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Determinants of Successful Strategic Change Implementation in the County Government of Kakamega, Kenya

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Abstract: **This study sought to determine the influence of organizational factors on strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The specific objectives were to determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. This study was anchored to Transformational Leadership Theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was 548 top level and middle level managers. Sampling frame consisted of Agriculture, Public Service, Social Services, Education, Health Services, ICT, Lands & Housing, Trade & Industrialization, Roads, Public Works & Energy, Finance and Economic Planning. Purposive and stratified sampling techniques were chosen and used to select the sample population of 232 respondents according to Yamane recommendation. Structured questionnaire pre tested for validity and reliability was the main primary data collection tool. The primary data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS as the analysis tool. The correlation findings indicated that there existed a significant relationship between transformational leadership and strategic change implementation (P=0.418, P=0.000). Simple linear regression analysis revealed that transformational leadership accounted up to 17.4% variation in strategic change implementation (R^2=0.174). This implies that enhancement of transformational leadership will result to significant increase in strategic change implementation. The study concluded that transformational leadership has a significant influence on strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The study recommended that managers should go beyond self-interest for the good of the group during strategic change implementation.**

Keywords: **Transformational Leadership, Strategic Change Implementation, County Government, Organizational Factors, Kakamega.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Changes in an organization's environment, such as new technological trends or customer needs, demand the renewal of a firm's strategies and processes. Lichtenthaler (2016) observed that in managing the required internal changes, companies have to establish special units, often called change management functions. Brandi and Elkajaer (2011) concluded that change becomes the norm for vital and growing organizations. They further noted that organizations are continuously adopting numerous methods to initiate change for the betterment of organizational outcomes. According to Antonio and Varkey (2010) the inevitability of change promises that as soon as one becomes familiar with something, it is already time to enhance it. To survive in the market place, an effective new technique must be adopted through practicing the concept of change and creating a dynamic organization that is willing and flexible to apply the necessary changes (Abdul, Alyaa & Fatima, 2013). Kuruvilla and Ranganathan (2010) noted that the business world is changing at an ever-increasing pace due to globalization, the revolution in information and communication technologies, and increasing importance of financial markets which have intensified competition in the current business environment. These reasons among others indicate that change is inevitable.

Wang and Wang (2017) considered strategic change as the change in corporate decisions regarding products and markets in response to dramatic environmental shifts. Batra (2016) notes that bringing strategic change is far more difficult to accomplish in large established firms as compared to new ventures. Strategic change involves the constituting of a new reality in the minds of organizational members (Jaynes, 2015). In their study, Tarus and Aime (2014) found out that strategic change is an important phenomenon as it represents the means through which organizations maintains co-alignment with shifting competitive, technological, and social environments which pose threats to their continued survival and effectiveness.

Stensaker, Frolich, Huisman, Waagene, Scordata and Botas (2014) perceived leadership as the most important factor in strategic change implementation, outweighing communication, cooperation, emphasis on decision-making procedures, and a supportive financial climate. According to Imran et al. (2016), the process of change is far from easy, and implementing it successfully makes considerable demands on the managers involved. Jaynes (2015) noted that managers of strategic change programs can influence practices by providing positions that offer employees to a way of thinking, talking, and acting. Tarus and Aime (2014) perspective suggests that the board of directors plays three interrelated roles, which is, monitoring role, linking the firm to its external environment, and shaping the strategic direction of the firm and review progress in its implementation. Dominguez et al. (2015) stated that reorganization of the management team is necessary in stimulating strategic reorientation because it always precedes the other components of strategic change. This does not necessarily mean changing the members, but rather refers to a reshuffle of responsibilities, involving (perhaps) the same people.

Article 1(3) and (4) of the Constitution of Kenya (CoK), (2010) establishes two levels of government; the national and county levels of government. As a result 47 county governments and the Senate were established following the March 4, 2013, General Election as part of the implementation of devolution. Devolution was one of the major issues at the formation of the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC) between 2000 and 2004 which considered people's participation through the devolution of power, respect for ethnic and regional diversity and communal rights including the right of communities to organize and participate in cultural activities and the expression of their identities. The devolved governments were expected to spur economic growth, political stability, and social advancement in line with Vision 2030 (Murithi, Njeru, Chege, Muluvi, Odhiambo, & Otieno, 2013). The devolved system called for creation of new governance structures considered central to the new devolved governance framework including governors, county women representatives, county ward representatives, and senators (Laibuta, 2013).

