



**STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE OF AGRO- PASTORALISM MICROENTERPRISE IN KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA.**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study sought to explore the strategy implementation and performance of agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: To examine the effect of communication plan and control systems on performance of agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County, Kenya. To achieve the set objectives, the study adopted a descriptive research design, and used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This study focused on pastoralists integrating with crop farming; thus, the study's target population included 269 micro enterprises integrating both crops and livestock in Kajiado County. Systematic random sampling was used to sample 161 respondents. The study used structured questionnaire as the main mode of data collection, and the research questions were statistically tested at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The collected data was edited, coded and entered into MINITAB 14 software for analysis. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In particular, Regression Analysis was used to investigate the relationships between hypothesized variables. The findings of this study highlight the critical role of effective strategy implementation in enhancing the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. Firstly, the study emphasizes the importance of clear goal setting, community engagement, and stakeholders' participation in driving the success of agro-pastoralism microenterprises. Finally, the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprises is significantly influenced by the successful implementation of these strategies. This study recommends that there is a need to develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan that fosters effective community engagement, stakeholder participation, and goal setting within agro-pastoralism microenterprises

**Key Words:** Communication Plan, Control Systems, Strategy Implementation And Agro-Pastoralism Microenterprise

## **Background of the Study**

Strategy implementation is the process of putting into action the strategies formulated so that performance can be moved from an existing position to a future desired position (Henry, 2021). According to Altamony et al. (2016), strategy implementation means putting the results of planning into a real-life activity. This involves the operationalization of the day-to-day activities so that an organization can achieve its competitiveness. For strategy implementation to achieve the desired objectives, the right institutional frameworks must be in place for nesting the strategic plan. One of the vital institutional frameworks for strategy implementation is the right organizational structure (Altamony et al., 2016). An organization has both an articulated purpose and an established mechanism for achieving that purpose. Organizational mechanisms are the structures through which organizational purposes are accomplished. Organizations constantly modify and refine the structure by which they achieve their purposes, that is, by rearranging the structure of roles and relationships and implementation processes. The role of strategy implementation in the strategic management process is gradually creating interest in management research (Favaro, 2015). Organizational performance remains of great concern to all organizations today, including private, public, and for-profit or not-for-profit (Mkalama, 2014). Organizational performance is a recurrent theme for both scholars and practitioners (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1986). Researchers and practitioners alike have attempted to understand why some organizations achieve higher levels of performance than others (Bolo & Ogutu, 2017).

Davies, Kerven, and Bauer (2019) describe pastoralism as a livelihood that is based on livestock production and as having recognizable values, beliefs, traditional knowledge, and sociocultural norms that revolve around livestock keeping. Catley & Scoones (2016), on the other hand, described pastoralism as a livelihood system where the food and income of at least 50% of a given population come from livestock production. Moreover, pastoralism is a form of livestock production system where livestock is reared for the provision of food, financial capital, and the description of wealth among the pastoralist communities. Hence, livestock rearing is one of the most predominant economic activities and sources of livelihood among the rural households in the ASALs of Kenya.

Globally, pastoralism, which was once primarily a traditional way of life rooted in culture and heritage, has transformed into a globally recognized business enterprise (Birch and Grahn, 2017). Originating in arid and semi-arid regions, pastoralism was historically a means for communities to utilize their land sustainably while adapting to challenging environmental conditions. Over time, strategic shifts have occurred where pastoralists have transitioned from solely subsistence-based practices to embracing market-oriented strategies (Birch and Grahn, 2017). This transformation, driven by economic pressures, changing market dynamics, and the need for improved livelihoods, has elevated pastoralism from a cultural livelihood to a microenterprise model that aligns traditional wisdom with contemporary market demands. According to Davies & Hatfield (2016), pastoralism exerts a substantial influence on the global economy and GDP. As outlined by the FAO, the value of livestock production exceeds \$1.4 trillion, representing approximately 40% of the total value of global agricultural output (FAO, 2021). This underscores the economic importance of pastoralism, which encompasses livestock rearing, trade, and associated value chains.

Regionally, pastoralism is the main livelihood of an estimated 268 million people in Africa. It represents one of the most viable and sometimes the only suitable livelihood options in the drylands and makes enormous contributions to social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in dryland areas and beyond. According to Hesse and Macgregor (2016), pastoralism contributes to 10% of employment generation and poverty reduction, further enhancing its role in shaping national economies and global economic dynamics. The global interconnection between global

strategic implementation and pastoralism as a microenterprise enterprise is evident in the shared goals of sustainable development, livelihood improvement, and environmental stewardship (Oxfam, 2015). Strategic implementation encompasses innovative techniques, technological integration, and knowledge sharing across borders. International organizations, research institutions, and governments collaborate to disseminate best practices that align traditional pastoral knowledge with modern advancements, optimizing productivity, reducing environmental impact, and enhancing market access (Davies & Hatfield, 2016). Thus, Pratt et al. (1997) posit that the synergy reflects the acknowledgment that pastoralism's transformation into a microenterprise transcends local boundaries, requiring global cooperation to ensure its viability and contributions to a more sustainable future.

