accounted for 55.0% and male respondents 45.0%. This shows a fair gender distribution in the study. Gender of the respondents was necessary to show a true representative of both men and women in the study to ensure equal chance of each gender.

4.3.2 Age

The result of gender distribution of the respondents is presented in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Age

Years	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 30	15	12.5
31 to 40	55	45.8
41 to 50	40	33.3
Above 50	10	8.3
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 4.2 show that the respondents whose age bracket ranged between 31 to 40 years accounted most at 45.8%. Those whose age bracket ranged between 41 to 50 years were represented by 33.3%, 12.5% represented the respondents aged between 18 to 30 years and 8.3% were aged above 50 years. This shows that the study had a fair distribution of respondents in terms of their age. Determination of the age of the respondents was important because in an organization age diversity brings about different experiences, expectations, styles, and perspectives which becomes as a source of strength and innovation.

4.3.3 Education Level

The result of distribution of the highest distribution of the respondents is presented in Figure 4.2

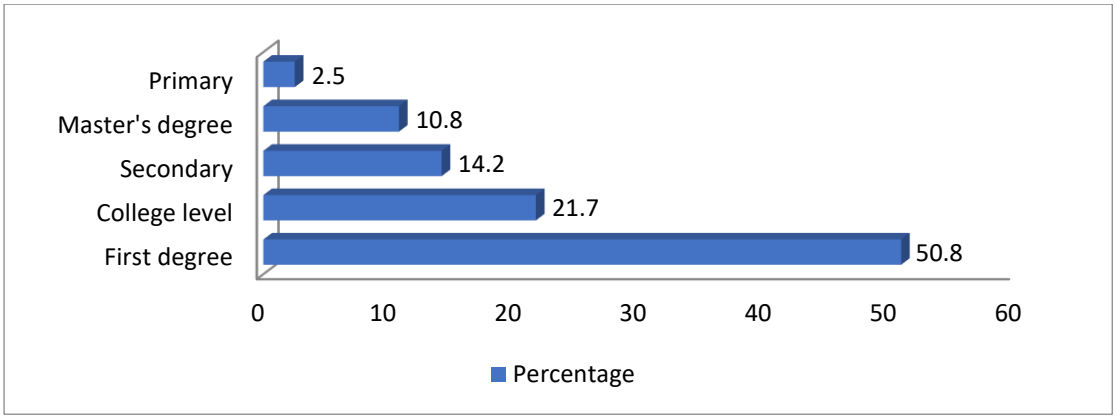

Figure 4.2: Education Level

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Figure 4.2 show that the majority (50.8%) of the respondents had achieved a highest level of education at first degree level, 21.7% college level, 14.2% secondary, 10.8% master's degree and 2.5% primary level. This shows the respondents involved in the study had attained a higher level of education. Higher education level of an employee is important in making an organization a success because an individual has the knowledge and skills required to meet changing business needs.

4.3.4 Length of Work in the Organization

The result of distribution of the work experience of the respondents is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Length of Work in the Organization

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1 year and below	5	4.2
2 to 3 years	14	11.7
3 to 5 years	43	35.8
6 to 10 years	36	30.0
Above 10 years	22	18.3
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 4.3 show that the respondents with work experience ranging between 3 to 5 years were majority as represented by 35.8%, 30.0% with a

work experience ranging between 6 to 10 years, 18.3% above 10 years, 11.7% between 2 to 3 years and 4.2% 1 year and below. This implies that majority of the respondents had worked with the organization for a considerable period of time and thus they were in a position to give credible information relating to this study.

4.3.5 Respondent's Position in the Company

The result of distribution of the present position held by the respondents is presented in Figure 4.3.

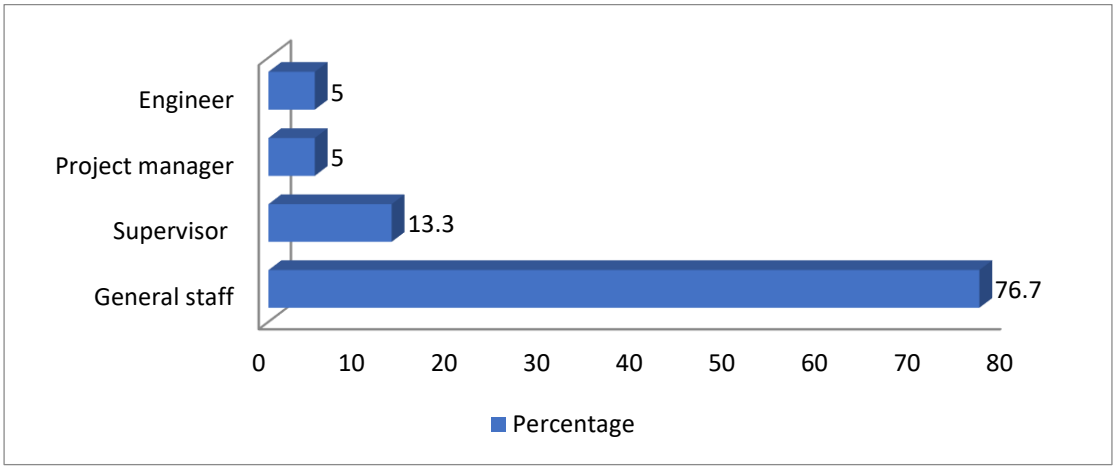

Figure 4.3: Position Held

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Figure 4.3 indicate that the general staff accounted for 76.7% in the study, 13.3% supervisors, 5% project manager and engineers respectively.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics Results

