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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	SIGNIFICANCE OF COST MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN DECISION MAKING: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ETHIOPIAN MANUFACTURING PRIVATE LIMITED COMPANIES (PLCs)	1
2.	DR. FISSEHA GIRMAY TESSEMA TECHNICAL EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS AND INFLUENCE OF SUBSIDIES ON THE TECHNICAL EFFICIENCY OF FARMS IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC DR. ING. ANDREJ JAHNÁTEK, DR. ING. JANA MIKLOVIČOVÁ & ING. SILVIA MIKLOVIČOVÁ	10
3.	A COMPARISON OF DATA MINING TECHNIQUES FOR GOING CONCERN PREDICTION FEZEH ZAHEDI FARD & MAHDI SALEHI	14
4.	DETERMINANTS OF CONSTRAINTS TO LOW PROVISION OF LIVESTOCK INSURANCE IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF NAKURU COUNTY THOMAS MOCHOGE MOTINDI, NEBAT GALO MUGENDA & HENRY KIMATHI MUKARIA	20
5.	PERCEPTIONS OF ACCOUNTANTS ON FACTORS AFFECTING AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE IN NIGERIA AKINYOMI OLADELE JOHN & TASIE, CHUKWUMERIJE	25
6.	AN ASSESSMENT OF MARKET SUSTAINABILITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING PROJECT FINANCING OPTIONS IN NIGERIA I.S. YESUFU, O.I. BEJIDE, F.E. UWADIA & S.I. YESUFU	30
7.	AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE PERCEPTION OF CUSTOMERS TOWARDS THE ROLE OF MOBILE BANKING, AND ITS EFFECT ON QUALITY OF SERVICE DELIVERY, IN THE RWANDAN BANKING INDUSTRY MACHOGU MORONGE ABIUD, LYNET OKIKO & VICTORIA KADONDI	35
8.	BUSINESS PROCESS REENGINEERING AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE C. S. RAMANIGOPAL, G. PALANIAPPAN, N.HEMALATHA & M. MANICKAM	41
9.	CUSTOMER PERCEPTION OF REAL ESTATE SECTOR IN INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF UNORGANISED PROPERTY ADVISORS IN PUNJAB-INDIA DR. JASKARAN SINGH DHILLON & B. J. S. LUBANA	46
10.	INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY AND PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS: A STUDY OF SELECTED PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS OF ANAND DISTRICT POOJARA J.G. & CHRISTIAN S.R.	51
11.	THE PROBLEMS AND PERFORMANCE OF HANDLOOM COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES WITH REFERENCE TO ANDHRA PRADESH INDIA DR. R. EMMANIEL	54
12.	IMPACT OF GENDER AND TASK CONDITIONS ON TEAMS: A STUDY OF INDIAN PROFESSIONALS DEEPIKA TIWARI & AJEYA JHA	58
13.	MOTIVATIONAL PREFERENCES OF TEACHERS WORKING IN PRIVATE ENGINEERING INSTITUTIONS IN WESTERN INDIA REGION: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY DD MUNDHRA & WALLACE JACOB	68
14.	CHANNEL MANAGEMENT IN INSURANCE BUSINESS DR. C BHANU KIRAN & DR. M. MUTYALU NAIDU	74
15 .	MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM APPLIED TO MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT OF AN ENGINEERING COLLEGE C.G. RAMACHANDRA & DR. T. R. SRINIVAS	78
16.	A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES ON LEADERSHIP CONCEPTS AND CONSTRUCTS IN LIC H. HEMA LAKSHMI, P. R. SIVASANKAR & DASARI.PANDURANGARAO	83
17.	TEXTURE FEATURE EXTRACTION GANESH S. RAGHTATE & DR. S. S. SALANKAR	87
18.	INDIAN BANKS: AN IMMENSE DEVELOPING SECTOR PRASHANT VIJAYSING PATIL & DR. DEVENDRASING V. THAKOR	91
19.	DEVALUATION OF INDIAN RUPEE & ITS IMPACT ON INDIAN ECONOMY DR. NARENDRA KUMAR BATRA, DHEERAJ GANDHI & BHARAT KUMAR	95
20.	SERVICE PRODUCTIVITY: CONCERNS, CHALLENGES, AND RESEARCH DIRECTIONS DR. SUNIL C. D'SOUZA	99
21.	A STUDY OF THE MANAGERIAL STYLES OF EXECUTIVES IN THE MANUFACTURING COMPANIES OF PUNJAB DR. NAVPREET SINGH SIDHU	105
22.	FINANCIAL LEVERAGE AND IT'S IMPACT ON COST OF CAPITAL AND CAPITAL STRUCTURE SHASHANK JAIN, SHIVANGI GUPTA & HAMENDRA KUMAR PORWAL	112
23.	REACH OF INTERNET BANKING DR. A. JAYAKUMAR & G.ANBALAGAN.	118
24.	THE PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICE TAX REGIME: AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENT MODELS TO SELECT A SUITABLE MODEL FOR INDIA ASHISH TIWARI & VINAYAK GUPTA	122
25.	ESTIMATION OF STOCK OPTION PRICES USING BLACK-SCHOLES MODEL DR. S. SARAVANAN & G. PRADEEP KUMAR	130
26.	MIS AND MANAGEMENT DR.PULI.SUBRMANYAM & S.ISMAIL BASHA	137
27.	REFORMS IN INDIAN FINANCIAL SYSTEM: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH	147
28.	PRAVEEN KUMAR SINHA NATURAL RUBBER PRODUCTION IN INDIA DR. D. CHENNARDISHNAN	151
29.	QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN FREE AND OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE PROJECTS OR SHALK MAHADOOR PASHA	157
30.	DR. SHAIK MAHABOOB BASHA ICT & PRODUCTIVITY AND GROWTH BUSINESS: NEW RESULTS BASED ON INTERNATIONAL MICRODATA VAHID RANGRIZ	160
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	165