Locally, almost 8 million people depend on pastoral livelihoods in Kenya (Adeel and Uriel, 2015). Pastoralism is a subsector of the County Department of Agriculture, along with Livestock Production, Fisheries Development, and Cooperative Development. Following devolution, the department was formed in 2020 (Brooks, 2016). The department has many functions that touch on the aspects mentioned above, but those that are specifically related to livestock include: provision of extension services; creation of awareness among farmers on pest and disease control; animal disease surveillance and control; distribution of early warning systems to farmers' conditions; training farmers on animal feed production and conservation; and creation of awareness among farmers on best livestock practices, to name a few. The sector directly contributes to the county's economy by improving food security, generating income, creating jobs, and creating wealth. Pastoralism is a major source of income for the rural community, whereas crop farming is not. Pastoralists own over 70% of Kenya's national livestock herd, valued at over US\$ 1.55 billion. It contributes significantly to the GDP (12%) in Kenya. According to Omar (2015), pastoralists possess 60% of the herd nationally, producing about 10% of GDP. These people live in ASALs characterized by high rainfall variability and recurring droughts, which impact rangeland productivity.

Pastoralism in Kajiado County is entirely arid and purely inhabited by the Maasai community (Barton and Morton, 2015). The areas inhabited by these groups of people, like the other regions of drylands in Kenya and East Africa, are fairly isolated from the main centers of development and are generally inaccessible because of poor communication and transport infrastructure (Ahmed et al., 2016). Kajiado County has embraced strategies that align with global trends. The integration of innovative technologies, sustainable land management, and value chain development has elevated pastoralism beyond subsistence (Brooks, 2016). With a focus on diversified livelihoods, market access, and environmental conservation, Kajiado County's pastoralists are carving a path that merges local heritage with economic progress.

Despite the significant transformation of pastoralism from subsistence and cultural practice into a microenterprise, there have been significant hurdles in carrying out pastoralism as a stand-alone microenterprise entity, necessitating the need for combining pastoralism with crop farming (Gumbo and Maitima, 2017). In some ASALs, where rangelands receive reliable rainfall patterns that can support crop production, pastoral households have responded by introducing commercial crop production. Consequently, the response has been associated with gradual integration from pastoral to agro-pastoral land use systems (Gumbo and Maitima, 2017). According to Olson (2016), agro-pastoralism emerged as pastoral systems experienced chronic pressure to alter their land use as a consequence of multiple forces. This includes government policy oriented against the nomadic lifestyle of pastoralism, farming, and wildlife.

Moreover, Mwang'ombe et al. (2018) posit that access to extensive land offering potential for grazing and water resources promotes mobility in pastoral production systems. Therefore, changes restricting access to these grazing resources increase pastoral vulnerability to drought and loss of livestock assets, which pose a threat to the sustainability of pastoral-based livelihoods

(Coast, E., P. Trench, and M. Thompson 2016). Faced with such threats, many pastoral communities have responded by diversifying their livelihoods to agro-pastoralism (Binsbergen and Watson, 2018). The pastoral community in Kajiado County is not exceptional, even though the drivers behind the integration have not been well understood. This kind of shift in livelihoods is ongoing in Kajiado County, among traditionally pastoral communities that have had a strong attachment to livestock keeping (Coast et al., 2016). In the county, integration of agriculture and livestock systems has led to competition for land resources between livestock and crops, higher population growth rates, and in-migration to pastoral lands.

To mitigate some sustainability threats to agro-pastoralism, the Kenyan government, in partnership with the private sector, promoted the integration of the agro-pastoral economy into the market economy (Morton and Meadows, 2000). This was achieved through the setting up of cooperative societies in Kajiado County to open a ready market for livestock and livestock products alongside agricultural produce which aimed at accommodating financial and social capital. The availability of ready markets was associated with steady incomes and high turnover for agro-pastoralism (Tangus, 2014). Agro-pastoralism helped mitigate climate change. It led to improved productivity as well as nutrient and water use efficiency, depending on land suitability, stocking density, and other factors.

Although the government interventions to some extent promoted the integration of agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County, there was a notable gap between strategic implementation and agro-pastoralism (Binsbergen and Watson, 2018). As mentioned, strategic management play a pivotal role in ensuring microenterprise sustainability and resilience (Altamony et al., 2016). In Kajiado County, the strategic implementation gaps in agro-pastoralism's performance encompassed a range of critical factors. First, insufficient adoption of modern agricultural technologies and sustainable land management practices hindered productivity enhancement and resilience against environmental challenges (Binsbergen and Watson, 2018). Second, limited access to financial services and markets in Kajiado County constrained the capacity of agro-pastoralists to invest, expand, and realize the full economic potential of their endeavors. Third, Gumbo and Maitima (2017) highlight that inadequate value addition and market linkages further limited profit margins, undermining the overall profitability of the agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County. Additionally, a lack of comprehensive risk management strategies left agro-pastoralists vulnerable to climate variability, market fluctuations, and resource scarcity, impacting their ability to withstand shocks and uncertainties (Omar, 2015).