The study analyzed quantitative data using descriptive statistics such Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD). The results are presented as per the study specific variables as follows:

4.4.1 Stakeholder Management Skills

The study sought to establish the extent to which stakeholder management skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Stakeholder Management Skills

Statements	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD
Stakeholder management skills is critical in implementation of projects by tea companies	0.8	9.2	8.3	35.0	46.7	4.31	0.814
There is stakeholders input in planning of the projects and decision making	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0	4.56	0.846
Stakeholders involvement in the projects by managers promotes their satisfaction, and smooth flow of the project	0.0	12.5	0.0	33.3	54.2	4.60	0.917
Projects take care of user's needs in all outcomes.	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.2	58.3	4.53	1.006
Aggregate score						**4.50**	**0.896**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.4 show that the majority of the respondents indicated that stakeholder management skills is critical in implementation of projects by tea companies. All the respondents agreed that there is a stakeholder input in planning of the projects and decision making. The statement that stakeholders' involvement in the projects by managers promotes their satisfaction and smooth flow of the project was agreed by 87.5% of the respondents. In addition, most (87.5%) agreed that projects take care of user's needs in all outcomes. These results were supported by an aggregate mean score of 4.50 which indicates that the respondents strongly agreed to most of these statements based on 5-point likert scale. The finding agree with Rajablu, Marthndan & Yusoft (2015) who examined stakeholder-based management with

respect to successfulness of the project and established that The role of project management is crucial in improving organizational development through value creation, innovation and vision realization. The findings also indicate that new flow of stakeholder authoritative attribute and models in project management which focus on the stakeholder assisted in stakeholder management. The finding also agreed with Chinyio and Olomolaiye (2010) who indicated that stakeholder management skill is beneficial to an organization or project in achieving its objectives, stakeholders may become antagonistic when they work against projects objectives.

4.4.2 Risk Management Skills

The study sought to examine the level to which risk management skills influence implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics results are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Risk Management Skills

Statements	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD
Project Risk management is important in project implementation	0.0	4.2	1.7	56.7	37.5	3.54	0.896
Effectiveness of risk management is dependent on the skill levels of the manager.	0.0	0.0	0.8	35.8	55.8	4.08	1.741
Risk management skills are required to safeguard the projects from uncertainties e.g. resource shortage, strikes	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	83.3	4.66	0.512
Project managers have defined type of risks well.	4.2	4.2	0.0	60.8	30.8	4.63	0.971
There is proper planning of risks by management	0.0	14.2	0.0	55.0	30.8	4.55	1.370
Risk management processes have enabled the project to be done within the right time.	0.0	2.5	0.0	33.3	64.2	3.99	1.380
Aggregate score						**4.24**	**1.145**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.5 show that most (94.2%) agreed that project risk management is important in project implementation. It was revealed that effectiveness of risk management is dependent on the skill levels of the manager as agreed by 91.6% of the respondents. The statement that risk management skills are required to safeguard the

projects from uncertainties e.g., resource shortage, strikes was agreed by all the respondents. 91.6% of the respondents agreed that project managers have defined type of risks well. 85.8% of the respondents indicated that there is proper planning of risks by management. The study also revealed that risk management processes have enabled the project to be done within the right time as agreed by 97.5% of the respondents. The aggregate mean score of indicate that the respondents mostly agreed on these statements.

The finding concur with Fakhratov, Chulkov, Kuzhin, & Akbari (2020) who examined risk management implementation as well as methodology that is applicable at implementation process in projects dealing with construction and found that the manager must watchout for risk from the inception of the projects to execution. This require apppropriate experience, skills, knowledge and approach to risk management. The finding concur with Dalcher, (2012) who argues that, the core purpose of having skills in risk management and practicing them is to improve on organizational value by competently reducing risk that can affect negative on implementation of the projects. The finding also agree with Wallace and Blumkin, (2007) who argue on the need of incorporating risk management skills in early planning stages of a construction project. In her study on how Project management skills influence Implementation of CDF.

