

Factors Affecting Implementation of Strategic Plans by Water Service Providers under Athi Water Services Board

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to establish the factors affecting implementation of strategic plans in water Service Providers under Athi Water Services Board. The specific objectives were to determine whether communication influence implementation of strategic plans, Establish whether leadership styles influence implementation of strategic plans, Find out whether organization culture influence implementation of strategic plans and investigate whether organization resources influence implementation of strategic plans. Strategic planning is intended to help governments, communities and organizations deal with and adapt to their changing internal and external circumstances. It can help clarify and resolve the most important pressing issues they face. The target population of the study was 850 employees of water Service Providers under Athi Water Services Board. The study adopted a descriptive census design where all the 850 employees formed the sample. A sample of 90 (10.6%) employees was selected using random sampling in each category of staff. Data was collected using questionnaires. Data was presented descriptively and illustrated by use of tables. Data was sorted, coded and input into the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for production of tables, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics and inferential analysis was analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences 20 aided by Microsoft Excel. Statistical inferences using 2-way ANOVA indicated that a high reliability was achieved by the data collection instrument with Cronbach's alpha coefficients consistently returned high scores averaging 0.8. Both tests of significance using ordinary regression and correlation analysis indicated a strong significance amongst the variables as well as when combined against the dependent variable. This enabled a conclusion to be made that Communication, leadership Style, Organization Culture and Organization resources all affect the effectiveness of implementation of strategic plans. The first conclusion from study findings was that leadership style affects the effectiveness of implementation of strategic plans. The study also concluded that flow of communication within organizations had little influence on degree of effectiveness on implementation of strategic plans. The study thus concluded that organizational resources were key to the growth of an organization and must be nurtured and protected.

Keywords: Athi Water Services Board, strategic plans.

1. INTRODUCTION

Strategy implementation has attracted less attention in strategic and organizational research than strategy formulation or strategic planning. Alexander (2011) suggested several reasons for this, strategy implementation is less glamorous than strategy formulation, people overlook it because of a belief that anyone can do it, people are not exactly sure what it includes and where it begins and ends. It is long argued that well-planned strategies lead to superior performance, only when they are successfully implemented (Bingxin Li, C., & Juan Li, M. (2008). Organizations seem to have difficulties in implementing their strategies however, researchers have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation which include weak management roles in implementation, lack of communication, lacking commitment to the strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, unaligned organizational systems and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities, and uncontrollable environmental factors (Grace, 2014).

Ansoff (2009) viewed strategy in terms of market and product choices. According to his view, strategy is the “common thread” among an organization’s activities and the market. Pearce and Robinson (2007) defined strategy as the direction and scope of an organization that ideally matches the results of its changing environment and in particular its markets and customers so as to meet stakeholder expectations. According to Jauch and Glueck (2013), strategy is a unified and integrated plan that relates the strategic advantages of the firm to the challenges of the environment and that it is designed to ensure that the basic objectives of the enterprise are achieved through proper execution by the organization. Mintzberg and Quinn (2009) also had a hand in strategy definition whereby he perceived strategy as a pattern or a plan that integrates organization’s major goals, policies and action into a cohesive whole. Porter (2006) defined strategy as a creation of a unique and vulnerable position of tradeoffs in competing, involving a set of activities that neatly fit together, that are simply consistent, reinforce each other and ensure optimization of effort. Pearce and Robinson (2007) define strategy as the company’s “game plan” which results in future oriented plans interacting with the competitive environment to achieve the company’s objectives. Grace (2014) concluded that strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term, which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment, and fulfill stakeholder’s expectations. Shannon (2015) stated that strategic plan provides a business with the roadmap it needs to pursue a specific strategic direction and set of performance goals, deliver customer value, and be successful.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

McNamara (2008) observes that a frequent complaint about the strategic planning process is that it produces a document that ends up collecting dust on a shelf – the organization ignores or fails to make good use of the precious information depicted in the strategic planning document. Strategy implementation is a connecting loop between formulation and control. Herbiniak (2006) argued that while strategy formulation is difficult, making strategy work and executing it is even more difficult. Similarly, Cater and Pucko (2010) concluded that while 80% of firms have the right strategies, only 14% have managed to implement them well.