Therefore, the establishment of Agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County needed proper strategy implementation to enhance its performance and sustainability as a primary microenterprise. With the rapid growth of Agro-pastoralism as opposed to pastoralism only, the significance of strategic implementation strategies, included a proper communication plan, resource allocation, cultural change, and control systems, could not be understated in enhancing the performance of Agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County (Kyalo, 2015). Unfortunately, there was not sufficient research on how these strategies could be implemented to enhance the performance of Agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County. Hence, this study was significant as it delved into the link between strategy implementation and the performance of Agro-pastoralism, providing valuable insights to the County and national governments, crop and animal farmers, as well as agricultural agencies, on how best they can integrate strategic management to boost the performance of Agro-pastoralism as a potential microenterprise in Kajiado County.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The transition from traditional pastoralism to the agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County marks a significant shift in the regional economic landscape. According to Kyalo (2015), this transition has substantial ramifications for livelihoods and the contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Statistics indicate that approximately 70% of Kajiado County's population is directly

involved in agro-pastoralism activities (Mkalama, 2014). Furthermore, the sector contributes significantly to the county's GDP, accounting for about 40% of the total GDP contribution (Gumbo & Maitima, 2017). However, despite its potential, the agro-pastoralism sector in Kajiado County faces several challenges that hinder its full realization as a viable commercial operation. Statistics indicate that over the past decade, the productivity of the agro-pastoralism sector in Kajiado County has significantly declined, with an average decrease in yield of approximately 30% across major crops (Kyalo, 2015). This decline is attributed to various factors, including poor communication infrastructure, restricted market access, and environmental unpredictability (Davies & Hatfield, 2016). Specifically, over 70% of agro-pastoralists in the county face challenges related to inadequate access to reliable communication networks, hindering their ability to access market information, weather forecasts, and extension services (Ahmed et al., 2016).

Moreover, inadequate resource allocation and budget estimation further exacerbate the challenges faced by agro-pastoralists in Kajiado County. Statistics reveal that only 20% of agro-pastoralists in the county have access to formal financial services, while the majority rely on informal sources of credit with exorbitant interest rates (Davies & Hatfield, 2016). This limited access to financial resources hampers their ability to invest in modern agricultural practices, purchase high-quality inputs, and adopt climate-smart technologies, thus reducing their overall productivity and profitability.

In addition to the socioeconomic challenges, there is a contextual gap in comprehending the complex socioeconomic aspects that shape Kajiado County's agro-pastoralism scope. Despite the economic importance of agro-pastoralism worldwide and locally, there is little empirical study on the unique contextual issues such as communication plan, cultural change, control system and resource allocation that agro-pastoralists experienced in Kajiado County (Davies & Hatfield, 2016). This contextual gap impedes the creation of targeted interventions and policy measures that are adapted to the region's specific agro-pastoral requirements and restrictions. Second, there is a conceptual deficit in the theoretical framework that guides research and interventions in agro-pastoralism development. While the literature recognized the significance of strategy implementation in improving microenterprise performance, there lacks conceptual clarity about the specific mechanisms by which strategy implementation influenced Agro-pastoralism outcomes in Kajiado County (Altamony et al., 2016). Existing conceptual models neglect the particular socio-cultural dynamics and environmental circumstances that shape Agro-pastoralism practices, limiting their usefulness in directing local policy and practice (Chaimakong & Prasertsakul, 2014).

The challenges faced by the agro-pastoralism sector in Kajiado County affect various stakeholders, including the county government, farmers and the wider community. According to Hesse and Macgregor (2016), the livelihoods of these communities heavily rely on agro-pastoralism, making them particularly vulnerable to the sector's challenges. Therefore, any challenges faced by the agro-pastoralism sector have a direct impact on the economic well-being of the community. Limited access to resources and market opportunities further exacerbates the socio-economic disparities within the community, leading to increased poverty levels and food insecurity (Altamony et al., 2016).

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study was to establish the effect of Strategy implementation on performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya.

### **Specific Objectives**

- i. To examine the effect of communication plan on the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya.

- ii. To assess the effect of control Systems on performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya.

## **Theoretical Literature Review**

### **Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory**

This theory was introduced by Kurt Lewin in the year 1951. Kurt Lewin considered behaviour to be a balance in dynamic forces that work in the opposite directions (Cummings, Bridgman & Brown, 2016). The driving force leads to change because they direct the employees to the direction that is desired. The restraining forces affects change since they direct employees to the opposite directions. Kurt Lewin indicated that the initial step in transforming behavior is to unfreeze the situation that exist or the status quo. At this stage of unfreezing awareness on the way status quo affects the company in a particular manner is developed (Cummings, Bridgman & Brown, 2016).