4.4.3 Communication Skills

The study sought to determine the effect of communication skills on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics results are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Communication Skills

Statements	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD
Communication skills among staff are important in the implementation of speciality tea projects.	8.3	0.0	11.7	36.7	43.3	4.09	1.064
There is a clear communication channel that allows stakeholders to give their input in identifying client's needs.	0.0	0.0	11.7	45.0	43.3	4.56	0.811
There is frequent team meetings to discuss project implementation	0.0	0.0	4.2	45.8	50.0	4.53	1.413
The information flow is not one sided, both bottom up and top down flow of information is exercised	0.0	6.7	0.0	10.8	75.0	4.59	1.509
There is a feedback system in place to enhance communication	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.8	84.2	3.82	0.548
Aggregate score						**4.32**	**1.069**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.6 show that the majority (80.0%) of the respondents agreed that communication skills among staff are important in the implementation of speciality tea projects. The statement that there is a clear communication channel that allows stakeholders to give their input in identifying client's needs was agreed by 88.3% of the respondents. 95.8% of the respondents agreed that there is a frequent team meeting to discuss project implementation. The study found that the information flow is not one sided, both bottom up and top-down flow of information is exercised as

agreed by 85.8% of the respondents. The respondents agreed that there is a feedback system in place to enhance communication.

The finding agree with Zulch (2014) who examined communication skills an important concept of project management and the finding revealed that project managers' communication skills did affect project management and are beneficial. Quality, scope and cost of project were improve through adoption of effective communication. The findings concur with Ssenyange (2011) who observe that good communication on the objectives and scope of a project impacts positively the final output of a project. Communication if well done, creates attention and involvement from stakeholders, clarifies project tasks and harmonizes teamwork. The finding also agreed with Muszynska (2015) who examined communication management in patterns and teams-practice of project and results indicated that effective communication in identifying responsibilities for project team members, project information storage, distributing, collecting, creating, communication plan and project stakeholders.

4.4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Skills

The study sought to find out the influence of monitoring and evaluation skills on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics results are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Monitoring and Evaluation Skills

Statements	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD
The organization has a well-structured plan for appraising and keeping tabs on projects/service delivery	0.0	5.0	0.0	64.2	30.8	4.57	1.514
Monitoring and evaluation skills are important in implementation of projects by tea companies	0.0	0.0	0.0	35.0	65.0	4.33	0.714
Project status is trailed regularly and relevant stakeholders updated on the same/ availability of a progress report	0.0	5.8	0.8	45.0	38.3	4.61	0.715
Processes are archived and data referred in making management decisions	0.0	0.8	0.0	40.8	58.3	4.52	1.294
There is training of staff on monitoring and evaluation	0.0	0.0	11.7	45.0	43.3	4.06	0.813
Aggregate Score						**4.42**	**1.01**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.7 shows that the respondents agreed that the organization has a well-structured plan for appraising and keeping tabs on projects/service delivery as represented by 95.0%. The statement that monitoring and evaluation skills are important in implementation of projects by tea companies was agreed by all the respondents. 83.3% of the respondents agreed that project status is trailed regularly and relevant stakeholders updated on the same/ availability of a progress report. Most

(99.2%) of the respondents agreed that processes are archived and data referred in making management decisions. The study revealed that there is training of staff on monitoring and evaluation as 88.3% of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. The study further revealed that these statements were mostly agreed by the respondents as indicated by an aggregate mean score of 4.42 based on a 5-point likert scale.

The finding concur with Tecla, Egesah & Ngeywo (2017) who investigated monitoring and evaluation in project sustainability and found that project management requires an excellent monitoring and evaluation process to ensure prudence utilization of resources and keeping tract of implementation of project. The finding concur with Shapiro (2011) who observes the importance of incorporating monitoring and evaluation right from project inception so as to enhance performance and meet targets. The finding also agree with Ocharo & Kimutai (2018) who concluded that evaluation enables managers in project reporting, attaining the set objectives and development of a communication matrix by an organization.

4.4.5 Project Implementation

The study sought to examine the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics results are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Project Implementation

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD
The project has been done within the budget cost based on the financial plans done.	0.0	12.5	0.0	33.3	54.2	4.08	0.744
The quality of the project output is up to the standard required due to good management skills and stakeholder involvement.	4.2	4.2	0.0	60.8	30.8	4.27	1.130
The Projects was finished on time line given based on proper risk assessment and management done.	0.0	14.2	0.0	55.0	30.8	3.64	1.361
The scope of the project are maintained through the project since there exist proper monitoring and control of the projects	8.3	0.0	11.7	36.7	43.3	4.72	0.776
Stakeholders are satisfied on how the project is being implemented	0.0	0.0	11.7	45.0	43.3	4.53	1.219
Aggregate Score						**4.24**	**1.046**

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.8 shows that most (87.5%) of the respondents agreed that the project has been done within the budget cost based on the financial plans done. 91.6% of the respondents agreed that the quality of the project output is up to the standard

required due to good management skills and stakeholder involvement. The study revealed that the projects were finished on time line given based on proper risk assessment and management done as agreed by 85.8% of the respondents. The statement that the scope of the project are maintained through the project since there exist proper monitoring and control of the projects was agreed by 80.0% of the respondents. The study also revealed that stakeholders are satisfied on how the project is being implemented as agreed by 88.3% of the respondents. The further found that these statements were agreed by most of the respondents as indicated by an aggregate mean score of 4.24 based on a 5 –point likert scale.

