



**EFFECTS OF MANAGEMENT ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION OF
STRATEGIC PLANS IN PUBLIC SECTOR, A CASE OF NYAMIRA COUNTY
GOVERNMENT, KENYA**

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Abstract

Successful implementation of strategic plans is key for any organization's survival. Many organizations cannot sustain their competitive advantages, despite having a robust strategy formulation process because of failure in proper implementation. Considering the high failure rates in implementation of strategies more attention should be given by executives to implementing the strategies. The Public sector is the engine of development in both the County and country. The sector from independence has experienced substantial growth. Despite such growth, public sector in Kenya has been undertaken by foreign firms due to lack of adequate local capacity in the industry. In the context of this study, the fact that the Public sector have strived from various stages alongside the adoption of various organizational strategies indicates that it has not been easy to achieve optimum implementation of strategic plans. None of the known local studies has ever focused on implementation of strategic plan in the county Governments. Given the importance of these processes, this study therefore was done to fill the gap by analyzing the factors affecting implementation of strategic decision among Public Sector in Kenya a case of County Government Nyamira.

Keywords: Budgeting, Financial Performance, Financial Planning

I. INTRODUCTION

Many people believe that formulation an innovative and unique strategy is critical and by itself sufficient to lead a firm to success in today's business world, ensuring that such a strategy works is equally as important executives should pay careful attention to the implementation of strategies to avoid common pitfalls that result in failure. A number of approaches that greatly enhance the effectiveness of strategy implementation can be employed. Indeed, good strategic management is a function of people actively considering strategy as they make day-today decisions in an ever-changing world.

Strategy implementation involves organization of the firm's resources and motivation of the staff to achieve objectives. The environmental conditions facing many firms have changed rapidly. Today's global competitive environment is complex, dynamic, and largely unpredictable. To deal with this unprecedented level of change, a lot of thinking has gone into strategy formulation. Strategic management is about managing the future, and effective strategy formulation is crucial, as it directs the attention and actions of an organization. The assessment of strategy formulation processes becomes crucial for practitioners and researchers alike in order to conduct and evaluate different formulation processes (Olson et al., 2005).

The quest for a devolved system of governance in Kenya popularly referred to, as 'ugatuzi' has been a longstanding one. The promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 (CoK, 2010) on 27 August 2010 paved way for realization of the "dream" system of governance. Chapter Eleven (Cap 11) of CoK 2010 – Devolved Government specifically provides for the setting up of the County Governments .

Decentralization is not new concept in Kenya. It has been taking place from the time Kenya gained independence from the British in 1963. Although with power being centered on the national government as opposed to other decentralized units, and with no real opportunities for citizen's participation.(Gabriel, 2012)

Devolution is actually a form of decentralization. Decentralization is about transferring of selected functions from a central authority to the lowest feasible structure. Devolution entails the ceding (legal act giving) of power from a Central Authority to Local Authority, the state powers of revenue collection and expenditure among others. In Kenyan case the current Centralized System Government headquartered in the Capital City of Nairobi will transfer power to the 47 Counties listed on the First Schedule of CoK 2010. These governments need to be primarily developmental. That means that they have to be lean and nimble. Governors must think and plan like warriors against poverty. Their primary role should be to create an enabling environment, through smart investments and regulatory measures, for Kenyans to be able to unlock the economic potential of counties. This can only happen through effective implementation of the formulated strategies.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the context of this study, the fact that the public sector has strived from various stages alongside the adoption of various organizational strategies indicates that it has not been easy to achieve optimum strategy implementation. None of the known local studies has focused on management affects on implementations of strategic plans in public sector. There is therefore, the need to research in the same area of effects of management on implementation of strategic plans a reason which contributed to the researcher's interest in conducting the study. Given the importance of these processes, this study therefore sought to fill the gap by analyzing the effects of management on implementation of strategic plans in public sector in Kenya a case of Nyamira County Government.

III. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The general objective of the study was to establish the management factors that affect strategy implementation in public service sector in Kenya a case of Nyamira County Government.

Specifically the study sought to:

1. Establish the effect of leadership on strategy implementation
2. Establish the effect of communication on strategy implementation
3. Establish the effect of coordination of activities on strategy implementation

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the effect of leadership on strategy implementation at county government of Nyamira Kenya
2. What is the effect of communication on strategy implementation at County government in Nyamira Kenya?
3. What is the effect of coordination of activities on strategy implementation at county government in Nyamira Kenya?

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was guided by three theories

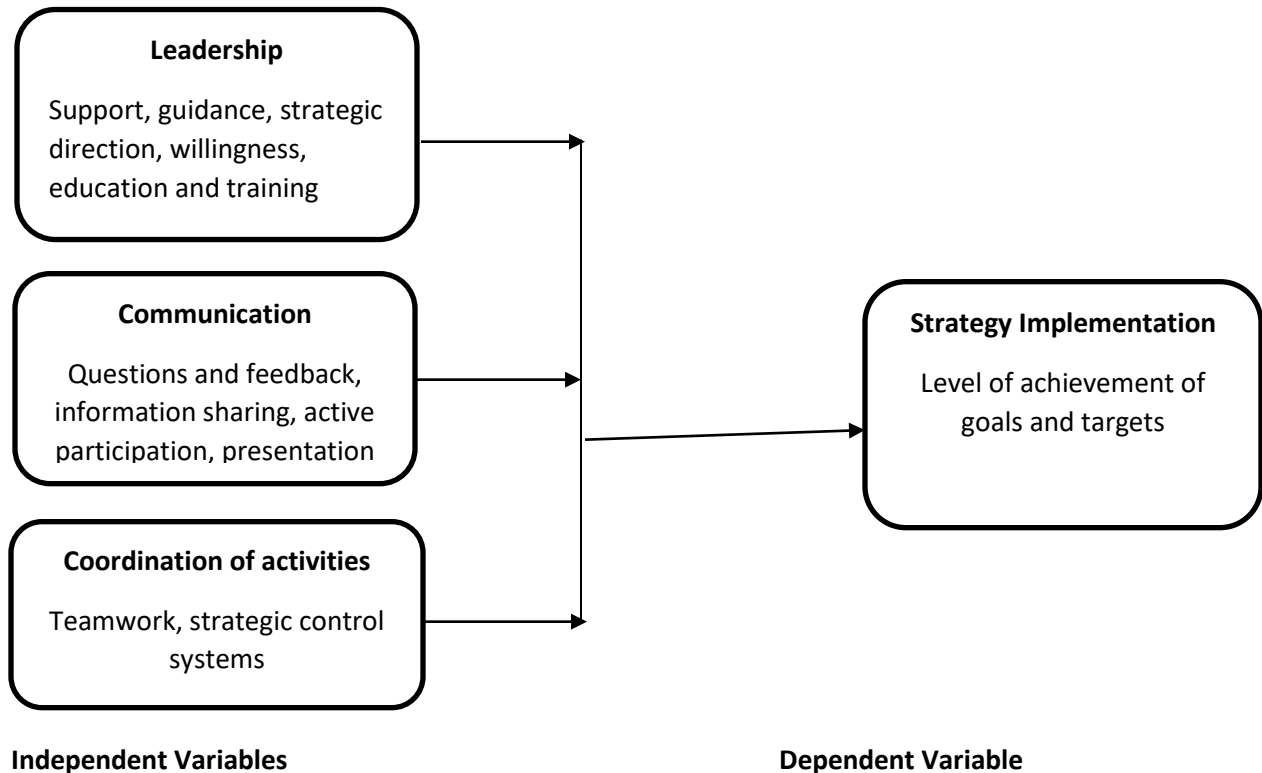
The resource-based theory - The resource based theory (Wernerfelt, 2004 & Barney, 2003) focuses on internal strengths and weakness in organizational resources, showing how processes are managed and how the resources are allocated and deployed, all in order to assist in the implementation of the strategies.

