

Influence of Organizational Leadership on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region, Kenya

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Abstract

Original Research Article

In this period of globalization when the world is consistently experiencing numerous rapid changes in various fields, the environment in which organizations now operate is never again predictable and stable. This has led to strategic planning to provide an operational framework allowing organizations to cope with changes and gain a competitive edge. The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of organizational leadership on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region. The study was guided mainly by one objective: to determine the influence of organizational leadership on the implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region. A descriptive cross sectional survey research design was used in this study, that is, this research design involved the observation and description of the behavior of a subject without influencing the outcome of the respondent in any way. The study's target population was 295 heads of departments from the 8 universities in Mount Kenya Region. Stratified sampling and later purposive sampling technique was used incorporating the slovin's formula to get a sample size of 170 respondents. Both closed and open ended questions were used in the questionnaires to collect data. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics as well as content analysis and presented through percentages, standard deviations, means and frequencies. The study carried out a correlational analysis in order to ascertain the relationship and strength of associations between organizational leadership and implementation of strategic plans. The findings indicated that organizational leadership had a moderate and significant relationship with implementation of strategic plans. The study revealed that the leadership attributes that influence implementation of strategic plans in Universities include communication effectiveness, availability of strategic plan, commitment towards the strategic plan, explaining the benefits of the strategic plan to employees and delegating power to employees in decision making. The study concluded that organizational leadership has an influence on implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya region. The study recommended that further studies be carried out on external factors like the organizational environment and type of industry to give a better aspect of these factors. The study also recommended that similar studies be carried out on other Universities in other regions within the country.

Keywords: Implementation, Strategy, Strategic Plan, Organizational leadership, Communication.

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INTRODUCTION

In this period of globalization when the world is consistently experiencing numerous rapid changes in various fields, the environment in which organizations now operate is never again predictable and stable. Strategic planning then can provide an operational framework allowing organizations to cope with changes and gain a competitive edge [1]. Strategic planning is an essential practice for any organization that aims at assuring that it produces a worthwhile pattern of good results while avoiding an undesirable pattern of bad circumstances. Strategic management refers to the set of managerial decisions and actions that determine the

long run performance of a corporation. It includes environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, evaluation and control. Strategy implementation affects the organization, especially on service companies which have different nature than other kinds of organizations; the importance of this issue gets more highlighted [2]. Diversification and broadness of service sector including individual and social services, professional and commercial and public increases the role and importance of strategy implementation in service companies.

Although formulating a consistent strategy is a difficult task for any management team, implementing that strategy to ensure it works is more difficult. A myriad of factors can potentially affect the process by which strategic plans are turned into organizational action. Unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation is often seen as something of a craft, rather than a science, and its research history has previously been described as fragmented and eclectic. It is thus not surprising that, after a comprehensive strategy or single strategic decision has been formulated, significant difficulties usually arise during the subsequent implementation process [3].

Strategic implementation falls within a realm of strategic management which is the application of strategic thinking to doing the business of an organization. It focuses on entire organizations whereby companies identify future opportunities and survival [4].

Ahuja, *et al.* [5] studied strategic decisions in organizations in USA and Canada and the conclusion was that half of strategic decisions failed to attain their initial goals and objectives based on problems encountered while implementing their strategic plans. Strategy implementation is a key challenge to organizations. Challenges range from people who communicate or implement strategic plans to systems in place for coordination and control of plans. Alexander [6] identified problems such as longer period of time to implement strategic plans than expected, problems during implementation are not identified earlier, ineffective coordination of implementation of activities, lack of understanding of overall goals among employees and poor leadership. Chew [7] on the other hand identified the challenge of goals and strategy pursued by top management not been clearly understood by unit managers based at the periphery. Friedman [8], points out challenges as lack of stakeholder commitment, strategic drift, and failure to understand progress and failing to celebrate success among others.

