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DETERMINANTS OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC CHANGE IN STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at establishing the determinants of successful implementation of strategic change among the state corporations in Kenya. Specific objective of the study encompassed the assessment of the influence of involving stakeholders on successful implementation of strategic change. The study targeted all 392 State Corporation in Kenya, from eighteen (18) functional categories. A questionnaire containing both open ended and closed ended questions was used to collect primary data while secondary data was gathered through reviews of both theoretical and empirical literature. Pilot study was carried out on 32 participants representing 10 percent of the size of the sample. The pilot study aim was to test both the reliability and validity of the research instruments. The reliability was assessed with the use of Cronbach's alpha. The analysis of the primary data was carried out with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Descriptive statistics were tabulated into percentages of participants' responses. Conversely, inferential statistics aided the determination of the association between variables, and was applied using correlation and multiple regressions. The study revealed that stakeholder involvement had a significant bearing on successful implementation of strategic change among state owned entities in Kenya. The study concluded that stakeholder involvement affects the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya. The study recommended that State Corporations, during times of implementation of Strategic Change, should religiously involve stakeholders & employees, allocate sufficient resources as well as use coercion when necessary.

Key Words: *strategic change, stakeholder involvement*

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INTRODUCTION

No organization has ever been immune from implementing organizational changes (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). In today's uncertain economic climate, many organizations are forced to make changes in order to survive (Edmond, 2011). In the recent past, organizations have embraced change in their ways of doing things as well as various change management practices. Change is considered as moving from some present state of quasi-stationary equilibrium towards a future state in which change agents prescribe progressive movements forward towards a desired outcome (Dawson & Sykes, 2016). Johnson and Scholes (2011) aver that organisations must find ways for operating by developing new competencies as the old advantage and competences gained quickly eroded owing to environmental changes. Dingli (2013) argue that change is the movement from present state towards a future state. According to Burnes (2011), change is an ever present feature of organizational life, both at an operational and strategic level.

Gichuki and Abok (2015) allude that change is a comprehensive, cyclic and structured approach for transitioning individuals, groups and organizations from a current state to a future state with intended business benefits in addition to being a process that begins with organizational leaders developing an organizational strategy, then with the creation of an initiative that is aligned with strategy. Change is also a socially constructed reality with negotiated meaning as outcomes of power relationships and struggles for supremacy (Grant, Marshak, Oswick & Wolfram, 2010). Armenakis and Harris (2009) posit that organizational change is normal and a requirement to achieve and sustain organizational effectiveness. Isern & Pung (as cited in Aslam, Ilyas, Imran, & Rahman, 2016) alluded that organizations change in order to reduce costs, to move from good to great performance, to complete or integrate a merger, to turn around a crisis situation, to catch up with rival companies, to split up or divest part of the organization, and to prepare for privatization or market liberalization.

Implementing strategic change is one of the most important undertakings of an organization (Sonenshein, 2010). Business environment across the globe has become increasingly volatile and constantly changing in the last few decades (Thomas, 2014), with the rate of change which business organizations face continuing to increase more and more. Globally, many institutions have embraced change to continue being afloat and match the fast changing business environment leading to great success to many of these firms. However, some institutions despite having embraced and implemented change, they have faced many challenges, had the changes collapse and eventually going under the drain.

Sonenshein (2010) argued that successful implementation of strategic change can re-invigorate a business, but failure can lead to catastrophic consequences. According to Warrilow (2010), change management strategies are referred to as the techniques adopted to effectively manage change in an environment experiencing change dynamics so as to embrace change and direct it towards positive contribution of a given organization. An institution needs to know its strength and weakness as well as customer's needs and the nature of the environment in which they operate before any strategy is adopted. Organizational change occurs often, due to the dynamic nature of the environment which poses several challenges to its effectiveness and performance and which may take place in order to respond to a new opportunity to avoid a threat to the organization (Moses, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Organizations of all stripes routinely attempt strategic change, but many implementation effort fail (Sonenshein & Dholakia, 2012). For many years, state corporations in Kenya have implemented changes in order to improve on service delivery, remain relevant, enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness as well as to realize surpluses. Notable changes adopted by state corporations include e-government, e-procurement, IFMIS as well as ICT implementation. Magut, Lelei, and Borura (2010) state that ICT improves transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. KRA has implemented i-tax and electronic tax register (ETR), Public Universities have implemented expansion programs, parastatals have been merged and others privatized, public institutions have undergone restructuring and all state institutions are signing performance contracts with the Kenyan National Government.

