

The Role of Internal Organizational Factors in Strategy Implementation in Kenyan Universities

Titus Ndunda Mwanthi
Kabarak University, Kenya
Email; mwanthititus@yahoo.com

Submitted: 14th November 2017; Accepted: 20th December 2017; Published online: 9th February 2018

Abstract

The business environment is dynamic and ever evolving thus compelling organizations to continuously change and adapt to the ever changing environment. Organizations create competitive edge through studying the environment and adjusting accordingly. One sure way to adapt to environmental change is by embracing culture change, improving organizational systems and organizational structure. Strategy implementation entails putting into action strategies towards organizational performance. This study sought to establish the influence of organizational culture, organizational systems, and organizational structure on strategy implementation. The study was conducted in 10 universities (5 public and 5 private universities) in Kenya. The sample size for this study was 384 university employees. The study was quantitative in nature and adopted cross-sectional design. The study found that the three internal organizational factors had a positive influence on strategy implementation. The study recommends for development of a positive culture to enable suitable environment for strategy implementation. The study also calls for alignment of university processes and procedures with strategy to facilitate smooth implementation of strategies. The study recommends that in order to successfully implement strategies in organizations, there need to be in place clear line of reporting and individual responsibilities.

Key words: Internal organizational factors, strategy, strategy implementation, Kenyan universities

Introduction

Business world is entering into a new frontier characterized by rapid, unpredictable change and substantial uncertainty that is transforming the nature of competition (Hitt, Ricart & Nixon, 1998). The authors further state that success in today's business world calls for new managerial mindsets that emphasize global markets, strategic flexibility, and the ability to tolerate and harness change. Furthermore, the time frames of all strategic actions are significantly being reduced (Hitt, Keats, & DeMarie, 1998). This new business setting requires new forms of managerial thinking and organizational structures, global mindsets, considerable strategic and structural flexibility, and innovative methods for implementing strategies. A scientific

reawakening will bring about the rise of new industries, change how businesses compete, and possibly transform how companies are managed (Pascale, Millemann, & Gioja, 2000). Business strategy has entered the aptly named market-driven era because of its central focus on the market as the basis for strategy design and implementation (Cravens, Greenley, Piercy, & Slater, 1998; Day, 1994). In order to cope with these dynamic changes for the strategic management field, more research is needed in this field (Okumus, 2001).

According to Davenport (2007), creating a brilliant strategy is not superior to executing it successfully. Execution is critical to organizational success, thus a carefully and well planned approach to execution leads to attainment of strategic goals. Therefore, in order to achieve intended results, good strategies should be properly implemented. Strategy implementation involves converting the strategic plan into action and then into results. Thus, strategy implementation is geared towards improving a firm's performance. Organizational performance involves the recurring activities to establish organizational goals, monitor progress toward the goals, and make adjustments to achieve those goals more effectively and efficiently. In order for organizations to remain viable over time, they must be both financially viable and relevant to their stakeholders and their changing needs.

Universities in Kenya are required by the government of Kenya through the (Universities Standards and Guidelines, 2014) to have vision and mission statements and philosophy which clearly and succinctly indicate their strategic direction (CUE, 2014). The Commission for University Education (CUE) expects each university in Kenya to have evidence of long and medium term plans to ensure sustainability and continuous improvement. One of the evidences of planning in universities is by having in place a strategic plan.

Literature Review

According to Ibrahim, Sulaiman, Kahtani, and Jarad (2012), previous research on organizational performance revealed that organizations that implement their strategies effectively also perform better than organizations that lack in implementing their strategies. Strategic management is widely regarded as an important aspect for business processes (Bowman & Asch, 1987; Kumar, 2010; Thomson & Strickland, 2003; Viljoan & Dann, 2003). Business scholars and professionals argue that the strategic management process affects a firm's ultimate success or failure more than any other factors (Porth, 2003). Strategic management process is important for a firm's success since it enables a firm to define a future direction, provides the means to achieve its mission, and ultimately leads to value creation (Porth, 2003). Powell (1992) also indicates that firms whom adopt strategic management generally improve their performance. One of the most important management's tasks is to constantly search for the best strategy to enhance performance.

Firms which implement strategic planning achieve better performances than those that don't implement (Al-Kandi *et al.*, 2013). However, most strategies often fail due to problems

encountered during implementation stage. Strategic decisions should be implemented with awareness that their success is vital for the organization. By identifying the factors that influence the process and outcomes of the strategy implementation stage, an organization will be better prepared for its future performance, which will ultimately contribute to its success. The competitive advantage of an organization is illustrated by the distinctiveness of its capabilities and how it uses these capabilities to achieve extraordinary profits or returns in comparison to other organizations. One of the most important capabilities that organizations can adopt is an effective and strategic decision-making process (Al-Kandi, Asutay, & Dixon, 2013).

