



Participation of Members and the Development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine the effect of the adoption of technology on the development of Dairy Cooperatives; evaluate the effect of financial access on the development of cooperatives; find out how managerial skills affect the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County and; determine how the participation of members affect the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County. Grounded on the Social Capital and Resource-Based Theory, this study adopted the descriptive research design. In this study, the target population was 59,635 registered Dairy Cooperative members while the sample size was 398 respondents who were picked via stratified random sampling. Data collection involved questionnaires that contained 5-point scale Likert-type statements. Descriptive and inferential statistics were carried out. In this case, tests such as central tendency (mean), frequencies, percentages, and standard deviation in addition to Pearson correlation were utilized. The findings show that membership participation had a statistically significant influence on the development of dairy cooperatives ($r=.398, p<0.001$). These findings lead to the conclusion that increased member subscriptions affected the success of Cooperatives projects. Increasing members' participation would increase their buy-in of the development projects of the dairy cooperatives; augmenting their sustainability. This would go on to enhance their development. The study recommends that member participation should be strengthened and embedded in all management processes of the dairy cooperatives to enhance their support of projects.

Keywords: Member's Participation, Development of Dairy Cooperatives, Kiambu County, Kenya

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Birchall, 2004 states that the earliest agricultural cooperatives were formed in Europe in the early 17th century in the Military and were mainly agricultural cooperatives. The earliest civil agricultural cooperatives were also formed in Europe in the second half of the 19th century before spreading to North America and the rest of the world. They have become the true facilitator of agronomic development in the developing nations where farmers have cooperated to form mutual farm Cooperatives e.g. Dairy and insurance societies.

The Kenyan co-operative movement is the strongest in Africa in terms of financial liquidity and membership, the country's savings credit and co-operative (Sacco) movement is valued at over KES 1 trillion and scooping the crown among the best in Africa. Government records show that Saccos directly employ more than 500,000 while another 1.5 million Kenyans benefit indirectly. According to the 2015 statistical Report by the World Council of Credit Union (WOCCU), Kenya has the leading Sacco movement in Africa with over five million members (WOCCU, 2015).

The country's Cooperatives provide over 61% of the total savings mobilized and 68% of the loans advanced by the Cooperative movement in Africa. Cognizant of the high value that Cooperatives hold in the Kenyan economy, the government in 2009 formed the Sacco's societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) to provide oversight for deposit-taking co-operatives, as enshrined in the Sacco Societies Act 2008. Today, about 174 Cooperatives holding Kes 305.3 billion deposits from 3.6 million members are under SASRA's regulation. That notwithstanding over 30 million Kenyans depend on the cooperative movement for loans. The Cooperative movement provides a source of employment to young men and women while providing revenue to the government in the form of taxes. And In supporting enterprise development and self-employment in the Kenyan economy, Cooperatives offer affordable credit to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) KUSCCO (2019).

The Ministry of cooperative development & marketing, 2008 report shows the rich history of Kenya's involvement in cooperative development that has been characterized by strong growth, thus making a momentous contribution to the overall growth of the economy. The Cooperatives are recognized by the government to be a major contributor to national development, as cooperatives are found in almost all sectors of the economy e.g. Agriculture,

Transport, Education, Manufacturing, and the Service industries. Out of the total population of Kenya which is approximately 49 million (the Republic of Kenya, 2019), it is projected that 63 % of the populace will participate directly or indirectly in cooperative-based enterprises (GoK, 2019). The Cooperative movement is supposed to play a vibrant role in achieving the Jubilee government's big 4 agenda which are food security, manufacturing (employment creation) Security (Through wealth creation), and universal health support. Kenya currently has about 12,000 registered cooperative societies with a membership of over 6.5 million which has managed to mobilize domestic savings estimated to be over Kenya shillings (Kes) 130 billion. The Republic of Kenya 2007; International Monetary Fund 2007; The Kenya High Commission in the United Kingdom 2007 reports submit that the Cooperative movement has directly employed over 500,000 people, besides providing opportunities for self-employment to about 63% of Kenya's populace. However, the development of dairy cooperatives is thwarted by various challenges. This underlines the need for studies aimed at examining the factors that affect such development. This study focuses on the influence of members' participation in the development of dairy cooperatives in the Kiambu County of Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

From extant statistics, the Cooperative Movement in Kenya is estimated to contribute about 47% of the GDP and 34% of the national savings; the extant empirical evidence indicates further that some 63% of the Kenyan populace derive their livelihood either directly or indirectly from Cooperatives. WOCCU, 2010, submit that during the year 2011, the cooperative movement reported a revenue of about Ksh.50 Billion. We can conclude from this report that the cooperatives have great potential as an economic pillar for the development of the country. The way to sustain the development of these agricultural cooperatives in Kenya has been debatable since the number of cooperatives going into insolvency and hurting the economy is increasing over time (GoK, 2013).