Success of change depends on people's willingness to let go their current reality, have an ending got through a confused period, then a new beginning, however, no matter how good an idea is, it will always have early adopters, average adopters and laggards (Alande, 2013). Effective implementation of devolution as stipulated in the CoK, 2010 should transform Kenya and aid achievement of Kenya Vision 2030. Devolution, however, has experienced a share of challenges during its implementation such as late disbursement of funds from the National Government, a contravention of section 17(6) of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2012. This has adversely affected the operations and development agenda because of delayed transfer of funds. Successful implementation of devolution requires a comprehensive and well-coordinated government strategy based on consultation and cooperation between the various arms and departments of government. The County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) as provided for in the PFMA, outlines the macroeconomic performance of the county which informs and guides the formulation of budget, tax and revenue policies. The main result of the CFSP process is an estimate of resources that will be available to finance county recurrent and capital expenditures in a given financial year.

Since the devolution of the governance structure; the country has undergone various changes. Organizational transformation impacts on the performance of an organization during the period of rethinking and uncertainty that precedes radical organizational transformation. Irmer, Jimmieson, Prashait and Restubog (2011) observed that organizations may change strategy and processes, undergo mergers and acquisitions, restructure or downsize in the quest for a competitive edge in a global market place. The change in the structure and leadership has greatly affected the performance of the county socially, financially and economically. The County Government of Kakamega has had its fair share of challenges during the implementation of the new form of governance which required a change of strategy. For instance there was a sharp decline in the local revenue collection during the first three quarters of the FY 2013/14. Consequently in the FY 2014/15, the total County revenue collection from local sources stood at Kshs. 516.89 Million a figure far much lower of the budgeted target of Kshs. 903.5 Million (Annual County Governments Budget Implementation Review Report (ACGBIRR), 2015). This challenge in revenue collection could probably be attributed to new leadership, emerging culture in the County, communication and lack of skills and competencies among staff for the accomplishment of tasks required under devolution. Revenue being one of the most important aspect for strategy implementation and service delivery in Kakamega County, it is necessary to relook at the factors that influence implementation of strategy/strategies as a whole during change process among County Governments so as to avert devolution failure.

A. Statement of The Problem

Devolution represents a strategic change in the form of governance in Kenya (CoK, 2010). Since assuming office in 2013, the performance of Kakamega County Government compared to the defunct Local Authority has experienced its fair share of challenges in terms of provision of leadership, communication of new strategies, and lack of a vision and mission statement at inception. Among issues observed during the transition period is the decline in revenue collection as per (ACGBIRR, 2015) which could be attributed to decline in employee performance and resistance to the strategic change. Such a situation calls for appropriate leadership, proper communication, induction of employees to the change, and ensuring that the new organizational values, beliefs and norms are provided for in its vision and mission. Though political leadership was in place in Kakamega County, other dimensions of transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2004) at inception were missing, the vision and mission had not been developed, no clear communication framework and some employees lacking the necessary competencies despite the Transition Authority (TA) having been in place.

Although Stensacker et al. (2014) suggested that leadership was the most important factor during strategic change implementation as compared to other factors; it cannot be the only factor influencing strategic change in the County Government of Kakamega as other factors including communication, culture and staff training also play an important role during strategic change process. The late disbursement of funds to Counties which does not conform to provisions of section 17(6) of the PFM Act worsens the situation. The above mentioned factors have not been researched comprehensively among County Governments in Kenya, and therefore this study sought to find out the influence of these factors on strategic change implementation among County Governments in Kenya- context of County Government of Kakamega and fill this research gap

B. Objective and Research Hypothesis

The specific objective of the study was to determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. This objective was achieved by testing the study null hypothesis that posited H_{01}**:** There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Transformational Leadership Theory:

Transformational leadership theory was introduced by leadership expert McGregor Burns (1978) by distinguishing between ordinary (transactional) leaders, who exchanged tangible rewards for the work and loyalty of followers, and on the other hand extraordinary (transformational) leaders who engaged with followers, focused on higher order intrinsic needs, and raised consciousness about the importance of specific outcomes and new ways in which those outcomes can be achieved (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers. Transformational leaders build subordinates’ respect and trust by behaving in a fair manner and doing what is right rather than what is expedient; by increasing followers’, awareness of the mission or vision toward which they are working and raising followers’ expectations of what they can achieve, hence motivating them to pursue the group goals; by encouraging their followers to look at old problems from new and differing perspectives, giving rise to followers’ creative thinking and innovation; and, lastly by granting individualized attention to their followers, considering their needs and abilities, playing an especially important role in the followers’ growth and development (Robbins & Judge, 2013). This theory is in line with the objective linking transformational leadership and strategic change implementation.

B. Transformational Leadership and Strategic Change Implementation:

Johnson, Whittington and Scholes (2011) state that leadership is the process of influencing an organization in its efforts towards achieving an aim or goal. Additionally the authors state that leadership of change needs to happen at different levels of an organization. On the other hand, Baesu and Bejinaru (2013) aver that transformational leadership entails a leader empowering subordinates to assume the organization's vision that reflects into growth of productivity, employees' motivation, and work satisfaction and of individual performance. According to Avolio and Bass (2004), transformational leadership consists of four dimensions including: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. Idealized influence is exhibited when followers respect and trust their leaders and want to be like them. Inspirational motivation is when a leader acts in a way that causes people around them to be motivated to work better. Individualized consideration is shown when a leader gives attention to each employee and is concerned about their individual needs whereas intellectual stimulation is demonstrated when a leader asks questions to try and increase productivity and innovation (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transformational leadership is said to influence employees' commitment to change through the choice of either planned (top-down) approaches, such as managerial vision statements relayed down to employees, or emergent (bottom-up) approaches, such as organizational change initiatives conceived and led by the employees most impacted. In the transformational framework, emergent change approaches are considered more effective because they include the desired communication to, and participation with, employees (Van der Voet, Kuipers & Groeneveld, 2016).

Baesu and Bejinaru (2013) postulate that leader's effectiveness resides in the capability to manage employee resistance and mold their behavior towards the implementation of successful changes. Radical changes are much more difficult to be accepted and resistance is stronger; that is why true leadership competencies are necessary (Baesu & Bejinaru, 2013). Knowledge about leadership competencies, leaders' strengths and weaknesses, and change behaviors will lead to identifying pragmatic strategies to be applied through the change process. This knowledge together with styles of leadership adopted play a key role in determining the leadership quality during strategic change implementation. Accordingly, the authors affirm that it is possible that more leaders apply certain leadership styles in order to ensure the optimal match between style, skill, and capabilities and what is required by each situation. Johnson et al. (2011) in their point of view, different contexts require different leadership styles.

Brenes, Mena and Molina (2007) suggest that implementation of a strategy also means empowering those responsible for implementing various strategic actions. This is to imply that personnel implementing strategic change need to gain power and influence such as the ability to allocate resources and communicate effectively. In addition to a reconfiguration of power structures (Johnson et al, 2011), current literature also proposes to gain support from influential personnel and form coalitions. Results from the study of Hrebiniak (2006) also uphold that the ability to form coalitions and gain the support of influential people in the organization will help immensely with the execution of formulated plans. In addition to gaining support from influential people, it is also vital to remove resistance to strategy implementation as much as possible. Thus managers should choose a strategy that does not offend personal interests of employees and does not conflict with power structure within the organization (Hrebiniak, 2006).

Stensacker et al. (2014) carried out a study on factors affecting strategic change in higher education. They found out that strategic changes were highly dependent on leadership, decision making procedures, communication and evaluation. Leadership was rated as an extremely important factor during strategic change followed by communication, cooperation with academics, emphasis on decision-making procedures, and finally a supportive financial climate. Agili and Okibo (2015) also conducted a study on factors influencing implementation of change in selected Public universities in Kenya. Independent variables included; leadership and culture while implementation of change was the dependent variable. In their findings, majority of employees, top management and other stakeholders in public universities considered leadership to have a very great influence on change implementation process. Among the different leadership styles investigated, democratic leadership had a positive impact on change implementation process. Kihara et al. (2016) in their studied the relationship between leadership styles in Strategy Implementation and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Thika. Leadership styles were the independent variable with transformational, transactional and passive avoidant styles as indicators while performance was the dependent variable. They concluded that manufacturing firms interested in enhancing their performance should endeavor to practice superior leadership styles starting with transactional leadership and progressively changing to transformational leadership style in the entire process of strategy implementation in their firms.