The finding agrees with Crispin (2020) who observes that project management has been associated with major development in different sectors. The biggest concern by a project manager is ensuring that objectives set for a project are achieved and this requires high skills from stakeholders. The finding concur with Stevens (2016) who observe that acknowledges that project success can be positioned on how complex a project is, process involved in contracting, relationship between relevant parties, the leadership qualities and skills of the project manager and the competence of the stakeholders. The finding also agree with According to Ali & Rahmat (2014) who observe that a lucrative project is one that is finished in time, on set budget and satisfies the relevant stakeholders' wants. Most of the projects in tea industry are construction projects, where a new processing plant is being constructed, a new line is being installed or replacement of old technologies.

4.5 Diagnostic Test Results

The study carried out diagnostic tests that included; multicollinearity test and normality test. These are discussed as follows;

4.5.1 Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity was determined by using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The findings are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Collinearity Tests	
	Tolerance	VIF
Stakeholder management skills	0.845	5.312
Risk management skills	0.764	2.527
Communication skills	0.791	4.617
Monitoring and evaluation skills	0.667	1.174

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results as presented in Table 4.9 indicate that the VIF values of all the variables studied was less than 10. According to Field (2013), a Value Inflation Factor (VIF) of less than 10 and a Tolerance of more than 0.1 in a regression model indicates the lack of multicollinearity. Therefore, it was concluded that none of the independent variables could suffer from multicollinearity test since every individual variable had a VIF value below 10.

4.5.2 Normality Test

The normality of the data was examined using the Shapiro-Wilk one sample test. The results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Normality Test

Variable		Shapiro	
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Stakeholder management skills	0.800	120	0.378
Risk management skills	0.715	120	0.275
Communication skills	0.812	120	0.336
Monitoring and evaluation skills	0.667	120	0.517
Project implementation	0.790	120	0.166

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 4.10 show that the stakeholder management skills, risk management skills, communication skills, monitoring and evaluation skills and project implementation had a statistical value of 0.800, 0.715, 0.812, 0.667 and 0.790 respectively. In addition, the significance value for stakeholder management skills, risk management skills, communication skills, monitoring and evaluation skills and project implementation was 0.378, 0.275, 0.336, 0.517 and 0.166 respectively which are more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a normal distribution of data.

4.5.3 Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity test was performed using Breusch-pagan-Godfrey test

Table 4.11: Heteroscedasticity Test

Breusch-pagan-Godfrey test *H0: Sigma(i)^2= Sigma^2 for all i*
Chi2 (4) = 0.109

Table 4.11 shows p-value of 0.109 is greater than 0.05, thus the null hypothesis of lack of heteroscedasticity is not rejected. Therefore, data set was homoscedastic, implying that the error term had a constant variance.

4.6 Inferential Statistics Results

The study performed inferential statistics which involved correlation and regression analyses. The results are presented as follows;

4.6.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was done to quantify the association between the independent and dependent variables. The findings are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.12: Correlation Analysis

		Stakeholder management skills	Risk management skills	Communication skills	Monitoring and evaluation skills	Project implementation
Stakeholder management skills	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	120				
Risk management skills	Pearson Correlation	.210	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.0845				
	N	120	120			
Communication skills	Pearson Correlation	.351	.321	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.634	.125			
	N	120	120	120		
Monitoring and evaluation skills	Pearson Correlation	.223*	.492**	.303**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.048	.000	.007		
	N	120	120	120		
Project implementation	Pearson Correlation	.691**	.787**	.834**	.762**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.002	.001	
	N	120	120	120	120	120

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results as presented in Table 4.11 show that the Pearson r value of stakeholder management skills against project management was at 0.691 with a significance value of 0.001 which is less than 0.05. This shows that there was stakeholder management skills were strongly correlated with the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The finding is consistent with Zhang, Chong, & Zhang (2022) who investigated the role of stakeholders as effective mediators in the relationship between implimentation of Build Information Model (BIM) and project performance and the study output demonstrated that utilizing BIM effectively isdirectly propotional to an increase in project performance. In addition, stakeholder management as intermediator cannot be assumed in relation to BIM and how its incooporated in projects or how a projects achieves their objectives.

The Pearson r value of risk management skills against project implementation was at 0.787 with a significance value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This shows that the risk management skills were strongly correlated with the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The finding is supported by Muthoni & Ngugi (2018) study which examined risk management practices on performance of construction projects and the findings indicated that risk management practices association with contruction project were land dispute, construction dispute, project designing and project costing.

The Pearson r value of communication skills against project implementation was at 0.834 with a significance value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This shows that the communication skills were strongly correlated with the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The finding is in line with Muszynska (2015) who examined communication management in patterns and teams-practice of project and the results indicated that effective communication in identifying responsibilities for project team members, project information storage, distributing, collecting, creating, communication plan and project stakeholders.

