



**AN ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS INFLUENCING STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN SELECTED STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this study was to analyze the determinants influencing strategic plan implementation in selected state corporations in Kenya. The targeted state corporations included National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), National Bank of Kenya (NBK), New Kenya Cooperative Creameries (New KCC), Kenyatta University (KU) and Kenya Tea Development Authority (KTDA). The study was grounded on four objectives; to establish the effect of organisational leadership on strategic plan implementation, to determine the effect of organisational structure on strategic plan implementation, to find out the effect of organisational culture on strategic plan implementation and to establish the effect of stakeholders' engagement on strategic plan implementation. A descriptive research design was adopted by the researcher. The target population comprised of all the 94 head office based employees who are in the management level, from all the targeted corporations. A total sample of 28 respondents were randomly determined from these corporation. In order to obtain the required information from the selected respondent, the study deployed questionnaires as tools for data collection. Data was analyzed both descriptively (through means and standard deviation) and inferentially (through correlation and regression) with the help of SPSS. The findings of the study established that organisational leadership and organisational culture to a very great extent positively impact strategic plan implementation while enhanced stakeholder engagement and organisational structure positively but averagely impact strategic plan implementation. The researcher recommended that the organisations should establish effective leadership structures and also involve their leaders in the process of strategic plan implementation. These structures should however allow for clear allocation of duties and sufficient resources. The corporations need to also consider their culture in the process of strategic plan implementation and keenly identify and involve key stakeholders such as Public and private sectors partners, employees, advocacy groups, board members and executive leaders. The roles of these stakeholders should however be clearly defined.*

**Key Words:** *Organisational Leadership, Organisational Structure, Organisational Culture, Stakeholders' Engagement*

## INTRODUCTION

Organisational business environment is an ever-changing platform (Virginia, 2016). The researcher adds that the changes may entail a modified law, a newly invented or improved technology and change in people or client behaviour. Organisations therefore find themselves, many a times, in a different setting and therefore obliged to adjust themselves accordingly (Niclas, 2014). Niclas adds that the reaction can result in a change of strategy. Crittenden and Crittenden (2008) however argue that this strategic change is vital, because it helps to retain or gain competitive advantage in an altered business environment. The duo add that organisations have therefore resorted to using strategies in their planning and management processes to remain competitive. Strategic change needs planning as a lot of issues arise and need to be solved. According to Niclas (2014), feasibility and purpose are very key in the process of strategic planning, but also the organisational culture and structure will play a role in this stage (Niclas, 2014). The implementation of strategy plan has proliferated in several business discussions. Different scholars and experts in the area of strategy have conducted studies and argued out operational frameworks that can be used while developing strategic plans (Machuki & Aoasa, 2011; Birnbaum, 2009; Niclas, 2014). It is also vital for organisations to develop and establish a clear sense of their distinctiveness. According to Awino et al. (2012), strategic plan implementation entails the process of analyzing the competitiveness of an organisation's business environment, setting strategic goals, developing a course of action and allocating resources that will increase the likelihood of achieving those goals.

Generally, strategic planning is the formal consideration of an organisation's future course. However, strategy plan implementation remains to

be a mystery in a number of organisations as a result of the complexities involved (Elwak, 2013). The researcher adds that in this backdrop, the management prefer to participate in the establishment of a strategy other than its implementation. This is mostly occasioned by lack of assurance of success in strategy plan implementation. Ramesh (2011) asserts that most organisations deny effective strategic plan implementation the attention it demands. He adds that great strategic plans are rendered irrelevant and useless in the wake of poor or no implementation since implementation is a key part in the entire process of strategy planning. In line with this argument, Blahova and Knapkova (2011) adds that implementation of a developed strategy has proved to be the greatest challenge to organisations rather than strategy formulation.

Hrebiniak (2008) asserts that developing a consistent strategy within an organisation has always proved to be a difficult responsibility. All strategic planning seek to answer at least one of these three important questions: what does the organisation purpose to execute? What audience does the organisation target? And in what ways does the organisation purpose to excel? Relating the third question to a business environment, a strategic plan identifies measures that facilitate a win or avoidance of competition. According to Li, Guohui and Eppler (2008) many organisations therefore view strategic plan implementation as a process for establishing where an organisation targets to be over a specified period of time, say for example, 3 to 5 years to come. As noted by Kazmi (2008), this presents the implementation of strategies that are competitive critical more specifically in the light of the stiff and ever increasing competition and complexity of today's world that can make it extremely difficult to assess and take advantage of opportunities open to a firm. Strategic plan implementation forms a part of the strategic management process (Horvathova, 2010).

The process involves both external and internal business environment scanning, strategy development and implementation, and strategy evaluation.

Organisations do not generally find it difficult to formulate a strategy, the difficulty is registered in the implementation process as it is viewed as being a near to impossible task to implement a strategy due to the several negative determinants (Koyana, 2009). The process of strategic plan implementation as an aspect of strategic management has proved to be the greatest and most significant challenge that all organisations have to fight (Horvathova, 2010). Oanda (2013) cited a 1996 study by Arthur and asserted that four main areas can be linked to successful process of strategic plan implementation. The first determinant is that, although strategies need to be developed around the small business units within an organisation, these business units often do not correspond to parts of the organisation's structure and some of the business units implement strategies independent of other sections of the organisations therefore hindering the success of the implementation process.

Esther (2008) defined corporatism as a system that is founded either politically or economically in which power is granted to civic groups that include economic, agricultural, professional and industrial. The civic are therefore termed as corporations. State corporations being units that are not elected, have an internal hierarchy; the intent being to execute control in their areas of representation both socially and economically. In Kenya, the establishment of state corporations is covered under the State Corporation act which a parliamentary act. The act provides for the establishment of state corporations while also describing their control and regulations. The act also defines State Corporation as a corporate unit established under an act of parliament or any other written law (State Corporation Act, 2015).

The Kenya government regards its public sector transformation strategy as a dynamic process created to fundamentally reshape the Public Service to fulfill its role in the achievement of Vision 2030 (Isahakia, 2010). This transformation strategy is also seen as representing a transition for the public service and the beginning of a more cohesive, long-term approach to reform (Isahakia, 2010). The government launched the Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) I in 1993 to enhance efficiency in public service and productivity. The target then was to manage cost (OPM/PSTD, 2010), and the program was driven hugely by the fiscal need to reduce the size of the mainstream civil service (World Bank, 2001).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many of the strategic plan considerations rarely reach the real business operations level (Niclas, 2014). According to Hrebiniak (2008), most organizations' strategies fail as a result of poor implementation process. Most organisations are influenced by a number of aspects relating to strategic plan implementation that range from management commitment, resource availability to organisational structure, culture and change (Blahova & Knapkova, 2011). While commenting on the Kenyan scenario, Marwa and Zairi (2009) asserted that several strategies aimed at enhancing efficiency and the general performance of the public sector have been introduced by the government including the strategic development plan in Vision 2030, the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) and the performance contracts.