C. Strategic Change Implementation

Mbaka and Mugambi (2014) in their review of literature and expert opinions on factors affecting successful strategy implementation identified various factors which affect strategy implementation. These factors include: strategy formulation process, relationship among different units/departments and different strategy levels, executors, communication, implementing tactics, consensus, commitment, organization structure, employees and inadequate resources. To ensure successful implementation of strategies they recommended: involvement of employees during the strategy implementation process, engaging employees through frequent updates, providing adequate resources, aligning of organization structure with the new strategy, proper structures, clear and well developed strategies, motivation, support by top level management, and technological infrastructure. Pearson and Robinson (2007) further argue that strategic change implementation success is directly linked to the unique characteristics, orientation and actions of the chief executive officer. Chepkemoi and Makori (2015) ascertained that leadership and governance had the strongest positive influence on effective strategic change management. In addition, resources allocation and implementation strategy were found to be positively correlated whereas organization culture had a negative association to effective strategic change management.

According to Markiewicz (2011) a strategic implementation process may be deemed to fail because of the following barriers: unrealizable mission and strategy; team goals which are not connected to strategy; mechanisms of resource allocation being in disconnect with the strategy and feedback being of operative (tactical) rather than of strategic character. The author further states that structures and processes existing in the organization strengthen previous ways of action and therefore implementation of the new strategy requires changes both in static aspect (structure) and dynamic aspect (processes). Strategy implementation process determines perspectives of the organization (which include strategy sustainability) and allows to state whether correct decisions were taken by selection of the strategy (Markiewicz, 2011). This strategy sustainability is determined by special character of operations of the organization, financial condition, character of selected strategy (development or restriction), the range of changes in comparison to previous strategy, and the character of intangible resources of the organization.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. In this study the target population of 548 was drawn from top and middle level management across ten (10) ministries in the County Government of Kakamega. Sampling frame consisted of county ministries of Agriculture, Public Service, Social Services, Education, Health Services, ICT, Lands & Housing, Trade & Industrialization, Roads, Public Works & Energy, Finance and Economic Planning. The study sampled 232 respondents as recommended by Yamane (1967). Primary data was collected using structured five point Likert Scale Questionnaires consisting of closed ended questions. Content validity was used as a measure of the degree to which the data collected using the questionnaire represents the objective of the study. The data gathered from the pilot test was subjected to Cronbach's alpha a coefficient of reliability that gave an alpha value of 0.815 which was acceptable in social sciences. Quantitative data obtained was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used included means, frequency and standard deviation. Inferential statistics involved Pearson correlation while linear simple regression was used to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables with significance level of 0.05 (95.0% confidence level).

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics was conducted for transformational leadership and Strategic Change Implementation. The presentation is as follows;

Transformational Leadership:

The sampled respondents were presented with 18 statements on transformational leadership in relation to strategic change management. The study sought to find out their level of agreement from Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4 and Strongly Agree-5. The results are as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Descriptive Results for Transformational Leadership

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SDV
1	Managers go beyond self-interest for the good of the group during strategic change implementation	10.71% (21)	7.65% (15)	28.06% (55)	42.35% (83)	11.22% (22)	3.36	1.121
2	Managers display a sense of power and confidence during strategy implementation	7.65% (15)	6.12% (12)	9.18% (18)	47.96% (94)	29.08% (57)	3.85	1.140
3	Managers make personal sacrifices for others benefit during strategic change implementation	10.71% (21)	4.59% (9)	37.76% (74)	36.22% (71)	10.71% (21)	3.32	1.082