Organizational culture and strategy implementation

Organizational culture is the shared values, attitudes and norms of behavior that create the propensity for individuals in an organization to act in certain ways (Hilman & Siam, 2014). However, one of the most common culture-related problems in companies is a lack of trust, which usually results in poor or inadequate information and knowledge sharing between individuals and/or business units responsible for strategy implementation (Hrebiniak, 2005). Hilman and Siam (2014) argue that culture has to do with people's interaction, interaction between ideas and behaviors. Dobni (2003) defines culture as "the collective thoughts and actions of employees that manifest the strategic orientation of the firm. Culture drives strategy and it is an internal variable that the firm can control".

Strategists manage a number of factors in strategy implementation. Organizational culture is one of these important factors. Strategists must manage cultural artifacts in order to successfully manage organizational culture. These cultural artifacts include myths and sagas about company successes and the heroes and heroines within the company; rituals, ceremonies, and symbols; language systems and metaphors; certain physical attributes such as the use of space, interior and exterior design, and equipment; and the defining values and norms (Higgins & McCallaster, 2004).

In addition, Higgins and McCallaster (2004) argue that in managing strategy implementation through management of culture, strategists usually think in terms of managing values and norms. But as it turns out, if they don't manage existing cultural artifacts as well, then they build in barriers to failure. This is because the current cultural artifacts support the old strategy and not the new one. To be successful, strategists must create new cultural artifacts or modify the existing ones that will support the new strategy. Isaboke (2015) identifies culture as the single most important factor of organizational success or failure. Researchers have identified organizational culture as a factor having the greatest potential to affect organization improvement or decline. Organization culture has been identified by the various frameworks of strategy implementation as a variable that influences the success of the implementation process.

According to Eaton and Kilby (2015), a company's culture is embedded in its DNA. It grew up along with the company and is rooted in values, beliefs, and behaviors. Culture owns the power over strategy. People are the reason strategies succeed or fail, and culture controls and moderates

behavior across the entire workforce. If people are not aligned with the right values, beliefs, and behaviors that support the new strategy, they will be working against themselves and the company. Not only will they be frustrated, but the best people also often will leave, which puts the new strategy at further risk.

Rajasekar (2014) found out that a meaningful relationship exists between organizational culture and strategy implementation. Organizational development programs and their application enable a company to change its culture, structure, and operating procedures. They added that a flexible structure and adaptable employees who are willing to initiate process and procedure changes are important for production of high-quality products and services at the lowest possible cost. Strategy implementation is positively related to organizational culture along the dimensions of learning and development, participative decision making, power sharing, support and collaboration, and tolerance for risk and conflicts, which all form part of an organization's cultural environment.

Carlopio and Harvey (2012) studied on social-psychological principles and their influence on successful strategy implementation and found that if an organization's structure and culture are not aligned with a proposed strategy and the required new behaviors, the strategy implementation process will certainly fail. Brenes and Mena (2008) studied Latin American firms and concluded that organizational culture accompanied by supportive principles and values in the new strategy led to successful strategy implementation in the sampled firms. The study revealed that 86% of the most successful companies see culture aligned to strategy as highly significant, as opposed to only 55% of less successful companies. A study on culture and strategy noted that related factors such as the organizational structure and organizational culture are the most effective strategy execution factors that affect organizational performance.

Culture is the single most important factor accounting for success or failure in organizations. They identified four key dimensions of culture including values – the beliefs that lie at the heart of the corporate culture, heroes – the people who embody values, rites and rituals – routines of interaction that have strong symbolic qualities, and the culture network – the informal communication system or hidden hierarchy of power in the organization (Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

Organizational structure and strategy implementation

According to Kiptoo and Mwirigi (2014), every organization has a unique structure that reflects its current image, reporting relationship and internal politics. Okumus (2003) defines “organizational structure” as “the shape; division of labour; job duties and responsibilities; the distribution of power, and decision-making procedures within the company”. Louw and Venter (2006) has a different definition of structure: “The formal pattern of interactions and co-ordination designed by management to link the tasks and patterns of individuals and groups in achieving organizational goals”. Okumus (2003) cautions that issues for consideration must include: the

impact of a new strategy on potential changes in duties; roles; decision making; and on reporting relationships.