A GoK, 2012 study commissioned by the Ministry of Cooperative Development and Marketing found that from a sample of 220 cooperatives only 3.63% were considered to be sustainable, 35% of cooperatives had an average sustainability score and 78% were considered unsustainable. This report scored the cooperatives based on 3 sets of criteria; the existence of a business plan (50%), the degree of representation (20%), and management (30%). The poor development sustainability of agricultural cooperatives in Kenya has been attributed to management skills by the leadership, adoption of technology, stakeholder involvement, and access to finance (GoK, 2012; WOCCU, 2010). Munkner, 2015; Birchall, 2011). It is on this premise that the researcher embarked to establish the determinants of the development of Dairy cooperatives in Kenya with a keen interest in Kiambu County. Could members' participation be drivers of the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kenya? This study seeks to dive deeper and find out.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study sought to determine how the participation of members affects the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review of Literature

The synergy of each and every member of a Cooperative society is required for any developmental progress of a community or a group. Social capital is the effect of members' relations in social groups that often unknowingly result in fulfillment of their goals together and individually. This relates also to the promotion of cooperation and unity among members of the same association leading to trust and a common bond. This theoretical framework integrates two sides: on one hand how cooperatives create internal social capital and spread it in their immediate environment, and, on the other hand, it explains how the presence of social capital promotes the creation and development of cooperatives. The theories further cover the various aspects of the social capital chief among them the type of social networking, relationship, and interaction which comprises the rules, regulations, and norms that govern social actions and common bond among members including the benefits that are derived from them (Anderson, Locker, & Nugent, 2002).

This study was based on the social capital theory originates from social capital, which comprises the attitudes, relationships, institutions, and values that dictate the interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development. Basargekar (2009) posits social capital as "the abilities of people to work together towards resolving community or social issue and promote equitable access to benefits of development". Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote (2002) suggest that "social capital can be considered as a tool of economic development among people, which also affects their environment and community." This can either be positively or negatively based on their collective action for the mutual benefit of a group or a community. He also argues that individuals do not generate social capital and thus are not the primary unit of analysis in the use of social capital theory to measure an occurrence.

Basargeker (2010) reckons that the theory focuses also on collective responsibility thus enhancing better participation by members in a society or a community. The theory surmises that when people act or function in a group like in a cooperative society, there is a trickle-down effect on the economic and social development of the group, individuals in the group, and the community. This development can either be a financial condition or physical progress such as a material acquisition. This is important because economic development does not take place without expansion in physical material achievement and financial possessions.

Glaeser et al. (2002) opine that the theory recognizes a healthy social and civil environment, which should help the social group to act and meet their personal, and group interest without which economic development capabilities will not be accomplished. The attention of this theory is to use the social network, association, and relationship for the social and economic development of individuals, the group, and the community. The application of the social capital theory to the role of cooperative societies in development is to evaluate the contribution of the cooperatives to members' standard of living which examines household income, resources, business profitability, and enterprise asset conditions and is expected to lead to social, financial and physical rewards.

Henry and Schimmel (2011) in conclusion suggest that cooperatives are meant to meet members' financial, economic and social needs. In the context of this current study, members' needs and interests ought to be put into consideration. The economic needs can be met through the financial gains while the members can derive the physical benefits from interactions, and finally, the social needs related to social benefits. The social, financial, and physical contribution of the cooperative to the members may include easy access to loans, the ability to accumulate savings, and the acquisition of physical assets like land, livestock, and houses among others. Financial benefit or capital benefit accrues in a cooperative due to improved interpersonal relations while trust and the common bond can increase efficiency and reduce the costs of the transaction, thus creating financial capital which lacks in other types of institutions like banks.