Despite all these efforts by the government, the Kenyan public sector still remain behind in service delivery with the government losing billions of shillings while seeking to implement its development strategies. Whilst ensuring that Kenyans of all walks of life have access to quality services, most of the state corporations have gone

through various changes in terms of internal restructuring, total quality management, cost rationalization, benefit maximization, financial mix restructuring, market penetration, product development, integrated communication and operational attainments (Njau, 2011). However, the same organisations have encountered various challenges in the process of implementing the planned strategies which has impacted negatively on the desired objectives of the strategies.

Several researcher have conducted studies on the implementation strategies that measured a number of factors within diverse sectors. For instance, Magambo (2012) conducted a study on the challenges of strategic plan implementation in public corporation but targeted all the country's corporations. The study only measured two variables; the general challenges and the measures taken in dealing with the challenges. In a study conducted on Germany firms by Niclas (2014) titled strategic plan implementation: key factors, challenges and solutions, only three key variables were measured, namely strategy, structure and behaviour. Similarly, Tabo (2013) in his study on challenges of strategic plan implementation limited himself to privately owned security firms in Kenya. The study only measured three main variables in relation to challenges in strategic plan implementation; process of strategic plan implementation, communication systems and employee skills.

Therefore, little is still known on the determinants influencing strategic plan implementation within state corporations since the studies conducted were mostly on other sectors other than the public sector. Besides, others related to countries other than Kenya hence their findings may not directly be implementable on the Kenyan state corporations' scenario. Furthermore, within governments, it is asserted that the actual process of strategic plan implementation occurs relatively infrequently hence the recorded results differ widely from

government to government (Isahakia, 2010). This implies that results obtained from one government may not directly be applicable to another. This study therefore sought to enhance the knowledge on determinants influencing strategic plan implementation in the state corporations in Kenya through measuring four main variables; organisational leadership, organisational structure, organisational culture, stakeholders' engagement.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective was to analyze the determinants influencing strategic plan implementation in selected state corporations in Kenya. The specific objectives were:-

- To establish the effect of organisational leadership on strategic plan implementation.
- To determine the effect of organisational structure on strategic plan implementation.
- To find out the effect of organisational culture on strategic plan implementation.
- To establish the effect of stakeholders engagement on strategic plan implementation.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Agency Theory**

This theory is by Eisenhardt (1989) and anchors the study' objective of effect of organisational leadership on strategic plan implementation. The theory explains the relationship between principals, such as a shareholder, and agents, that include company leaders or executives. In this relationship, the principal delegates or hires an agent to perform work. The theory attempts to deal with two specific problems, first, that the goals of the principal and the company leaders are not in conflict (agency problem), and second, that the principal reconciles different tolerance for risk (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Agency theory suggests that the firm can be viewed as a nexus of contracts loosely defined between resource holders. An agency relationship arises whenever one or more individuals, called principals, hire one or more other individuals, called agents, to perform some service and then delegate decision-making authority to the agents. The primary agency relationships in business are those between stockholders and managers and between debt holders and stockholders. These relationships are not necessarily harmonious; indeed, agency theory is concerned with so-called agency conflicts, or conflicts of interest between agents and principals. This has implications for, among other things, corporate governance and business ethics.

When agency occurs it also tends to give rise to agency costs, which are expenses incurred in order to sustain an effective agency relationship e.g., offering management performance bonuses to encourage managers to act in the shareholders' interests. Accordingly, agency theory has emerged as a dominant model in the financial economics literature, and is widely discussed in business ethics texts, Eisenhardt, (1989). If not well managed, the agency conflicts and costs may turn out to be hindrances in the implementation of new ideas including strategic plans within the organisation. Eisenhardt (1989) asserts that agency theory raises a fundamental problem in organisations—self-interested behavior. A corporation's managers may have personal goals that compete with the owner's goal of maximization of shareholder wealth. Since the shareholders authorize managers to administer the firm's assets, a potential conflict of interest exists between the two groups.

The theory therefore argues that, in imperfect labor and capital markets, managers will seek to maximize their own utility at the expense of corporate shareholders. With reference to strategic plan implementation, the leaders who work as agents in the organisations should therefore ensure

that the strategy to be implemented in the organisation is in line with the interests of the principals and the organisation as a whole.

### **Dynamic Capability Theory**

The study' objectives on effect of organisational structure on strategic plan implementation was founded on the dynamic capabilities theory of organisations. This theory is argued out by Teece, Pisano and Shuen (1997). It is centered on exploiting existing internal and external organisation' specific competences in addressing the ever changing business environments. The theory stresses on development of management capabilities and hard-to-imitate both organisational and functional skills. According to the researchers, they use the word "Dynamic" to depict the capacity of an organisation in renewing competences so as to attain congruence with the changing business environment. "Capability" on the other hand emphasizes on appropriately adapting, integrating and reconfiguring internal organisational skills, resources and functional competences, which can be categorized as either techno-structural or socio-structural capabilities, to match the requirements of changing environments (Teece et al., 1997).

On the other hand, Shiyyl and Chien (2012) assert that, the capabilities that create dynamism entail management orientation, fluid structures, team work, knowledge management and creativity. These are majorly categorized as aspects of structure with an organisation. According to Moinkett (2015), the dynamic capabilities that are knowledge resource based are effective where organisational structure allow flexibility and create a culture of learning. The Dynamic Capabilities Theory is established on two key principles namely developing firm-specific capabilities and renewing competences to respond to shifts in the business environment. The capabilities are viewed to be unique from organisation to organisation and deeply rooted in the firm' history, hence impossible to imitate.

Additionally, an organisation's competitive advantage depends on the structure adopted by the organisation i.e. routines and patterns of current practice (Karanja, 2013). Organisations need to gain and sustain their competitive advantage through adjusting their abilities so that they are in synch with the changes in their operating environments. Organisational structure can be termed as distinctive competences as they set the organisation apart from other organisations. Organisational structures are to be set, constantly revisited and reconfigured so as to adopt to the business environment. The implementation of strategic plan needs therefore to be a careful examination and evaluation of a company's organisational structure to ensure successful implementation (Moinkett, 2015).

### **Industry Organisation Theory**

The industrial organisation theory is argued for by Porter (1985). The study's objective on organisational culture was founded on this theory. The theory argues that the culture of the industry where an organisation operates has a stronger effect on the organisation's performance compared to the decisions managers resolve within the organisations (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2007; Elwak, 2013). Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson, (2007) asserted that organisations should seek to establish culture that allow for learning and utilization of resources in the implementation of the strategy needed by the industry's structural organisation. Ana, Shanthi and Ramon, (2014) argued in favor of the Porter's five forces models make-up the rule of competition and further influence the industry's profit levels. These forces include the bargaining power of suppliers' and buyers, extent of rivalry between the organisations in the industry, existence of substitute products and threat of new entrants.

This theory suggests that organisations that implement strategies in line with the industry's

demand stand to earn returns that are above the industry's average (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2007). Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2007) established that up to twenty percent of an organisation's profitability can be attributed to the industry within which the organisation operates, while thirty six percent of the changes in profitability explained by a firm's characteristics and actions implying that organisation's management should marry resources with the industry aspects in developing the most effective strategies. Essentially, the successful organisations are those that adopt progressive cultures such as developing or acquiring the internal skills required in implementing strategies demanded by the external environment.