P Elements of Resource Based View (RBV) - Theoretically, the central premise of RBV addresses the fundamental question of why firms are different and how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage by deploying their resources.

Lewins theory- Building on his principle of the force-field which assures that management of strategic change to be successful driving forces must outweigh resisting forces

VI. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1



VII. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employed descriptive research design. This research was conducted through a case study since it was a research on one organization. The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire while secondary data was collected by use of desk search techniques from published reports and other documents. Quantitative data was collected and analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics. The researcher targeted 56 employees of the County government of Nyamira in all the departments.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Commitment of leadership

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement that the following statements regarding commitment of top level management and strategy implementation. Mean and standard deviation were calculated and the findings shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Commitment of leadership and strategy implementation

Statement	SD	D	MA	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
Middle level managers are the “key actors” in strategy implementation since they have a pivotal role in strategic communication.	2	4	2	14	28	4.24	0.1834
The most important thing when implementing a strategy is the top level management’s commitment to the strategic direction.	1	3	7	15	24	4.18	0.1985
Top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process.	0	2	3	13	32	4.50	0.7472
Demonstrable management’s commitment is a positive signal for organization to enhance strategy implementation	2	0	1	18	29	4.44	0.1186
Current organization top level management does not allow employee participation in decision making	9	7	13	9	14	3.36	0.1095
There are clear commitment of top level management that give organizational members certainty during an implementation effort	13	3	4	19	13	3.44	0.1278
To enhance strategic implementation success, my organization selects the right people for key positions	9	8	11	12	10	3.12	0.0264
The top level managers always determine the degrees of authority needed to manage each organizational unit during strategy implementation.	1	1	7	14	27	4.30	0.0475

The response with mean close to 1 denotes strong disagreement. In the same continuum, responses with mean close to 2 denotes disagreement, 3 denotes neutral or moderate agreement, 4 denotes agreement and 5 strong agreement. Majority of the respondents agreed that middle level managers are the “key actors” in strategy implementation since they have a pivotal role in

strategic communication (mean=4.24), the most important thing when implementing a strategy is the top level management’s commitment to the strategic direction (mean=4.18), top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process (mean=4.50), demonstrable management’s commitment is a positive signal for organization to enhance strategy implementation (mean=4.44) and the top level managers always determine the degrees of authority needed to manage each organizational unit during strategy implementation (mean=4.30).

The respondents moderately agreed to the statements that the current organization top level management does not allow employee participation in decision making (mean=3.36), there are clear commitment of top level management that give organizational members certainty during an implementation effort (mean=3.44), to enhance strategic implementation success, my organization selects the right people for key positions (mean=3.12).

The respondents were further asked to indicate the extent to which commitment of top level management influence strategy implementation. Figure 8 shows the findings of the study.