At the stage of unfreezing, communication is very crucial so that the employees can remain informed regarding imminent change, its logic and the way each employee is benefiting. The concept is that, the more employees become aware of change the more they feel the urgency and necessity and therefore become more motivated to embrace it (Brisson-Banks, 2019). The transformation is marked by change implementation making transformation real. At this transformation step, individuals start learning new behaviors, process and ways of thinking. At this stage, time, communication, education and support are very important for employees because it is at this stage that they start being familiar with transformations (Hamel & Prahalad, 2020).

In the Kurt Lewin's three-step model of change, the final stage of reinforcement, stabilization and solidification of the new state after the change. The changes made in technology, structure and culture are embraced and refrozen as status quo and new norm. Kurt Lewin established that this final stage is very important in making sure that individuals don't revert to their traditional thinking ways or practices before change was implemented (Coghlan, Rashford & Figueiredo, 2015).

Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory holds substantial significance in the examination of the effects of communication plan on the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County. This theory provides a structured framework that acknowledges the complexities of introducing change within an organization or community (Brisson-Banks, 2019). The agro-pastoralism context in Kajiado County demands a transition from conventional practices to enhanced communication methods. The theory's significance lies in its recognition of the need to unfreeze existing behaviors and mindsets, facilitating the introduction of new communication practices (Coghlan, Rashford & Figueiredo, 2015). By creating awareness of the limitations of current communication approaches, the theory prompts stakeholders to perceive the necessity and benefits of adopting a communication plan. Hence, Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory is pivotal I helping agro-pastoralists to embrace the change with a clear understanding of its purpose and potential impact on their microenterprise performance.

Narrowing down to the communication plan components, it is notable that goal setting is directly linked to Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change theory's "changing" stage (Brisson-Banks, 2019). This is because setting clear and achievable goals is pivotal in guiding the implementation of the communication plan within the agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County. Since Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory emphasizes the importance of creating a shared vision and providing a direction for change, it is directly linked to goal setting within the communication plan establishes specific objectives, as it involves increasing market information exchange or improving knowledge sharing among agro-pastoralists (Hamel & Prahalad, 2020). These goals serve as a focal point, aligning stakeholders' efforts and facilitating a unified approach towards

effective communication. Therefore, Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory resonates with the process of goal setting, as both emphasize a systematic transition towards a desired outcome.

Similarly, the emphasis on community engagement and involvement aligns seamlessly with Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory. In the context of agro-pastoralism, involving community members in the change process is vital for successful implementation. Thus, Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory notion of involving individuals in decision-making and change processes is mirrored by community engagement strategies through conducting participatory workshops, involving agro-pastoralists in designing communication initiatives, and fostering a sense of ownership (Brisson-Banks, 2019). By aligning the theory's principles of participation with community engagement strategies, the communication plan ensures that agro-pastoralists in Kajiado County are active participants in shaping their communication practices, fostering better understanding, and ultimately enhancing performance.

Furthermore, Kurt Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory's emphasis on stakeholders' participation is directly aligned with the stakeholders' participation component of the communication plan. The theory underscores the importance of involving individuals who are directly affected by change, ensuring their voices are heard and opinions considered (Cummings, Bridgman & Brown, 2016). Similarly, stakeholders' participation within the communication plan involves engaging various actors, including agro-pastoralists, local leaders, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. By facilitating stakeholders' participation, the communication plan harnesses diverse perspectives and insights, enhancing its effectiveness and relevance (Hamel & Prahalad, 2020). Hence, stakeholders' participation resonates with the theory's principles of collaboration and shared decision-making, ultimately leading to a more successful implementation of the communication plan and improved performance in the agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County.

### **Contingency Theory**

Contingency Theory was established in the 1960s by Tom Burns and G.M. Stalker in response to the rising understanding that there is no universally applicable management technique that fits all scenarios (Otley, 2016). According to this idea, the efficacy of organizational structures, processes, and strategies is determined by the fit between these aspects and the unique features of the environment in which the organization functions. In essence, it implies that there is no one-size-fits-all management solution and that the optimum strategy changes according to aspects such as uncertainty, complexity, and technology (Islam & Hu, 2014). As revealed by Harney (2023), Contingency Theory stresses the need of adapting organizational methods to the specific conditions and demands of each scenario, arguing for a flexible and context-sensitive approach to management that is in sync with the complexities of the external world.