### **Stakeholder Theory**

The theory anchored the study's objective on effect of stakeholder engagement on strategic plan implementation. The stakeholder theory is a theory of organisational management and business ethics that addresses morals and values in managing an organisation. It was originally detailed by Edward Freeman in the book *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder approaches*, identifies and models the groups that forms stakeholders of a corporation and both describes and recommends methods by which management can give due regard, the interests of those groups. In short, it attempts to address the "Principle of Who or What Really Counts" (Robert & Freeman, 2003). Robert and Freeman (2003) refer to stakeholders as all individuals or groups with a legal or a legitimate claim towards the organisation. The stakeholders includes: clients, suppliers, employees, shareholders, community and all those who interact with the organisation in reciprocity.

However, according to Phillips (2003), there are other parties involved in organisational management and business ethics, including governmental bodies, political groups, trade associations, trade unions, prospective employees and prospective customers that also count as

stakeholders. Bonnafous – Boucher (2005) argues that the implicit and explicit agreement between the organisation and its stakeholders requires that the organisation sets structures through which the stakeholders can state their case, reduce the effects of information asymmetry and enforce systems built to protect the rights of stakeholders especially in strategic plan formulation and implementation. According to Moinkett (2015), strategic plan implementation demands the adequate participation of stakeholders. Their participation serves to cut down on the differences and resistance that may arise from them hence hindering the timely and successful implementation of the strategic plan. A sense of ownership arises when the stake holders are engaged in the strategy process.

### Conceptual Framework



**Independent Variables**      **Dependent Variables**  
**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### Organisational Leadership

Strategic plan implementation frequently fails due to weak leadership, evidenced by firm leaders unable or unwilling to carry out the difficult

decisions agreed upon in the plan (Wixom & Watson, 2010). Muniu (2010) cited several aspects as avenues of challenges within organisations in the process of strategic plan implementation; Organisational leadership, organisational structure, Organisational culture and stakeholders engagement. Mulongo (2012) argues that insufficient leadership attention may hamper the process of strategic plan implementation.

After undergoing a resource intensive strategic planning process, the firm’s Managing Partner and Executive Committee members may find themselves jumping back into billable work or immersing themselves in other firm matters, mistakenly believing that writing the plan was the majority of the work involved. Within weeks of finalizing the plan, strategies start to collect dust, partners lose interest, and eventually, months pass with little or no reference to the plan or real action from on (Alsurudi, 2012). A weak strategy may also result from overly inspirational or unrealistic firm leaders or partners who adopt an ill-fitting strategy with respect to the firm’s current position or market competition. Without a viable strategy, firms struggle to take actions to effectively implement the plan identified. According to Musyoka (2011), the difficulty of driving significant change in an industry rooted in autonomy and individual manager’s behaviors is not to be underestimated. More often than not, executing on strategy requires adopting a change in approach and new ways of doing things.

### Organisational Structure

Organisational structure refers to how an organisation coordinates its human resources both as individuals or teams. For an organisation to achieve its goals and objectives, individual work needs to be planned and well-managed. Structure is therefore an important tool in attaining coordination, as it defines reporting relationships, delineates formal communication channels, and explains how independent actions of teams and or



individuals can be centrally coordinated (Sine, Mitsuhashi & Kirsch, 2006). The researchers categorize organisational structures can either be viewed as being mechanistic or organic.

An argument by Pereira (2010) indicated that an organisation's structure influences the distribution of power and hierarchical levels, division of work and interaction of internal processes. The researcher further asserts that it is the structure that defines the trajectory of a strategic plan implementation process since it establishes who will play what role during the implementation of the strategy. Neis et al. (2015) revealed that strategies developed from strategic planning are to be aligned to the organisation's structure in order for the implementation process to be successful.

### **Organisational Culture**

Schein (2004) defined organisational culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group has learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. Organisational cultures enhance specific new adaptations and inhibit others (Ivy, 2017). The researcher argued that some cultures are best suited in environments that are fast and keep changing, while others fit best in slow incremental developments. A similar argument is raised by Karanja (2013) who states that culture turns out to be a liability in the event that the shared values are not in synch with those that enhance organisational effectiveness. The correct culture best fits an organisation's direction and strategy as it works towards achieving its objectives and beat its challenges. In line with this argument, Robbins, Judge and Campbell (2010) linked failures of strategies in organisations to the constant neglect of aspects of an organisation's culture.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Two main categories of stakeholders have been identified by Freeman (2010); internal stakeholders and external stakeholders. The researcher asserts that these are group of people or individuals who are impacted in one way or another by all organisational processes undertaken. Kazmi (2008) asserts that in conducting strategic planning, firm stakeholders involved in the process develop a strong understanding of the business imperative behind the chosen strategy and the need for change in order to achieve partner goals. However, Kazmi asserts that any stakeholders removed from the implementation process may struggle to identify with the objectives and strategies outlined by organisation management; these stakeholders may not see a need for change, and without understanding the background and rationale for the chosen strategy, may never buy-in to strategic plan and, as a result, will passively or actively interfere with the implementation process.

### **Strategic Plan Implementation**

Hrebiniak (2008), asserted that a huge number of failures in strategies can be linked to poor implementation process. The greatest challenge in the process of strategic plan management mostly lies in the implementation level (Yang et al., 2008). Musyoka (2011) argues that too often, organisations dedicate substantial internal and external resources to a strategy development process, but ultimately, the organisations turn out being unsuccessful hence fail to move the organisation in the direction identified or realize the benefits of their investment.

Wixom and Watson (2010) pined that leading strategic plan implementation requires a balancing act – the ability to work closely with partners in order to build cohesion and support for the firm's strategy, while maintaining the objectivity required in order making difficult decisions. Hrebiniak (2008) mention weak or inappropriate strategy as impeded to successful implementation. The

researcher argues that during the course of strategic planning, the lack of a realistic and honest assessment of the firm will lead to the development of a weak, inappropriate or potentially unachievable strategy.

### **Empirical Review**

#### **Organisational Leadership and Strategic Plan Implementation**

Organisational leadership has been cited as one of the key factors in strategic plan implementation (Niclas, 2014). The mandate of a leader is vital in any organisation that seeks to implement a new strategy. Studies such as O'Reilly et al. (2010) indicate that leaders frequently have a significant influence on performance. They describe leaderships as an individual's capability, in a formally allocated hierarchical duty, to affect people in attaining organisational goals; therefore, during implementation a leader plays a vital role.

The leader has to ensure, that the firm is given to the strategy through convincing his subordinates in believing that the strategy to be implemented is key and also attaches meaning to the strategy so that it is supported (Valentine, 2013). The researcher also adds that the leader also has to deal with resistance, allocate the right resources hence creating consensus as this further motivates the lower level managers in adopting the strategy. Mulongo (2012) supported an argument in the study on the motivation of middle management to implement a certain strategy conducted by MacMillan and argued that if the middle managers in an organisation are of the view that their self-interest is being compromised, this may increase the likelihood of delaying or totally sabotaging the process of implementation. On the other hand, Fredberg (2008) asserts that organisation leaders can enhance commitment with the involvement of employees from lower rank levels. This engagement stirs a unique type of ownership in the new strategy that further improves the commitment enormously.