2.2 Empirical Review

Participation is defined as the process by which Dairy Cooperatives members exert their influence on the scope, operation, and direction as well as activities of their respective cooperatives. The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) defines cooperation as a form of union where the members unite as individuals to fulfill their social, economic, and cultural needs. The cooperatives through the founding principles are less on profits and more on services to the members. The aim is to afford the members the services and goods at the least cost. Besides the economic aspect to the community who are the members, the cooperatives are considered social establishments which educate the people in economic management (Selvaraj, 2000).

Davis (1969) describes participation to be both the mental and emotional involvement of a person in a group situation which encourages him to contribute to objectives and share duties with them. On the other hand, the UNO (1979) describes participation as the distribution by people the remunerations of growth, active input by people to develop, and participation of people in decision making at all the various levels of society. The UNDP (1993) also describes participation as the close taking part of people in the commercial, public traditional, and administrative process that affect their lives.

Selvaraj (2000) writing on cooperative in the New Millennium, for effective functioning of the cooperative movement, posits that free-thinking members are the pole of the cooperative. These are well-informed members, about cooperatives principles and philosophy. These members make themselves aware of the problems and have the disposition to donate to the advancement of the cooperatives. Such membership certifies member participation in the business and decision-making affairs of the cooperatives. Observant members thwart fiscal indiscretions and the advent of bestowed interest in cooperatives. Ultimately the development of the cooperative is definite. On the flipside, ill-informed, lethargic, sedentary, non-participative, and indifferent members become a problem in themselves. They are susceptible to manipulation by the converted elements in society (Foster & Viswanathan, 1996).

Gray and Kraenzle (1998) states that participation is the measure of appearance at meetings, serving on committees, serving as an elected official, and finally participating in recruiting other farmers to become members. Consequently, Cooperative institutions, which are devolved economic and autonomous units, can fulfill real economic activities by empowering individual members to pool their wealth for production on feasible scales. This is truer in the rural areas where production units are small in size (especially land), the members are various in number, and are physically scattered by nature and so no viable commercial activity can be practiced unless the individual efforts are established based on principles of self-help service and impulse mutual aid (Vishwanatha, 1994). Clark (1991) in their research acknowledged the indispensable elements for safeguarding the active contribution of farmers' groups. These were; minute identical group, auxiliary income generation activities, formal credit, group promoters, training to group members, group savings, ready access to extension service, participatory monitoring and evaluation; and lastly group self-sufficiency. Mukherjee (1998) observed that the level of contribution tends to oscillate with time, at times it's high

than low but ultimately finds a balance and steadies. Rehman and Rehman (1998) found that there are many factors determining the nature of participation of members in the development programmes of a Cooperative among them; willingness, desirability, the representative nature of participants in the Cooperative, and the asset distribution pattern among the participants among many more others.

Table 1 A summary of research gaps

Author	Variables relating to the present study	Objective(s) of the study	Findings or recommendations	Research gap (method, context among others)
Selvaraj (2000)	Members' Participation	"Cooperative in the New Millennium, for effective functioning of the cooperative movement t."	Found that free-thinking members are the pole of the cooperative.	Focused on India and may not expressly relate to Kiambu County in Kenya.
Collis (1994).	Members' Participation	"Research Note: How Valuable Are Organizational Capabilities."	Underlines the importance of member participation in the performance of organization	It may not expressly relate to Kiambu County in Kenya.
Mukherjee (1998)	Members' Participation	"Credit Cooperatives in India's Rural Economy."	Observed that the level of participation tends to fluctuate with the passage of time. Sometimes it remains at a low key and then takes off and/or dissipates	Focused on India and may not expressly relate to Kiambu County in Kenya.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study used the descriptive survey design to establish factors affecting the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kenya with reference to Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County. This design was used since it "determines and reports the way things are, describes data and characteristics of the population and phenomenon being studied." This study is also built on this design since as Cooper and Schindler (2003) assert, "the descriptive study is the one that is concerned with finding out who, what, when, where and how."

3.2 Target Population

The target population for the study was 59,635 Dairy Cooperative members in Kiambu County (Kiambu County, 2018). This was partly done due to the fact that Kiambu dairy cooperatives lead in milk production in Kenya (Kenya Dairy Board, 2018). The sample population was 398 members. The targeted population of the study was collated from the various Sub-Counties.