Leaders must consider whether the organizational structure facilitates the free flow of information; co-ordination, and the co-operation between management and other functional areas (Okumus, 2003). Simplistically, structure informs “who does what”, and “levels of accountability”. This clearly shows that organizational structure is a fundamental factor when looking at how strategic planning can be implemented in organizations. Without proper structures then strategic planning might not see the light in some organization because structures play a major role in delivering the expected results (Okumus, 2003). Waribugo and Etim (2016) opine that organizational structure contributes significantly to the implementation of strategies as it creates a clear understanding of the processes needed to achieve formulated organizational strategies. They add that the proper organizing of activities in an organization reduces the challenges managers have to confront during the process of implementing strategies in the face of turbulent global operating environment (Waribugo and Etim, 2016).

According to Alfred (2014), structure consists of corporate hierarchy, division of labor, delegating and communications. In order to set an adaptive and conforming relationship between structure and strategy, the following points should be considered, measuring the adaptability level of structure, centralization and decentralization, strategy and structure relationship, corresponding to gain and share information all through the organization and lastly clarifying responsibilities (Alfred, 2014). David (2001) emphasizes that a well defined structure is fundamental in the implementation of organizational strategies. Also, Lewis, Goodman and Fandt (2004) described organizational structure as an authority which controls every other aspects of organizational life, including implementation of strategies and achievement of the overall organizational objectives. Meanwhile, Wheelen and Hunger (2006) opine that organizational structure plays an influential and strategic role in the successful implementation of organizational strategies.

Hrebniak (2006) conducted a study on obstacles to effective strategy implementation and found that poor or inadequate information sharing, unclear responsibility and accountability and working against the organizational power structure – all part of organizational structure – results in failed implementation processes. Rajasekar (2014) argues that formal organizational structures are necessary for employees to act readily on the knowledge developed to craft and implement strategy. The organizational structure provides a visual explanation of two main things: the decision-making process and resource allocation. Zaribaf and Bayrami (2010) revealed that strategy is formulated by top management only and middle-level managers only implement the strategy with exceptional cases where a wide range of changes is required before implementation (structure alignment with strategy).

According to Rajasekar (2014), many studies have addressed the link between organizational strategy and structure by arguing out that one of the challenges in strategy implementation is

weak coordination of activities. Miller, Wilson, and Hickson (2004) also emphasized the importance of converting poor coordination into teamwork and re-aligning roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities with strategy. On the other hand, Brache (1992) suggested that for implementation to be successful, it is more valuable for an organization to apply cross-functional processes than to change the organizational structure. Rajasekar (2014), studied on influence of organizational structure on strategy implementation and found strategy implementation to be structured and formal in nature. In addition, Markiewicz's (2011) study on the importance of processes and structures in the successful strategy implementation highlighted the importance of creativity, innovation, and perception of an organization as key ingredients in implementing strategies. The most influential factor in realizing business success is creating a fit between strategy and organizational architecture (Slater, Olson, and Hult, 2010). Organizational structure and design play important roles in making decisions on resource allocation for various functions and activities within the business ecosystem (Brenes and Mena 2008).

In addition, Muoki and Okibo (2016) aver that organizational structure is the main key element in improving the efficiency of all organizations. It is valued as the framework of the organization providing a foundation through which organizations functions. The structure of organizations models the behavior of its employees who become products of organizational structures in either positive or negative manner. Organizational structure has been broadly considered to be an anatomy of the organization that provides a foundation within which institutions function. Thus, structural deficiencies may affect employee's behavior and performance negatively which adversely impacts organizational strategy implementation. Organizational structure which is inappropriate regarding the objectives of the organization is a hindering bureaucracy and hinders organizations from achieving their goals or misleads them.

Again, Muoki and Okibo (2016) postulate that the right organizational structure clarifies how duties are determined, what formal coordination mechanisms are needed, and organizational patterns of interaction that must be met. Organizational structure is considered the management framework adopted to oversee the various activities of institutions project or other activities of an organization. A suitable organizational structure assists the management team to achieve high performance in the organization. Institutions require efficient and effective organizational structure in order to successfully accomplish its goals and objectives. Organizational structure helps in development of capacity to implement strategies. Structural components are an important means to the facilitation of smooth translation of organizational strategy and policies to actions that lead to motivation and coordination of activities and people working in an organization. Hence an appropriate organizational structure is crucial for successful strategy implementation in any institution. Organizational structure can therefore be referred as a framework within which strategy implementation should take place in order to achieve organizational objectives (Muoki & Okibo, 2016).