The Government embraced hiring of directors of parastatals on the basis of performance contracts and rewards them handsomely when they improve the performance of parastatals (Mwaura, 2008; Obongo, 2009)

There was evidenced success in some state corporations after implementing change. KRA has achieved increased tax collected, improved services after the introduction of Huduma Centres and the adoption of e-citizen, the KWS turnaround strategy, the KQ reforms in the early 2000, restructuring of Insurance Commission (Commissioner of Insurance) into Insurance Regulatory Commission. A good change management practice strategy is a critical success factor in implementation of changes in the organizations (Kihara, 2010; Sinei, 2013; Tamimy, 2008)

However, there has been a history of failed changes despite the adoption and implementation of strategic changes by state corporations, with some of the changes collapsing midway implementation. Uchumi supermarket's business reengineering and growth strategy program in 2013 and the Kenya Airways expansion program through the purchase of Boeing 787 dreamliner aircrafts and the turnaround of Kenya Meat Commission are examples of collapsed changes. The privatization of Kenya Airways and Kenya Railways Corporation did not yield the desired results.

NBK has continuously posted losses despite the reengineering program, some public universities are experiencing financial difficulties despite the aggressive expansion programs and devolution in Kenya is still facing challenges.

The question here was why some state corporations have realized success in implementation of strategic changes while others have been unsuccessful in their attempt to implement strategic changes. Hence, the present study aimed at exploring the determinants of successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya.

General Objective

The general objective of this study was to establish the determinants of successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya. The specific objective was:-

- To assess the influence of stakeholders involvement on the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya.

Study Hypotheses

- $\mathbf{H_0 1}$: Stakeholder involvement does not have a significant influence on the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

Stakeholder theory

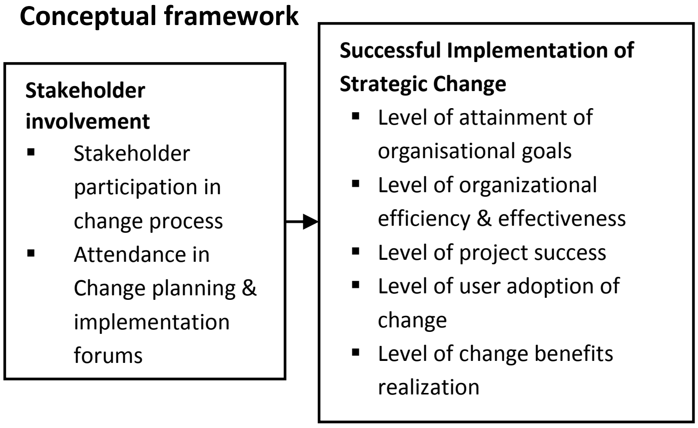
Stakeholder theory emphasizes on increasing stakeholder satisfaction as opposed to profits maximization by a firm. According to Freedman (1984), a stakeholder is an individual or a group who is able to affect or be impacted upon by achievement of the Organization's goals. Jensen, (2017) views a stakeholder as a person, group of people or an organization that is able to place a claim on the organizations' attention, resources or output or is affected by that output. Stakeholder management can be done variously including stakeholder identification, stakeholder analysis, stakeholder matrix as well through stakeholder engagement and communication of information (Widén, Olander, & Atkin, 2013). Bradley, (2016) asserts that the idea of stakeholder management to strategic management process including the change process calls for managers to come up and oversee the implementation of processes that have the support of all stakeholders. Management team of any enterprise are required to establish the middle ground between the requirements of their organizations and those of the stakeholders which ensures continued success of the enterprise. In relation to critical corporate decisions including strategic change process, it is imperative that the expectations of the various groups of the stakeholders are known and a determination made regarding their extent of influence (Benn, Edwards, & Williams, 2014).