In the context of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, the Contingency theory's relevance lies in understanding how control systems impact microenterprise performance. The theory suggests that the choice and design of control systems should match the complexity and uncertainty of the agro-pastoral environment (Harney, 2023). This means that effective control systems should be adaptable and flexible to accommodate the unpredictability of factors such as weather patterns and market fluctuations. By analyzing the Contingency Theory, agro-pastoralists can tailor their control systems to suit the specific challenges faced in Kajiado County, enhancing performance by ensuring that management practices are responsive and aligned with the dynamic agro-pastoral context.

Feedback mechanisms are critical for continuous improvement and adaptation, which align with the principles of Contingency Theory (Otley, 2016). The theory emphasizes that in uncertain and complex environments, organizations should adopt control systems that allow for regular feedback and adjustment (Islam & Hu, 2014). In the context of agro-pastoralism in Kajiado

County, incorporating feedback mechanisms enables agro-pastoralists to monitor the impact of their actions, adapt to changing conditions, and refine their strategies. By embracing the Contingency Theory's insights, agro-pastoralists can foster sustainability through responsive management practices, enhance revenue by refining their approaches based on feedback, and generate employment opportunities by adapting to evolving demands within the agro-pastoral sector.

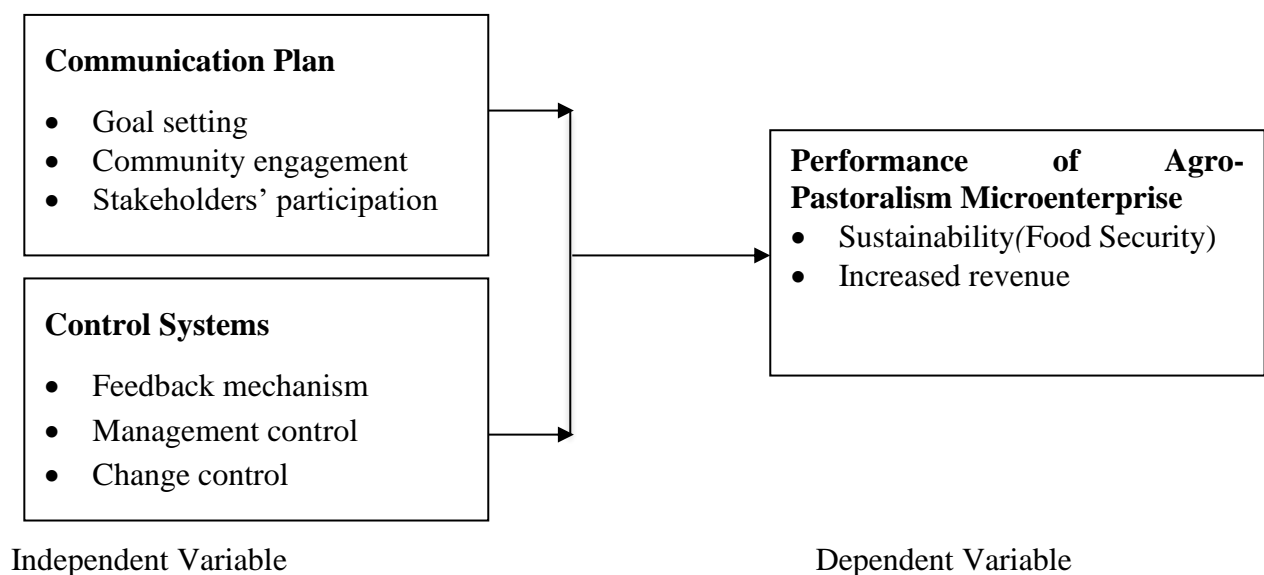
Management control involves establishing procedures to guide organizational activities, which aligns with the theory's focus on adapting to varying conditions. In the agro-pastoralism context in Kajiado County, tailoring management control practices to the specific challenges of resource scarcity, climate variability, and market dynamics is essential (Harney, 2023). By applying Contingency Theory principles, agro-pastoralists can develop management control strategies that promote sustainability through efficient resource use, increase revenue by optimizing production processes, and generate employment opportunities by fostering efficient value chains that respond to market changes.

The Contingency Theory suggests that control systems should adapt to different circumstances, and this applies to change initiatives (Donaldson, 2016). In Kajiado County, changes such as adopting new technologies or diversifying product offerings should align with the agro-pastoral context. By considering the Contingency theory, agro-pastoralists can ensure that change is managed in a way that promotes sustainability through gradual adaptation, increases revenue by introducing innovations aligned with local conditions, and generates employment opportunities by embracing new practices that align with the dynamic agro-pastoral sector.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework hereunder illustrates the perceived link between the independent and dependent variable. The conceptual framework was founded from the literature review, which depicts a linkage between dependent variable and independent variable. Influence of Communication Plan, Resource Allocation, Culture, and Control Systems.