3.3 Sampling Design and Procedures

Using stratified sampling techniques, this study sampled 398 persons from the target population of 59,635 using the simplified sampling formula stipulated by Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1967) at a 0.05 level of precision. As a result, 398 respondents were sampled.

Questionnaires that contained open and closed-ended questions and also the Likert-scale type of questions were administered by the interviewer to collect primary data on the factors affecting the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kenya.

3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher used quantitative and qualitative data in this research study. As such, quantitative analysis was done using the descriptive statistics aided by the use of SPSS (data analysis application), and qualitative data analysis

involved the explanation of information obtained via discussions and explanations of the study findings. In this case, tests such as central tendency (mean), frequencies, percentages, and standard deviation were carried out. A correlation was also carried out to test the relationship between the predictor and response variables.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Members' Participation

The study went on to explore the influence of members' participation on the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County. While most of the respondents agreed with the first statement presented to them (Weighted mean of 4), they strongly agreed with all other statements (Weighted mean of 5 for each statement). In this light, above half of all the respondents agreed (52.7%) that the participation of members was vital before investments are made. Secondly, 66.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that members had a voice in the Cooperative and its activities and that this affected its development projects. This agrees with Gray and Kraenzle (1998) who underline the importance of member participation in the implementation of projects in organizations. It was thus vital for members to be involved in the implementation of projects.

Most of the respondents also strongly agreed (63.5%) that considerations about the financial expectations of members had to be made before development decisions are made. These findings corroborate those of Umamaheswari and Kumar (2014) who point out that members' opinions, as well as their expectations, should be sought before making investment decisions. Almost all of the respondents (99.1%) strongly agreed that members were encouraged to transact/consume products offered by the Cooperative. This was pivotal towards the achievement of the development goals of the firm as envisaged by Foster and Viswanathan (1996). Lastly, most of the respondents strongly agreed (70.1%) that if members did not support an investment project, its sustainability was not guaranteed. This is in line with the findings of Francesconi and Heerink (2010) who points out that members' participation affected the sustainability of projects and vice versa.

Table 2 Members' Participation

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Statement	%	%	%	%	%	
a) The participation of members is vital before investments are made.	0.9	0.9	16.5	29.0	52.7	4
b) Members have a voice in the Cooperative and its activities and affect its development projects	0.0	0.0	4.5	29.3	66.2	5
c) Considerations about the financial expectations of members has to be made before development decisions are made	0.0	0.0	6.3	30.2	63.5	5
d) Members are encouraged to transact/consume products offered by the Cooperative	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	99.1	5
e) If members do not support an investment project, its sustainability is not be guaranteed	0.3	0.3	0.6	28.7	70.1	5
N=334						

When presented with the question, "in which other ways does members' participation affect the development of the Dairy Cooperative?" the respondents made various suggestions. Members' participation increased the pool of ideas at the disposal of the cooperative. This influenced the quality of decision-making. Involving members in project decisions led to increased buy-in into the projects as envisaged by Francesconi and Wouterse (2011). This further affected the success of these projects. Some members were also able to volunteer their expertise and this augmented the overall performance of the cooperative. The willingness of members to adopt the projects of the firm was also increased if they were involved in making project decisions. This further buttressed the development of the cooperative as posited by Bhatnagar and Viswanathan (2000).

4.2 Development of Dairy Cooperatives

The study went on to investigate the extent of the development of Dairy Cooperatives in Kiambu County. Regarding the development of dairy, cooperatives mixed results were obtained with means ranging from 2 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) obtained. To begin with, Most of the respondents strongly agreed (66.2%) that there were instances in which the high cost of finance stalled development projects before the conclusion. This is in line with Henry and Schimmel (2011) who points out that high cost affected the success of organizations'. The majority of the respondents also strongly approved (63.2%) that the Dairy Cooperative faced management-related challenges in implementing development projects. Also, 60.2% strongly agreed that sometimes, technology apathy affected the development of the Dairy Cooperatives. This corroborates the findings of Develtere, et al. (2008) who posits that managerial problems affected the success of Dairy cooperatives.

Almost half (49.1%) of the respondents agreed that their technology adoption was usually in time in order to be competitive. Another close to a third (35.6%), the highest number, agreed that their stakeholders/members were usually satisfied with the development projects they undertook. This could lead to further support and success of the projects as posited by Francesconi and Wouterse (2011). Another close to half (49.4%) agreed that high costs of technology hardware and software affected the development of the Dairy Cooperative.