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DETERMINANTS OF CONSTRAINTS TO LOW PROVISION OF LIVESTOCK INSURANCE IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF NAKURU COUNTY

THOMAS MOCHOGE MOTINDI LECTURER CHUKA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Insurance companies today are embracing livestock insurance as a means of improving the overall performance of the livestock sector in the country. However, there are a number of insurance companies that still do not provide livestock insurance cover. The purpose of this study was to explain the causes for low provision of livestock insurance in the insurance market in Kenya. This study focused mainly on the supply and demand related challenges. The target population comprised all insurance companies that operate in Nakuru. Primary data was collected from the underwriting personnel of the insurance companies under consideration. Hypotheses were tested using Chi-square at 95% degree of confidence. The major findings of this study were that low levels of training of personnel and complex constraints of supply and demand related issues are responsible for low provision of livestock insurance. Based on the study findings, two key recommendations were made; there is need for insurance providers to increase their market share in the insurance product through innovation of new ways to facilitate their underwriting process and also encourage shared ownership of potential buyers so as to make the product affordable to them.

KEYWORDS

Livestock Insurance, index based, Underwriting, Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

ACKGROUND

Livestock insurance is a type of insurance whereby the livestock is insured against communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well as fire, natural disasters, theft, malicious acts of third persons and other risks. Livestock (also cattle) refers to one or more domesticated animals raised in an agricultural setting to produce commodities such as food, fibre and labour. Dairy and livestock farming generally account for the utilisation of 30% of the high to medium potential land and 8% of the Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASAL). Livestock related production alone accounts for nearly 421 million hectares out of a national total of 484 million hectares used mainly for crop and livestock production. Kenya's livestock and poultry production sector is dominated by dairy, dual purpose and beef cattle. Commodities from cattle that are beef and milk account for more than 75% of marketed livestock production from the national stock of nearly 12 million cattle (Ephraim, 2010).

LITERATURE REVIEW

LIVESTOCK INSURANCE

Livestock insurance is a type of insurance where livestock is insured against communicable diseases and non- communicable diseases as well as fire, natural disasters, theft, malicious acts of third persons and other risks (Livestock refers to domestic animals such as cattle or horses raised for home use or profit especially on a farm.

Livestock insurance raises a farmer's credit worthiness. Large farms, agricultural processing business and slaughter houses could easily obtain loans but small farmers at the very end of the line. This is because large agricultural farmers could afford insurance covers for their animals (Kuria, 2010).