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**





## **Empirical Literature Review**

### **Communication Plan and Performance**

Communication Plan helps firms to build and sustain performance; therefore, it bolsters organization's ability to hold their ground in a dynamic and complex environment particularly in the short-run (Amburgey et al., 1990). According to Taiwo and Idunnu (2019), managers play an important role in Communication Plan of driving functional strategies, which have short-term horizons but are an imperative for achieving corporate strategies. Strategies are carefully crafted by organizations to aid in the achievement of more favorable positions in the market place (Waruhiu H. (2014).

Bassa (2015) investigated the link between strategic planning practice and strategy implementation in public universities in Ethiopia. The research data for this study was collected through questionnaires administered to staff and students as well as through interviews involving the members of management team of selected public universities. Similarly, Anichebe and Agu (2020) studied the effect of Communication Plan on implementation of strategy in microenterprise organizations in Enugu State in Nigeria. The study assessed the extent of application and workability of formulated strategies in the target universities. This study was however carried out in Nigeria and thus its conclusion may not directly apply in the case of Agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County.

Ongonge (2020) sought determine how strategic planning has assisted Action Aid Kenya (AAK) to improve in performance of its programs. This study was conducted using case study approach in Action Aid Kenya. Opano (2020) conducted an investigation to ascertain strategic planning and implementation practices at the Kisii County Government in Kenya. The researcher gathered qualitative data from the County Secretary, Deputy Speaker, County Development Officer (CDO) and county executives. The qualitative data gathered was analysis using content analysis and the findings could not be generalized. In addition, the study by Opano involved Kisii County Government and thus the recommendation for policy and practice could not be relevant in the case of Agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County.

### **Control Systems and Performance**

Baba Femi (2015) underscores the importance of having control systems in mind when crafting organizational strategies. Indeed, control systems practices are used to evaluate the degree of alignment between microenterprise activities, strategies and environmental factors. Moreover, control of strategy ensures integration of activities in the separate microenterprise units (Gummer et al., 1992). Nyariki (2020) proposed that strategy evaluation and control should be embraced by management of SMEs as an approach for improving corporate performance and to support coping with the changes and challenges of turbulent microenterprise environment and the global economy. Strategy evaluation and control essential for measuring actual achievement against the intended and ultimately providing the requisite feedback for making adjustment during the implementation phase (Vollert, 2014). The essence of Control Systems is not to bring to the fore past errors but rather to suggest the corrections that are needed so as to steer the firm in the desired direction (Pearce & Robinson, 2018).

Ondoro (2017) undertook a conceptual review of control systems and organization social performance. The study was anchored on control theory and adopted library review approach. It explored, synthesized and critiqued literature on the subject of Control Systems and organization social performance with a view of developing a conceptual framework. Ondoro noted that empirical literature was scanty on investigations involving control systems particularly the aspects of description of Control Systems activities to be carried out in pursuit of strategic outcomes. The conclusion of this conceptual review was that the existing empirical evidence is not specific and adequate in respect of the relationship between Control Systems and

organization social performance. The current study sought to provide a basis for the empirical examination of the relationship between control of strategy and performance of Agro-pastoralism in Kajiado County Kenya.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study used a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data that was useful for the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The study population comprised of the 269 agro-pastoral micro enterprises enlisted by the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries department, Kajiado County. The target population for this study was agro-pastoral micro enterprises integrating both pastoralism and crop farming in Kajiado County. The unit of observation comprised the leadership/owner-representatives of these micro enterprises. The representatives thus provided the useful information about these enterprises. Collaboration with these representatives enabled the researcher to gather comprehensive insights into agro-pastoral dynamics, policies, and practices, ensuring that the research findings was deeply rooted in the local context and contributed to informed decision-making and effective interventions

The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula which was recommended by Bell, Brymann and Harley (2018) for a study with large population. With target population (N) being 269 and with a margin of error (e) being 0.05, the sample size for this study was 161 respondents. Therefore, every 2<sup>nd</sup> individual was selected and procedure repeated until 161 individuals were selected to participate in the study. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire which is an instrument that is used to gather data and allows measurement for or against a particular viewpoint. Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the respondents.

A pilot study is conducted with 4% - 10% of the sample population (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Thus, the pilot study comprised 16 respondents which were 10% of the sample. The respondents were selected using stratified random sampling.

Inferential statistics, such as regression and correlation analysis, were used to investigate connections between variables. Specifically, multiple regression analysis was used to analyse and establish correlations between performance and the factors under consideration. This technique allowed for a thorough evaluation of how these factors interacted and contributed to the overall performance outcomes under consideration. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to evaluate the entire model's significance, while multiple regression analysis allowed predictions of the dependent variable in respect to the independent variables, so identifying their correlations.

To draw conclusions on the objectives of the study and answer research questions, a statistical model was fitted for the specification function showing the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. To test the combined independent variable on the dependent variable, a multiple regression model was fitted. The multiple regression models were used.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Descriptive Statistics**

This sub-section covers the descriptive analysis of the main findings of the study. The main statistics captured are mean, percentages and standard deviation. The findings are presented systematically as per the study variables. The respondents were presented with a set of statements concerning the relationship between communication plan and the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kenya. They were asked to indicate their level of agreement

using a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where ‘Strongly agree’ was represented by 5, ‘Agree’ by 4, ‘neutral by 3, ‘Disagree’ by 2, and ‘Strongly disagree’ by 1.