Despite O'Reilly et al. (2010) stress on consistency of leadership in giving employees a backing and support in the process of implementation, Valentine (2013) explains the abilities required by managers as a link of technical and interpersonal skills and alertness to the demands of other functions. Therefore the managers are required to hit a balance between powerful charismatic leadership and satisfaction for the employees. According to Crittenden and Crittenden (2008), a successful process of strategic plan implementation demands a capable, competent and efficient leader.

#### **Organisational Structure and Strategic Plan Implementation**

Nandakumar, Ghobadian and O'Regan (2010) views organisational structure as the environment in which all actions of employees are undertaken. Managers can develop an organisational structure in accordance with their view which also fits, the option the organisation has and the business environment in which the firm can best operate (Niclas, 2014). According to Musyoka (2011), a good implementation support structure is vital in determining the success of implementing a strategy. Musyoka further argues that to support effective implementation, firm leaders should ask the question: does the organisation have the right leadership, governance and operational structure required to support effective implementation? Are the right people serving in the right places?

Very often, organisation leaders demonstrate the behavior of dynamic and influential visionaries. However, such leaders may lack an attention to detail and the organisational skills required to effectively drive day to day action. By assessing whether the firm has the right people in the right places, organisations can better ensure that visionary firm leaders are appropriately supported by individuals who can get the daily actions of implementation done. A fundamental and critical step in moving forward with strategy

execution involves planning. Implementation planning entails developing a detailed outline of the specific actions and sub-actions, responsibilities, deadlines, measurement tools, and follow-up required to achieve each of the organisation's identified strategies (Crittenden & Crittenden, 2008). Achieving a level of detail in these plans provides for a tangible and measurable guide by which both the organisation and its leaders can assess progress in implementation over time.

Successful implementation of an organisation's strategy also requires alignment of the organisation's partner compensation system, performance management approach, and other related practice group and client team management structures and processes with the organisations chosen strategy (Musyoka, 2011). The most common and perhaps critical example of a structure necessitating alignment is that of partner compensation. Very often organisations adopt strategic plans which require partner collaboration and teamwork in order to achieve success, yet fail to modify the partner compensation system to reward such activities. According to Blahova and Knapkova (2011), not aligning management processes and structures with a newly adopted strategy frequently results in a stall out of implementation efforts.

Organisational structures are categorized as either mechanistic or organic. Mechanistic structures are more bureaucratic (Nandakumar et. al, 2010). It allows for communication to follow formal channels whereas employees are handed particular job descriptions delineating their roles and responsibilities. One of the main advantages of a mechanistic structure is its efficiency but disallows innovations (Nandakumar et. al, 2010). Mechanistic organisations are often rigid and resist change, making them unsuitable for innovativeness and taking quick action. Therefore, in organisations that are trying to maximize efficiency and minimize costs, mechanistic structures provide advantages.

Contrary to mechanistic structures, organic structures are flexible and decentralized, with. Organic structure, allows for more flexible channels of communication within an organisation. Employee's responsibilities are made broader and are usually asked to execute duties based on the organisational needs and their expertise levels (Kessler, 2016).

### **Organisational Culture and Strategic Plan Implementation**

Robbins, Judge and Campbell (2010) argued that one of the main reasons that causes strategies to fail may be attributed to the constant neglect of aspects of an organisation' culture. An organisation' culture can either enhance or hinder the possibility of implementing strategy and attaining organisational change. Culture turns out to be a liability in the event that the shared values are not in synch with those that enhance organisational effectiveness (Karanja, 2013). Hiriyappa (2009) argue that the culture can be a dysfunction, impacting on organisational performance. An organisation' culture should therefore be considered during the strategic plan implementation process. However, it is initially vital to establish the kind of cultures which facilitates an organisation in implementing their strategic objectives (Ahmadi, Salamzadeh, Daraei and Akbari, 2012).

Different organisations have adopted different cultures. The different cultures adopted impact the strategic plan implementation process. Ahmadi et al. (2012) established that successful organisations have been viewed to have strong cultures which seek to empower employees, stress on team work and have a clearly defined strategic direction. Strong organisational cultures may however negatively impact the strategic plan implementation process if the organisational values do not coincide with those defined in the strategic plan. They may also prove very difficult to alter hence making the

implementation process slow and costly (Robbins et. al, 2010). On the other hand, weak cultures results to a lack of commitment towards the process of strategic plan implementation as they provide little or no assistance in implementation strategic plan (Hiriyappa, 2009).

Different organisational cultures have been identified. For instance, a rigid organisational culture restricts innovation and creativity. The culture deny employees the freedom of acting of being responsible in accomplishing their allocated tasks. On the other hand, flexible cultures enhance risk taking among employees, experimentation and changing of strategies so as to fit the special situations facing the organisations. This avails a healthy business environment (Karanja, 2013). In a flexible culture, organisation members will consider change as something good and useful thus the strategic plan implementation process is likely to be continual and incremental in nature. This reduces resistance and encourages participation of the employees (Jones & George, 2011).

Organisational culture can also be categorized as innovative or conservative (Jones & George). This allows room for creativity and risk taking therefore assisting the strategic plan implementation process be conducted fast and efficiently. On the other hand, conservative cultures stress on control through the application of rules and regulations, hence resulting to continuous supervision of employees that may further eroded the trust between organisational leaders and subordinates. The employees are therefore less motivated and have less initiative during the process of strategic plan implementation. This organisational culture type also resists the adoption of strategies which deviate from the norm as the implementation of new strategy is viewed as being harmful to the organisation (Jones & George, 2011).

Power cultures are self-serving as they only enhance the interests of leaders in the organisation,

as in the hierarchy cultures. Organisations which have a task, market or guided missile cultures experience teamwork among employees hence encouraging motivation and trust among the employees. Organisations that have embraced clan cultures mainly focus on nurturing and mentoring the subordinates through the superiors. This enables the employees develop the knowledge and skills needed in the process of strategic plan implementation (Tipster, 2013).

### **Stakeholders Engagement and Strategic Plan Implementation**

According to Freeman (2010) a stakeholder refers to a group or individual who can affect or be affected by the attainments of an organisation's goals. Stakeholders can be categorized as either internal or external to the organisation with their complexities relying on organisations size and activities. Internal stakeholders are people who are already committed to serving an organisation as staff, volunteers, executive leadership, and board members. On the other hand, external stakeholders are individuals or groups that are impacted by an organisation's work as service recipients, community members, partners from the public and private sectors, funders, advocacy/interest groups, and others (Mangala, 2015). The criticality of identifying and involving key stakeholders in the strategic management process is important because when the main stakeholders are left out, the relevance and expected benefits from the implemented strategy becomes limited (Pedersen, 2006).