Several studies have been conducted on the relationship between strategic planning and organizational’s performance in Kenya. Abok (2013) studied factors affecting effective implementation of strategic plans in Non-Governmental Organizations. Grace (2014) carried out factors affecting strategy implementation in government parastatals: case of national cereals and produce board. Muguni (2007) studied the role of executive development in strategy implementation. His was a comparative study of KCB and National Bank of Kenya. The studies done in Kenya fail to capture the processes involved in strategy implementation as it addressed the strategy used in response to competition and changes in external environment(Grace 2014). These studies focused on a different context and concept from what the current study seeks to cover.

The study therefore established the factors affecting implementation of strategic plans in water and sewerage companies under Athi Water Services Board. Given the importance of these processes, the study sort to fill the gap by seeking answers to the question on implementation of strategic decision whereby it focused on water and sewerage companies under Athi Water Services Board. The current research attempted to fill in the gap. It specifically focused on the effective factors that affected the implementation of strategic plans in water and sewerage companies under Athi Water Services Board. Without this kind of research, it will be hard to determine what is needed to help public Sector Organizations from failing and continue in operation to the foreseeable future.

1.2 General Objective:

The main objective of this study was to explore the factors affecting implementation of strategic plans in water Service Providers under Athi Water Services Board.

1.2.1 Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine whether organization communication has influence on implementation of strategic plans
2. To establish the effect of leadership styles on implementation of strategic plans
3. To evaluate the effect of organization culture on implementation of strategic plans
4. To find out whether organization resources affects implementation of strategic plans

1.3 Significance of the study:

Strategy which is a fundamental management tool in any organization is a multidimensional concept that various authors have defined in different ways. It is the match between an organization's resources and skills and the environmental opportunities as well as the risks it faces and the purposes it wishes to accomplish. Organizations seem to have difficulties in implementing their strategies. The study was important not only to water service providers under Athi Water Services Board but also to other managers in other industries. It would help them understand the strategy implementation policies and help different firms achieve success better than others.

The information on the study was used to sensitize the government and other stakeholders of the water and sewerage companies under Athi Water Services Board on the challenges facing them in the implementation of their strategic plans and thus put in place policies that guide firms within or without the industries in implementing their strategies to ensure food security in Kenya. This was used to create more awareness of local environmental challenges for policy framework improvements that encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

The study was a source of reference material for future researchers on other related topics and it will also help other academicians who undertake the same topic in their studies. The study also highlighted other important relationships that require further research; this may be in the areas of relationships between intelligence and firm's performance.

1.4 Limitations of the Study:

Some of the respondents approached were reluctant in giving information, fearing that the information sought would be used to intimidate them or print a negative image about them or the institution. Some respondents turned down the request to fill the questionnaires. The researcher handled the problem by carrying an introduction letter from the University and assuring them that the information they gave would be treated as confidential.

Employees in the organization operate on tight schedules, which in turn lead to respondents not being able to complete the questionnaire in good time and this overstretched the data collection period. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher used networks to persuade targeted respondents to fill up and return the questionnaires.

The researcher also encountered problems in eliciting information from the respondents as the information required was subject to areas of feelings, emotions, attitudes and perceptions, which cannot be accurately quantified and/or verified objectively. This might have led to lack of sincerity from the responses due to the veil of confidentiality surrounding the institutions. The researcher encouraged the respondents to participate without holding back the information which they felt uncomfortable revealing as the research instruments did not bear their names.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review:

