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EFFECT OF HUMAN RESOURCES ON STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WITHIN PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Strategic plan directs institutions to reach their destination and failure to successfully execute the plan leads to failure in achievement of organization goals and objectives. Public universities in Kenya play a major role in providing knowledge to students which is fundamental for a nation's growth by enhancing realization of national goals. The objective of the study was to assess the effect of human resources on strategic implementation plan within public institution of higher learning in Kenya. The research was based on human resource development theory. The target population for the study was thirty-one committee members of public institutions of higher learning in Kenya while the sample was derived from purposive non probabilistic sampling techniques which was used to pick to best and two worst public institution of higher learning as per the 2019 webometric ranking. The research used descriptive research design and primary data gathered using questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS. The outcome from the findings were represented using tables, regression and correlation analysis that were tested and determined the effect of human resources on strategic implementation plan. The research findings indicated that human resources had positive and significant effect on strategic implementation among selected public institutions of higher learning in Kenya. The study concluded that the effect of human resources on strategic execution was statistically significant within institutions of higher learning in Kenya. The study recommended that management of institution of higher learning in Kenya should ensure that there are adequate human resources for effective strategic implementation plan.

Key Words: Human Resources, Strategic Plan Implementation, Public Higher Learning Institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous strategic plans produced in public universities, according to Wasike (2010), were ineffectively and inefficiently implemented, while others were not put in place. Institutions of higher learning in Kenya have plans and strategies on paper as formality, as evidenced by inadequate internal structure and incompetent employees, bad administrative arrangements, weak human resource practices, and poor institutional development structures (Nyakeriga, 2015). He also mentioned that the university's management's poor performance has resulted in the stalling of anticipated projects. The strategic execution task is a complex process that entails a set of resolutions and events by employees & managers influenced by variety of in-house and exterior issues in the endeavors to meet organizational goals by putting strategic plans into action (Samson & Bevington, 2012).

Blenko, Mankins and Rogers (2010), identifies major literatures concerning strategic plan as being major factors in business endevours. Martínez-López (2014)also approves. Despite significant institutional growth, more than seventy percent of strategic change failed (Higgs & Rowland, 2011). Ninety percent of organizational strategies fail owing to the execution issues rather than formulation issues (Reeves, Haanaes & Sinha, 2015). According to Schilling (2014), the frequency of properly implemented plans is between 30-10%, with inability to execute successful strategies are attributed to huge institutional cost. Failure of strategy execution is wastage of time and resources which results in low productivity, low employee morale, lack of faith and trust in top management and reduced performance. According to Mukhwana (2016), nature of training provided by Kenyan public institutions of higher learning is insufficient in preparing higher cadre human resources for growth and progress.

The strategic implementation plan is affected by various factors among them being human resources. A study conducted by Waithaka (2017)

on factors affecting strategic plan implementation in institutions of higher learning in Kenya a case of Jomo Kenyatta university opined those institutions of higher learning should put in place support systems for purposes of increasing resources for implementing strategies such as employing skilled staff, training employs for purposes of ensuring that the institution is up to date with new management methods. Jones (2016) confirms that lack of understanding a strategy results to its failure when implementing. Therefore, for purposes of attaining proper strategic implementation, there is need to prepare human resource adequately by training, communicating and creating awareness while quipping them with knowledge, skills and expertise to guarantee accomplishment of institutional objectives and goals.

Further, creating good understanding of a strategic plans aids with the establishment of comprehensible methodology that can connect and coordinate different expertise and professionalism for purpose of working in harmony thus enhance task and objectives accomplishment. As a result, the executive team and staff involved in the strategic execution process should be extremely knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities, as well as their contribution to the organization's overall success. Furthermore. insufficient human resource capacity continues to be a major stumbling block in the implementation of strategic plans. As a result, participatory strategy implementation has an impact on personal engagement and dedication to the implementation of a successful strategic plan. Human resources are subjected to change while using a participative method, which is primarily geared at guaranteeing proper strategic implementation plan.

Institutions of higher learning abilities to incorporate and execute their strategic plan based on technical advance are said to have improved performances. In Kenya, efforts to startup universities started in the year 1961. During the time, there was only one college – Royal College which was then promoted to university despite being a college. Through an agreement from London University, Royal College equipped students for degrees offered by the London University. With the advent of East African university in the 1960s, Royal College was upgraded as a university after independence it became the now University of Nairobi in the year 1970 with teachers College currently known as Kenyatta university being a proponent of University of Nairobi and fully acknowledge as Kenyatta University in the year in 1985. Lopes (2017) asserts most institutions of higher learning and colleges in Kenya have been strategically planning using traditional methods the made use of the five-year plan as per the government interventions. This mechanism were subjected inflation and politicization thus housed the notion of ruling government.