Hughes and Demetrious (2006) assert that an organisation's success in implementing a strategy relies on developing real conversation with its diverse stakeholders. Alsuridi (2012) noted that the two critical processes in strategy management include creating strategy and implementing it, and that most of the problems firms experience in trying to implement strategy towards their problems have

their root in lack of involving stakeholders. Sustainability alongside its problem to company to assess its performance against financial bottom-line, social and environmental impacts, means a change of the traditional business prototype with its key focus being on short-term profits and catering for the shareholder concerns (Bae & Smardon, 2011).

## METHODOLOGY

According to Lewis et al. (2012), a research design refers to the adopted structure in connection to the investigations aimed at finding answers to the study objectives. This study utilized a descriptive survey research design. The study' target population comprised of all the 94 head office based managers, according to the numbers provided by the various human resource departments, of the five purposively selected state corporations; the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), the National Bank of Kenya (NBK), the New Kenya Cooperative Creameries (New KCC), the Kenyatta University (K.U), the Kenya Tea and Development Authority (KTDA). The study adopted a simple multiple regression model indicated below;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where; Y – Successful strategic plan implementation

$\beta_0$  - Constant

$\beta_i$  (i = 1,2,3,4) - Regression Coefficients

$X_1$  – Organisational leadership

$X_2$  – Organisation structure

$X_3$ - Organisational culture

$X_4$ - Stakeholder engagement

$\varepsilon$  - Error term

**Table 1: Organisational Leadership**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
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## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### Organisational Leadership

The study sought to determine the impact of organisational leadership on strategic plan implementation. The researcher therefore asked the respondents to express their opinion on their level of satisfaction on the various aspects relating to organisational leadership and strategic plan implementation within their organizations. The findings were as presented in table 1. From the findings, the mean of 2.33 and standard deviation of 0.516 reveal that the respondents agree that the organisations involve their leadership in the process of strategic plan implementation. The mean of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.685 indicate that the respondents disagree that the organizations' strategic plan implementation process frequently fails due to lack of leadership support. Similarly, the respondents disagreed that the organizations' leaders are mostly incapable or unwilling to carry out the difficult decisions agreed upon in the strategic plan implementation as indicated by the mean of (4.29, 0.499). The respondents however agreed that a manager' capability in the form of experience and education usually impacts the success of the implementation process within their organisations (1.57, 0.378) and that in order to ensure a successful strategic plan implementation process, the organizations' leaders usually deal with resistance and motivate the lower level managers in adopting the strategy (2.22, 0.511). On the other hand, the mean of 3.07 (0.865) and 3.17 (0.632) depict that the respondents were not sure as to whether the level of influence of a manager within a department and/or the entire organisation usually determines the success of the implementation process and if the organizations' leadership involve low rank employees so as to enhance ownership of the new strategy.

The organisation involves its leadership in the process of strategic plan implementation.	28	1	4	2.33	0.516
The organisation' strategic plan implementation process frequently fails due to lack of leadership support.	28	1	5	3.55	0.685
The organisation' leaders are mostly incapable or unwilling to carry out the difficult decisions agreed upon in the strategic plan implementation.	28	3	5	4.29	0.499
A manager' capability in the form of experience and education usually impacts the success of the implementation process within the organisation.	28	1	2	1.57	0.378
In the corporation, the level of influence of a manager within a department and/or the entire organisation usually determines the success of the implementation process.	28	1	5	3.07	0.865
In order to ensure a successful strategic plan implementation process, the organisation' leaders usually deal with resistance and motivate the lower level managers in adopting the strategy.	28	1	5	2.22	0.511
The organisation' leadership involves low rank employees so as to enhance ownership of the new strategy.	28	1	5	3.17	0.632
Valid N (listwise)	28				

The respondents also mentioned a number of other leadership challenges that influence the success of strategic plan implementation within the corporations. They include a lack of unique and creative leadership skills, no clear duty allocation, insufficient allocation of resources towards the implementation process, lack of well-established leadership structure, poor ordination of the implementation process, perceived lack of commitment from other leaders and embezzlement of financial resources allocated to the implementation process.

### **Organisational Structure**

The study established the impact of organisational structure and strategic plan implementation and the extent to which the respondents agreed with various statements relating to organisational structure and strategic plan implementation. The findings were summarized in table 2 and 3 below.

The researcher sought to find out the extent of impact of various aspects relating to organisational structure on strategic plan implementation. The findings were as indicated in table 2. The results depicted that the respondents confirmed that organisational structure to a great extent impacts the organizations' ability to achieve coordination during strategic plan implementation process and also explain how independent actions can be centrally coordinated during strategic plan implementation process as depicted by the mean of 1.84 and 2.31 respectively. The standard deviations of 0.409 and 0.485 reveal that the responses did not greatly vary. The mean of 2.79 and standard deviation of 0.601 depict that the respondents were not sure of the impact that organisational structure has on reporting relationships during strategic plan implementation process. However, the mean of 1.21 and standard deviation of 0.233 depict that to

a very great extent, organisational structure impacts delineation of formal communication

channels during strategic plan implementation process.

**Table 2: Impact of Organisational Structure**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Achieving coordination during strategic plan implementation process.	28	1	3	1.84	0.409
Explaining how independent actions can be centrally coordinated during strategic plan implementation process.	28	1	3	2.31	0.485
Reporting relationships during strategic plan implementation process.	28	1	4	2.79	0.601
Delineating formal communication channels during strategic plan implementation process.	28	1	2	1.21	0.233
Valid N (listwise)	28				

The study established the relationship of various aspect of organisational structure and strategic plan implementation. The results as summarized in table 3 depicted that the respondents were indifferent as to whether the currently adopted organisational structure eases the process of strategic plan implementation (3.27), the organizations' structures create an enabling environment in which all actions of employees are undertaken during the strategic plan implementation process (3.33) and if the adopted organisation structure allows for partner collaboration in the implementation process (2.95).

The respective standard deviations of 0.719, 0.698 and 0.777 (< 1.0) depict that the responses did not significantly vary. The mean of 2.23 and the standard deviation of 0.561 reveal that the respondents agreed that the currently adopted organisational structure facilitates communication during strategy implementation in their organisations. The mean of 3.67 revealed that the organizations' structures allow for teamwork among various individuals and groups during implementation. The standard deviation of 0.645 (<1.0) further reveal that the respondents did not hugely differ in their responses.

**Table 3: Aspects of Organisational Structure**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
The currently adopted organisational structure eases the process of strategic plan implementation.	28	1	5	3.27	0.719
The organisation' structure creates an enabling environment in which all actions of employees are undertaken during the strategic plan implementation process.	28	1	5	3.33	0.698
The adopted organisation structure allows for partner collaboration in the implementation process.	28	1	5	2.95	0.777
The currently adopted organisational structure facilitates communication during strategy implementation.	28	1	5	2.23	0.561
The organisation' structure allows for teamwork among various individuals and groups during implementation.	28	1	5	3.67	0.645
Valid N (listwise)	28				

### Organisational Culture

The researcher sought determine the challenges in strategic plan implementation in relation to organisational culture. The researcher summarized the findings in table 4 below. The results indicate that the respondents were indifferent as to whether the organisations consider their culture as one of the key factors in strategic plan implementation (3.44, 0.735), the organizations’ cultures enhance the implementation process through empowering employees and stressing on team work (2.95, 0.487), the cultures are not flexible making the

implementation process slow and costly (3.47, 0.509) and that the adopted organisation cultures are strong hence results to commitment among employees towards the process of strategic plan implementation as they provide assistance in implementation. However, the respondents agreed that failures of strategies in the organisations can be attributed to neglect of aspects of the type of culture adopted by the organisation (2.28, 0.543) and that the adopted cultures allow the implementation process to be conducted within the organisation’ mission and vision (2.43, 0.599).