The Pearson r value of monitoring and evaluation skills against project implementation was at 0.762 with a significance value of 0.001 which is less than 0.05. This shows that the monitoring and evaluation skills were strongly correlated with the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The findings concur with Chege & Omondi (2020) who studied project monitoring and assessment in Kenya. This study examined how the skills and expertise of the M&E team affect the output of development initiatives as well as the pertinency of M&E methodologies used. This study indicated that management must completely adopt and support the M&E team's work and sufficiently provide the necessary resources required for the team to operate well, which this study indicated influences project performance and result accomplishment.

4.6.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

The results of regression analysis that sought to establish the extent which independent variables influenced the dependent are presented in the following Table 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14.

Table 4.13: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.845[a]	.714	.701	1.152

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.12 show that coefficient of correlation R was 0.845 an indicator of strong positive correlation between the variables. The value of adjusted R square was 0.701(70.1%) which shows that the extent to which the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya was determined by the stakeholder management skills, risk management skills, communication skills, monitoring and evaluation skills. Therefore, the remaining percentage (29.9%) account for other variables not studied.

Table 4.14: Analysis of Variance

Model		**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	102.085	4	25.521	50.164	0.000[a]
	Residual	60.542	115	0.509		
	Total	**162.627**	**119**			

Source: Research Data (2024)

The findings presented in Table 4.13 show that the significance value is less than 0.05 at 0.000. In addition, the statistical F value is 50.164 which is greater than the statistical mean value of 25.521. Therefore, this confirms the model was significant.

Table 4.14: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	0.709	0.182		3.896	.0011
	Stakeholder management skills	0.834	0.549	0.452	1.519	.0012
	Risk management skills	0.773	0.245	0.160	3.155	.0014
	Communication skills	0.816	0.228	0.006	3.579	.0020
	Monitoring and evaluation skills	0.865	0.157	0.317	5.509	.0010

Source: Research Data (2024)

The findings in Table 4.14 revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between stakeholder management skills and project implementation (β=0.452, p=0.0012). This finding agree with a study by Dekkar & Qing (2014) who looked into the effect of stakeholders management issues on leadership in project management. The traits and qualification of project maanger plays a role in stakeholders' management skills in enhancing effective communicating, consultation, collaboration and cooperation with different stakeholder.

The risk management skills was found to have a positive and significant influence on the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya (β=0.160, p=0.0014). This finding agree with the findings of an empirical study in Brazil by Roque & Carvalho (2013) which evaluated the contribution of project risk management on projects success and the findings were positive and concluded tha risk management practices had a good statistical effect on success of the project.

The communication skills was found to have a positive and significant influence on the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya (β=0.006, p=0.0020). The finding concurs with Pavlenko & Pavlenko (2020) who investigated teamwork and communication skills in project technology. The study highlighted the importance of proffesionals of the future more so in IT sector embracing communication skills and working as a team since these are among the most desired and essential skills.

The monitoring and evaluation skills was found to have a positive and significant influence on the implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya (β=0.317, p=0.0010). The finding concurs with Fransisko (2016) who did a research on the implementation of M&E on efficiency and effectiveness of projects. Findings indicated that monitoring and evaluation procedures as well as management commitment improve project implementation performance.

The established regression equation was confirmed as follows;

Project implementation = 0.709 + 0.452 (stakeholder management skills) + 0.160 (risk management skills) + 0.006 (communication skills) + 0.317 (monitoring and evaluation skills)

4.7 Results of Qualitative Data Analysis

4.7.1 Stakeholder Management Skills

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which stakeholder management skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. They indicated that stakeholders are an essential part of every project and company. Any project is guaranteed to succeed thanks to their involvement and contribution. A project's objectives are translated into goals through effective stakeholder engagement, which also guarantees that everyone involved in the project is on board. Every stakeholder has a different viewpoint on how to make the project and organization successful. Consensus and shared understanding are essential for fostering the project's positive momentum and vision.

4.7.2 Risk Management Skills

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which risk management skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. They indicated that project managers can determine which projects require attention and where they are by using risk management skills. Teams that take a strong approach to risk management are able to communicate about project challenges more effectively and quickly. Risk management techniques enable the team to identify issues much sooner. Project managers can now make more informed decisions based on the reality of a project because they have access to better quality and more useful data.

4.7.3 Communication Skills

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which communication skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. They indicated that project management requires effective communication in order for work to proceed smoothly and on schedule. It guarantees that everyone in the team is aware of the project's objectives and knows exactly what is expected of them. Additionally, it fosters trust, which improves teamwork from the beginning to the end of the project. Since professionals in project teams frequently come from a variety of backgrounds and skill sets, effective communication is essential to keeping everyone informed and focused. In order to ensure the project's success, project managers spend a large portion of their time as leaders communicating with their team.