According to Zaribaf and Baryami [9], majority of large organizations had problems implementing strategic plans. This literature supports the view that unlike strategy formulation strategy implementation cannot be achieved by top management alone, it requires collaboration from everyone in the organization and outside the organization while strategy formulation is a top-down endeavor, implementing it requires simultaneous top-down, bottom-up and across efforts. Some empirical analysis relates the strategy implementation environment with the degree of success in strategy implementation. Some studies show that the failure rate in strategy implementation may go as high as above 70% due to lack of supportive organization environment Magnusson *et al.* [10], in spite of this reality most attention has been given to strategy

formulation process ignoring the role of implementation activities. Grundy [11] up until the mid-1980s many public sector organizations in most developing countries and especially Africa were perceived to be manifestations of inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Funding was more or less guaranteed by successive governments. Public sector whereas characterized by rigid bureaucratic structures, organizational life more predictable and the existing culture worked against innovation and risk taking. Strategic planning, management and change were alien concepts, there was little need to ensure that, in the interests of organizational performance, and the organization achieved a “good fit” with its environment.

Governments and all other partners work together to ensure quality of education for all regardless of gender, wealth, location, language, ethnic, social or cultural origin. These factors can only be evaluated and answered by developing policies that define gender, wealth, location, language, ethnicity or social or cultural origins. The Kenya education sector through this government from 2003 embarked on plans to institute reforms at all levels, they ask, where are we now? Where do we want to go? And how do we get there? With constant changing circumstances? These are key questions [12]. These questions help in evaluating micro and macro- environments, examine competitive pressures, carry out SWOT analysis and identify strategic issues. This leads to developing strategic plans to tackle these issues.

However, in Kenya like most African states, more or less unlimited government funding has ended by the close of the 1980s with the introduction of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) imposed on government by the community due to changing socioeconomic and political forces after collapse of USSR. Need for change was also occasioned by persistent demands for change and value for money by the public alongside this there was a shift in values from traditional public administration to new public management (NPM) characterized by adoption of private sector concepts and styles and public sector concepts also idealized.

Statement of the problem

A study by Muraguri [9] who researched on challenges affecting strategy implementation in private universities found out that the same implementation challenges that is found in the private sector transcends to the private universities. Previous local studies [13] concurred that good strategies have been written but very little has been achieved in their implementation. Therefore, it is important to note that not much attention has been given to the organizational factors influencing implementation of strategic plans in universities in Mount Kenya Region. It is on this basis that this study sought to find out how organizational leadership influences implementation of strategic plans in

universities in Mount Kenya Region. Specifically the study aimed to determine the influence of organizational leadership on the implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region.

Organizational leadership

Organizational Leadership is a process in which top management can enlist aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. Top managers must communicate their policies and guidelines to their employees [14]. Communication led to development of strategic plans by the government in the Education Sector in 2003. Communication if done properly helps in successful implementation of the strategic planning process because employees feel part and parcel of the planning. The type of leadership also enables understanding and successful implementation of planning when employees are allowed to have an input into it.

Universities in Mount Kenya region

Strategic Plan implementation is a major undertaking in the both private and public universities in Kenya. Successful strategic plan implementation is a significant aspect that contributes to the growth of universities and overall performance of the universities. The high demand for higher education has led to rapid increase in the number of universities and expansion of existing universities in various regions in Kenya to meet the demand. The universities in Mount Kenya Region are focusing on implementing the strategic plans effectively to achieve competitive advantage and improve their performance. With devolution in the country universities are located strategically in various counties to meet the high demand of young people trying to grow their counties. It is well known that each county has a constitutional right of employing its residents from within. Therefore like any other county trying to create employment and grow minds through learning and education, the universities in Mount Kenya Region were strategically placed and they include; University of Embu, Chuka University, Meru University of Science and Technology, Karatina University, Kirinyaga University, Muranga University of technology, Dedan Kimathi University and Kenya Methodist University. However, poor implementation of the strategic plan makes it ineffective. All universities have strategic plans but majority of the universities have not managed to implement the strategic plans successfully as evidenced by poor administrative policies and systems, weak human resources practices, poor internal organization, poor performance in structural development, and poor personnel [3].

Theoretical review

According to Kothari [15], theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena and in many cases to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical

bounding assumptions. The role theory was used in this study. Role Theory was founded by Biddle and Thomas 1966, It shows how leaders and employees define their roles, define roles of others, how people act in their roles and how people expect to act in their roles within the organization. Self-role is where an employee sees roles of making decisions as leader's roles but may be proactive in trying to resolve customers' needs by at least enquiring on what customers want, but leaves resolution to the leader. Organizational leadership is where leaders formulate strategic plans and make key decisions on how implementation will be done by employees. However, employees see role of accountability of strategic plans to management. This is known as formal role theory.