Therefore, the planning could not achieve long term goals since a new regime came with new management and planning mechanism as well. According to Sanaghan (2009), institutions of higher learning should embrace new strategic method in order to achieve their goals. This is because strategic planning encompasses making informed decisions and choices concerning the long-term objectives of the organization. With proper strategic planning the public institutions of higher learning and colleges are in a position to advance and create a competitive edge and position within their operational environment thus a call for the institutions of higher learning in Kenya to rethink and redesign their strategic plan for proper execution of their operations (Rumelt, 2017). Guidelines by the ministry of education shows that for universities to pursue high missions, there is need to establish and allocate human resources that are important for the institutions of high learning to enable them respond to the dynamics of their operations and activities.

Problem Statement

Institutions of higher learning depicts government image by acting as an example and a model to their learning institutions by being an example to them in the way they have set up and executed their strategic plan in an effective manner. This is evidenced in the way universities produce graduates who are equipped for the job markets. Research conducted by Mwangi (2014) established that institutions of higher learning in Kenya acted as mentors for developing individuals who already to champion social and economic development of a country through industrialization, innovation and research. This is made real by providing a course that is concerned with social and economic growth for purposes of enhancing national growth. In recent years, a lot of criticisms have been on the rise concerning graduate employers within Kenyan institutions of higher learning. That they don't poses necessary skills, expertise and knowledge requires by the current job market. Thus, calling for the need to articulate and use effective implementation strategies and methodologies that could address the issues at hand (Robert & John, 2010).

Public institutions of higher learning in Kenya have a well-articulated document defining mechanism to be utilized, methodologies, practices and are supposed to be used by the institutions for purposes of attaining their high objectives. Despite this effort, strategic plan implementation remains a challenge within the institutions of higher learning in Kenya as they are revealed to have unskilled personnel, unfavorable human resource practices and lack of proper strategic execution skills. Research conducted by Nyakeriga (2015) indicated that poor management strategies among universities resulted to absence of growth. Kitonga (2012) on the other hand indicated that different factors like human resources contributed to what we are currently experiencing with institutions of higher learning in Kenya. One of the key factors cited is the poor execution of strategic plan and lack of implementation and monitoring and evaluation process within the process. This has resulted to time wastage as a result of minimal human resource allocation by the government thus resulting to flimsy service delivery within public institutions of higher learning. Again, this is reflected by the way graduates are said not to fit within the job markets.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to assess the effect of human resources on strategic implementation plan within public institution of higher learning in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Theory of human resources development

The study was grounded on theory of human resources development which was postulated by Raymond Miles (1965. According to Jorgensen and MC Guire (2010) the theory of human resource development act as a context for enhancing and building employee knowledge, skill set, expertise and capabilities within the organization and individually. Therefore, it works on a platform of training which is the most efficient way of attaining development in human resource thus enhances institutional performances. The impact of this theory offers an important opportunity to a workforce through personal development. Within institutions, this theory is motivational framework that enhances employee retention. Both theoretical and empirical research have indicated that this theory enhances institutional performance by planting numerous aspects linked with individual performance (Gold, et al., 2013).

According to Deneulin and Shahani (2010) the theory empowers and nurture human abilities that enhance employee outcome. it is a strategy where institutions offer freedom to employees so that they can partake their work in a professional manner. Robert and John (2010) also support human resource development as a process of ensuring that the institutions and individuals have the needed knowledge, skills and abilities so that they can be able to attain their goals. Which is attained through development, execution and activity evaluation attained through training. In public setting, the major resources to any organization are the employee without them no objective can be attained (Robert & John, 2010).

A confirmation by Leberman, McDonald and Doyle (2016) show that human resources, educational level enhances employee productivity through conveying important and essential skills, knowledge and expertise to enable performance at personal and institutions level. This means that education, training as human capital enhance individual capabilities thus bring about dynamic changes within economic environments (Wilson, 2012). Human resource development adds value by creating human capital in organization. Again, it rationalizes hos organization strategic plan gives knowledge and work force that are competitive and also an added advantaged to the organization through expansion of strategic plan and technical innovations. Human resource development theory thus helps to shape and understand the importance of human resource in strategic implementation plan within public institution of higher learning in Kenya.