### **Communication plan**

The majority of the participants (67%) strongly agreed that the community is fully engaged in agro-pastoralism activities, as indicated by a mean score of 4.2 and a standard deviation of 0.75. This high level of community engagement suggests a positive impact on the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County. This finding resonates with the sustainable livelihoods approach advocated by Ndiritu (2019), emphasizing the importance of community participation in enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability.

While a substantial proportion of respondents (58%) agreed that the communication plan effectively conveys strategic goals, there is room for improvement, with a mean score of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 0.95. This moderate level of agreement suggests that clearer communication channels are needed to align organizational goals and objectives with the broader community. Similar observations were made by Altamony et al. (2016), highlighting the challenges of change management strategies in ERP implementation, emphasizing the need for more effective communication strategies to enhance performance outcomes. The findings indicate a balanced perspective among respondents regarding stakeholder involvement during strategy formulation, with a notable majority (62%) agreeing that stakeholders are involved. The mean score of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.81 suggest a moderate level of agreement, indicating opportunities for enhancing stakeholder engagement practices. This observation resonates with the findings of Agu and Anichebe (2020), emphasizing the pivotal role of stakeholder engagement in shaping organizational strategies for sustainable performance.

A significant proportion of respondents (55%) agreed that agro-pastoralism strategy formulation has improved farming in Kajiado County, reflected by a mean score of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 0.87. While the agreement is moderate, the positive perception suggests a favorable impact on farming practices, contributing to the overall performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise. This finding aligns with the research by Kavana et al. (2021), which emphasizes the transformative potential of agro-pastoralism on soil properties and forage production. The majority of participants (64%) strongly agreed that there is a clear communication channel regarding strategy, as indicated by a mean score of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 0.72. This high level of agreement underscores the importance of effective communication channels in facilitating strategy implementation and performance improvement. Similar findings were reported by Ahuja and Galvin (2003), highlighting the role of clear communication in enhancing organizational performance.

Lastly, 60% of the respondents agreed that goals are met in agro-pastoralism microenterprise, with a mean score of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 0.89. This finding suggests a moderate level of agreement regarding goal achievement, indicating potential areas for improvement in performance outcomes. The alignment of goals with performance outcomes is crucial for the sustainability and success of agro-pastoralism initiatives.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Communication plan**

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
The community is engaged in agro-pastoralism microenterprise	0	14	12	67	5	4.2	0.75
The communication plan effectively conveys strategic goals	1	7	24	58	10	3.8	0.95
Everyone gets involved in agro-pastoralism strategy formulation	4	13	20	62	1	3.9	0.81
Agro-pastoralism strategy formulation improves farming	6	12	24	55	3	3.6	0.87
Stakeholders are involved during strategy formulation	0	2	20	64	14	3.9	0.77
There is a clear communication channel regarding strategy	1	2	23	60	14	4.1	0.72
Goals are met in agro-pastoralism microenterprise	8	12	12	55	13	3.7	0.89

### Control systems

The analysis indicates that a significant majority of respondents (85%) agreed that there is a well-established feedback mechanism in agro-pastoralism microenterprises in Kajiado County. The mean score of 4.8 (SD = 0.42) reflects a high level of satisfaction with the feedback processes in place. This finding is consistent with the assertions of Cummings et al. (2016), who emphasized the importance of feedback loops in facilitating organizational learning and adaptation. Moreover, 78% of respondents strongly agreed that effective feedback mechanisms enable timely adjustments to challenges in agro-pastoralism microenterprise operations. The mean score of 4.6 (SD = 0.58) suggests a widespread recognition of the role of feedback in enhancing operational agility. This finding aligns with the perspectives of Coghlan et al. (2015), who emphasized the importance of feedback in promoting responsiveness and resilience in organizational settings.

A substantial majority of respondents (80%) affirmed that management control systems enable agro-pastoralism representatives to respond promptly to emerging issues. The mean score of 4.7 (SD = 0.51) suggests a high level of confidence in the effectiveness of control mechanisms in facilitating rapid problem-solving. This finding resonates with the arguments of Otley (2016), who highlighted the role of control systems in enabling proactive management of operational challenges.

The analysis shows that 72% of respondents agreed that the change control concept has contributed to the improvement of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County. The mean score of 4.3 (SD = 0.63) indicates a positive perception of the role of change management practices in driving microenterprise enhancements. This finding is consistent with the views of Andrews et al. (2017), who emphasized the importance of change management strategies in fostering organizational effectiveness and adaptability.