Organizational leadership

Top managers must be able to communicate their long term plans with employees. By communicating the employees are able to understand what is expected of them leading to a high performance, growth of the firm and high profitability of the firm. Allio [16] also concluded from an economic survey of 276 senior operating executives that a discouraging 57% of firms were unsuccessful at executing strategic initiatives. To effectively undertake strategic plan implementation strategic leaders need to have skills on communication, motivation, decision making and team building. Al-Ghamdi [17] agreed with Alexander [6] that poor leadership and direction at departmental level are an implementation challenge. Some of the managers may be doubtful about the merits of the strategic plans, seeing it as contrary to the organizations interests, unlikely to succeed or threatening to their careers. It is the responsibility of the managers to explain to their subordinates the need for the strategic plan in a manner that will secure the buy in, enthusiasm and commitment of all the concerned parties [18]. Nutt [19] suggested that the tactics used in leadership plays an important role in overcoming obstructions from the lower levels that sometimes may appear in the implementation strategies. The implementation of strategies therefore, may not be successful if the lower level managers and the non-management employees are not adequately informed on issues concerning the implementation of strategies, moreover, where the information passes through several management levels in an organization may lead to lack of consensus concerning the information hence creation of a barrier that hinders the success of implementing a strategy [20] study indicated that firms which focus their attention to involvement of all employees significantly realize higher percentages of strategy implementation.

The middle and the low level managers are responsible for initiating and supervising the execution process in their areas of authority as well as getting the subordinates to continuously improve on how the strategic plan's critical activities are being performed

and in producing operating results that allow company's performance targets to be met [21].

Within a single firm, the choices made by individual managers can influence the speed with which units adopt practices supporting a new strategy [22]. This suggests that understanding the extent to which the intangible factors within a group can support implementation will be influenced by the leader of the unit. Effective leadership is required for successful strategy implementation, in a competitively chaotic environment, one essential contribution of a strategic leader is to provide and share a clear vision, direction and purpose for the organization [18] The CEO's action and the perceived seriousness to a chosen strategy will influence subordinate managers' commitment to the strategy implementation. The personal goals and values of a CEO strongly influence a firm's mission, strategy and key long term objectives. The right managers must also be in the right positions for the effective implementation of a new strategy [23].

Their commitment towards the plan is what makes a successful organization that has a competitive edge among the rest. Also communication indicates accessibility to the strategic plan. This culminates to proper customer and stakeholder satisfaction because they understand what is expected from them and the long term benefits to them and to the firm at large. Tietjen *et al.* [24] motivation of employers and employees can lead to successful implementation of the strategic plan. Employees are motivated by been recognized for performance of each and every target laid down in the strategic plan. Motivation enhances positivity and innovativeness. Jones [23] observed that a centralized leadership is one where decision making is made at upper levels of the organization. This type of organization is very stable and implements strategic plan quickly. A decentralized organization on the other hand is one where decision making is not confined to a few top executives but rather throughout the organization, with managers at various levels making key operating decisions relating to their sphere of responsibility. This environment is complex and uncertain. A formalized organization is where rules and

procedures are followed in an organization. Formalization makes a process a routine. It also increases rationality in decision making.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive cross sectional survey design in examining how organizational leadership influence implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region. The target population of the study consisted of heads of departments from the 8 Universities in Mount Kenya Region. Stratified sampling technique was appropriate for the research because the study had different groups within the university i.e.: management and employees. The study also applied purposive sampling after that by sampling the management due to their similar background and experience and the needs of the study. The researcher would achieve valid results from the formulators of the strategic plans who are management. They make the key decisions in the implementation process. These heads of sections were categorized according to different departments and due to the large number; the researcher picked a sample size of 170 persons from the total number of population of heads of sections of 295. This was calculated using the slovin's formula as shown below

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N= Total population of heads of departments

e is the margin error of 0.05 when based on 95% confidence level.

$$n = \frac{295}{1 + 295(0.05)^2} = \text{i sample 20 persons from each university} \quad \text{Equation (1)}$$

170 questionnaires were administered and 170 questionnaires were received by the researcher, however after data cleaning only 143 questionnaires were analyzed.