A theory is a formal, testable explanation of some events that includes explanations of how things relate to one another. A theory can be built through a process of reviewing previous findings of similar studies, simple logical deduction, and/or knowledge of applicable theoretical areas at hand (Zikmund, Babin & Griffin, 2010). According to Trochim (2006) and Tormo (2006), a theoretical framework guides research, determining what variables to measure, and what statistical relationships to look for in the context of the problems under study. This research will be anchored in four theories; Communication theory, Transformational theory, Organization culture theory and the resource based theory. These theories are explained in details below;

2.1.1 Communications Theory:

Wolfgang (2006) pointed out that communication is possible only upon a common language between sender and receiver. Marianne, Elain and Zellei, (2011) explain Communication Theory as a Field" which expanded the conversation regarding disciplinary identity in the field of communication. Theory of communication proposes a vision for communication that engages in dialogue on the practice of communication. In this deliberative process theorists would engage in dialog about the "practical implications of communication theories. Leonarda and Susana (2009) explain communication theory as an outline on how each one of the elements of communication processes would engage the others in dialogue. The main elements of communication according to communication theory are seven.

First, source which Shannon calls the information source, which "produces a message or sequence of messages to be communicated to the receiving terminal. Second, is sender or transmitter, which "operates on the message in some way to produce a signal suitable for transmission over the channel.

Third, is the channel that is "merely the medium used to transmit the signal from transmitter to receiver. Fourth, is the receiver which performs the inverse operation of that done by the transmitter, reconstructing the message from the signal. Fifth is the destination that is "the person (or thing) for which the message is intended. Sixth is the message from the receiver that confirms receipt that implies information or communication and the seventh item for effective communication is feedback which in strategic terms is the actualization of what has been communicated.

2.1.2 Transformational Theory:

Burns (1978) developed the original idea of Transformational Theory. This theory was defined as a process that transforms people through the motivation, values, and well planning goals which can lead the leaders and followers to higher level of satisfaction and being successful in achieving target (Anagnoste, Agoston, Puia, 2010). This theory also indicated the ability of leaders in satisfying the needs and expectations of the followers (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Bass (2006) suggested that Transformational Theory emphasized the influence of leaders to the followers by developing a way that can encourage the commitment of the followers to achieve a better performance (McCall, Jr., Morgan, 1986). Transformational leaders tend to have the capability to inspire the subordinates. They always encourage the employees to explore deeper of their potential so that they can be more confident about themselves and can contribute more in the effort of achieving the goals of organization (Carless, 2001).

According to Bass (2006), there were four major factors that must be practiced by the leaders that wanted to commit in Transformational Leadership. The first factor was Charisma which emphasized on the characteristics expressed by the leaders that can attract and retain the employees through their persuasive words and actions. The second factor was Inspirational leadership which was defined as a sub factor within charismatic leadership behaviour.

The leaders that commit to this leadership have the capability to motivate and influence others through the emotional qualities. The third factor was Individualized Consideration which means that the leaders concern for the needs and development of each employee and they respect the dignity of each employee. The last factor was Intellectual Stimulation which implied the intelligence of leaders in problem solving. They encourage the subordinates in asking questions and explore the potential of employees to be creative (McCall, Jr., Morgan, 1986).

2.1.3 Organizational Culture Theory:

Different concepts of culture stem from two distinct disciplines, anthropology and sociology. The concepts have been applied to organizational studies since the early 1980's (Schein, 1988). Anthropology views culture as a metaphor for organizations, defining organizations as being cultures. On the other hand, sociology takes on the functionalist view and defines culture as something an organization possesses. Despite the separate definitions of organizational culture, there seems to be a movement towards a general consensus.

The most widely used organizational culture framework is that of Edgar Schein (1988) who adopts the functionalist view and described culture as a pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation, and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid. This culture therefore is to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. In Schein's (1988) model, culture exists on three levels: Artifacts - which are difficult to measure; Values - which deal with espoused goals, ideals, norms, standards, and moral principles, and is usually the level that is usually measured through survey questionnaires; and Underlying assumptions - deals with phenomena that remain unexplained when insiders are asked about the values of the organizational culture.