Other benefits of obtaining livestock insurance include: stabilisation of farmers incomes; guaranteed automatic protection against losses of the farmers stock from accidents or diseases; gives confidence to venture into modern farming methods that increase livestock yields; sharing of losses amongst farmers and price stabilisation of livestock products *Chattered Institute of Insurance* (CII, 2000).

Challenges faced by insurance providers and livestock insurance buyers include: Process issues as a result of high transaction costs where the costs are incurred in identification of an animal, assessment of cattle, claim settlement process and other administrative processes; product issues; premium pricing marked by absence of historical data and hence no actual fair pricing; lack of ability and willingness to pay; lack of awareness and non-standardized risks reducing practices. Insurance products offered are limited to catastrophic death and disability; absence of proper distribution channels as well as low literacy and awareness among the citizens and as a result livestock was below 10% in 2009 (Sharma 2009).

LIVESTOCK INSURANCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Around 50 million households in India depend on livestock for sustenance. Livestock acts as insurance for households that depend on agriculture for income for close to 18 million households, livestock is the primary source of income. While the share of agriculture in the Gross Domestic product (GDP) has steadily been on the rise (Sharma, 2009).

Agriculture in Mongolia is dominated by livestock husbandry which accounts for some 87% of agricultural GDP and which employs some of agricultural work force, providing rural households with an important but vulnerable source of income and food security. Livestock's importance to rural livelihoods increased dramatically during the 1990s with the transition from collectivized farming to family based herding and between 1990 and 2000 the number of herding of herding households increased 75000 to 190,000. Mongolian herders are subject to catastrophic weather related shocks, such drought and severe winter spring colds. Between 1999 and 2002, a series of winter, spring colds led to the loss of one- third of the national herd, seriously impacting national GDP. The high levels of livestock mortality in Mongolia with winter- springs had major effects on rural poverty and many of the households that had entered herding during the 1990s

were stripped off their principle assets. Addressing the problem of such severe weather related risk in an effective and sustainable way posed a difficult challenge for the country and for the World Bank. The Mongolian government endorsed a programme of improved pastoral risk management that includes activities from the community to the national level, including increased investment in infrastructure services and hay fodder reserves while these activities can be helpful in the context of the limited, low- level risks, they are insufficient to prevent the kinds of losses incurred in extreme winter cold seasons. The alternative suggested was government intervention such as restoring programmes which have been found to be expensive, insufficient and likely to provide perverse incentives for herders not to take steps to lower herd mortality. It not only revealed problems but was also susceptible to corruption hence to the development of the livestock insurance (Roberts, 2002).

INDEX-BASED LIVESTOCK INSURANCE

In Mongolia the project pilots insurance plans in three provinces: Bayakhogor, UVS and Khenti, which consists of five components. The first provides the mechanism to pilot two index-based livestock insurance (IBLI) products: The Base Insurance Products (BIP) which is commercial risk instrument sold and serviced by insurance companies, for which herders pay a fully loaded premium rate. It pays out when a district's mortality rate exceeds a defined "trigger"; The Disaster Response Product (DRP) which is a social safety net product financed and provided by the government that begins payments at mortality rates that exceeds the exhaustion point of the BIP. Herders who purchase the BIP are automatically registered for the DRP on the same species of livestock at no additional cost; those herders who have not purchased the minimum value BIP must pay a contribution to cover DRP administrative costs. The second component of the project entails a variety of targeted promotional and public awareness activities to foster awareness and inform stakeholders about the details of the two products and the IBLI pilot; the component supports the institutional framework and capacity necessary to expand the availability of the insurance products once the viability of IBLI instruments has been established.

The fourth component monitors a variety of stakeholders during the IBLI pilot in tracking access by different social groups, monitoring how the products received and in determining whether herders modify their behaviour in response and if so, how their behaviour changes. The project's fifth component implementation until its management functions (Mahul 2006).

LIVESTOCK INSURANCE IN KENYA

Livestock insurance in Kenya is a recently introduced cover since the collapse of KNAC. It wasn't until 2010 when four insurance companies took up livestock insurance. They include CIC, APA, UAP and ICEA insurance companies.

According to Riungu (2010) the livestock sector contributes about 12% of the National Gross Product and that 42% of the total agricultural GDP employs 50% of agricultural labour force. The sector's contribution comes in form of dairy products, dairy bi-products such as manure and some form of money paid in taxes. Such a source of income needs to be protected against adverse effects through livestock insurance.