**Table 4: Organisational Culture**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
The organisation considers its culture as one of the key factors in strategic plan implementation	28	1	5	3.44	0.735
Failures of strategies in the organisation can be attributed to neglect of aspects of the type of culture adopted by the organisation.	28	1	5	2.28	0.543
The organisation’ culture enhances the implementation process through empowering employees and stressing on team work.	28	1	5	2.95	0.487
The organisation’ culture is not flexible making the implementation process slow and costly.	28	1	5	3.47	0.509
The organisation’ culture is strong hence results to commitment among employees towards the process of strategic plan implementation as they provide assistance in implementation.	28	1	5	2.84	0.700
The adopted culture allows the implementation process to be conducted within the organisation’ mission and vision.	28	1	5	2.43	0.599
Valid N (listwise)	28				

### Stakeholder Engagement

The research sought to determine the extent to which the organisations engage both their external and internal stakeholders in the process of strategic plan implementation and how they agree as pertaining various challenges relating to stakeholder engagement during strategic plan implementation process. The findings were as indicated in tables 5 and 6 below.

The findings on the extent to which the corporations engage their stakeholders were

presented in table 5 below. The findings reveal to a very great extent, the corporations engage Public and private sectors partners (1.30, 0.487), executive leadership (1.00, 0.000) and board members (1.00, 0.000). From the responses, it was not clear to what extent the organisations engages community members and advocacy groups in the process of strategic plan implementation as depicted by the mean of 3.17 (0.583) and 3.03(0.546) respectively. The findings also revealed that the corporation staff are to a great extent engage during strategic plan implementation (2.17, 0.489) while the mean of



4.53 and standard deviation of 0.408 reveal that the process. organisations do not engage volunteers in the same

**Table 5: Engagement of Internal and External Stakeholders**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
<b>External Stakeholders</b>					
Community members	28	2	5	3.71	0.583
Public and private sectors partners	28	1	3	1.30	0.487
Advocacy groups	28	1	4	3.03	0.546
<b>Internal Stakeholders</b>					
Staff	28	1	4	2.17	0.489
Volunteers	28	2	5	4.53	0.408
Executive leadership	28	1	1	1.00	0.000
Board members	27	1	1	1.00	0.000
Valid N (listwise)	28				

The respondents gave their feedback on how they agree with various statement relating to challenges linked to strategic plan implementation in relation to stakeholder engagement. The results as depicted in table 6 indicated that the respondent agree that the organisations consider the importance of identifying and involving key stakeholders in the implementation process (2.22, 0.373) and their external and internal stakeholders in the process of implementation with equal importance (2.41, 0.398). Besides, the respondents confirmed that

their organisations specify roles to be played by their stake holders during the implementation process and that internal stakeholders in the organisation play more roles than the external stakeholders during implementation process (1.65, 0.402). However, the respondents were not sure if their organizations' success in implementing a strategy can be attributed to them developing real conversation with their external and internal stakeholders (3.39, 0,415).

**Table 6: Aspects of Stakeholder Engagement**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
The organisation considers the importance of identifying and involving key stakeholders in the implementation process.	28	1	4	2.22	0.373
The organisation' success in implementing a strategy can be attributed to it developing real conversation with its external and internal stakeholders.	28	1	5	3.39	0.415
The organisation considers its external and internal stakeholders in the process of implementation with equal importance.	28	1	4	2.41	0.398
The organisation specifies roles to be played by its stake holders during the implementation process.	28	1	2	1.17	0.269
Internal stakeholders in the organisation play more roles than the external stakeholders during implementation process.	28	1	3	1.65	0.402

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
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The organisation specifies roles to be played by its stake holders during the implementation process.	28	1	2	1.17	0.269
Internal stakeholders in the organisation play more roles than the external stakeholders during implementation process.	28	1	3	1.65	0.402
Valid N (listwise)	28				

### Other Stakeholder Engagement Challenges

The respondents listed additional challenges in relation to stakeholder engagement that impact strategic plan implementation process. Such listed challenges include a lack of clean and well detailed communication of the tasks to the various stakeholders, a non-supportive political environment to the corporations' strategy implementation plans, resistance of strategy by the employees due to fear of change, inefficient tapping of employee skills and abilities and under engaging key stakeholder.

### Strategic Plan Implementation

The respondents were to also give their feedback on the extent to which their organisations adopt a number of measures in trying to deal with the strategic plan implementation challenges. The results obtained and analyzed were as indicated in table 7 below. The results depict that in seeking to address a number of challenges in relation to strategic plan implementation, the corporations

manage staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management (2.37, 0.641), organize internal training of staff through workshops and seminars to change organisational culture (2.39, 0.444), sponsor employees to further their studies in related fields to enhance their skills (1.64, 0.532) and enhance organisational structure to suit the strategies (2.48, 0.555). The mean of 3.18 (0.773), 2.67 (0.488) and 3.11 (0.723) respectively reveal that the respondents were indifferent as to whether their organisations allocate enough resources for each project, improving top management commitment to strategy implementation and managements adopt a top down and horizontal communication with other staff in dealing with strategy implementation challenges. On the other hand, the respondents disagree that the corporations usually ensure timely distribution of resources (3.53, 0.515), recruit more staff to the organisation when there is need (4.01, 0.573) and change the organizations' culture (3.77, 0.606) so as to deal with strategy implementation challenges.

**Table 7: Strategic Plan Implementation**

Services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Allocating enough resources for each project.	28	1	5	3.18	0.773
Ensuring timely distribution of resources.	28	1	5	3.53	0.515

Improving top management commitment to strategy implementation	28	1	4	2.67	0.488
Managing staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management.	28	1	5	2.37	0.641
Recruitment of more staff to the organisation when there is need.	28	1	5	4.01	0.573
Organizing internal training of staff through workshops and seminars to change organisational culture.	28	1	4	2.39	0.444
Sponsoring employees to further their studies in related fields to enhance their skills.	28	1	3	1.64	0.532
Enhancing of organisational structure to suit the strategies.	28	1	5	2.48	0.555
Change organisational culture.	28	1	5	3.77	0.606
Management adopting a top down and horizontal communication with other staff.	28	1	5	3.11	0.723
Valid N (listwise)	28				

### Correlation Analysis

The results indicate that all the independent variables positively relate to one another with the strongest relationship being between organisational structure and organisational culture ( $r = 0.501$ ). Similarly, a positive association exists between the predictor variables and success in implementing strategic plans. This further indicates that an improvement in any of the predictor variable gives rises to a greater success in strategic plan implementation. The correlation value ( $r$ ) between organisational leadership and successful implementation of strategic plan determined to be

0.814. This value is viewed to be positively very strong hence organisational leadership was the most important aspect to be addressed by the corporations in seeking to address challenges in the process of strategic plan implementation. In addition, the findings also revealed a relatively strong positive relationship existing between organisational structure ( $r = 0.611$ ), organisational culture ( $r = 0.562$ ) and stakeholder engagement ( $r = 0.625$ ) and successful strategic plan implementation process. The values depict that an enhancement in these predictor variables results into successful implementation of strategic plans within the corporations.