The theory also demonstrates that while there is no single type of organizational culture, the organizational cultures may vary widely from one organization to the next, commonalities do exist and there are theories developed to describe different cultures.

Hofstede (1980) demonstrated that there are national and regional cultural groupings that affect behavior of organizations. While O'Reilly, Cardick and Newton (1991, 2005) based their belief on the premise that cultures can be distinguished by values that are reinforced with organizations. Deal and Kennedy (1982) argue that culture is the single most important factor accounting for success or failure of organizations. They identified heroes, rites, rituals and culture networks as four key dimensions of culture. Schein (2005) postulates that organization culture theory is a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solves 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 correct way to perceive, feel and think in relation to the problems. Studies (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Aldins & Caldwell, 1991) suggest that efficiency

outcomes are associated directly or indirectly with organizational culture. A culture of efficiency, effectiveness, commitment and oneness is robust and would provide positive outcomes.

2.1.4 Resource Based Theory:

The resource-based view stipulates that in strategic management the fundamental sources and drivers to firms' competitive advantage and superior performance are mainly associated with the attributes of their resources and capabilities which are valuable and costly-to-copy (Mills, Platts & Bourne, 2003). Building on the assumptions that strategic resources are heterogeneously distributed across firms and that these differences are stable overtime, Barney (1991) examines the link between firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. Four empirical indicators of the potential of firm resources to generate sustained competitive advantage can be value, rareness, inimitability, and non-substitutability.

In Barney (1991), firm resources include all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, etc. controlled by a firm that enable the firm to conceive and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, a firm is said to have a sustained competitive advantage when it is implementing a value creating strategy not simultaneously being implemented by any current or potential competitors and when these other firms are unable to duplicate the benefits of this strategy (Barney, 1991).

Barney (1991) further argued that to have the potential to generate competitive advantage, a firm's resources must have four attributes: it must be valuable, in the sense that it exploits opportunities and/or neutralizes threats in a firm's environment; it must be rare among a firm's current and potential competition; it must be imperfectly imitable; and there cannot be strategically equivalent substitutes for this resource. The resource-based view of the firm (RBV) has emerged in recent years as a popular theory of competitive advantage. The resource-based view contends that the answer to this question lies in the possession of certain key resources, that is, resources having the characteristics of value and barriers to duplication (Fahy, 2000).

2.2 Conceptual Framework:

McGrath (2009) and Mosby (2009) define conceptual framework as a group of concepts that are broadly defined and systematically organized to provide a focus, a rationale, and a tool for the integration and interpretation of information. A conceptual framework is defined as a network or a "plane" of linked concepts (Jabareen 2008). A conceptual framework helps a researcher to postulate or hypothesize and test certain relationships and thus improving understanding of the dynamics of situation. Strategic management practices are useful only when they make a positive difference in output from the traditional management practices. In this study implementation of strategic plans is the dependent variable and independent variable include Communication, Leadership style, Organizational culture and Organization resources (Figure 2.1)