The latest statistics from the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme given in 2009 indicates that only a partly 6.8% of Kenyan populace use insurance products while 91% have never taken any insurance cover. Livestock insurance being lately introduced product, falls even much lower (Ng'aru, 2010).

There is an index based livestock project in northern Kenyan aimed to develop insurance products to protect livestock keepers from drought related asset losses they particularly those in drought prone areas (ASAL). For pastoralists whose livelihoods rely on partly livestock, the resulting high livestock mortality rate has devastating effects on asset levels, rendering them amongst vulnerable populations in Kenya.

Index Based Insurance products represents a promising and exiting innovation that could allow the benefits of insurance to protect the climate – related risks vulnerable rural small holders farmers and livestock keepers face. Because Index Insurance is based on the realization of an outcome that cannot be influenced by insurers or policy holders (such as the amount and distribution of rainfall over a season, it has a relatively simple and transparent structure. This makes such products easier to administer and consequently to more cost effective to develop and track. Indeed the success of several pilot programmes conducted in India, and the feasibility and affordability of such products (Sharma, 2009).

Gold (2010) explains the main challenge faced by pastoralists in Kenya is drought. Sommarat Chantarat, a post doctoral researcher and his colleagues designed the newly launched insurance programme. Chantarat first visited northern Kenya in 2007 and began thinking about the problem as a Cornell graduate working with Chris Barret, a professor of applied economics and management and Andrew Mude, PhD '06, a researcher scientist at the *International Livestock Research Institute* (ILRI) in Kenya, dedicated her PhD thesis to finding a solution, and the product she designed – an index- based livestock insurance plan make payments based on an aggregate index of predicted livestock mortality for the region, instead of on individual losses – which was officially launched in the Marsabit region in January 22, 2010.

As with traditional insurance plan, subscribers in the pilot plan pay premium when they sign up based in the value of the insured livestock and receive an indemnity payment if they experience loss beyond a certain level during the covered time period, but instead of using inspectors to certify the value of insured livestock and verify individual claims – a system that would be impossible to implement due to poor infrastructure. Deficient Northern Kenya – the plan uses an index based on satellite images showing the amount of available vegetation to estimate the aggregate loss in the last 10 years of satellite data with the household survey on livestock mortality collected by researchers in Marsabit over that period.

The outcome was to show whether herders would be able to accumulate more assets and grow their way out of poverty and if this is so, they would expand the programme to other countries in East Africa and beyond (Gold, 2010).

INDEX APPROACHES TO LIVESTOCK INSURANCE

In livestock insurance evidence of damage is needed before an indemnity is paid. However, verifying such damage has occurred is expensive and making an accurate measurement of the loss on each individual insured farm is even more costly. An index policy operates differently with an index policy; measurement is derived not directly dependent in individual loss assessment.

The measurement traits most commonly considered in constructing an index for insurance relates to meteorological events which are expected to be damaging and which can therefore be used as the trigger for indemnity payments. The classic insurance policy replaced with a simple coupon. Instead of the usual policy wording which would give the indemnity payable for livestock mortality for losses form specific causes, coupon merely gives the monetary sum that becomes payable on certification that the named weather event has occurred. It is suited to weather perils that impact over a wide area e.g. drought as than case of Marsabit.

This is a theoretical possibility that indices derived from the events other than weather could be used as triggers for insurance products e.g. as used in Mongolia. The Mongolian authorities and the World Bank recently conducted a study to see whether an index of mortality could be used as a basis for indemnities on an area basis. Facilitating this fact is that there is a well established practice of conducting on annual livestock census in Mongolia. The feasibility study indicated that the concept has merit and may well be taken as steps towards meeting the strict conducting that would accept risk (Roberts, 2002).

RISKS FACING LIVESTOCK FARMERS

Sharma (2009) identifies the risks to livestock dependent livelihood, where he categorised them into two;

Production risk and price risk: production risk include elements such as cattle mortality due to epidemics, natural calamities, non- availability of dry and green fodder animals, stoppage of milk production due to disease like mastitis etc on the other hand, price risks include fluctuations costs of livestock and its product as well as weak rural infrastructure.