4.7.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Skills

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which monitoring and evaluation skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. They indicated that project managers can make better decisions by tracking progress and ensuring that the project is completed on schedule with the aid of monitoring and evaluation. Investors and shareholders are kept informed through monitoring and evaluation, and these parties may offer important viewpoints and insights into the project, which could further its advancement. Using monitoring and evaluation, the management team can determine if additional resources are required. It also demonstrates to them which resources are unnecessary for the project. Project managers can investigate new options and alternatives thanks to the M&E process.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the findings, conclusions of the study, recommendations of the study and suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of project management skills on implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya. The project management skills studied included; stakeholder management skills, risk management skills, communication skills and monitoring and evaluation skills. Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The following is presentation of findings in a summarized form;

The first research objective sought to establish the extent to which stakeholder management skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The study established that stakeholder management skills had a positive significant influence on speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The stakeholders involvement in the projects by managers promotes their satisfaction, and smooth flow of the project, there is stakeholders input in planning of the projects and decision making, projects take care of user's needs in all outcomes and stakeholder management skills is critical in implementation of projects by tea companies.

The second research objective sought to establish the extent to which risk management skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The study established that risk management skills had a positive significant influence on speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. Risk management skills are required to safeguard the projects from uncertainties e.g. resource shortage, strikes, project managers have defined type of risks well, there is proper planning of risks by management and that effectiveness of risk management is dependent on the skill levels of the manager.

The third research objective sought to establish the extent to which communication skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The study established that communication skills had a positive significant influence on speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The information flow is not one sided, both bottom up and top down flow of information is exercised, there is a clear communication channel that allows stakeholders to give their input in identifying client's needs and that there is frequent team meetings to discuss project implementation.

The fourth research objective sought to establish the extent to which monitoring and evaluation skills influence speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. The study established that monitoring ad evaluation skills had a positive significant influence on speciality tea projects implementation in Kericho County, Kenya. Project status is trailed regularly and relevant stakeholders updated on the same/ availability of a progress report, the organization has a well-structured plan for appraising and keeping tabs on projects/service delivery and that processes are archived and data referred in making management decisions.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

The study concludes that the Tea companies ensure that project managers are skilled in communication and decisions regarding the projects they are working on are communicated to all relevant parties. Including stakeholders in the project's implementation has improved transparency, accountability, and trust—all while ideas are shared effectively and everyone is aware of their own responsibilities. Additionally, it facilitates better decision-making by outlining stakeholder needs and allowing the project to be carried out in compliance with client preferences.

The study comes to the conclusion that project managers can make better decisions with adequate risk management skills. These skills assist in conducting a comprehensive evaluation of potential hazards and their outcomes, project managers can weigh the pros and cons of different choices and ascertain which one has the highest probability of leading to project success. An effective risk management plan helps the project stay on track and meet its objectives. Project managers who identify and manage risks can minimize delays and keep the project moving forward. By identifying, evaluating, and managing potential risks, project managers has to be well

skilled to ensure that their projects stay on track and meet their objectives while minimizing adverse effects and maximizing the chances of success.

The study recommends that for project participants to understand what is expected of them by the organization and their superiors, communication is essential. Good communication skills make it easier to evaluate a team's performance as well as the planning and workflow that senior managers and project managers have established. Project planning is made easier by communication because the communication plan will handle accurate completion, updating status and requirements, and monitoring project progress. Effective communication with well-chosen words has the potential to achieve milestones, while ineffective communication can produce mediocre results that degrade the quality of work.

The study comes to the conclusion that the Tea companies have invested on project managers with adequate monitoring and evaluation skills. These have enabled them to engage on early project task monitoring and then assess these tasks to gather accurate and concise data on each accomplishment. By performing a feasibility study and updating the stakeholders on developments, project managers can establish focus and efficiency in completing the project tasks. Monitoring and evaluation enable project managers to recognize possible risks at an earlier stage. They can successfully manage the project and accomplish its goals and objectives by reducing these risks.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

The study recommends that organizations must invest in training their employees to equip them with proper skills in managing the internal and external environment; this will ensure smooth implementation of the projects. To gain Skill in stakeholder management, training is recommended for all employees in the tea companies; also relevant internal and external stakeholders must be identified and categorized by tea companies. Consider these parties' influence or power, vested interest in the project's outcome, and ability to alter or impact the project. Assess their understanding of the initiated project plan, how they define the project, why they are motivated to work on it, and how it impacts all stakeholders to develop an engaging strategy. Last but not least, plan key communication initiatives to execute and gauge participation.

The study recommends that project managers should be trained on risk management, skills in identifying potential risks that could affect the business, assess the likelihood and possible outcomes of those risks, develop plans to lessen or eliminate those risks, implement those plans, and monitor those risks. A project risk assessment ought to be carried out at the beginning of the project planning phase in order to identify potential risks that might have an impact on the project's goals and to develop strategies to reduce or eliminate those risks. During the project's execution phase, risk assessments should be carried out frequently to identify newly emerging risks and assess the effectiveness of risk management strategies that are currently in place.