Organizational systems and strategy implementation

Operating systems represent the heart of the organization's ability to implement its strategy (Cocks, 2010). Winning organizations strive for close alignment of systems to achieve consistency, operational efficiency and commonality of purpose. An important factor in achieving outcomes from a system is the way that people behave in the system. To achieve effective strategy implementation, people need to take responsibility for their part of the organization. Open and direct feedback and communication systems are important.

Strategy implementation is the process through which a chosen strategy is put into action (Buuni *et al.*, 2015). This entails the design and management of systems in order to achieve the best integration of people, structure, processes and resources to achieve organizational objectives. If a strategy fails because of unsuitable or poor implementation, then the effort invested during the formulation phases becomes worthless. Strategic thinking does not matter on a firm's performance, until all the elements or factors of the strategy fit together using the appropriate capabilities, system, and structure (Okumus, 2001, 2003). Since change is inevitable during the implementation affecting the process, system, and even structure of an organization (Hrebiniak & Joyce, 1984), top management must be wise when making decisions on certain strategies that could affect people and their overall implementation.

According to Kaplan and Norton (2008), the major cause of a company's underperformance is the breakdown of its management system. They add that if organizations could link strategy and operations through a closed-loop management system, then they could easily reduce the failure chances of the new strategies. A closed-loop management system towards successful strategy implementation is comprised of five stages that begins with strategy development. Strategy development also known as strategy formulation involves application of tools, processes, and concepts such as mission, vision, and value statements; SWOT analysis; shareholder value management; competitive positioning; and core competencies to formulate a strategy statement (Kaplan and Norton, 2008).

In addition, Kaplan and Norton (2008) aver that the strategy statement is then translated into specific objectives and initiatives that are supported by other tools and processes such as strategy maps and balanced score cards. Strategy implementation then follows in the process that links strategy to operations with a third set of tools and processes including quality and process management, reengineering, process dashboards, rolling forecasts, activity-based costing, resource capacity building, and dynamic budgeting. As implementation progresses, managers continually review internal operational data and external data on competitors and the business environment. Finally, managers periodically assess the strategy, updating it when they learn that the assumptions underlying it are obsolete or faulty, which starts another loop around the system (Kaplan & Norton, 2008).

According to Nzyoki and Mingaine (2015), information systems play a key role in strategy implementation process since it's mainly concerned with internal circulation of information and appears on environmental uncertainty phenomenon. They define Information ambiguity as "a situation in which problems cannot empirically and explicitly be understood, analyzed and gathering more data about them is not possible." Another important matter that depicts the role of information systems in strategy implementation is managers' need to reciprocate exchange of information (Nzyoki & Mingaine, 2015). This calls for a system that transmits information both upwards and downwards. Management information system is one of the instruments that can collect and organize data for managers in order to do their tasks. In relation to information relevancy, strategic management as a process suggests that the information fluency and affecting directions are often reciprocal and planning and implementing segmented. Some guidelines for strengthening information systems in implementing strategies are Software and hardware should help global compatibility (a kind of stable procedure for the entire world), common channels of processing system should be available and all the parts should be self-sufficient and well matched to information systems capabilities (Nzyoki & Mingaine, 2015).

The business processes involve the structures and the program that are designed to facilitate the operation of an organization (Ndambiri, 2015). The process includes the systems put in place including control systems, resource distribution and allocation, reward and disciplinary systems, and structures. He adds that failure to align these processes to strategy then it becomes a challenge to implement the strategy. According to Ndambiri (2015), aligning structure, strategy, skills, staff, style, systems, and shared values, leads to achievement of company effectiveness. Kaplan and Norton supports this by proposing four processes which include translating vision, communication and linking, business planning and feedback & learning. These processes need to be aligned with systems, structures, programs and people for success of the organization. Aligning business process supports the organization in realizing its goals and objectives. He adds that management systems, process owners and process operators must work together as a system though still in their unique tasks. Aligning these processes is a complex task which if not well handled can become a hindrance to strategy execution (Ndambiri, 2015).

Best Practices for Strategy Implementation

A study by Beer and Eisenstat (2000) identified six silent killers of strategy implementation and made a conclusion that managers who tackled these killers, instead of avoiding them, successfully implemented the strategy and achieved the desired goals. De Feo and Janssen (2001) described ten steps for corporate strategy that ought to become an integral part of an organization's culture. These steps include: establishing a vision; agreeing on a mission; developing key strategies; developing strategic goals; establishing values; communicating company policies; providing top management leadership; deploying goals, measuring progress with key performance indicators and finally, reviewing progress.