**Table 8: Correlation Analysis**

	Organisational Leadership	Organisational Structure	Organisational Culture	Stakeholder Engagement	Successful implementation
Organisational Leadership	1				
Organisational Structure	0.501	1			
Organisational Culture	0.473	0.387	1		
Stakeholder Engagement	0.399	0.271	0.339	1	
Successful Implementation	0.814	0.611	0.562	0.625	1

### Regression Analysis

In order to establish the cumulative impact of organisational leadership, organisational structure, organisational culture and stakeholder engagement on successful strategic plan implementation, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The findings were as indicated in tables 9 and 10 below. The results indicated in table 9 revealed a coefficient-of-determination value ( $R^2$ ) of 0.621.

This implied that organisational leadership, organisational structure, organisational culture and stakeholder engagement explain up to 62.1 percent of the success attained in the process of strategic plan implementation. The significance value of 0.01 ( $< 0.05$ ) depicts that the cumulative effect of these variables on strategic plan implementation is statistically significant.

**Table 9: Regression Analysis**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig.
1	0.788a	0.621	0.598	0.573	0.01

a. Predictors: organisational leadership, organisational structure, organisational culture and stakeholder engagement.

From the results summarised in table 10, the regression model for the study is generated as:

$$Y = 0.753 + 0.218X_1 + 0.122X_2 + 0.084X_3 + 0.159X_4 + \varepsilon$$

The constant value of 0.753 depicts that if all the independent variables were rated as zero, the value of success in strategic plan implementation would be 0.753. The results further depict that with the

other variables held constant, a unit improvement or decrease in organisational leadership, organisational structure, organisational culture and stakeholder engagement results to 0.218, 0.122, 0.084 and 0.159 improvement or decrease in the success of strategic plan implementation within the corporations respectively.

**Table 10: Regression Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.753	0.478		1.442	0.001
	Organisational Leadership	0.218	0.056	0.188	0.485	0.019
	Organisational Structure	0.122	0.047	0.098	1.009	0.001
	Organisational Culture	0.084	0.055	0.073	1.675	0.001
	Stakeholder Engagement	0.159	0.039	0.111	1.121	0.007

Dependent Variable: Successful Strategic Plan Implementation

## Discussions

The study revealed that more men than women hold managerial positions within the state corporations. The results were in line with the current state of gender imbalance within the public sector. In relation to the age of the respondents, it was evident that up to 92.9% of the managers within the state corporations were aged more than 35 years old hence implying that very few youths are able to secure slots within the management of the state corporations. The findings also indicated that most of the respondents are qualified academically with more than three-quarters (85.7%) of the respondents having attained a minimum of an undergraduate degree. These findings imply that the corporations strongly consider academic qualification while placing managers. Besides, the reliability of the responses received is also enhanced since the respondents are well qualified.

The study found out that all the respondents were in the management positions as either supervisors or officers or assistant managers or managers or regional heads or HoDs. This therefore enhances the reliability of the findings since the respondents are viewed to have accurate and sufficient information pertaining the implementation of strategic plans and their challenges thereof in their various organisations considering that they spearhead this process at various levels. Nearly 90% of the respondents had worked for their respective corporations for more than 5 years. These results depict a low employee turnover within the corporations hence of the respondents are perceived to be well versed with the process of strategic plan implementation within their organisations and therefore the responses obtained are deemed reliable. The findings revealed that the corporations are currently implementing a strategic plan with however most of the respondents (46.4%) asserting that the corporations are not adequately

or very inadequately staffed within the strategic and/or planning departments while only 25% of the organisations are thought to be either very adequate or adequately staffed.

It was evident that the organisations involve their leadership in the process of strategic plan implementation and that a manager's capability in the form of experience and education usually impacts the success of the implementation process within their organisations. Also, in order to ensure a successful strategic plan implementation process, the organisations' leaders usually deal with resistance and motivate the lower level managers in adopting the strategy. Additional findings in relation to organisational leadership and strategic plan implementation depict that organisations' strategic plan implementation process do not frequently fail due to lack of leadership support and that leaders within these organisations are capable or willing to carry out the difficult decisions agreed upon in the strategic plan implementation. This argument was also asserted by Wixom and Watson (2010).

The results were however not conclusive as to whether the level of influence of a manager within a department and/or the entire organisation usually determines the success of the implementation process and if the organisations' leadership involve low rank employees so as to enhance ownership of the new strategy. Other challenges that impact strategic plan implementation process which relate to organisational leadership include a lack of unique and creative leadership skills, no clear duty allocation, insufficient allocation of resources towards the implementation process, lack of well-established leadership structure, poor ordination of the implementation process, perceived lack of commitment from other leaders and embezzlement of financial resources allocated to the implementation process. These challenges were also identified by Muniu (2010) and Mulongo (2012)

in their studies on challenges to implementation of strategic plan.

Similar to the assertions by Sine, Mitsuhashi and Kirsch (2006), the study established that organisational structure to a great extent impacts the organizations' ability to achieve coordination during strategic plan implementation process and also explain how independent actions can be centrally coordinated during strategic plan implementation process. Also, it was determined that organisational structure very greatly impacts delineation of formal communication channels during strategic plan implementation process. However, there were no clear findings on the impact that organisational structure has on reporting relationships during strategic plan implementation process. The results were also not conclusive as to whether the currently adopted organisational structure ease the process of strategic plan implementation, the organizations' structures create an enabling environment in which all actions of employees are undertaken during the strategic plan implementation process and if the adopted organisation structure allows for partner collaboration in the implementation process. It was however also clear that the currently adopted organisational structure facilitates communication during strategy implementation in their organisations, an argument that is in line with the findings by Neis et al. (2015) who asserted that organisational structure influence communication during strategic plan implementation.

Contrary to the assertions by Robbins, Judge and Campbell (2010), the findings of the study did not reach a clear conclusion on whether the organisations consider their culture as one of the key factors in strategic plan implementation and if the organizations' cultures enhance the implementation process through empowering employees and stressing on team work. The study

did also not conclusive establish if the cultures adopted by the corporations are not flexible making the implementation process slow and costly and if they are also strong hence resulting to commitment among employees towards the process of strategic plan implementation as they provide assistance in implementation. It was clear that failures of strategies in the organisations can be attributed to neglect of aspects of the type of culture adopted by the corporations and that the adopted cultures allow the implementation process to be conducted within the organisation' mission and vision.