Freeman et al., (2010) posit that the key stakeholders in the firm's activities include; employees, suppliers, customers, media, local communities, government, NGOs and environmental activists.

Carroll, and Buchholtz, (2014), further asserts the importance of stakeholder management is not limited to then daily operations of the enterprise. To the contrary, stakeholders' management is more concerned with the organisations long term strategic decisions. This makes it even more prudent for stakeholders' involvement in planning and execution of these decisions to ensure overall success of the set objectives of the enterprise. Lee, (2011) posit that firms are likely to pay attention to stakeholder influence for either normative or instrumental reasons. Normative illuminations of stakeholder theory perceives the firm-stakeholder relationship in the lens of ethics where managers are seen as considering the interests of those with interests in their organizations (Mumbi, 2014). Thus, this perspective view the stakeholders as having a legitimate interests in the affairs of the enterprise (Andriof et al, 2017)

On the other end, instrumental stakeholder theories predicts firm behaviour on means-ends reasoning, such that the organization pursues its interests through management of relationships with stakeholders (Elms et al. 2011). Thus, this perspective views organization as laying focus to the interests of stakeholders who are perceived as having influence (Hatch, 2018). This theory is critical to this study and is be relevant in answering the first research objective on the role of stakeholder involvement on the successful implementation of strategic change.

Conceptual framework



Independent Variable **Dependent Variable**

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2019)

Stakeholder involvement

As discussed in the Stakeholder's theory, stakeholders are very important in the organisation and it is therefore important that they are involved in organisation strategic processes such as the Change process. To revisit the definition for stakeholders, to Freedman (1984), a stakeholder can be defined as an individual or a group who is able to affect or be impacted upon by achievement of the Organisation's goals. On the other hand, Bryson (as cited in Freeman, 2010) views a stakeholder as a person, group of people or an organisation that is able to place a claim on the organisations' attention, resources or output or is affected by that output.

The importance of stakeholders in the planning for change in the organisation cannot not be underrated. Strategic change on organisations cut across various departments, boundaries and silos of working making it important to engage stakeholders to attain successful outcomes (Bryson,

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2011). For strategic change to be successful various stakeholders need to be engaged. Senior management for instance need to be involved as they are the ones who will oversee the implementation of the strategic change (Noland & Phillips, 2010). There may also be parties like internal partners including departments and teams within the enterprise as well as external partners including consultants and trainers who must be bought on board.

Bradley, G. (2016) views the stakeholder involvement as a web of connections between the different components. Accordingly, keeping stakeholders engaged is not the limited function of stakeholder engagement within the premises of corporate social responsibility. Instead Weiss, (2014)) sees engagement of stakeholders as a basis for good corporate governance despite this being ignored or underestimated by most companies. The first tier of stakeholders and the most important includes the suppliers, distributors, customers and employees which the organisation engages with on a daily basis (Plouffe et al. 2016). The second tier, is the wider community, NGOs, Labour organisations, Industrial Organisation as well as financial institutions. These too play a role in the operations of the organisation. Stakeholder involvement helps the organisation to get a definite mind-map of the situation and mark all the necessary connections between different stakeholders both upstream and downstream and need to be involved in implementing a strategic change (Benn, Dunphy & Griffiths, 2014). However, a distinction between the two tiers is important to help in strategizing stakeholder engagement.

Successful implementation of Strategic Change

Not all change efforts in the organization are successful. In fact, most change efforts fail, with literature establishing that 70 percent of change efforts normally fail (Jansson, 2013). It is therefore important for organization to have metrics against which they can determine whether change efforts have been successfully implemented in their organizations. Measuring change success is a complex process and goes beyond a simple binary of yes or no at a single point. According to Cooler (2015), understanding successful implementation of change requires an evaluation of change installation, benefits realization and the process of change. Other success metrics have been established by different researchers. The most appropriate metrics that we can use to measure successful implementation of change in State Corporations include project success, user adoption and benefits realization.