When asked if their development projects were usually completed within the estimated budget costs, most of the respondents (35.6%) said that they were not sure. This was an indication of success in the implementation of the projects since timeliness was a key indicator of the success in projects (Hamisu, 2010). Also, most of the respondents pointed out that they were not sure (39.5%) that their development projects usually yielded the desired returns. This is in line with Avolio (2012) who posits that the success of projects is pegged on their ability to realize the expected outcomes. Lastly, more than half of the respondents (52.7%) disagreed that there was evidence that their development projects were sustainable because they are undertaken based on qualitative market research. This shows that often, projects were undertaken without prior research on their suitability.

Table 3 Development of Dairy Cooperatives

Statement	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	Mean
a) Our technology adoption is usually in time in order to be competitive	3.3	3.9	14.1	29.6	49.1	4
b) Our development projects are usually completed within the estimated budget costs	5.4	16.2	35.6	22.8	20.1	3
c) Our stakeholders/Members are usually satisfied with the development projects we undertake	6.6	16.2	11.4	30.2	35.6	4
d) Our development projects usually yield the desired returns	25.4	39.5	3.3	16.5	15.3	3
e) There is evidence that our development projects are sustainable because they are undertaken based on quality market research	26.0	52.7	0.9	13.5	6.9	2
f) There are instances in which the high cost of finance stall development projects before conclusion	0.0	0.3	3.3	30.2	66.2	5
g) The Cooperative faces management related challenges in implementing development projects	0.0	0.3	2.7	33.8	63.2	5
h) Sometimes technology apathy affects the development of the Dairy Cooperative	0.0	0.3	6.3	33.2	60.2	5
i) The high cost of technology hardware and software affects the development of the Dairy Cooperative.	0.6	0.9	20.1	29.0	49.4	4
N=334						

The responders were presented with the question, "in which other ways can you rate the success of the development of the Dairy Cooperative?" The responses obtained show that the performances of cooperatives were very divergent. While some cooperatives were doing well by expanding their client bases and opening new branches, others were not doing so well. This was attributable to market forces such as competition as well as internal challenges in the cooperative. If the cooperative was poorly managed, its efficiency was compromised. Loss of resources through



corruption could also set in, leading to poor development. This agrees with Mwakajumulo (2011) as well as Maghimbi (2010) who posit that poor management led to embezzlement of funds. It was thus pertinent to have managers with high integrity.

The respondents were also presented with the question, “In which ways can the development of Dairy Cooperatives be enhanced?” The responses obtained show that there were various ways in which this could be achieved. This included employing competent and experienced managers as recommended by Turner et al. (2001). The training was also necessary to enhance the capacity of the employees as posited by Clark (1991). There was a need to carry out thorough research before starting projects to understand their riskiness and put in place the requisite strategies to ensure that their success was ensured. Partnerships with microcredit were also recommended since they could avail of low-cost credit. Member participation should also be strengthened and embedded in all management processes of the Saccos to enhance their support of projects.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation shows that there was a statistically significant relationship between member's participation ($r=.398$, $p<0.001$); and the development of dairy cooperatives.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation

Correlations						
		Technology Adoption	Managerial Skills & Leadership	Access to Finance	Member's Participation	Development of Dairy Cooperatives
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.213	.771		
Development of Dairy Cooperatives	Pearson Correlation	.646**	.156**	.317**	.398**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.004	.000	.000	

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

N=334

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3 Conclusion

Members' participation has a statistically significant relationship with the development of dairy cooperatives ($r=.398$, $p<0.001$). These findings lead to the conclusion that increasing members' participation would also increase their buy-in of the projects of the dairy cooperatives; augmenting their sustainability. This would go on to enhance their development. Dairy Cooperatives should thus put in place strategies aimed at increasing the participation of members in decision-making and operational processes where possible.

5.4 Recommendations

Anchored on the theoretical literature, empirical assessment, and research outcomes, the study recommends that member participation should also be strengthened and embedded in all management processes of the Dairy Cooperatives to enhance their support of projects. The study recommends the need for policies to be in place to strengthen research on the challenges facing Dairy Cooperatives development. The constitutions of the Dairy Cooperatives should be revised and member participation strengthened by a policy.

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