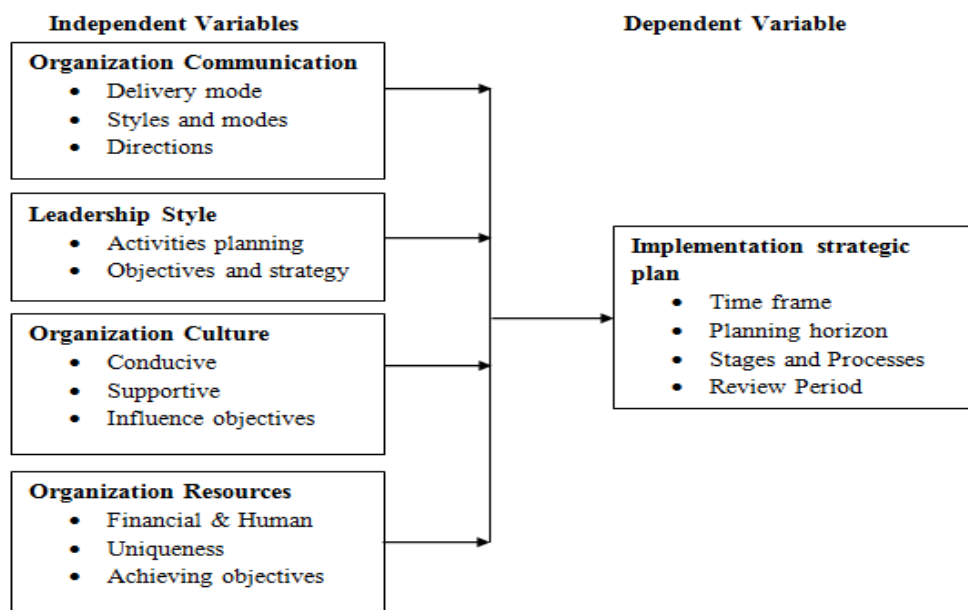


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.3 Critique of Literature Review:

The assumption in communication theories is that all the steps are followed procedurally. However, the practical reality is that the environment has lots of disturbances called noise that interferes with communication. The theories also fail to recognize that in some communications, no feedback is ever expected. Theories on organization culture concentrate very much on macro-level studies of groups and organizations leaving out the individual and do not consider resistance to change assuming that all people will obey culture. Employees are assumed to crave for recognition and responsibility yet some employees are happier without either of those as long as they get a salary. Needs ladder does not take place in the given order over a time and one can achieve self-esteem or actualization under risky environment for example in an environment without security and adequate physiological needs, we still get people who have achieved the higher levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Studies on communication tend to ignore the fact that in some cultures, communication is defined by the community and not work environment. Therefore, studying communication in isolation without other factors gives a biased assessment of that variable. Resource dependency theories fail to recognize that the complexities of relationships in environment mean that an organization can break from its immediate environment, for example, in outsourcing. The theories can be faulted since by assuming that all resources come from the external environment is not practical e.g. during economic sanctions or political turmoil, organizations still get resources. In all the studies for all variables, the assumption was that, applicability is universal, but different regions of the world view each of the studies variables in a completely different way and more so, the African context does not come out clearly even for the studies carried out on the African continent.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design:

A research design is a framework or blueprint for conducting a research project (Paurav and Shukla, 2008). Research design is the methodological connection between the philosophies and subsequent selection of data collection methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 2007). Miller and Yang (2008) describe a research design as the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The research design is important in establishing the priorities for different research elements, such as the nature of the research inquiry, the philosophical underpinnings, and research orientation towards theory (Bryman, 2007; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Suddaby (2006) asserts that there must be consistency between research questions and the research design used to answer questions.

Descriptive design was used in this study. Babbie et al (2005) defined descriptive research as studies designed to obtain information directed towards determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study. This design will enable the researchers collect comprehensive data and thus provide relevant and specific information relevant to draw conclusion on the population under study, since in this study the researcher sort to establish the factors affecting strategy implementation in the water and sewerage companies under Athi Water Services Board. This kind of study was the most appropriate.

3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Technique:

According to Bryman (2008) and Spiegel (2011) define a sample as a part of the total population. However, Kothari (2007) defines a sample as a collection of units chosen from the universe to represent it. The sample should be as representative as possible of the entire population.

Kerlinger (1973) indicates that a sample size of 10% of the target population is large enough so long as it allows for reliable data analysis by cross tabulation, provides desired level of accuracy in estimates of the large population and allows for testing the significance of differences between the estimates. In Kenya, Omiti, Otieno, Nyanamba and Cullough (2009) used Zikmund (2000) model in their study on factors influencing the intensity of market participation by smallholder farmers. This study used Zikmund (2000) model to determine the sample size.