Attainment of goal metric looks at the extent the change efforts led to attainment of targets set at the beginning of the project. Change projects need to be constantly monitored to ensure the desired goal is being attained. Some of the measurements that organizations use to monitor achievement of goals includes quality, quantity, cost and timeliness. For instance for a change effort to lead to attainment of goal, it need to lead to improved customer satisfaction levels. Quantity on the other hand is represented by numeric values for instance, "process 70 more new hires per day." The level of organizational efficiency and effectiveness are other metrics that are used in evaluation of successful implementation of change.

Fullan, (2014) emphasized the importance of these two indicators to assess successful implementation of change in the organization. For managers, suppliers and investors these two terms might be synonymous, yet, each of these terms have their own distinct meaning. The findings revealed that efficiency information provides different data compared to effectiveness one. Organisational efficiency is a measure of the relationship between organisational inputs (resources) and outputs (goods and services provided) and in simple terms the more output we can achieve with a given amount of inputs or resources, the more efficient we are.

Successful implementation of change is also determined by benefits realization. Every change effort is meant to attain some benefits (Muthoka, Oloko, & Obonyo, 2017). However, it is critical to realize that benefits do not become apparent immediately and some may take quite some time. It is important that the change management team be aware of what they should look out for to know if change implementation is successful (Kotter, 2012). For instance tangible measures such as speed to market, cost of transaction, cycle time, speed of processes, and increase in employee participation can be used to measure successful change implementation in a given organization. For change efforts to be success also, the change agents must address the drivers to resistance and address them.

Empirical Review

Stakeholder Involvement

Several empirical studies exists on the role of stakeholders' involvement in the implementation of strategic change. Chepkoech (2015) examined the role of stakeholders in the implementation of strategic change among commercial banks in Kenya using a case study of National Bank of Kenya. She noted that in the current corporate world, the high level of awareness among the stakeholders dictates that organizational leaders must implement change processes which satisfy the interests of those groups who have a stake in the business.

Through the use of descriptive research design, the study established that stakeholders preferences and tastes are key factors affecting the implementation of strategic change and that stakeholders such as customers provide the indispensable influence to the bank in terms of competitive advantage, revenue and profits, employees are involved in the change management process need to be adequately trained. The study recommended that there needs to be stakeholder involvement in all stages of planning and implementation to bring a sense of ownership by all parties so that they can feel the strategy has not been forced on them.

Mangala (2015), on the other hand carried a research on the influence of stakeholders in strategy implementation at G4S Kenya Limited. The research noted that identifying and including important stakeholders in the strategic management process is critical since when primary stakeholders are excluded, the relevance and anticipated benefits from the strategy will be limited. The study adopted qualitative analysis which was carried out using content analysis. He concluded that management had taken initiatives in creating and sustaining a climate within G4S Limited that motivated employees in their implementation that includes; encouraging teamwork, maintaining a powerful culture that results in employees aligning their individual goals and behaviours with those of the firm.

Strategic Implementation of Strategic Change

A number of empirical scholarly works have been conducted on the successful implementation of strategic change. Indiaz (2016) for instance explored the challenges faced in implementing strategic change by State owned enterprises in Kenya. The study purposed to specifically examine the impact of leadership, organizational structure, culture and availability of core competencies on management of strategic change. Using a descriptive design and targeting 56 state corporatons selected using stratified sampling technique, the study found out that strategic change management was positively impacted upon by leadership, structure, culture as well as avaialbality of core competences.