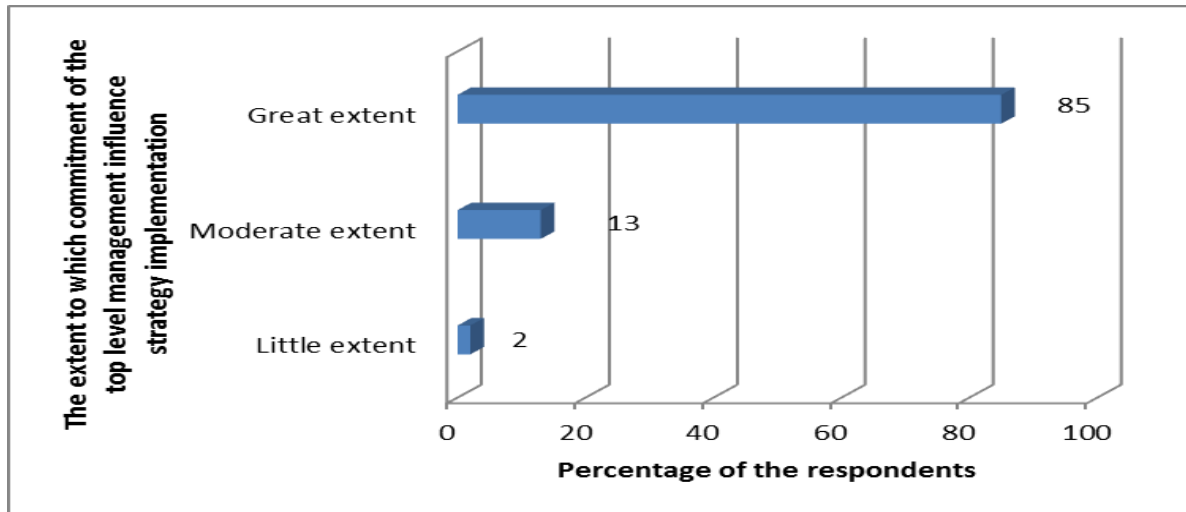


Figure 2: Commitment of top level management influence strategy implementation.

Source: Survey, (2017)

From the study findings in figure 2, majority (85%) of the respondents indicated that commitment of top level management influence strategy implementation to a great extent.

The respondents stated that commitment of the current top level management should be enhanced by ensuring that managers are motivated in monetary and non-monetary terms and clear communication of duties and responsibilities of the managers to the entire organization. Enhancing commitment of the current top level management would in turn improve strategic implementation.

Communication Process

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement that the following statements regarding communication process and strategy implementation. Mean and standard deviation were calculated and the findings shown in table 2

Table 2: Communication process and strategy implementation

Statement	SD	D	MA	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
Communication processes in my organization are planned to match requirements for a strategy to be implemented	1	1	1	28	19	4.26	0.0048
Communication is a key success factor in strategy implementation	0	1	3	30	16	4.22	0.2733
In my organization communicating with employees concerning strategy implementation is frequently delayed	19	15	10	3	3	2.12	0.132
My organization is faced with the challenge of lack of institution of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy	9	6	4	18	13	3.40	0.1951
Lack of communications cause more harm as the employees are not told about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees	1	3	3	30	13	4.02	0.0295
The way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it.	1	0	2	19	27	4.36	0.0148
An integrated communications plan is an effective vehicle for strategy implementation	0	1	5	20	24	4.34	0.0148

The response with mean close to 1 denotes strong disagreement. In the same continuum, responses with mean close to 2 denotes disagreement, 3 denotes neutral or moderate agreement,

4 denotes agreement and 5 strong agreement. From the study findings in table 4.7, majority of the respondents agreed that communication processes in Nyamira County Government are planned to match requirements for a strategy to be implemented (mean=4.26), communication is a key success factor in strategy implementation (mean=4.22), lack of communications cause more harm as the employees are not told about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees (mean=4.02), the way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it (mean= 4.36) and , an integrated communications plan is an effective vehicle for strategy implementation (mean=4.34).

The respondents moderately agreed to the statement that Nyamira County Government is faced with the challenge of lack of institution of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy (mean=3.40). However, the respondents disagreed to the statement that communicating with employees concerning strategy implementation is frequently delayed at Nyamira County Government mean= (2.12).

The respondents were further asked to indicate the extent to which communication process influence strategy implementation. Figure 3 shows the findings of the study.