4	Managers talk enthusiastically about what needs to be Done during strategic change implementation	1.53% (3)	3.06% (6)	16.33% (32)	52.55% (103)	26.53% (52)	3.99	.832
5	Managers express confidence that goals will be achieved after strategy implementation	1.53% (3)	3.06% (6)	8.16% (16)	44.39% (87)	42.86% (84)	4.24	.846
6	Managers talk optimally about the future	1.53% (3)	7.65% (15)	21.43% (42)	55.1% (108)	14.29% (28)	3.73	.855
7	Managers get to look at problems from many different angles during strategy implementation	4.59% (9)	3.06% (6)	27.04% (53)	44.9% (88)	20.41% (40)	3.73	.972
8	Managers seek differing perspectives when solving Problems during strategic change implementation	6.12% (12)	3.06% (6)	31.63% (62)	38.78% (76)	20.41% (40)	3.64	1.035
9	Managers allow some independence during strategy implementation	6.12% (12)	16.84% (33)	26.02% (51)	43.37% (85)	7.65% (15)	3.30	1.035
10	Managers treat others as individuals rather than as members of a group during strategic change implementation	7.65% (15)	13.78% (27)	43.37% (85)	29.08% (57)	6.12% (12)	3.12	.985
11	Managers help others to develop their strengths during strategy implementation	1.53% (3)	1.53% (3)	44.39% (87)	40.82% (80)	11.73% (23)	3.60	.775
12	Managers are empathetic and supportive	1.53% (3)	9.18% (18)	24.49% (48)	48.98% (96)	15.82% (31)	3.68	.901
13	Managers are able to use their personal influence in effecting strategic change implementation	7.65% (15)	7.65% (15)	13.78% (27)	54.59% (107)	16.33% (32)	3.64	1.084
14	Managers have the expertise power to aid strategic change	6.12% (12)	9.18% (18)	28.06% (55)	49.49% (97)	7.14% (14)	3.42	.971
15	Managers use coercive power to enhance effectiveness of strategic change during execution of their duties	7.65% (15)	14.8% (29)	26.02% (51)	44.9% (88)	6.63% (13)	3.28	1.047
16	Executive County Committee Members and Chief Officers work is determined by County politics	15.82% (31)	13.78% (27)	15.82% (31)	29.08% (57)	25.51% (50)	3.35	1.404
17	Employment of senior and middle level managers is politically influenced	8.16% (16)	19.39% (38)	20.41% (40)	31.63% (62)	20.41% (40)	3.37	1.235
18	Allocation of resources to County projects is determined by politics	14.29% (28)	8.67% (17)	34.18% (67)	26.53% (52)	16.33% (32)	3.22	1.239
	Overall Mean						**3.55**	**1.031**

From Table 4.3, 53.57% (105) of the sampled respondents agreed that managers go beyond self-interest for the good of the group during strategic change implementation with a mean of 3.36 and standard deviation of 1.121. This implies that there is large deviation from the mean. Brinkschroder (2014) found out that if middle managers believe that their self-interest is being compromised they are likely to redirect, delay or totally sabotage the implementation of strategic change. The results also revealed that 77.04% (151) of the respondents agreed that managers display a sense of power and confidence during strategy implementation with a mean of 3.85 and standard deviation of 1.14. According to Crittenden and Crittenden (2008), manager needs to find a balance between powerful charismatic leadership and sufficient autonomy for the employees during strategy implementation.

With a mean of 3.32, 46.93% (92) of the respondents agreed that managers make personal sacrifices for others benefit during strategic change implementation. Katarina, Bogdan and Metka (2010) indicated that when leaders are prepared to make personal sacrifices for followers or the company in general for the sake of acting in accordance with their values, the employees are more willing to do the same during implementation of strategic change plan. The results further revealed that 79.08% (155) of the respondents agreed that managers talk enthusiastically about what needs to be done during strategic change implementation. This conforms to Pieterse, Caniëls and Homan (2012) who indicated that to reduce resistance to change, managers ought to actively engage other employees and explaining to them their contribution in strategic change implementation.