Nabwire (2014) on the other hand explored the factors influencing implementation of strategic change with a case of Barclays Bank of Kenya. A descriptive research design was utilised in the undertaking and a case study of Nairobi branches was used to represent the views of staff of Barclays Bank of Kenya. A field research was undertaken using a sample size of 69 was selected using stratified random sampling. A qualitative approach in which data will be collected using questionnaires that will be emailed and hand delivered. The data will then be interpreted through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Percentages were used to analyze the data provided by the respondents and

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the results and findings of the study were represented in the form of tables, graphs and charts.

The findings indicated that resource allocation and information systems were major factors affecting implementation of strategy. The findings also reveal that respondents agreed that the advocates of strategic change left the organization during its implementation. The study showed that the organization includes its stakeholders in the planning and implementation of strategic change.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the positivism approach which advocates the application of methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond. Bryman and Bell (2011) observe that positivism describes the research task as entailing the collection of data upon which to base generalizable propositions that can be tested. The research design utilized a questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The study targeted all the 392 state corporations from 18 functional categories. The target population of interest in this study was four (4) staff members at middle and senior level management from each state corporation, with at least one (1) being drawn from each level of management, translating to 1,568 employees in the 392 state corporations. The study used questionnaires containing both open ended and closed ended questions to collect primary data.

FINDINGS

Correlation analysis for Stakeholder Involvement

Table 1 below showed the degree of relationship between stakeholder involvement and other variables. The results indicated that there was positive significant relationship between stakeholder involvement and all the other variables. The Pearson's correlation coefficients were 0.626, 0.700, 0.647, 0.433 and 0.682 between stakeholder involvement and leadership commitment, change communication, employee participation, change coercion and organization culture respectively, all with a p-value<0.001. This implied that 62.6% of stakeholder involvement in state corporations in Kenya is explained by leadership commitment, 70% by change communication, 64.7% by employee participation, 43.3% by change coercion and 68.2% by organization culture.

Table 1: Stakeholder Involvement

		Stakeholder Involvement	Leadership Commitment	Change Communication	Employee Participation	Change Coercion	Organization Culture	Successful implementation of Strategic Change
Stakeholder involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.626**	.700**	.647**	.433**	.682**	.566**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0	0	0
	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	298

Regression analysis for construct Stakeholder Involvement

The results showed the regression model on Stakeholder Involvement versus successful implementation of strategic change.

As indicated the coefficient of determination R^2 (R square) was 0.320 and R was 0.566. The statistic R which was 0.566 was the correlation coefficient which implied a moderate positive relationship between stakeholder involvement and successful implementation of strategic change. The coefficient of determination R square implies that 32% of the variation on the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya is explained by the variation of stakeholder involvement alone. The other 68% of the variation in successful implementation of strategic change is explained by other factors not included in the model.

Table 2: Regression results on relationship between stakeholder involvement and successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya

(a) Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.566[a]	.320	.318	.47422

a. Predictors: (Constant), X_1

(b) ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.390	1	31.390	139.583	.000[b]
	Residual	66.567	296	.225		
	Total	97.957	297			

a. Dependent Variable: Successful implementation of Strategic Change

b. Predictors: (Constant), X_1

(c) Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.560	.027		129.597	.000		
	X_1	.370	.031	.566	11.815	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Successful implementation of Strategic Change

X_1 = Stakeholder Involvement

Results indicated the results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Stakeholder Involvement versus successful implementation of strategic change. From the processed data, the ANOVA results indicate that the p-value of the F statistic is less than .001 (p-value<.001) which is less than 0.05, an indication that the model was statistically significant, thereby implying that the data is extremely ideal for making a conclusion. This showed that the estimator in the one parameter regression analysis is significantly not equal to zero. This therefore implied that the predictor variable stakeholder involvement significantly influence successful implementation of strategic change in Kenyan state corporations.