Roth et al (2002) categorizes risk that faces livestock farmers into two: Market Related and non-market related. Market related risks are those that related directly to transactions in the economy. They include availability of inputs, prices of inputs, the price of farm products, availability of farm outputs, the gross margins of agricultural enterprises and the revenue derived from farming operation.

Non- market related risks are those that relate to a variety of events, some involving human intervention directly or indirectly. They include: Group 1 health factors. They are associated with diseases/ epidemics with the risk of consequences including mortality, diminished production through diseases, and ban on sale of animal or animal products due to quarantine or health rulings, government slaughter order and increased on farm costs occasioned by quarantine curative measures. Group 2 climate and seismic events. They include drought, flood, windstorm, freeze, lightning, earthquake and tsunami. Group 3 accidents. They include fire, accident, poisoning and explosion. Group 4 infrastructure and environment problems. They include machinery/ electrical breakdown and power outages, malicious damage, riot, strike and pollution of water supply or water environment. Group 5 management issues. They include infertility loss of normal biological function, malnutrition due to unexpected food deficiencies and rustling, theft prediction escape. Group 6 consequential losses due to livestock losses and food safety considerations.

Candel (2007) points out the various natural perils that cause massive losses in the livestock sector in Latin America. Some of the perils mentioned include hurricanes, floods, droughts, mountain glaciers and winter storms in southern cone. She pointed out that Latin America is particularly susceptible to the consequences of climate change as mentioned above and its low insurance penetration adds to the injury.

As from the project on IBLI in Kenya (2010) its evident that drought is most prevalent in the North- eastern part of Kenya which claims more livestock lives due to semi- arid conditions in that area.

RISK MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN LIVESTOCK

Sharma (2009) points out that livestock risk management aims at improving the value of livestock and reducing the vulnerability of low income households. He states that there are two major components of livestock management; risk reduction and risk transfer.

Roth et al (2006) categorizes risk management techniques into three parts: policy based risk management, on farm risk management and financial- based risk management mechanisms.

Policy based risk management includes: site licensing for certain types of production as required in certain jurisdiction as an attempt to minimize pollution; quarantine requirements as an attempt to help manage the risk of the introduction of exotic diseases or organisms that may be detrimental to the health or production of existing species in a given country e.g. foot and mouth disease; compulsory veterinary procedures which are used to ensure that the animals are kept healthy.

On farm risk management is categorized into three groups: Group 1, health factors - they include adherence to Official recommendations for preventing veterinary procedures.

Care also needs to be taken in the citing and construction of livestock handling facilities; Group 2, climate and seismic events – a normal farm management should ensure proper reservations of food supplies (hay or silage); Group 3, accidents - machinery and electrical breakdown can be prevented by appropriate maintenance.

Financially - based risk management mechanisms. These mechanisms according to Roth et al (2006) include shared ownership, marketing arrangements, whereby these mechanisms permit some of the financial burden of losses in livestock to be shared with an entity or individual outside the farm itself.

FORMS OF LIVESTOCK INSURANCE COVER

Green J.W et al (2005) gave main forms of livestock insurance: full mortality and specified risks. They emphasized on the features and conditions of livestock mortality insurance where they stressed that it is important to know that; livestock mortality insurance is written on the purpose of protecting the actual investment of the livestock owner not potential gain or profit; a mortality policy cannot be considered in any way as a maintenance coverage it does include veterinarian or similar expenses; a mortality policy cannot be considered in any way as a maintenance coverage which does include veterinarian or similar expenses; indemnity is payable only as a result of death loss; mortality coverage does not indemnify an insured against loss of an animal's ability to perform the function for which it is kept; death from natural or accidental causes included but mandatory slaughter by government authority or decree or expediency is not included (hence there exist a third type of cover i.e. slaughter policy); the basis for valuing an animal should be an actual sales price of fair and conservative appraisal by competent judges when no actual sales transaction has taken place. These values are subject to acceptance by the company; mortality both insurance is renewable only on censurability both to physical condition and market value;

Cancellation may only be effected by insured or by the company on notice given in conformation with the existing laws; policies may not be transferred from one insured to another subject to acceptance by the company.