Empirical Review

Human Resources and strategic plan implementation

In organizations, strategic execution encompasses making judgment on activities. For instance, institutions of higher learning in Kenya, its management and employee are affected in external and internal elements in implementing a strategic plan. Evans, Biles and Bae (2019) ascertained that different factor that affected strategy implementation were communication, execution of a plan by using different mechanism, management and coordination of the implementation process. Raczkowski (2016) showed that implementation of strategies fails within public sector due to botch interpretation, adaptation and failures to long term transformation. However, Robertson & Caldart (2009) confirmed that by using dynamic methodologies within strategic implementation, it helps overcome traditional administrative restriction that are high seen within the public sectors.

Leinwand, Mainardi and Kleiner (2016) posit that there are challenges the lead to poor strategic implementation process within public sectors which include, weak execution management, inefficient communication mechanism, lack of commitment, unfamiliar strategy, unaligned organization resources and systems, poor coordination of activities, lack of capabilities and competition from environmental aspects that are uncontrollable (Njoroge, Muathe and Bula, 2015). This shows that for a public institution of higher learning to attain its goals within the strategic implementation process, then they have to commit all stakeholders, staff, top and middle managers within the process. Study by Machuka (2011) examining challenges faced in the process of strategy implementation among Kenyan local authorities found out that institutional cultures, training, governance, policies, resources and institutional procedures affect the strategic implementation process.

In research conducted by Belcourt and Podolsky (2019) realized that human resources are very significant to strategic implementation process since it aided organization to attain their objectives. This was attained through training, awareness and creating workshop delegated towards achieving organizational goals. Kumar (2011) affirmed that human resource can be used as a tool for applying strategic plan, as partner to the process, as a tool for engaging people into the planning process and as a tool for innovation with the strategic implementation plan. Thus grounded the evidence from the empirical review, human resources can't be ignored in strategic execution plan. This is because human resource is the major enabler of efficient strategic implementation plan that drive and institutions towards attaining its goals.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a descriptive research design. Mills (2009) opines that descriptive design aid with the cross examination of large populations in order to come up with conclusion pertaining to the research variables. The research design therefore is important when it comes to perceiving the effect of effect of human resources on strategic implementation plan within public institution of higher learning in Kenya. The study targeted thirtyone commissioned universities in Kenya. This population helped the researcher to establish the relationship among the variables. The sample size was 60 respondents. This research used primary data which was collected using structured research tool by picking and dropping. The questionnaire was designed to enable the research to get information that was used for qualitative and quantitative analysis. Since the data collection was systematic, the researcher acquires a letter of introduction from Kenyatta university as we as NACOSTI (National Council for Science and technology) for purposes of enabling the researcher conduct the study with the sole aim addressing research questions while at the same time attaining the goals of the research. (Olsen, 2012). The pilot testing was conducted to test for validity and reliability of the research tools. In this research quantitative data was analyzed and results obtained that addressed the research intentions by giving a consistent answer to the research questions.

Data collected was investigated and examines using an application known as SPSS for purposes of generating outcome in form of tables, charts and graphs (Stehlik-Barry, 2017). Descriptive statistics used included the use of averages, standard deviation, frequencies and percentage. Multiple regression test was carried out to predict the effects of human resources on strategic implementation among public institutions of higher learning in Kenya. Thus, regression model formula was used:

SIIP= $\beta_0 + \beta_1 HR + \epsilon$

Where:

SIP = Strategic implementation plan in public institutions of higher learning

- **HR** = Human resources
- β_0 = Regression intercept
- β_1 = Regression coefficient
- ϵ = Error

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A sum of 60 self-administered questionnaires were disseminated and 59 participants managed to successful fill and return the questions while one participant was not fully attended to. The score card for successfully filled questioners were 98% of the total response rate and 2% were deemed as not fully attended to as a result of COvid 19 curfew restriction. As per Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) and Saunder. *et., al,* (2007) response rate of 50% is measured as enough for data analysis. Thus, the response rate report of 98% is satisfactory,

reasonable and recommended for purposes of coming up with a conclusion from data analysis concerning the research objectives.

Descriptive Statistics

The study to examine the effect of human resources on strategic implementation plan among public institutions of higher learning. The respondents were asked to give their level of agreement with various statements regarding the human resources and strategic implementation plan using 5-point Likert scale. The findings are shown in Table 1.