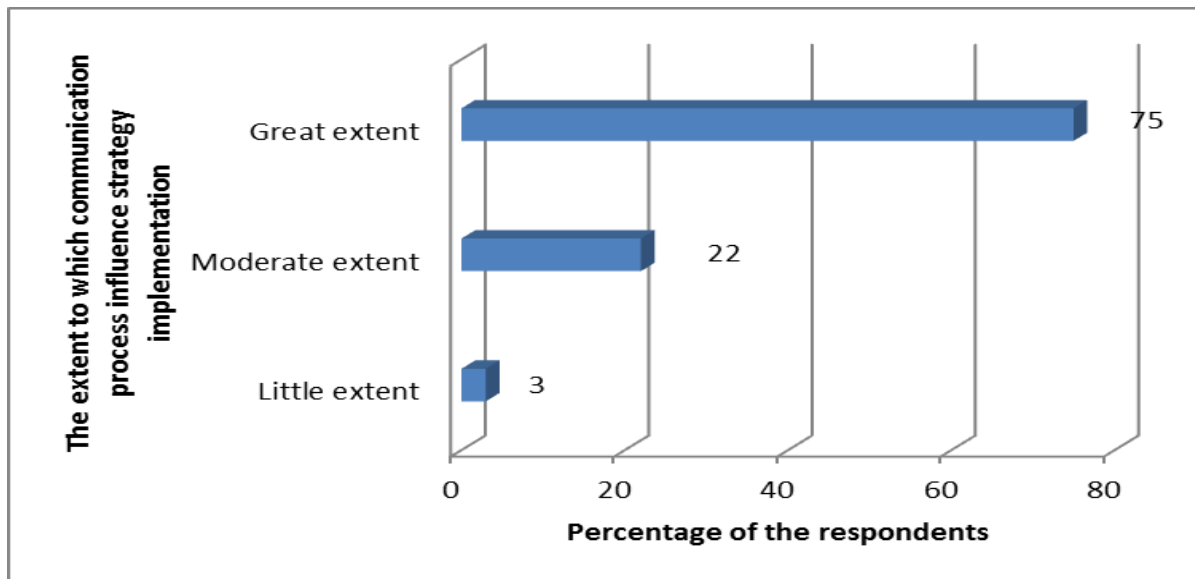


Figure 3: Communication process influence strategy implementation

From the study findings in figure 3, majority (75%) of the respondents indicated that communication process influence strategy implementation to a great extent. The respondents stated that the communication process at Nyamira County Government is efficient in service delivery because requires clear and precise information and all employees are keen not to miss out on any communication in the organization. The efficiency of communication is an impetus to strategy implementation at Nyamira County Government.

Co-ordination of Activities

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement that the following statements regarding co-ordination of activities and strategy implementation. Mean and standard deviation were calculated and the findings shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Co-ordination of activities and strategy implementation

Statement	SD	D	MA	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
Lack of coordination of activities in my organization leads to more time before a strategy is implemented	41	2	1	2	4	1.58	0.13924
Silent killers of strategy implementation comprise of unclear strategic intentions and conflicting priorities and weak co-ordination across functions.	3	2	8	20	17	4.00	0.6944
Coordination of activities required to maintain and monitor progress towards strategy implementation.	0	5	1	26	18	4.14	0.2518
My organization is faced with influence that arise from decentralization and imperfect monitoring of Co-ordination of Activities in strategy implementation.	42	4	1	2	1	1.32	0.7878
My organization does not have sufficient policies in solving the challenges of co-ordination of activities on strategy implementation	41	8	1	0	0	1.20	0.6952

The response with mean close to 1 denotes strong disagreement. In the same continuum, responses with mean close to 2 denotes disagreement, 3 denotes neutral or moderate agreement, 4 denotes agreement and 5 strong agreement. From the study findings in table 4.8, majority of the respondents agreed that silent killers of strategy implementation comprise of unclear strategic intentions and conflicting priorities and weak co-ordination across functions (mean=4.00) and coordination of activities required to maintain and monitor progress towards strategy implementation (mean=4.14).

However, the respondents disagreed to the statements that lack of coordination of activities in my organization leads to more time before a strategy is implemented (mean=1.58), Nyamira County Government is faced with influence that arise from decentralization and imperfect monitoring of co-ordination of activities in strategy implementation (mean=1.32) and, Nyamira County Government does not have sufficient policies in solving the challenges of coordination of activities on strategy implementation (mean=1.20)

The respondents were further asked to indicate the extent to which co-ordination of activities influence strategy implementation. Figure 4 shows the findings of the study.