Similarly, 87.25% (171) of the sampled respondents agreed that managers express confidence that goals will be achieved after strategy implementation. D'Ortenzio (2012) noted that one of the causes of resistance by employees in organizations worthy of mention is lack of confidence in management during strategic change implementation. However, Livingstone, White, Nelson and Tabak (2002) concluded that employee confidence in management was not related to their willingness to accept change. More than half of the respondents 69.39% (136) agreed that managers' talk optimally about the future. The results further revealed that managers get to look at problems from many different angles during strategy implementation as indicated by 65.31% (128). According to Rajasekar (2014), effective leadership should address strategy implementation issue from a different perspective. The study suggested that in the absence of effective leadership, conflicting priorities will result in poor coordination because employees will suspect that top management prefers to avoid potentially threatening and embarrassing circumstances.

The results also revealed that 59.19% (116) of the sampled respondents agreed that managers seek differing perspectives when solving problems during strategic change implementation. Dinwoodie, Pasmore, Quinn and Rabin (2015) indicated that the role of mid- and senior-level leaders in making change happen is critical and they should therefore, look for different ways to make sure that effective implementation of strategic plan. In regard to managers allow some independence during strategy implementation, 51.02% (100) of the sampled respondents agreed with this statement. Mutunga (2017) indicated that in Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), management allow independence in the strategy implementation unlike in government organizations where the implementation emanates from the headquarters.

On the hand, respondents as shown by 43.37% (85) were neutral about managers treat others as individuals rather than as members of a group during strategic change. Dillon and Bourke (2016) indicated that leaders need to personalize individuals that is, understanding and valuing the uniqueness of individual while also accepting them as members of the group. It was also revealed from the findings that 44.39% (87) of the respondents were neutral that managers help others to develop their strengths during strategy implementation. In regard to empathetic and supportive, 64.88% (127) of the respondents agreed that managers are empathetic and supportive with a mean of 3.68 and standard deviation of .901. Leadership and specifically strategic leadership have been identified as one of the key drivers of effective strategy implementation. Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2014) indicated that leadership's role is all important because it offers considerate and supportive role which is decisive in shaping the character of the implementation and moving the process along.

Managers are able to use their personal influence in effecting strategic change implementation as shown by 60.92% (139) of the respondents who agreed with a mean of 3.64 and standard deviation of 1.084. Janićijević (2012) indicated that change strategy is based on using people's personal relations in order to influence them to implement changes. Therefore it is not information or power that forces people to accept a change of course of action but personal relations between people. The results further revealed that 56.63% (101) of the sampled respondents agreed that managers have the expertise power to aid strategic change. Similarly, 51.53% (101) of the respondents agreed that managers use coercive power to enhance effectiveness of strategic change during execution of their duties. Mapetere, Mavhiki, Nyamwanza, Sikomwe and Mhonde (2012) found that in Zimbabwe's state owned enterprises, managers used forced to ensure that government strategies are implemented accordingly.

The results further revealed 54.59% (107) agreed that executive County Committee Members and Chief Officers work is determined by County politics with a mean of 3.35 and standard deviation of 1.404. Similarly, 52.04% (102) agreed that employment of senior and middle level managers is politically influenced with a mean of 3.37 and standard deviation of 1.235. This agrees with Aketch, Aila and Ombok (2017) who found out in western Kenya counties, employee procurement of senior officers is highly influenced politically. Lastly, few respondents 42.86% (84) agreed that allocation of resources to County projects is determined by politics. Sikudi and Otieno (2017) revealed that political intervention affects the rate of implementation of County development projects in Kilifi County. The overall mean of 3.55 and standard deviation 1.031 implies that there is great deviation from the mean.

Strategic Change Implementation:

The study sought to find strategic change management which was used as dependent variable in this study. The sampled respondents were presented with 12 statements so that their level of agreement from Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4 and Strongly Agree-5 is determined. The pertinent results are shown in Table 2