**Table 4. 2: Descriptive Statistics on Control Systems**

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
There is a well-set feedback mechanism in regards to agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya.	0	3	9	85	3	4.8	0.42
Effective feedback mechanisms facilitate timely adjustment to challenges in agro-pastoralism microenterprise operations.	2	4	3	78	13	4.6	0.58
The management control systems allow the agro-pastoralism farmers to have a timely response to rising issues.	1	6	8	80	5	4.7	0.51
Change control concept has helped to improve agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya.	1	3	20	72	4	4.3	0.63

### Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to evaluate the relationship between each independent variable and the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County.

Results revealed significant positive correlations between the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise and each of the independent variables: communication plan ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and control systems ( $r = 0.71$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings indicate strong positive relationships between these variables, suggesting that as the effectiveness of communication plans, and control systems improve, the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County also improves.

The correlation coefficients and significance levels for each pair of variables are presented in the table 3 below.

**Table 3: Correlation Analysis**

	Performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise	Communication plan	Control systems
Performance of Agro-Pastoralism Microenterprise	1.00		
Communication Plan	0.68 ( $p < 0.001$ )**	1.00	
Control Systems	0.71 ( $p < 0.001$ )**	0.52 ( $p < 0.001$ )**	1.00

### Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

To further understand the relationship between the independent variables (communication plan and control systems) and the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The results revealed a significant relationship between these variables and the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise ( $F(2, 147) = 154.011$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This indicates that the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of the communication plan and control systems. The results of the ANOVA suggest that improving these factors can lead to better performance outcomes in the agro-pastoralism sector in the county.

**Table 4: Analysis of Variance**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	132.45	2	66.225	154.011	.000
Within Groups	62.32	147	0.43		
<b>Total</b>	<b>194.77</b>	<b>149</b>			

### Regression Model

To explore the relationship between the independent variables (communication plan and control systems) and the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The regression analysis revealed a significant relationship between the independent variables and the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County ( $F(4, 145) = 77.0, p < .001$ ). The regression coefficients for each predictor variable were as follows:  $\beta_1 = 0.574$  ( $p < .001$ ) for the communication plan and  $\beta_2 = 0.421$  ( $p < .001$ ) for control systems.

The regression analysis suggests that for every one-unit increase in the effectiveness of the communication plan, there is a predicted increase of 0.574 units in the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise. Similarly enhancements in control systems are associated with a 0.421 unit increase in performance.

These results imply that improving the communication plan and control systems can significantly enhance the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County.

Hence The regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 0.893 + 0.574X_1 + 0.421X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y – Performance of Agro-pastoralism

$\beta_0$  – The intercept of the equation (Constant term)

X<sub>1</sub> – Communication Plan

X<sub>2</sub> – Control Systems

$\varepsilon$  – The error terms

**Table 5: Regression of Coefficients**

	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
(Intercept)	0.893	0.115	7.768	< .001
Communication Plan	0.574	0.097	5.925	< .001
Control Systems	0.421	0.105	4.007	< .001

The intercept value (0.893) is relatively small, suggesting that without the implementation of communication plans and control systems, the performance of agro-pastoralism would be minimal.

The small intercept value implies that the independent variables (communication plan and control systems) are crucial for enhancing the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya.

### Optimal model

The optimal regression model for predicting the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County, Kenya, based on the results obtained is:

$$Y=0.893+0.574X_1+0.421X_2$$

This model suggests that the intercept, communication plan and control systems significantly contribute to the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise in Kajiado County. The findings indicate that the communication plan has the most substantial positive effect on the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprise, followed by control systems.

### **Conclusion of the study**

The findings of this study highlight the critical role of effective strategy implementation in enhancing the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. Firstly, the study emphasizes the importance of clear goal setting, community engagement, and stakeholders' participation in driving the success of agro-pastoralism microenterprises. Effective communication and collaboration among community members and stakeholders are essential for aligning objectives, sharing knowledge, and fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the microenterprise.

Finally, the performance of agro-pastoralism microenterprises is significantly influenced by the successful implementation of these strategies. By enhancing community engagement, stakeholder participation, control systems, cultural change, and resource allocation, agro-pastoralism microenterprises can achieve increased revenue, sustainability, and long-term success in Kajiado County, Kenya.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the performance and sustainability of agro-pastoralism microenterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya.

Firstly, there is a need to develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan that fosters effective community engagement, stakeholder participation, and goal setting within agro-pastoralism microenterprises. This can be achieved by establishing regular forums, such as community meetings and stakeholder workshops, where members can openly discuss microenterprise objectives, share ideas, and provide feedback. Additionally, the use of modern communication technologies, such as mobile phones and the internet, can help facilitate information sharing and collaboration among community members and stakeholders. Furthermore, training programs on effective communication and conflict resolution should be provided to community leaders and microenterprise owners to ensure that all voices are heard, and that decisions are made collaboratively, leading to greater buy-in and commitment to the microenterprise goals.

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