In addition, Freedman (2003) suggested that in order to build a strong foundation for successful implementation of a strategy, an organization should complete the five activities. Allio (2005) came up with a short list of ten practical guidelines for successful implementation of the strategies that would help the managers get the job done and called them best practices for implementing strategy. In order to overcome and improve the difficulties in the implementation context, Raps (2005) introduced the idea of ten critical points together to be addressed.

Again, Thompson *et al.* (2005) emphasized on the importance of communicating the strategic intent to all members of the organization. This would eventually help to find the ways to put the strategy into action, make it work towards successfully meeting the targets. They added that although each company uses different strategy execution approaches after altering them according to the company's situation, however, these eight managerial tasks should be performed accurately to get the desired results. According to Pearce and Robinson (2011), firms are successful in implementing their strategies when they precisely stop "planning their work" and instead "work their plan".

Bigler and Williams (2013) described leadership development approach that relies mostly on 'on-the-job' training in organizations using nine step approach that is based on leadership development framework. They were added that for leaders to successfully implement and maintain an effective strategy, expansion of the leadership capabilities within an organization might be the preferred choice. Bigler and Norris (2004) opine that almost all the firms strive to attain World-class strategy execution skill which is very difficult to achieve. Every organization that manages to achieve this World-class strategy execution through leadership development are able to achieve the sustainable competitive advantage which would be difficult to imitate (Bigler and Williams, 2013). A world-class leadership can only execute world-class strategy, and therefore organizational leaders should follow the nine steps through which world class 'on-the-job' leadership with essential leadership qualities and necessary skills can be developed (Bigler and Williams, 2013).

According to Bigler and Williams (2013), any firm can successfully develop leaders who can efficiently execute strategy(s) through effective communication, learning and working together and by adopting this holistic and practical approach of leadership development through this nine step process. Similarly, Speculand (2014) put forward five recommendations for leaders to conduct a successful implementation.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional design since it was conducted once and represented a snap shot of one point in time. The study covered ten universities (five public universities and five private universities) out of the seventy universities in Kenya. The

universities were selected using criterion-based sampling. This sampling design was adopted because one may learn a great deal by focusing in depth on understanding a small number of carefully selected sample than by gathering standardized information from a large, statistically representative sample of the population (Patton, 1990). The researcher used preliminary information to judge which universities could be holding relevant information. Mainly, those universities that had earlier implemented a strategic plan had more relevant information for this research. The public universities included University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Egerton University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, and Multimedia University of Kenya. The private universities included Kabarak University, United States International University, Daystar University, Africa Nazarene University, and Africa International University. The sample size for this study was 383 university employees.

The study used primary data which was quantitative in nature. The data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire which was formulated questionnaires guided by the research objectives. Closed ended questions were developed guided by the concepts of this study, theory and other previous studies to harness divergence of views from various respondents. A five point Likert scale ranging from 1= not at all to 5 = very large extent or 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree was used to address some of the items. Likert scale questions were most frequently used in the study. It is used to test a respondent's opinion, perception or attitude. Likert scale exhibits favorable perception on one extreme and unfavorable perception on the other towards an aspect of study. The instrument was administered to senior officers in the universities through drop and pick method.

Validity is the extent to which differences found within a measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested (Kothari, 2004; Cooper and Schindler, 2006). The instrument's validity is said to be good if it contains a representative sample of the universe subject matter. This study performed content and construct validity tests. Content validity measures the extent to which the instrument adequately covered the investigative questions in the study. A pilot study was conducted at Pan Africa Christian (PAC) University to pre-test the validity of data collection instruments. Content validity was tested by use of a panel of lecturers from Kabarak University. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics where mode and Chi-Square tests were conducted. Descriptive statistics present respondents' opinion on subject matter under study. Respondents were asked to give their opinions on whether strategy communication, organizational leadership, employee participation, and resource allocation had a positive influence on strategy implementation. This qualitative data was treated as descriptive data where respondents' opinions were analyzed and presented as research findings.