Table 2: Descriptive Results for Strategic Change Implementation

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SDV
1	All stakeholders are taken into consideration before implementing strategic change	9.18% (18)	10.71% (21)	30.61% (60)	33.67% (66)	15.82% (31)	3.36	1.14
2	Employees are involved in arriving at strategies to be implemented	9.18% (18)	20.41% (40)	26.53% (52)	33.16% (65)	10.71% (21)	3.16	1.14
3	Priority projects are identified through public participation	3.06% (6)	9.18% (18)	6.63% (13)	44.9% (88)	36.22% (71)	4.02	1.03
4	Budget estimates are prepared in time to facilitate devolution programs	3.06% (6)	6.12% (12)	12.76% (25)	49.49% (97)	28.57% (56)	3.94	.967
5	The cost of the projects does not go beyond the budgeted cost	4.59%(9)	23.98% (47)	12.24% (24)	41.84% (82)	17.35% (34)	3.43	1.16
6	The scope of the works do not change during project implementation	9.18% (18)	31.63% (62)	21.94% \(43)	26.53% (52)	10.71% (21)	2.98	1.17
7	Funds are disbursed on time from the National Government	44.39% (87)	22.45% (44)	8.16% (16)	14.29% (28)	10.71% (21)	2.24	1.41
8	Success has been achieved during the devolution process	1.53% (3)	4.59% (9)	32.14% (63)	40.31% (79)	21.43% (42)	3.76	0.89
9	Projects undertaken are completed on schedule	11.22% (22)	24.49% (48)	32.14% (63)	24.49% (48)	7.65% (15)	2.93	1.11
10	Projects undertaken meet customer satisfaction	4.59% (9)	10.71% (21)	42.35% (83)	29.59% (58)	12.76% (25)	3.35	.989
11	Revenue collected from the County is at least 10% of the estimated County budget	12.24% (24)	31.12% (61)	26.53% (52)	25.51% (50)	4.59% (9)	2.79	1.09
12	Kakamega County Government upholds provisions of procurement laws and other key laws during strategic change implementation	1.53% (3)	3.06% (6)	35.71% (70)	43.37% (85)	16.33% (32)	3.70	.833
	Overall mean						**3.31**	**1.07**

From the results in Table 4.7, 49.49% (97) of the sampled respondents agreed that all stakeholders are taken into consideration before implementing strategic change with a mean of 3.36 and standard deviation of 1.149. This implies that there great deviation from mean. With a mean of 3.16 and standard deviation of 1.146, 43.87% (87) of the respondents agreed that employees are involved in arriving at strategies to be implemented. Mangala (2015) found that early involvement of employees in the strategy process helps employees in understanding goals, style, and cultural norms and also prevents them from being taken by surprise, putting all employees at the same platform, helping the employees to own the process thus ensuring better results. Majority of the respondents confirmed that priority projects are identified through public participation of which 81.12% (159) agreed with a mean of 4.02 and standard deviation of 1.038. The results further revealed that 78.06% (153) of the sampled respondents agreed that budget estimates are prepared in time to facilitate devolution programs with a mean of 3.94 and standard deviation of 0.967. Mulongo (2012) found out that, stakeholders play a central role in setting up priorities and objectives of the company change initiatives in order to ensure relevance and appropriateness.

In regard to project costs, 59.19% (116) of the respondents agreed that the cost of the projects does not go beyond the budgeted cost. However, in Meru County, Boru (2016) indicated that most county projects are delay due to cost overrun due to inflation and mismanagement of funds. On the other hand, less than half of the respondents confirmed that the scope of works does not change during project implementation as indicated by a mean of 2.98 and standard deviation of 1.177. The respondents disagreed that funds are disbursed on time from the National Government as indicated by a mean of 2.24 and as indicated by 25% (49) of the respondents who agreed with funds timely disbursement. This is in agreement with KIPPRA (2018) who indicated to delays in release of funds by the National government has resulted to low rates of capital consumptions affected absorption rates for public works, transport and housing and industrial and enterprise development functions over the period under review. The results further revealed that 61.74% (121) agreed that success has been achieved during the devolution process with a mean of 3.76 and standard deviation of 0.89. Kubai (2015) indicated that in Meru County, majority of resident felt that local resources has not been adequately mobilized to ensure successful implementation of the devolution agenda.