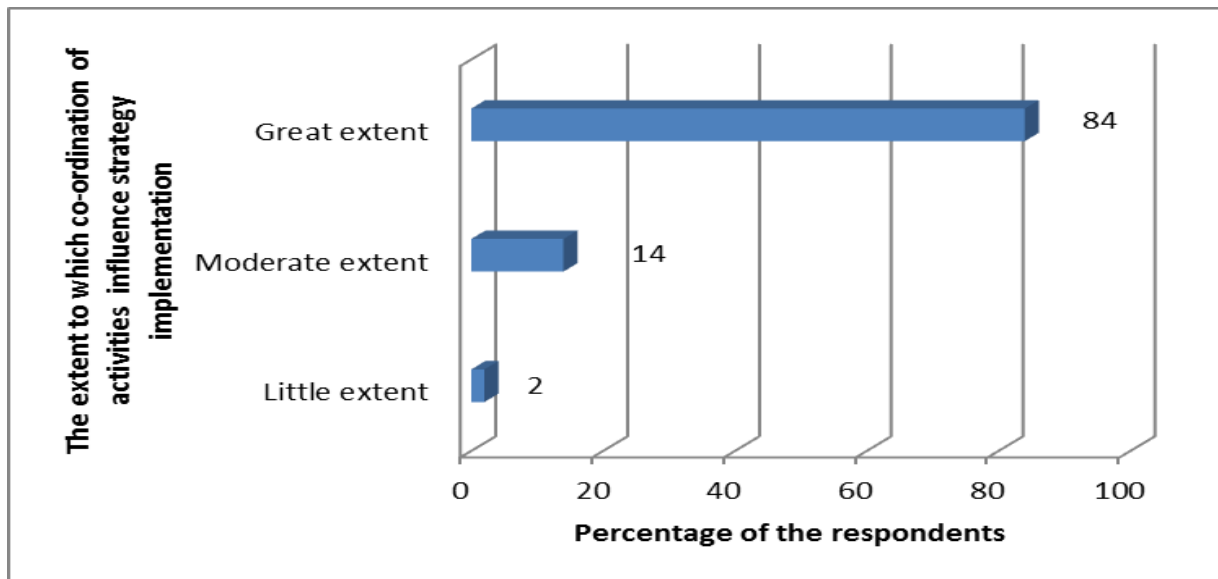


Figure 4: Co-ordination of activities influence strategy implementation

Source: Survey, (2017)

From the study findings in figure 4, majority (84%) of the respondents indicated that coordination of activities influence strategy implementation to a great extent. The respondent indicated that and efficient operational management in necessary to ensure that an organization meet its strategies.

Inferential statistics

Regression analysis was used to determine whether commitment of the top level management, communication, coordination of activities and organizational culture influence strategy implementation at County Government of Nyamira, Kenya. The following regression model was adopted for the study:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ are correlation coefficients

Y= Strategy implementation

X_1 = commitment of the top level management

X₂= coordination of activities

X₃= communication

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std.Error of the Estimate
1	.852 ^a	.727	.398	.95469

a. Predictors: (Constant), leadership, communication ,coordination of activities on strategy implementation

The model summary (Table 4) indicates that there was a very strong positive relationship (R= 0.852) between the dependent and the independent variables. The value of R Square 0.727 indicating that 72.7% of the effective implementation strategy could be explained by the independent variables for the study (commitment of the top leadership, culture, coordination of activities and communication).