Results and Discussions

Internal Organizational Factors and Strategy Implementation

To determine how respondent's understood influence of moderating factors (organizational culture, systems, and structure influence) on strategy implementation, the respondents were

asked questions which sought to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed. Results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Organizational Culture, Systems, and Structure

Variables	Not at all	Less extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	Very large extent	χ^2	$p > \chi^2$
University culture positively impacted strategy implementation	1.82%	7.64%	20%	49.82%	20.73%	188.8	<.0001
University systems supported strategy implementation	0.73%	6.18%	19.64%	53.45%	20%	231.24	<.0001
University's organizational structure was conducive for strategy implementation	1.82%	6.91%	20%	53.82%	17.45%	227.16	<.0001

Source: Research Data, 2017

The first question sought to investigate respondents' opinion on whether university culture positively impacted strategy implementation. Results indicate that majority of the respondents (49.82%) mentioned that the university culture influenced strategy implementation to a large extent while 20.73% indicated that university culture impacted strategy implementation to a very large extent. Nevertheless, a small number (7.64%) of the respondents stated that university culture influenced strategy implementation to a less extent while 1.82% indicated that university culture had no influence on strategy implementation. Only 20% of the respondents gave a moderate extent response.

The second question sought to investigate respondents' opinion on whether university systems supported strategy implementation. Results show that majority (53.45%) of the respondents

indicated that university systems supports strategy implementation to a large extent while 20% of the respondents indicated that university systems supports strategy implementation to a very large extent. A small number (6.18%) of the respondents stated that university systems supported strategy implementation to a less extent while 0.73% of the respondents indicated that university systems didn't support strategy implementation. A 19.64% of the respondents indicated that university systems supported strategy implementation to a moderate extent.

When asked whether university organizational structure was conducive for strategy implementation, majority of the respondents (53.82%) said to large extent while 17.45% of the respondents indicated that organizational structure influenced strategy implementation to a very large extent. On the contrary, 6.91% of the respondents indicated that organizational structure affected strategy implementation to a less extent while 1.82% of the respondents indicated that organizational structure did not have any impact on strategy implementation. Only 20% of the respondents stated that organizational structure had a moderate impact on strategy implementation. All P-values are significant at $p < 0.0001$.

From the results of this study, it is evident that the three moderating factors had a strong influence on strategy implementation. To begin with, organizational culture has depicted to play a key role in ensuring successful strategy implementation. Higgins and Mcallaster (2004) argue that for organizations to successfully execute strategy, strategists must manage a number of factors of which organizational culture is one of the most important factors. Strategists must manage cultural artifacts in order to successfully manage organizational culture. Cultural artifacts is comprised of myths and sagas about company successes and the heroes and heroines within the company; language systems and metaphors; rituals, ceremonies, and symbols; certain physical attributes such as the use of space, interior and exterior design, and equipment; and the defining values and norms. Additionally, Isaboke (2015) identifies culture as the single most important factor of organizational success or failure. Researchers have identified organizational culture as a factor with a greatest potential to affect organization improvement or decline. Organizational culture has been identified by the various frameworks of strategy implementation as a variable that influences the success of the implementation process. Also, Rajasekar (2014) found out that a meaningful relationship exists between organizational culture and strategy implementation.

Secondly, results show that organizational systems play a key role in ensuring successful strategy implementation. According to Cocks (2010), operating systems represent the heart of the organization's ability to implement its strategy. Winning organizations strive for close alignment of systems to achieve consistency, operational efficiency and commonality of purpose. An important factor in achieving outcomes from a system is the way that people behave in the system. To achieve effective strategy implementation, people need to take responsibility for their part of the organization. Open and direct feedback and communication systems are important.

Finally, results also imply that organizational structure plays a key role in ensuring successful strategy implementation. Rajasekar (2014) posits that many studies have addressed the link between organizational strategy and structure by arguing out that one of the challenges in strategy implementation is weak coordination of activities. Miller, Wilson, and Hickson (2004) also emphasized the importance of converting poor coordination into teamwork and re-aligning roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities with strategy. On the other hand, Brache (1992) suggested that for implementation to be successful, it is more valuable for an organization to apply cross-functional processes than to change the organizational structure. Bimani and Longfield-Smith (2007) studied on influence of organizational structure on strategy implementation and found strategy implementation to be structured and formal in nature.

Conclusion

The study found that the three internal organizational factors play a positive role in ensuring success in strategy implementation. The study established that organizational culture has a positive influence on strategy implementation in Kenyan universities. This implies that organizational practices, beliefs, norms, and values are key to successful strategy implementation. The study also found that organizational systems have a positive influence on strategy implementation in Kenyan universities. This calls for alignment of university processes and procedures with strategy to facilitate smooth implementation of strategies. The study also established that organizational structure had a positive influence on strategy implementation. This implies that in order to successfully implement strategies in organizations, there need to be in place clear line of reporting and individual responsibilities.