The results depict that public and private partners, executive leadership and board members are to a very great extent engaged by the corporations in the process of strategic plan implementation while the corporation staff are to a great extent engaged. On the other hand, the organisations do not engage volunteers in the same process while the results were not conclusive to what extent the organisations engages community members and advocacy groups in the process of strategic plan implementation. The findings further depict that the organisations consider the importance of identifying and involving key stakeholders in the implementation process and treat their external and internal stakeholders in the process of implementation with equal importance. The organisations also specify roles to be played by their stake holders during the implementation process and that internal stakeholders in the organisation play more roles than the external stakeholders during implementation process.

However, findings were not clear as to whether the corporation success in implementing a strategy can be attributed to them developing real conversation with their external and internal stakeholders. Other challenges in relation to stakeholder engagement include a lack of clear and well detailed communication of the tasks to the various

stakeholders, a non-supportive political environment to the corporations' strategy implementation plans, resistance of strategy by the employees due to fear of change, inefficient tapping of employee skills and abilities and under engaging key stakeholder. These challenges are in line with an assertion by Hughes and Demetrious (2006) and Alsuridi (2012).

In trying to deal with the strategic plan implementation challenges the results depict that the corporations manage staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management, organize internal training of staff through workshops and seminars to change organisational culture, sponsor employees to further their studies in related fields to enhance their skills and enhance organisational structure to suit the strategies. The findings were however not clear if the respond to strategic plan implementation challenges by allocating enough resources for each project, improving top management commitment to strategy implementation and managements adopting a top down and horizontal communication with other staff. On the other hand, it was established that the corporations do not ensure timely distribution of resources, recruit more staff to the organisation when there is need and change the organizations' culture so as to deal with strategy implementation challenges. Generally, the findings of the study depict that each of the analysed independent variables; organisational leadership, organisational structure, organisational culture and stakeholder engagement positively correlate with strategic plan implementation. The relationships were further determined as being statistically significant.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It was evident that leadership is a key determinant in the process of strategic plan implementation. In order to ensure a successful strategic plan implementation process, the organizations' leaders

usually deal with resistance and motivate the lower level managers in adopting the strategy. Challenges that impact strategic plan implementation process which relate to organisational leadership include a lack of unique and creative leadership skills, no clear duty allocation, insufficient allocation of resources towards the implementation process, lack of well-established leadership structure, poor ordination of the implementation process, perceived lack of commitment from other leaders and embezzlement of financial resources allocated to the implementation process. The study established that organisational structure to a great extent impacts the organizations' ability to achieve coordination during strategic plan implementation process and also explain how independent actions can be centrally coordinated during strategic plan implementation process. It was clear that failures of strategies in the organisations can be attributed to neglect of aspects of the type of culture adopted by the corporations.

Determinants, in form of challenges, relating to stakeholder engagement include a lack of clean and well detailed communication of the tasks to the various stakeholders, a non-supportive political environment to the corporations' strategy implementation plans, resistance of strategy by the employees due to fear of change, inefficient tapping of employee skills and abilities and under engaging key stakeholder. In trying to deal with the strategic plan implementation challenges the results depict that the corporations manage staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management, organize internal training of staff through workshops and seminars to change organisational culture, sponsor employees to further their studies in related fields to enhance their skills and enhance organisational structure to suit the strategies. Generally, the findings of the study depict that each of the analysed independent variables; organisational leadership, organisational structure,

organisational culture and stakeholder engagement positively correlate with strategic plan implementation. The relationships were further determined as being statistically significant.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

The researcher made a number of conclusions from the findings of the study. First, the researcher concluded that organisational leadership greatly impacts strategic plan implementation such that an improvement in a corporation's leadership results to a great success in the strategic plan implementation process. A number of leadership challenges whoever exist within the state corporations that impact the strategic plan implementation process. To achieve a greater success in the process, the corporations also need to deal with resistance from the lower level managers. The state corporations however enjoy leadership support and the leaders within these organisations bear the capability and willingness to carry out the difficult decisions agreed upon in the strategic plan implementation.

The study also concluded that organisational structure influences strategic plan implementation. A well-established organisational structure facilitates the corporations in addressing a number of strategy implementation challenges including enhancing the corporations' ability to achieve coordination during the implementation process, allowing for central coordination of activity, delineation of formal communication channels and allowing for teamwork among various individuals and groups during implementation.

In relation to organisational culture, the study concluded organisational culture greatly impacts success in strategic plan implementation process. Within the corporations, the adopted cultures allow the implementation process to be conducted within the organisation' mission and vision. However, failures of strategies in the organisations can be

attributed to neglect of aspects of the type of culture adopted by the corporations and that.

It was also concluded that enhanced stakeholder engagement positively impacts strategic plan implementation process. The corporations consider the importance of identifying and involving key stakeholders in the implementation process and treat their external and internal stakeholders in the process of implementation with equal importance. The organisations also specify roles to be played by their stake holders during the implementation process. However, the corporations face a number of challenges relating to stakeholder engagement and strategic plan implementation.

### **Recommendations of the Study**

The researcher set a number of recommendations in line with the findings. First, the study recommends that the organisations should establish effective leadership structures and also involve their leadership so as to attain success in the process of strategic plan implementation. In addition, the managers' experience and education should be well considered by the organisations during placement since they impact the success of the implementation process. In addition, clear allocation of duties among the various players and allocation of sufficient resources should also be taken into consideration by the organisations during the implementation process.

In relation to organisational culture, the study recommends that the corporations need to consider their culture as one of the key factors in strategic plan implementation. The adopted cultures should however be flexible and enhance the implementation process through empowering employees and stressing on team work. The researcher recommends that effective organisational structures should be established within the corporations as they allow for teamwork among various individuals and groups and enhance



coordination and communication during strategic plan implementation process. It is also recommended in the study the corporations should keenly identify and involve key stakeholders such as Public and private sectors partners, employees, advocacy groups, board members and executive leaders, in the implementation process and treat their external and internal stakeholders with equal importance. In addition, the roles of the various stakeholders in the implementation process should also be specified well communicated.

The researcher further recommends that the corporations should consider the impact of the political environment in the implementation process. In order to deal with the strategic plan implementation challenges the study recommend that the corporations needs to manage staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management, organize internal training of staff through workshops and seminars, sponsor employees to further their studies in related fields

so as to enhance their skills and recruiting more staff to the organisation when there is need.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study sought to analyze the determinants influencing strategic plan implementation in selected state corporations in Kenya. Similar studies can be carried out that assess other variables such as government and industrial policies, guidelines and regulations; political infringement; corruption and aspects relating to Human Resource Management. Besides, the current research was restricted to five state corporations; NHIF, KTDA, K.U, New KCC and NBK, therefore additional studies can be conducted on the state corporations so as to enhance the knowledge and understanding on challenges of strategic plan implementation in state corporations. Other studies can also be carried out in relation to other sectors such as the Non-Governmental and the private sectors while assessing variables measured in this study so as to develop a general view of the strategic plan implementation.

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