Table 5: Analysis of Variance - ANOVA^a

ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum Squares	ofdf	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	1.518	27	0.138	7.46	.003 ^b
1	Residual	.185	1	.185		
	Total	1.702	28			

a. Predictors: (Constant), leadership, communication ,coordination of activities on strategy implementation

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that composite effect of the four factors (commitment of the top level management, organizational culture, coordination of activities and communication) on corporate strategy implementations is statistically significant as indicated by the low p values (0.003) i.e. less than 0.05 and high F value (7.46), this shows that the overall model was significant.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	Constant	1.157	1.335		1.615	0.367
1	Leadership	0.597	0.213	0.167	0.901	0.014
	Communication	0.248	0.217	0.186	3.867	0.017
	Coordination of activities	0.147	.358	0.172	0.410	0.031

a. Dependent Variable: strategy implementation

The regression analysis in above indicates all the three independent variables had positive Coefficients. The Coefficients are used to answer the following regression model which relates the predictor (independent variables) and dependent variables

$$(Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon) \text{ becomes: } Y=1.57+0.597X_1+0.248X_2+0.147X_3$$

$$\text{Strategy implementation} = 1.157+0.597*\text{Leadership}+0.248*\text{Communication} +0.147*\text{Coordination of activities}$$

The regression equation above has established that taking independent variables to be constant will Strategy implementation will be 1.157 The findings presented also shows that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in Commitment of leadership will lead to a 0.597 increase in strategy implementation while a unit increase in increase in strategy implementation while a unit increase in coordination of activities will lead to 0.243 increase in strategy implementation and a unit increase in communication will lead to 0.147 increase in strategy implementation. This infers that commitment of leadership contribute most to strategy implementation. At 5% level of significance, commitment leadership had a 0.014 level of significance; coordination of activities showed a 0.017 level of significance and communication showed a 0.031 level of significance, hence the most significant factor is commitment leadership.

IX. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study established that implementation of strategic plans is influenced by commitment leadership, communication process and co-ordination of activities. Organization culture influences adherence to organizational vision, mission and values thus steering the implementation of organizational strategy. The employees at all levels must firmly understand

their individual and inter-dependent roles in attaining the corporate vision. Implementation of strategic plans requires a strong alignment between employee attitudes and strategic goals and objectives.

The study findings revealed that while leadership's commitment is a positive signal for organization to enhance implementation of strategic plan in service industry firms, there are still hindrances to strategy implementation. Top level management do not always facilitate employee participation in decision making, some firms lack leadership that give organizational members certainty during an implementation effort and some firms do not selects the right people for key positions.

The efficiency of communication is an impetus to implementation of strategic plans at Nyamira County Government. The way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it and an integrated communications plan is an effective vehicle for implementation of strategic plans. Communication process at County Government of Nyamira is efficient because public service delivery requires clear and precise information and all employees are keen not to miss out on any communication in the organization.

Coordination of activities maintains and monitors progress towards strategy implementation. Lack of coordination of activities leads to more time before a strategy is implemented. Firms in the public service industry should ensure efficient co-ordination of activities and have sufficient policies in solving the challenges of co-ordination of activities.

Commitment of leadership and strategy implementation

The study established that commitment of leadership influence strategy implementation in the public service industry. Middle level managers are the "key actors" in strategy implementation since they have a pivotal role in strategic communication and the most important thing when implementing a strategy is the leadership's commitment to the strategic direction. Top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process. Top level managers always determine the degrees of authority needed to manage each organizational unit during strategy implementation.

The study findings revealed that while management's commitment is a positive signal for organization to enhance strategy implementation firms in public service industry, there are still hindrances to strategy implementation. The study established leadership do not always facilitate employee participation in decision making, some firms lack top level management that give organizational members certainty during an implementation effort and some firms do not selects the right people for key positions.

The commitment of the current leadership should be enhanced by ensuring that managers are motivated in monetary and non-monetary terms and clear communication of duties and responsibilities of the managers to the entire organization. Enhancing commitment of the current top level management would in turn improve strategic implementation.

The study findings are in tandem with previous studies by Rapa and Kauffman, (2005) that commitment of top level management is undoubtedly a prerequisite for strategy implementation. Kamanda (2006) suggests that employee performance, absenteeism, innovation, turnover and satisfaction may be gauged by the degree of workers' commitment to the company.