The study recommends that project managers be provided with tools and channels of communication and regularly have their communication skills polished through trainings. They should communicate the project's status to internal and external stakeholders on a regular basis, acknowledge the importance of communicating at a higher level, remain receptive to feedback, and focus on the individuals involved in the project. This will facilitate the growth of an environment that is upbeat, courteous, transparent, and cooperative. All of the available channels should be taken into account and balanced by the project managers. Project managers should establish a clear communication plan that details where and how information will be generated for the benefit of the project team.

The study recommends that the to specify the purpose and parameters of the M&E system, project managers should be equipped with skills in M&E to clearly identify the problem or challenge that needs to be solved. Since monitoring and evaluation project design helps identify gaps, areas for success, and areas for improvement as well as any potential risks or challenges, it is an essential component of any development project. The study recommends frequent trainings on M&E and also refresher courses to the project managers to polish their skills. It is essential to identify the beneficiaries and stakeholders in order to ensure that everyone working on the project is informed and involved at all times and be trained on basic skills in M&E. These skills will help in establishing systems for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, mapping the indicators to determine the sources of the data. By following this process, you can ensure that the project or program is meeting its goals and objectives and that the conclusions of the evaluation are accurate and perceptive.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

In order to address the 29.9% conceptual gap that was discovered in the regression results to account for other variables not studied, the study recommends that more research be conducted with an emphasis on other project management skills that have not been studied. In order to close a contextual gap, the study also suggests that similar research be conducted with an emphasis on other tea projects in Kenyan counties other than Kericho County.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY,
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS AND TOURISM
P. O. BOX PRIVATE BAG,
NAIROBI, KENYA.

STEPHEN MITHAMO
KERICHO
MOBILE, 0727515960

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Respondent,

REF: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION

I am a postgraduate student at the Kenyatta University, as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree in Master of Business Administration (Project Management). I am carrying out a research study entitled **"project management skills and implementation of speciality tea projects in Kericho County, Kenya."**

Kindly you have been picked to form part of this study. I therefore humbly request you to assist in filling in the attached questionnaire to help in the success of carrying out this study. The information provided is fully for the purpose of the study and will be treated as confidential by the researcher.

Thanking you in advance.

Stephen Mithamo

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Instruction*: Kindly fill by checking the box with appropriate answer by ticking.*

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Gender:

   Male { } Female { }

2. Age: 18 – 30 years { } 31 – 40 years { } 41 – 50 years { } above 50 years { }

3. Highest Education Level?

Primary { } Secondary { } College level { } First degree { } Masters { } others ……..specify

4. For how long have you worked in the organization?

   1 year and below { } 2 – 3 years { } 3 – 5 years { } 5 – 10 years { } above 10 years { }

5. Indicate the position you are holding

Project Manager	{ }
Assistant manager	{ }
Supervisor	{ }
Engineer	{ }
General staff	{ }

SECTION B: Project Implementation

Please tick appropriately where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree.

This section has questions on implementation of projects by tea companies.

Implementation of mechanization projects by tea companies.	1	2	3	4	5
The project has been done within the budget cost based on the financial plans done.					
The quality of the project output is up to the standard required due to good management skills and stakeholder involvement.					
The Projects was finished on time line given based on proper risk assessment and management done.					
The scope of the project are maintained through the project since there exist proper monitoring and control of the projects					
Stakeholders are satisfied on how the project is being implemented					

SECTION C: Project Management Skills

Please tick appropriately where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree.

Part 1: Stakeholder management skills

These provide information about stakeholder management skills and implementation of mechanization projects by tea companies.

	1	2	3	4	5
Stakeholder management skills is critical in implementation of projects by tea companies					
There is stakeholders input in planning of the projects and decision making					
Stakeholders involvement in the projects by managers promotes their satisfaction, and smooth flow of the project					
Projects take care of user's needs in all outcomes.					

In what other ways does stakeholder management skills affect the implementation of speciality tea projects?

_____

_____

Part II: Risk Management

These provide information about risk management skills and implementation of mechanization projects by tea companies.

Risk management	1	2	3	4	5
Project Risk management is important in project implementation					
Effectiveness of risk management is dependent on the skill levels of the manager.					
Risk management skills are required to safeguard the projects from uncertainties e.g. resource shortage, strikes					
Project managers have defined type of risks well.					
There is proper planning of risks by management					
Risk management processes have enabled the project to be done within the right time.					

In what other ways does risk management skills affect the implementation of speciality tea projects?

_____

_____

Part III: Communication Skills

These provide information about communication skills and implementation of mechanization projects by tea companies.

Communication Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Communication skills among staff is important in the implementation of speciality tea projects.					
There is a clear communication channel that allows stakeholders to give their input in identifying client's needs.					
There is frequent team meetings to discuss project implementation					
The information flow is not one sided, both bottom up and top down flow of information is exercised					
There is a feedback system in place to enhance communication					

In what other ways do the communication skills affect the implementation of speciality tea projects?

_____

_____

Part IV: Monitoring and evaluation

It represents information on monitoring and evaluation skills on implementation of projects by tea companies.