References

- Allio, M. K. (2005). A short, practical guide to implementing strategy. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 26(4), 12 – 21.
- Alfred, M. (2014) Successfully Implementing Strategic Decisions, *Journal of Business strategy*, 2(3), 325-338.
- Al-Kandi, I., Asutay, M. & Dixon, R. (2013). Factors influencing the strategy implementation process and its outcomes: Evidence from Saudi Arabian banks. *Journal of Global Strategic Management*, 7(2), 5-15.
- Beer, M., & Eisenstat, R. A. (2000). The silent killers of strategy implementation and learning. *Sloan Management Review*, 4, 29-40.
- Bhimani, A., & Langfield-S. K. (2007). Structure, formality and the importance of financial and non-financial information in strategy development and implementation. *Management Accounting Research*, 18(1), 3-31.
- Bigler, W. R., & Williams, F. A. (2013). World-Class Strategy Execution Through' on The Job' leadership Development. *Business Studies Journal*, 5(1).
- Bigler, W. R., & Norris, M. (2004). *The new science of strategy execution: How established firms become fast, sleek wealth creators*: Greenwood Publishing Group.

- Bowman, C., & Asch, D. (1987), *Strategic Management*, Macmillan, London.
- Brache, A. P. (1992). Process Improvement and Management: *A Tool for Strategy Implementation. Planning Review*, 20(5), 24.
- Brenes, E. R., & Mena, M. (2008). Key success factors for strategy implementation in Latin America. *Journal of business research*, 61(6), 590–598.
- Buuni, H., Yusuf, A., Kiiru, G., & Karemu, G. (2015). Strategic plan implementation and organizational performance: a case of Hargeisa Water Agency in Somaliland. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 17(II), 60-6.
- Carlopio, J., & Harvey, M. (2012). The Development of a Social Psychological Model of strategy implementation, *International Journal of Management*, 29(3), 75-85.
- Cocks, G. (2010). "Emerging concepts for implementing strategy", *The TQM Journal*, 22(3), 260–266.
- Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P.S. (2006). *Business Research Methods*. 9th Ed. McGraw-Hill.
- Cravens, D., Greenley, G., Piercy, & Slater, S. (1998). Mapping the path to integrating contemporary strategic perspectives. *Long Range Planning*, 493-506.
- CUE (2014). *Universities Standards and Guidelines*. Kenya. CUE.
- Davenport, T. (2007), "Strategy Execution: Avoid the Extremes", *Harvard Business Review*.
- David, F.R. (2001). *Strategic management concepts & cases* (8th ed.). Prentice Hall: New Jersey
- Day, G. (1994, October). Capabilities of market-driven organizations. *Journal of Marketing*, 37-52.
- Deal E. T. & Kennedy A. A. (2000). *Corporate culture*. Persons Cambridge MA.
- De Feo, J. A. and Janssen, A. (2001). "Implementing a strategy successfully", *Measuring Business Excellence*, 5(4), 4 – 6
- Dobni, B. (2003). Creating a Strategy Implementation Environment. *Business Horizons*, 46(2), 43-46.
- Eaton, D. & Kilby, G. (2015). Does Your Organizational Culture support your Business Strategy? *The Journal for Quality & Participation*, 1(1), 4-7.
- Freedman, M. (2003). The genius is in the implementation. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 24(2), 26-31.
- Higgins, J. M. & Mcallaster, C. (2004). If You Want Strategic Change, Don't Forget to Change Your Cultural Artifacts. *Journal of Change Management*, 4(1), 63–73.
- Hilman, H. & Siam, M. (2014). The Influence of Organizational Structure and Organization Culture on the Organizational Performance of Higher Educational