The sample size in this study was determined using the following formula:

$$n = N (cv^2) / \{cv^2 + (N-1) e^2\}$$

Where n = sample size

N = target population

Cv = co-efficient of variation which is taken as 0.5

E = Tolerance at desired level which is taken at 0.05

Using this formula, the sample size was computed thus:

$$N = 850 * (0.5)^2 / \{(0.5)^2 + (850-1) (0.05)^2\}$$

$$N = 850 * 0.25 / \{0.25 + (849 * 0.0025)\}$$

$$N = 212.5 / \{0.25 + 2.1225\}$$

$$N = 212.5 / 2.3725$$

$$N = 90$$

This constituted 10.6% of the target population. The pilot test for this study used the recommendation by Baker (1994) using 10% of the sample size to run the pilot study.

3.3 Data analysis:

Data Analysis is the processing of data collected to make meaningful information out of it (Sounders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). This is necessary as raw data convey little meaning to most people. The collected data was edited for completeness, consistency and accuracy. The research came up with data that required qualitative analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics (involves formulation of regression models; analysis of the coefficient of determination of the models and standard errors of the models parameters) was used to analyze the qualitative data obtained to enable critiques to conceptualize the results. This includes mode, mean, percentages, and totals. The data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) Version 20 computer software.

In this case, the following model was used to measure the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables.

Regression Model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where

Y = Implementation of strategic plan

X₁ = Communication

X₂ = Leadership Style

X₃ = Organization culture

X₄ = Resource allocation

B₀ is a constant which is the value of dependent variable when all the independent variables are 0. β₁, β₂, β₃ and β₄ is the regression coefficients or change induced by X₁, X₂, X₃ and X₄ on Y. It determines how much each (i.e. X₁, X₂, X₃ and X₄) contribute to Y.

e is the error of prediction.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate:

Out of the sample population of 850 from the twelve water service providers under Athi Water Services Board 10.6 % sample equivalent to 90 was drawn using a proportionate random sampling technique as recommended by Saunders et al., (2007) Statistical inferences are validly made from samples that are large enough at 10 % of the population (Sekaran, 2006). 83 respondents representing 92% of the targeted sample returned the questionnaires, all of which were analyzed. This is a high response rate and is comparable to previous scholars' works; for example, Alice, (2016) attained 55, Awino (2007) attained 57%, Aosa (2012) attained 52% while Ombima et al. (2010) attained 53%. Babbie (2002) recommended a response rate of at least 50% to be adequate. The response rate was therefore fit enough for carrying out study analysis.

4.2 Combined Effect of the Variables on the Dependable Variable:

A combined effect of all the independent variables; management, communication, culture stakeholders and organizational resources on implementation of strategic plans were tested. This was done through a multiple regression. The multiple regression model, was used to determine the amount of influence that each independent variable has on implementation of strategic plans on a joint model. The result in table 4.1 shows that the R squared value is 87.3%. This implies that 87.3% of the variation in implementation of strategic plans is explained by the variation in the independent variables jointly. This shows a very good fit of the multiple data on the regression model. This fitness level is higher than all the levels of fitness that individual variables had on individual regression model.

Table 4.1 Model Summary on Combined Effect

R	R Square (R2)
0.934	0.873

According to the Analysis of variance in table 4.2 it shows a good result for the multiple regression model. It shows the significance of the F statistic 0.00 is less than 0.05. We reject the question as to whether the coefficients of the regression model are jointly equal to zero and accept the alternative that at least one coefficient is not equal to zero. The implication to these findings is that, all the independent variables, communication, Leadership style, organizational culture and organizational resources have a significant combined effect on effective implementation of strategic plans.

Table 4.2 ANOVA for Multiple Regression

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	41601.500	4	10400.375	134.298	0.000
Residual	6040.500	78	77.442		
Total	47642.000	82			

According to table 4.3, communication, leadership style, organizational culture and organizational resources significantly influence the implementation of strategic plans positively. The levels of influence that the variables have on implementation of strategic plans are -0.799, -0.428, 0.117 and 0.301 respectively with levels of significances 0.000, 0.024, 0.413 and 0.028 respectively which are all less than 0.5.