NEED OF THE STUDY

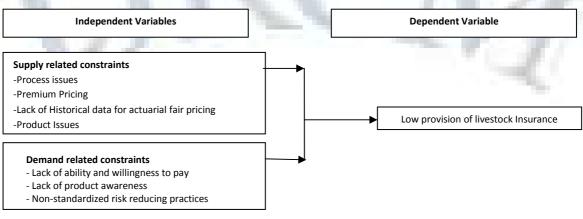
The findings of the study will enabled the gathering of information which reflects the problems and challenges faced by all the insurance companies underwriting livestock insurance in Kenya.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Low provision of livestock insurance cover is marked by two main types of challenges, the first challenge beings, while the second are the demand related challenges. The supply related constraints include process issues due to high transactions cost, premium pricing as well as product issues.

The demand related constraints focus on the perception of insured's lack of ability and willingness to pay lack of awareness and lack of standardized risk reducing practices. If those challenges are solved, it would bring about increased business growth, high penetration of the product into the market as well as development of other livestock insurance products. However, if the challenges are not solved, it would lead to loss of income to livestock insurance providers, low demand for livestock insurance provider.

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Source: Author (2011).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Livestock insurance is a type of insurance where livestock is insured against communicable diseases and non- communicable diseases as well as fire, natural disasters, theft, malicious acts of third persons and other risks. Insurance has remained a recognized essential element of risk mitigation and logical complement to other ongoing pastoral risk management activities. Insurance clearly has the potential to protect herders from unavoidable losses and to mitigate the need for government- sponsored re-stocking progress if innovative solutions to the problems of moral hazards and high verifications costs could be identified. Any such innovations would necessarily spread the risks and costs more evenly among herders, the government and the commercial insurance industry. The benefits that accrue from livestock insurance include raising the farmers' credit worthiness, stabilization of farmers' income, guaranteed automatic protection against losses of farmers stock from accidents or diseases and giving confidence to the farmers to venture into modern farming methods that increase livestock yields. In spite of these benefits, the provision of livestock insurance in Kenya has generally been low with only 4 firms undertaking livestock insurance out of the 43 insurance companies. Extant researches on this topic have focused mainly on challenges of provision of livestock insurance in developed countries (Sharma, 2009). This study however seeks to investigate the reasons for slow growth of livestock insurance in Kenya by examining the effect of supply and demand related factors on provision of livestock insurance in the Kenyan market.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the study was to evaluate factors that have led to low provision of livestock insurance in the Kenyan market.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. To determine the effect of supply related factors on provision of livestock insurance.
- 2. To determine the effect of demand related factors on provision of livestock insurance.

HYPOTHESES

HO₁: Supply related factors do not significantly affect provision of livestock insurance

HO₂: There is no significant effect of demand related factors on provision of livestock insurance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research adopted was descriptive survey. It involved fact-finding enquiries of different independent variables that have an impact on the low provision of livestock insurance. These facts were obtained from underwriters of livestock insurance operating within Nakuru town.

A field research was conducted by use of questionnaires. This was considered most appropriate way of collecting information due to the inconveniences of booking appointments and the time available for the researchers to complete the research.

TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE

The target population included all the 4 livestock insurance underwriters within Nakuru town. A complete enumeration of all the items in the population was conducted. This was due to the small population size that was intended to provide first-hand information. Two personnel from each underwriting departments were used as a source of information. It must be noted that this approach is consistent with the practice of surveying key informants knowledgeable about organizational matters by virtue of their positions. This is considered by many researchers as an impersonal method preferably to be used where questions demand a considered rather than immediate answer (John and Weitz, 1988)

DATA COLLECTION

Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The questions included a combination of open-ended, structured and dichotomous questions. Open ended questions provided additional information relevant to the objective of the research. Structured questions allowed standardization of responses where the questions aimed at arriving similar responses within a given parameter of interest. Multiple choice questions aimed at obtaining standard responses and at the same time allowing flexibility of opinion of the respondent.