The results further revealed that 32.14% (63) agreed that projects undertaken are completed on schedule with 2.93 and standard deviation of 1.11. Similarly, 42.35% (83) agreed that projects undertaken meet customer satisfaction with a mean of 3.35 and standard deviation of 0.989. Kanda, Muchelule and Mamadi (2016) indicated that most county projects face problems of completion through unmet client satisfaction requirements, cost escalations beyond the budgetary limits and late delivery times. This indicates that various county projects face enormous challenges of implementation. Lastly, 59.7% (117) agreed that Kakamega County Government upholds provisions of procurement laws and other key laws during strategic change implementation with a mean of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.833. In Machakos County, Mbae (2014) concluded that there are a number of challenges faced by the county government in the implement of procurement laws in the county which affected county integrated strategic plan. The overall mean was 3.31 and standard deviation of 1.082 which shows that there is some deviation from the mean.

B. Inferential Statistics

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The objective sought to test the null hypothesis: **H_{01}:** There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The criteria for this analysis was $P<0.05$ and $\beta \neq 0$. The results are as follows.

Correlation between Transformational Leadership and Strategic Change Implementation:

Pearson correlation was used to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The correlation strengths were interpreted using Cohen (1988) decision rules where r values from 0.1 to 0.3 indicate weak correlation, 0.31 to 0.5 indicate moderate correlation strength and greater than 0.5 indicate a strong correlation between the variables. The results are as shown in **Table 3**

Table 3: Correlation between Transformational Leadership and Strategic Change Implementation

Pearson Correlation	**Transformational Leadership**
Correlation Coefficient	.418**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N	196

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

The study established a coefficient of correlation (r) as 0.418**, $P<0.01$ at 99.0% confidence level. This shows that there exist a significant moderate positive relationship between transformational leadership and strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. This implies that strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega increases with an increase in transformational leadership.

Regression Results of Transformational Leadership and Strategic Change Implementation:

Regression analysis was used to tell the amount of variance accounted for by one variable in predicting another variable. Regression analysis was conducted to find the proportion in the dependent variable (Strategic change implementation) which can be predicted from the independent variable (transformational leadership) **Table 4** shows the analysis results.

Table 4: Regression Results of Transformational Leadership and Strategic Change Implementation

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.418[a]	.174	.170	.690
a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational leadership				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.506	1	19.506	40.996	.000[b]
	Residual	92.305	194	.476		
	Total	111.811	195			
a. Dependent Variable: Strategic change implementation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational leadership						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.433	.155		15.727	.000
	TL	.345	.054	.418	6.403	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Strategic change implementation						

The results revealed a coefficient of determination (r^2) of 0.174 implying that transformational leadership can explain up to 17.4 % of the variance in strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The adjusted r square attempts to produce a more honest value to estimate r square for the population. The F test gave a value of (1, 195) = 40.996, $P<0.01$, which supports the goodness of fit of the model in explaining the variation in the dependent variable. It also means that transformational leadership is a useful predictor of strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The unstandardized regression coefficient (β) value of transformational leadership was 0.345 and significance level of $p<.001$. This indicated that a unit change in transformational leadership would result to change in strategic change implementation by 0.345 significantly.

The null research hypothesis posited H_{01}: There is no significant influence of the transformational leadership on strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega, was rejected. From the results, transformational leadership had significant positive effect on strategic change implementation with $P<0.01$ and it significantly accounted 17.4% variance in strategic change implementation. These findings compare favorably with Agili and Okibo (2015) who found out that majority of employees, top management and other stakeholders in public universities considered leadership to have a very great influence on change implementation process. In another study, Stensacker et al. (2014) revealed that strategic changes were highly dependent on leadership, decision making procedures, communication and evaluation. The results were also not difference from Kihara et al. (2016) who revealed that there is significant linear relationship between leadership styles and manufacturing SME performance.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study concluded that there is significant relationship between transformational leadership and strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega; hence the first null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, increase in transformational leadership would result to enhanced strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. The study concluded that transformational leadership influenced strategic change implementation in the County Government of Kakamega. Managers were found to talk enthusiastically about what needs to be done during strategic change implementation as well as they expressed confidence that goals would be achieved after strategy implementation.

The study recommended that managers should go beyond self-interest for the good of the group during strategic change implementation. The managers should also allow some independence during strategy implementation. The study also recommended that managers have the expertise power to aid strategic change. This would ensure that all stakeholders are taken into consideration before implementing strategic change.

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