- Institutions: The Moderating Role of Strategy Communication. *Asian Social Science*, 10(13), 142-154.
- Hitt, M. A., Keats, B. W., & DeMarie, S. M. (1998). Navigating the new competitive landscape: Building strategic flexibility and competitive advantage in the 2P' century. *Academy of Management Executive*, in press.
- Hitt, M. A., Ricart, J. E., & Nixon, R. D. (1998). *New managerial mindsets: Organizational transformation and strategy implementation*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hrebiniak, L. G., & Joyce, W. F. (1984). *Implementing strategy*. New York: Macmillan.
- Hrebiniak, L. G. (2005). *Making strategy work: Leading effective execution and change*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education.
- Hrebiniak, L.G. (2006). Obstacles to effective strategy implementation. *Organizational Dynamics*, 35(1), 12-31.
- Ibrahim, M., Sulaiman, M., Kahtani, A. & Jarad, I. A (2012). The Relationship between Strategy Implementation and Performance of Manufacturing Firms in Indonesia: The Role of Formality Structure as a Moderator. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 20(7), 955-964.
- Isaboke, C. M. (2015). Influence of organization culture on strategy implementation in selected universities in Kenya. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, III(9), 1-15.
- Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2008). Mastering the management system. *harvard business review*, 86(1), 62.
- Kiptoo, J. K. & Mwirigi, F. M. (2014). Factors That Influence Effective Strategic Planning Process In Organizations. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 16(6), 188-195.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methods*. New Delhi: New Age International Publications.
- Kumar, K. (2010), Similarities and Differences in the Strategic Orientation, Innovation Patterns and Performance of SMEs and Large Companies, *The Business Review*, 16(2), 32- 58.
- Lewis, P. S., Goodman, S. H. & Fandt, P. M. (2004). *Management, challenges in 21st century*. (3rd Ed.). USA: South-Western College Publishing.
- Louw, L. and Venter, P. 2006. *Strategic Management: Winning in the Southern African workplace*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Markiewicz, P. (2011). Change Management in the Strategy Implementation Process. *Intelektine Ekonomika*, 5(2), 257-267.
- Miller, S., Wilson, D., & Hickson, D. (2004). Beyond planning: strategies for successfully implementing strategic decisions. *Long Range Planning*, 37(3), 201-218.

- Muoki, F. M. & Okibo, W. B. (2016). Role of organizational structure on strategy Implementation of public universities in Kenya: A case study of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of science and technology. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Information Technology*, II(III), 801-811.
- Ndambiri, S. (2015). Barriers of Effective Strategy Execution: Organization's Challenge. *The International Journal of Business & Management*, 3(9), 295-299.
- Nzyoki, J. M. & Mingaine, L. (2015). Factors Influencing Implementation of Strategic Plans in the Municipal Council of Machakos, Kenya. *International Journal of Art & Humanity Science*, 2(3), 11-21.
- Pascale, R. T., Millemann, M., & Gioja, L. (2000). *Surfing the edge of chaos*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Porth, S. J. (2003), *Strategic Management: A Cross-Functional Approach*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River.
- Powell, T. C. (1992), Strategic Planning as Competitive Advantage, *Strategic Management Journal*, 13(7), 551-558.
- Okumus, F. (2001). Towards a strategy implementation framework. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(7), 327-338.
- Okumus, F. (2003). A framework to implement strategies in organizations. *Management Decision*, 1(9), 871 - 882.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Beverly Hills, CA:Sage.
- Pearce, J. A., & Robinson, R. B. (2011). *Strategic management: Formulation, implementation, and control*: Irwin/McGraw-Hill.
- Rajasekar, J. (2014). Factors Affecting Effective Strategy Implementation in a Service industry: A Study of Electricity Distribution Companies in the Sultanate of Oman. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 59(1), 1-32.
- Raps, A. (2005). Strategy implementation-an insurmountable obstacle? *Handbook of business strategy*, 6(1), 141-146.
- Slater, S. F., & Olson, E. M. (2010). Marketing's contribution to the implementation of business strategy: an empirical analysis. *Strategic Management Journal*, 22(11), 1055-1067.
- Speculand, R. (2014). Bridging the strategy implementation skills gap. *Strategic Direction*, 30(1), 29-30.
- Thompson, A. A., & Strickland, A. J. (2003), *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases*, McGraw-Hill/Irwin, Boston.
- Thompson, A. A., Strickland, A. J., & Gamble, J. E. (2005). *Strategy: Winning in the Marketplace; core concepts, analytical tools, cases* (2nd ed.). Boston, NY: McGraw- Hill/Irwin.

- Viljoen, J., & Dann, S. (2003), *Strategic Management*, 4th ed. Prentice Hall, Sydney.
- Waribugo, S. & Etim, A. E. (2016). The Impact of Structure on Strategy Implementation among Telecommunication Firms in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 8(14), 59-68.
- Wheelen, T. L. and J. D. Hunger, (2006). *Strategic Management and Business Policy* (10th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson, Prentice Hall.
- Zaribaf, M., & Bayrami, H. (2010). An effective factors pattern affecting implementation of strategic plans. *Academic and Business Research Institute*.