Items	Average	Std. Dev
The university employs the best people for the task.	4.0508	.89873
Employees have received adequate training in order to add to their skill	3.7119	.96581
sets, knowledge, and competence.		
The university has great incentive schemes in place to keep personnel on	3.2542	1.18312
board and prevent turnover.		
The university pays salaries and other incentives on schedule, as	3.8475	1.24310
stipulated.		
Human resources have a significant impact on the entire strategic plan	4.0169	1.25247
since without employees, the plan will collapse.		

The 1st and 2nd items have an average of 4.0508 and 2.7119 agreed that institutions with the right employees, training for purposes of acquiring expertise and knowledge had an effect on human resources and strategic implementation plan among selected public institutions of higher learning in Kenya. There was a small variance of 0.8987 and 0.9658 correspondingly. The 3rd statement with an average of 3.2542 and 4.0169 showed that the respondents agreed that timely wages and incentive had an effect on strategic implementation plan with more deviation on views. From the findings human resources is one of the institutional which effect resources as on strategic implementation plan. The average and deviation of 3.7763 and 1.1086 correspondingly shows that respondents responded in unison with five statements while more deviation on human

resource items importantly measured the metrics of expertise, skills and knowledge.

Inferential Statistics

Research inferences were grounded on sample parameters where multiple regression model was tested to ensure model suitability and appropriateness and as well to verify violation of assumed multiple regression.

Goodness of Fit Test

Determination coefficient (adjusted R-squire) of 0.201 as shown in Table 4 shows that the human resources give an explanation of the 20.1% variation within strategic implementation plan among public institutions of higher learning while 79.9% represent other aspects that have not been considered for the study.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
1	0.464 ^ª	0.215	0.201	0.505

The outcomes from Table 5 are an additional model test fitness for F value as compared to F- critical to establish the significance of the regression model.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.986	1	3.986	15.609	.000 ^b
	Residual	14.556	57	0.255		
	Total	18.542	58			

Table 3: ANOVA

From the table above when V value was calculated using ANOVA (15.609) it was more than F- critical value. This is an indication that the research model was statistically important and that t- statistics for all independent variable were important at p<0.05, p value of .000 less significant to the study by 0.05. t –statistics reliability and adequacy as well as the p value can be used to test regression coefficient model significance as SIP = $\beta_0 + \beta_1$ HR + ϵ . This

implies that human resources significantly can forecast strategic implementation plan among public institutions of higher learning.

Multiple Regression Coefficient Results

Results represented in Table 5 is a model test fit that test the effect of human resources on strategic implementation plan among public institutions of higher learning in Kenya.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Coefficient

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Mod	el	β	Std. Error	В	t	Sig.	
1	(Constant)	3.642	0.476		7.651	.000	
	Human resources	0.602	0.118	.464	5.102	.000	
a. Dependent Variable: Strategic implementation Plan							
b. Predictors: (Constant), Human resources							

From the table above, human resources are important with p=0.000<0.05 with β =0.602, t=5.102. Also, there is an indication an increase in human resources result to 0.602 increases strategic implementation thus concluding that there is an important positive effect between human resources and strategic implementation among public institution of higher learning in Kenya. The findings corelate with Belcourt and Podolsky (2019) who asserted that human resources are very significant to strategic implementation process since it aided organization to attain their objectives.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings indicated that implementation plans that were successful in public universities were largely dependent on resource availability. Physical, human, financial and technological resource was helpful in the process of strategic implementations plan. Further the result indicated that resource shortage impeded strategic plan implementations with Kenyan public universities. This is one of the limiting issues that affect successful implementation of strategies within educational institutions

The study concluded that the effect of human resources on strategic execution was statistically significant within institutions of higher learning in Kenya. The study established that human resources have a significant impact on the entire strategic plan since without employees, the plan will collapse. This is why most public universities in Kenya employ competent staff who later receive adequate training in order to add to their skill sets, knowledge, and competence. Also, most public universities in Kenya pays salaries and other incentives on schedule as stipulated. The study recommended that management of institution of higher learning in Kenya should ensure that there are adequate human resources for effective strategic implementation plan. The study recommends that universities need to ensure that employees receive regular training, they also need to ensure that the staff is promoted on basis of their results.

The study recommended that in the future research should be done in a longitudinal manner so that it can necessitate navigation concerning the connection between institutions and the process of strategic execution among public institutions of higher learning in Kenya.

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