Communication process and strategy implementation

Communication is a key success factor in strategy implementation. Communication processes should be planned to match requirements for a strategy to be implemented. The way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it and an integrated communications plan is an effective vehicle for strategy implementation.

Lack of communications cause more harm as the employees are not told about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees. Some firms in the service industry do not have a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy. Moreover, a delayed communication with employees is a hindrance to strategy implementation.

The study established that communication process at Nyamira County Government is efficient because public service delivery requires clear and precise information and all employees are keen not to miss out on any communication in the organization. The efficiency of communication is an impetus to strategy implementation at Nyamira County Government.

According to Miniace and Falter (2006), communicating with employees concerning issues related to the strategy implementation is frequently delayed until the changes have already crystallized. Beer and Eisenstat's (2000) argue that in addition to inability to solicit questions and feedback, lack of communications cause more harm as the employees are not told about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees, and, furthermore, cover the reason behind changed circumstances.

Co-ordination of activities and strategy implementation

Efficient operational management is necessary to ensure that an organization meet its strategies. Coordination of activities maintains and monitors progress towards strategy implementation. Lack of coordination of activities leads to more time before a strategy is implemented. Firms in the service Industry should ensure efficient co-ordination of activities and have sufficient policies in solving the challenges of co-ordination of activities.

Previous studies by Beer and Eisenstat's (2000) also lay emphasis on the role of coordination of activities on strategy implementation. Beer and Eisenstat's (2000) asserts that strategy implementation is hindered by unclear strategic intentions and conflicting priorities and weak co-ordination across functions.

X. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that successful implementation of strategic plans requires comprehensive analysis of factors that might affect the process and coming up with a matrix of solution to the

identified challenges. The study presents four categories of factors that influence strategy implementation: challenges related to, commitment of leadership, efficiency of communication process and efficiency in coordination of activities during implementation.

The lack of leadership is a hindrance to strategy implementation in the service industry. Top level managers always determine the degrees of authority needed to manage each organizational unit during strategy implementation. Therefore, top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process. However, top level management do not always facilitate employee participation in decision making, some firms lack top level management that give organizational members certainty during an implementation effort and some firms do not select the right people for key positions.

Communication is a key success factor in strategy implementation but some firms in the construction industry do not have a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy. Moreover, a delayed communication with employees is a hindrance to strategy implementation.

With regard to coordination of activities, the study hindrances to strategy implementation comprise of unclear strategic intentions and conflicting priorities and weak co-ordination across functions. Lack of coordination of activities leads to more time before a strategy is implemented.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies should be enacted to allow firms in the public service delivery industry undertake the following actions during strategy implementation:

Inclusion of all employees in the implementation process: Bring influential employees, not just executive team members into the planning process. Not only will they contribute meaningfully to strategy, they will also be critical in ensuring the organization engages with the strategy. Engage them emotionally in the vision. The vision needs to give people goose bumps – a vision they believe in, that they want to invest and engage with.

Monitor and adapt to the strategy: Strategies must be adaptable and flexible so they can respond to changes in both our internal and external environments. Strategy meetings should be held regularly throughout the year, where initiatives and direction are assessed for performance and strategic relevance.

Put metrics in place to regularly measure both the output and process goals of the implementation effort, and ensure organizational adaptability to evolve the implementation plan based on the learning achieved. Effort to scope and design these metrics is often very high-reward. Without them it's impossible to tell if and why implementation is succeeding or failing, and to take timely corrective action as required. In our experience almost all implementation plans need to get tweaked at least now and then as unforeseen events, roadblocks, and/or consequences occur.

Communicate to all stakeholders: Ensure every staff member understands the strategic vision, the strategic themes and what their role will be in delivering the strategic vision. Communicate the strategy through a combination of presentations, workshops, meetings, newsletters, intranets and updates. Continue strategy and performance updates throughout the year.

Clarify the expectations: It is important that all employees are aware of expectations. How are they expected to change? What and how are they expected to deliver? Each individual must understand their functions within the strategy, the expected outcomes and how they will be measured.

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