Table-3. 1: sample size

Universities	Accessible Population (heads of departments)	Sample
University of Embu	37	21
Meru University of Science and Technology	42	24
Kenya Methodist university	39	22
Chuka University	37	21
Karatina University	38	22
Kirinyaga University	31	18
Murang'a University of technology	31	18
Dedan Kimathi University	40	23
Total	295	170

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

General evaluation of the status of implementation of Strategic Plans

The respondents were requested to rate the extent that best described the general implementation of Strategic Plans in their institution. The Likert-type scale was used to rate their responses on a 5-point scale ranging from (1) strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Not Sure, (4) Agree, and (5). The research findings in Table 1 show that 58% of the respondents indicated that they agreed their institutions were in the process of developing strategic plans, 44.1% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agreed their university was implementing strategic planning over a period of 5 years, 79.4% of the respondents indicated that they agreed that their universities had seen tremendous growth in performance after developing the strategic

plan, 79.4% of the respondents indicated that the heads of sections allow decision making among employees hence have a stable organization structure, 58.9% of the respondents indicated that their universities have a conducive work environment to implement strategic plans, 55.4% of the respondents indicated that goals and objectives of the implementation process were measurable, 68.6% of the respondents indicated that a time frame was set for the achievement of goals and objectives, 76.5% of the respondents indicated that universities promote stakeholder involvement in implementing strategic plan and 68.2% of the respondents indicated that the universities have embraced all employees by capacity building of new employees hence increased enrollment. These research findings indicate that all indicators of implementation of strategic plans were agreed upon.

Table 1: General evaluation of the implementation of Strategic Plans

	N	M	StD. DEV
Our institution is in the process of developing a strategic plan	143	4.18	0.93
Our university has implemented strategic planning over a period of five years	143	4.54	2.58
Our university has seen tremendous growth in performance after developing the strategic plan	143	4.11	0.43
Heads of sections allow decision making among employees hence has a stable organizational structure	143	4.01	0.48
The university has a conducive work environment to implement its strategic plan	143	4.65	4.19
The goals and objectives of the implementation process were measurable	143	4.02	0.71
A time frame was set for the achievement of goals and objectives	143	4.10	0.54
The university promotes stakeholders involvement in implementing the strategic plan	143	4.04	0.72
The university has embraced all employees by capacity building of new employees hence increased enrollment	143	4.01	0.55

These results imply that in most of the sampled Universities, it was evident that there were mechanisms in place in an attempt to formulate relevant strategic plans. This is done through involvement of all the relevant stakeholders. Further, since findings suggest that most Universities had conducive work environment to implement their strategic plans, as well as measurable goals and objectives of the implementation process, it can be deduced that this has contributed to the tremendous growth in performance in the sampled Universities as witnessed by majority of the respondents. These findings are in tandem with

previous studies such as the one by Johnson [14] which found out that top managers must communicate their policies and guidelines to their employees [14] which if done properly helps in successful implementation of the strategic planning process because employees feel part and parcel of the planning. On the other hand, Zhou [25] found out that a type of leadership also enables understanding and successful implementation of planning when employees are allowed to have an input into it. Organizational structure works best when employees and managers understand their roles in the organization since synergy is created.

Table-2: Influence of Organizational Leadership on Implementation of Strategic Plans

Items	N	Mean	Std.Dev.
Heads of Sections communicate the strategic plan to employees	143	3.74	0.74
Heads of Sections avail the strategic plan amongst themselves and employees	143	3.56	0.65
Heads of Sections are committed towards implementation of strategic plans	143	3.67	0.61
Heads of sections explain the benefits of the strategic plan to employees and make them understand the benefits	143	3.67	0.65
Power is delegated to employees in decision making	143	3.67	0.71

The study sought to establish aspects of organizational leadership that influence implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya. A Likert-type scale was used to rate their responses on a 5-point scale ranging from (1) strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Not Sure, (4) Agree, and (5). The research findings in Table 2 show that 46.7% of the respondents indicated that they agreed that heads of sections communicate the strategic plan to employees, 52.9% of the respondents agreed that heads of sections avail the strategic plan amongst themselves and employees, 53.5% of the respondents agreed that heads of sections are committed towards implementation of strategic plans, 54.7% of the respondents agreed that heads of sections explain the benefits of the strategic plan and make them understand their benefits and 52.4% of the respondents agreed that power is delegated to employees in decision making.