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

TABLE 1 (A): SUPPLY RELATED CONSTRAINTS

	Challenges		No challeng	es
Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Identification of animals	1	16.67	5	83.33
Assessment of animals	5	83.33	1	16.67
Claim settlement process	4	66.67	2	33.33

Table 1 a. shows that 16% of the respondents rated identification of the animals as a major challenge linked to the low provision of the product while 84% had proper mechanisms of identifying the animals that is, tattooing, ear tags and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). However, the respondents who identified it as a challenge said it was due to moral hazards of the insured like removal of ear tags and tagging other animals which are not insured especially during claims. In addition, 67% of the respondents faced challenges when settling claims where moral hazards were also associated to it leading to cancellation of the policies. The assessment of cattle value was also identified as a major challenge with 84% of the respondents linking it to moral hazard of the insured. 67% of the respondents found no challenges in their claim settlement procedures while 33% encountered challenges.

TEST STATISTICS

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	Identification	Assessment	Cattle Settlement Process	
Chi-Square	2.667°	2.667 ^a	.667 ^a	
Df	1	1	1	
Asymp. Sig.	.102	.102	.414	

a. 2 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 3.0.

The computed p-values for each of the variable were less than 5% degree of significance. Thus we conclude that identification of animals, assessment of cattle value and cattle settlement processes have a significant effect on provision of livestock insurance.

TABLE 1(B): SUPPLY RELATED CONSTRAINTS

	Yes		No	
Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Historical data	2	33.33	4	66.67
Innovation	4	66.67	2	33.33
Limited risk cover	5	83.33	1	16.67

Table 1(b) shows that 33% of the respondents indicated that the company did not have enough historical data on different breeds of livestock while 67% had relevant historical data on the breeds. 67% of the respondents saw no current intention of innovating the livestock product as the product was still in its early stages. In support of this 84% of the respondents indicated that the cover was adequate to meet nearly all the needs of the insured's. 50% evaluated the product awareness programme to be fair while the remaining 50% evaluated it as good.

TEST STATISTICS

	Historical Data	Innovation	Limited Risk Cover
Chi-Square	.667ª	.000 ^a	.667 ^a
Df	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.414	1.000	.414

2 cells (100.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 3.0.

The chi-square value for historical data was 0.667 at 1 degree of freedom with a p-value of 0.414 tested at 95% degree of confidence. Since the p-value is more than 0.05, we conclude that lack of historical data has a significant effect on provision of livestock insurance. Similarly, we found innovation and limited risk cover to have a significant effect on provision of livestock insurance with p-values more than 5% degree of significance.

TABLE 1 (C): DEMAND RELATED CONSTRAINTS

	Yes		No	
Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Ability to pay	5	83.33	1	16.67
Product awareness	3	50	3	50

The ability and willingness of the insured's to pay premium was evaluated as average with a support of 84% while 16% evaluated it as poor. 50% of the respondents opined that product awareness was good while 50% rated it as poor.

TEST STATISTICS

	Product Awareness	Ability to Pay
Chi-Square	.000°	2.667 ^a
Df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	1.000	.102

The chi-square value for product awareness was 0.000 at 1 degree of freedom with a p-value of 1.00 tested at 95% degree of confidence. Since the p-value is more than 0.05, we conclude that product awareness has a significant effect on provision of livestock insurance. Similarly, we found that ability to pay had a significant effect on provision of livestock insurance as scaled by chi-square value (2.667) and p<0.05 at 95% degree of confidence.

SUMMARY

Livestock insurance being a new product in the Kenyan market has not achieved its target as most farmers have not purchased the product. Some of the reasons that have been identified include low income level among potential buyers, lack of a well established claim settlement process, problems of assessment of cattle value as well as other variables such as identification of animal and insufficiency of cover provided.

RECOMMENDATION

Livestock insurance providers can increase their market share on the livestock insurance product through innovation of new ways to facilitate their underwriting process such as application of index- based on satellite images, so as to eliminate problems associated with poor infrastructure especially in the rural areas. They should also encourage shared ownership of potential buyers so as to make the product affordable to them, engage in micro-financing activities such as providing loans for the purchase of livestock and thus would even improve the performance of the product as well as its competitive advantage over the other insurers. The study did not focus on such issues such as the effect of the different styles of cattle keeping on the provision of livestock insurance. Further research is recommended on the impact of pastoralist, small scale farming and large scale farming on the demand for livestock insurance cover in Kenya (low livestock insurance uptake in Kenya)

CONCLUSION

Livestock insurance product in the market is fair and can only be improved by finding solutions to the various supply related and demand related constraints as already analysed.

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