Monitoring and evaluation	1	2	3	4	5
The organization has a well-structured plan for appraising and keeping tabs on projects/service delivery					
Monitoring and evaluation skills are important in implementation of projects by tea companies					
Project status is trailed regularly and relevant stakeholders updated on the same/ availability of a progress report					
Processes are archived and data referred in making management decisions					
There is training of staff on monitoring and evaluation					

In what other has monitoring and control affect the implementation of speciality tea projects?

_____

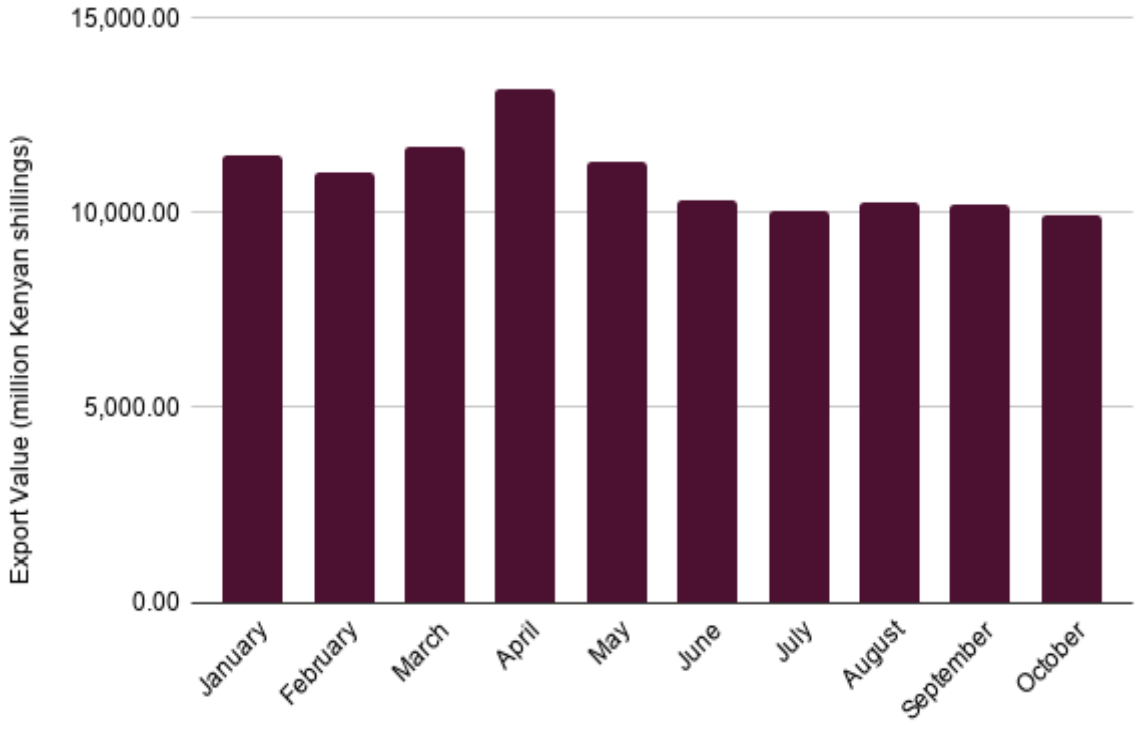
Thank You for Your Cooperation

Appendix III: List of Companies Implementing Specialty Tea Projects in Kericho County

1. Bureti Tea Company Limited
2. Chemusot ltd
3. Evergreen Tea factory
4. Kapkwen green tea factory
5. Kericho Tea East Africa Ltd
6. Kitumbe tea factory
7. Jamji Tea factory
8. Kipsigis highlands society
9. Kapkatet Tea factory
10. Lilim Tea factory
11. Simbelyon Tea Factory
12. Tower Bridge Tea Co. Ltd
13. Kimugu Tea factory
14. Boito Tea factory
15. Chagaik Tea factory
16. Kapkoros Tea factory
17. Saosa tea extracts
18. Changoi Tea factory
19. Chomogonday Tea factory
20. Kymlot Tea factory
21. Kitumbe Tea factory

Source: *TBK 2022*

Appendix IV: Tea Export Value in Kenya in the Year 2020



Source: ktda 2023

Appendix V: Research Authorization Letter

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: D53/ KER/PT/57779/2017

DATE: 23rd January, 2024

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR STEPHEN KANADA MITHAMO – REG. NO. D53/KER/PT/57779/2017

I write to introduce Mr. Stephen Kananda Mithamo who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for M.B.A degree programme in the Department of Management Science.

Mr. Mithamo intends to conduct research for a M.B.A Project Proposal entitled, "Project Management Skills and Implementation of Speciality Tea Projects in Kericho County, Kenya".

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

24 JAN 2024

PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

Appendix VI: NACOSTI Permit

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 611606

Date of Issue: 14/February/2024

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr.. STEPHEN KANANDA MITHAMO of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kericho on the topic: PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIALITY TEA PROJECTS IN KERICHO COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 14/February/2025.

License No: NACOSTI/P/24/33091

611606

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

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See overleaf for conditions