The results of this study suggest that approximately 50% of the heads of sections agreed that strategic plans are communicated to employees and that they avail strategic plans amongst themselves and employees. Universities in Mount Kenya region are

formalized organizations meaning that rules and procedures are already incorporated to the organization. The results are in synchrony with a theorist known as Frederick Taylor with his theory on scientific management which was guided by four management principles which points out that employees should be scientifically selected, trained and developed rather than passively leaving them to train themselves. Another principle mentions that work should be divided nearly equally between managers and employees so that managers apply scientific management principles to planning the work and the workers actually perform their work. Henry Fayol conquers with this theory especially on division of work.

Correlation analysis on the effect of Organizational Leadership on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region

The study conducted correlation analysis in order to ascertain the relationship and the strength of associations between Organizational Leadership and Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region. The findings are presented in Table 3. Correlational analysis using Pearson's Product

Moment technique was done to determine the relationship between influence of organizational leadership and implementation of strategic plans. It was meant to identify the strength and direction of the association between the influence of organizational leadership and implementation of Strategic plans. Values of correlation coefficient range from -1 and +1. A correlation coefficient of +1 indicates that the two

variables are perfectly and positively related in a linear sense, while -1 shows that the two variables are perfectly related but in a negative linear sense. Correlation coefficient (r) ranging from 0.81 to 1.0 is very strong; from 0.6 to 0.79 is strong; from 0.4 to 0.59 is moderate; from 0.21 to 0.39 is weak; and from 0.00 to 0.19 indicate very weak relationship [13].

Table-3: Correlation analysis on the effect of Organizational Leadership on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region

		Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities
Organizational Leadership	Pearson's Correlation	0.4
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	143

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

The correlation results in Table 3 indicate that there was a positive and significant coefficients between the objective Organizational Leadership and Implementation of Strategic Plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region ($r = 0.4$, $p < 0.01$). Organizational leadership had a moderate and significant relationship with implementation of strategic plans. These findings are in agreement with a study by Al-Ghamdi [24] that poor leadership and direction at departmental level are an implementation challenge. The results further agree with Thomson [18] that it is the responsibility of the managers to explain to their subordinates the need for the strategic plan in a manner that will secure the buy in, enthusiasm and commitment of all the concerned parties in implementation of strategic plans. Overall

though, it is increasingly acknowledged that the traditionally recognized problems of appropriate organizational structure and lack of top management backing are the main inhibiting factors to effective strategy implementation [17]. The study findings imply that there can be no successful implementation of strategic plans without relevant and adequate leadership throughout the implementation process.

Regression Analysis

The study conducted a regression analysis to establish the influence of organizational leadership on implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table-4: Regression Analysis Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.566 ^a	.320	.300	0.83642

Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Leadership
Dependent Variable: Implementation of Strategic Plans

Table 4 presents a correlation coefficient of 0.566 and determination coefficients of 0.320. This depicts a moderate relationship between implementation of strategic plans and the independent variable. Thus, organizational leadership accounts for

32.0% of the variations in implementation of strategic plans.

Analysis of Variance was used to test the significance of relation that exists between variables; thus, model's significance. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.455	4	11.364	16.243	.000 ^b
	Residual	96.545	138	0.700		
Total		26714	142			

Dependent Variable: Implementation of Strategic Plans
Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Leadership

The regression model has a margin of error of $p < .001$. This indicates that the model has a probability

of less than 0.1 thus; it is therefore, statistically significant (Table 5).

Table-6: Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			T	Sig.
	B	Std. Beta	Error		
1 (Constant)	-4.28	3.656		0.6688	.5112
Organizational Leadership	0.086	0.0940.086	4.343	.000

The study established that holding all other possible factors that influence implementation of strategic plans at a constant, a unit increase in organizational leadership would lead to a 0.086 increase in implementation of strategic plans. The study thus concluded that organizational leadership had a positive impact on enhancing implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya region.

The study is concurred by a researcher known as Adair, et al (1993) who viewed approaches to leadership education looking keenly at individual appreciation for leadership which aims at heightening the individual's appreciation for leadership with minimal supervision by an individual accepting and understanding communication skills, an individual providing personalized feedback and aligning management and support systems to promote and reinforce leadership development. Also the individual aspect supports systems such as performance appraisal, reward system and links to completing job assignments that are defined in a job description.

The results are in synchrony with a theorist known as Frederick Taylor with his theory on scientific management which was guided by four management principles which points out that employees should be scientifically selected, trained and developed rather than passively leaving them to train themselves. Another principle mentions that work should be divided nearly equally between managers and employees so that managers apply scientific management principles to planning the work and the workers actually perform their work. Henry Fayol concurs with this theory especially on division of work.