Results presented beta coefficients of stakeholder involvement versus successful implementation of strategic change. The beta coefficients are for the model

$$Y = 3.560 + .37 X_1$$

Where, Y = Successful implementation of Strategic Change

X_1 = Stakeholder Involvement

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The T statistics for the constant and coefficient of stakeholder involvement are 129.597 and 11.815 respectively, both with p values<0.001. Since the p values of the T statistics are both less than 0.05, it implies that the constant 3.560 and coefficient of X_1, 0.37 were both significant at 95% confidence. This further confirmed that stakeholder involvement significantly influences successful implementation of strategic change positively. If a p-value (Sig) was greater than 0.05, the alternative hypotheses was rejected and if a p-value (Sig) was less than 0.05 alternative hypothesis should accepted (Yin, 2009). This hence implied that stakeholder involvement had a positive influence on successful implementation of strategic change and hence the study rejected the null hypothesis H_0: that stakeholder involvement has no significant influence on the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya.

Stakeholder Involvement

Respondents had been asked to describe how different stakeholders were involved in different change initiatives in their organizations.

Majority responses pointed towards a great deal of stakeholders being involved in the development of change programs, in addition to participating in change seminars and trainings on matters regarding the planned and anticipated change. Most respondents were also in concurrence that involving stakeholders resulted to a positive impact. This is so because it would lead to acceptance and ownership of the change initiatives and programs

SUMMARY

The study sought to find out the extent to which stakeholder involvement influences the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya. Based on the findings from the study, stakeholder involvement was found to have significant influence on the successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya. The regression model on stakeholder involvement versus successful implementation of strategic showed that there was a moderate relationship between stakeholder involvement and successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya.

The study concluded that it was important to involve stakeholders during all stages of change implementation process in organizations and in particular, state corporations because it affected the level of success of the change. This concured with a study by Ayuso, Rodriguez and Ricart (2006) that firms should pay attention to stakeholder influence for either normative or instrumental reasons.

The results also agreed with Noland and Phillips (2010) that for strategic change to be successful various stakeholders need to be engaged as some of them will oversee the implementation of the strategic change.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that it is important to involve stakeholders during all stages of strategic change planning and implementation process in organizations and in particular, state corporations because it affects the level of success of the change. This is in concurrence with a study by Ayuso, Rodriguez and Ricart (2006) who concluded that firms should pay attention to stakeholder influence for either normative or instrumental reasons. Similarly, the results corresponded with Bryson (2011) findings that at times of strategic change in organisations, it important to engage stakeholders to attain successful outcomes equally, the results agreed with Noland and Phillips (2010) verdict that for strategic change to be successful various stakeholders need to be engaged as some of them will oversee the implementation of the strategic change. The results show that existence of organizations' policy on involvement of stakeholders in change issues helps organizations in achieving success in the process of implementation of strategic change. The study also concludes that stakeholders should be involved at all stages of the change process from the design of the change through to the implementation. This is because stakeholder involvement will lead to change buy-in translating to elimination of any possible resistance

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that during any change implementation process, when stakeholders are involved, leadership show commitment towards change, change is communicated effectively and timely, employees participate in the change process and change coercion is used in case of resistance and where there is urgency of change, then the implementation process of the strategic change will be smooth and successful. Organizations both public and private, scholars, policy makers, Kenyan Government, non-governmental organizations and all institutions undergoing any form of change process should pay keen attention to the determinants of the successful implementation of strategic change and their individual contributions to change programs. In the order of their contribution towards the success of a change program, change coercion, leadership commitment and stakeholder involvement post the highest contribution towards the success of any change program. And therefore they must be accorded serious consideration during strategic change implementation so as to ensure the change is efficacious.

Suggestions for further research

From the findings, the study revealed the need for further research on other determinants of successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya. It was inevitable that future studies are necessary to find out what the other factors whose contribution towards successful implementation of strategic change in state corporations in Kenya are and how they behave when regressed individually and jointly in presence of and in absence of organizational culture.

Because study only focused on the state corporations in Kenya, the researcher therefore recommended the study to be replicated in other entities like private sector and non-governmental organizations in order to establish the relatable trends in matters strategic change implementation in organizations. The researcher further recommended future studies to adopt other research designs in studying issues about strategic change implementation in organization.

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