This shows that a unit increase in organization culture would result in an increase in effective implementation of strategic plans by a rate of 0.117. An increase in organizational resources by a unit would increase effective implementation of strategic plans by a rate of 0.301. According to the combined model, communication and leadership style do not have significant influence on effective implementation of strategic plans. The regression through the origin shows that the constant term is zero which implies that there will be no effective implementation of strategic plans if all the independent variables are zero and that there are no other factors apart from the independent variables which affect the effective implementation of strategic plans in water service providers.

Table 4.3 Coefficients of Combined Variables

	Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
Communication	-0.799	4.535	-5.347	0.000
Leadership Style	-0.428	2.970	-2.301	0.024
Organizational culture	0.117	2.277	0.823	0.413
Organizational resources	0.301	1.832	2.238	0.028

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Major Findings:

The pilot study and preliminary findings were in line with other scholars from other parts of the world who have done studies on strategic plans and implementation for example, Anand et al (2007), Carter and Pucko (2010) from Slovenia and the local scholars including Awino (2007), Grace, 2014, Wambui (2006) and Leting (2009).

A sample was drawn using a proportionate random sampling technique as recommended by Birchall (2009). Statistical inferences are validly made from samples that are large enough of the population (Kothari, 2004; Sekaran, 2006). A statistically acceptable number of the targeted sample returned the questionnaires, all of which were analyzed. The

response rate was comparable to previous scholars' works; for example, Cater and Pucko (2010), Awino (2007) and Ombima et al. (2010).

5.2 Conclusion of the Study:

The first conclusion from study findings was that leadership style affects the effectiveness of implementation of strategic plans. In particular, democratic style of management provides leadership that impact positively on the implementation of strategic plans. Similarly, key players in the overall management of the organization including but not limited to the board of directors (BOD), functional or business managers significantly influence the effective implementation of strategic plans in WSPs. The study also concluded that flow of communication within organizations had little influence on degree of effectiveness of strategic plans implementation.

Organizations had however developed significantly in terms of technology and the interpersonal communication within the organizations. The study also concluded that organizations which provide a conducive environment were successful through embracing of a culture that supported team spirit, togetherness and willingness to share and implement goals. This supported successful implementation of strategic plans. The study has shown that WSPs had benefits from the coordinated communication within the organization. The study thus concluded that organizational resources were key to the growth of an organization and must be nurtured and protected.

5.3 Recommendation of the Study:

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: Special oversight teams should be established in order to facilitate periodic reviews and ensure effective implementation of periodic plans through monitoring and evaluation. Management should take a strong hold on the resources they have in order to have the organization culture treating those resources as part and parcel of the WSPs system and not just assets for an organization. It is further recommended that training and development should be an integral part of each organization's strategy to effective implementation.

The study also recommended that there should be more research and development (R & D) as this would give WSPs an opportunity to clearly understand and review their strategic options with respect to effective implementation of strategic plans. Special skills in resource development and fundraising need to be put in place. This would provide WSPs with professionalism in implementation of strategic plans. Finally, there is need for WSPs to work towards self-sustainability to avoid incomplete implementation due to inadequate resources.

5.4 Proposed Areas for Further Study:

While the objectives were clear and successfully accomplished, several areas remain unclear and require further research. First the study focused only on the concept of strategy implementation. The concept of strategic planning and other stages should be considered for further study. Second, data was collected from WSPs under Athi water services board that practiced strategic plans. It is proposed that further research be carried out on other water services board in Kenya. Third, although data collection was limited to the use of questionnaires, observations and interviews, more robust qualitative methods are recommended for future research namely, comparative research and census study. Finally, the study only used four aspects of an organization namely communication, Leadership style, organizational culture and organizational resources. Other aspects of an organization could be reconsidered in a future research for example training and development, monitoring and evaluation, Information, communication and technology.

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