The study found that to effectively undertake strategic plan implementation strategic leaders need to have skills on communication, motivation, decision making and team building. Al-Ghamdi [28] agreed with Alexander [6] that poor leadership and direction at departmental level are an implementation challenge. Some of the managers may be doubtful about the merits of the strategic plans, seeing it as contrary to the organizations interests, unlikely to succeed or threatening to their careers. It is the responsibility of the managers to explain to their subordinates the need for the strategic plan in a manner that will secure the buy

in, enthusiasm and commitment of all the concerned parties [18]. Nutt [19] suggested that the tactics used in

leadership plays an important role in overcoming obstructions from the lower levels that sometimes may appear in the implementation strategies. The implementation of strategies therefore, may not be successful if the lower level managers and the non-management employees are not adequately informed on issues concerning the implementation of strategies, moreover, where the information passes through several management levels in an organization may lead to lack of consensus concerning the information hence creation of a barrier that hinders the success of implementing a strategy [16] study indicated that firms which focus their attention to involvement of all employees significantly realize higher percentages of strategy implementation.

The middle and the low level managers are responsible for initiating and supervising the execution process in their areas of authority as well as getting the subordinates to continuously improve on how the strategic plan's critical activities are being performed and in producing operating results that allow company's performance targets to be met [18]. Within a single firm, the choices made by individual managers can influence the speed with which units adopt practices supporting a new strategy [22]. This suggests that understanding the extent to which the intangible factors within a group can support implementation will be influenced by the leader of the unit. Effective leadership is required for successful strategy implementation, in a competitively chaotic environment, one essential contribution of a strategic leader is to provide and share a clear vision, direction and purpose for the organization [18] The CEO's action and the perceived seriousness to a chosen strategy will influence subordinate managers' commitment to the strategy implementation. The personal goals and values of a CEO strongly influence a firm's mission, strategy and key long term objectives. The right managers must also be in the right positions for the effective implementation of a new strategy [23]. Their commitment towards the plan is what makes a successful organization that has a competitive edge among the rest. Also communication indicates accessibility to the strategic plan. This culminates to proper customer and stakeholder satisfaction because

they understand what is expected from them and the long term benefits to them and to the firm at large. Tietjen *et al.* [24] motivation of employers and employees can lead to successful implementation of the strategic plan. Employees are motivated by been recognized for performance of each and every target laid down in the strategic plan. Motivation enhances positivity and innovativeness. Jones [23] observed that a centralized leadership is one where decision making is made at upper levels of the organization. This type of organization is very stable and implements strategic plan quickly. A decentralized organization on the other hand is one where decision making is not confined to a few top executives but rather throughout the organization, with managers at various levels making key operating decisions relating to their sphere of responsibility. This environment is complex and uncertain. A formalized organization is where rules and procedures are followed in an organization. Formalization makes a process a routine. It also increases rationality in decision making.

CONCLUSION

The first research objective was to determine the influence of organizational leadership on the implementation of strategic plans in Universities in Mount Kenya Region. The indicators from implementation of strategic planning were heads of Sections communicate the strategic plan to employees, heads of sections avail the strategic plan amongst themselves and employees, heads of sections are committed towards implementation of strategic plans, heads of sections explain the benefits of the strategic plan to employees and make them understand the benefits and power is delegated to employees in decision making. The results indicated that majority of the universities in mount Kenya region communicated the strategic plan to employees the other indicators showed low uptake of implementation of strategic plans. These could be explained by challenges in accepting the strategic plan due to its rigorous activities and work plans and lack of understanding the benefits of the strategic plan to the employees. This concluded that implementation of strategic plans does not only need communication but understanding its benefits to implement it fully.

The study recommends to the leaders to follow set procedures and adhere to policies while formulating strategic goals and objectives. The leaders are also encouraged to submit to other authorities including stakeholders to enhance ownership of the strategic plan. Leaders are recommended to create new procedures and implement new policies while achieving the strategic goals and objectives. Organizations are recommended to have strong horizontal and vertical communication across the organization. Organizations are recommended to encourage decision making at all levels and have an accountability of policies. Employers are recommended to motivate the employees for

effective implementation of strategic planning. Employers are recommended to create stronger structures sine they enhance funding which hastens the speed towards strategic implementation.

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