

INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN KENYAN COUNTIES: A CASE STUDY OF KIAMBU COUNTY

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Abstract: Myriad of organizations are faced with the seemingly intractable task of strategy implementation notwithstanding their experience and previous successes. The challenge to translate the strategies and plans into action and successfully implementation is common to both large corporation and small and medium enterprise. However, it is possible to translate the established strategies and plans into individual and team action necessary to provide a successful strategy implementation. The general objective of the study was to analyse the influence of strategic management practice on strategy implementation in Kiambu county government. The study was guided by the following specific: to determine the influence of Strategy operationalization as a strategic management practice on strategy implementation, to examine the influence of strategy evaluation and control system as a strategic management practice on strategy implementation, to determine the influence of strategy planning as a strategic management practice on strategy implementation and to establish the influence of situation analysis as a strategic management practice on strategy implementation in Kiambu County. The theories that were used for the study were stakeholder theory, strategy fit theory, resource dependency theory, Mckinsey. To realize this objective, a survey research design was adopted. The target population of the study constituted Kiambu county government top level management from which the target population was 86 with a sample size of 43 respondents were identified through stratified sampling which constitutes 50% of the target population. Primary data was collected from the members of County Assembly, County public service, County Executive Committee and the chief officers of various departments using a combination of questionnaires and structured interviews. A fact sheet was used to summarize the data collected before analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS) to obtain descriptive statistics; data collected was presented in the form of frequency tables.

Keywords: Situation Analysis, Strategy Planning, Strategy Operationalization, Strategy Evaluation And Control.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the study:

It has been of great concern that a number of organization are grappling with a challenging task of strategy implementation notwithstanding their degree of proficiency and previous successes. However, it is possible to translate the established strategies and plans into individual and team action necessary to provide a successful strategy implementation. Many companies have fallen prey to not sufficiently motivating and inspiring their employees to work with zeal and as a team with a common purpose spearheaded by the management. The challenge to translate the strategies and plans into action and hence successfully implementation is noted in both large corporation and small and medium enterprise. Any organization that is determined to grow and thrive in their line of business must learn how to create strategies and ideas and establish them into reality (Martin, 2010).

Chetty (2010) noted that to achieve a successful strategy implementation it can be narrowed down to a combination of several aspects including: top management commitment and political goodwill, a communication system that not only communicates a clear tangible strategy but also is receptive to its employees and engages them in decision making, establishing the ability to monitor and evaluate progress in an organization and selecting the most competent employees and by extension the appropriate organization structure to support the strategy. However, these factors must be managed comprehensively for a successful strategy implementation. Qi (2010) additionally suggested several factors as critical in successful strategy implementation including: a communication system that coordinates and enables adequate feedback, availability of resources necessary to facilitate the implementation of strategy, exemplary leadership and political goodwill that motivates, inspires and leads the employees to achieve objectives and finally an appropriate organization structure and culture.

Globally, Bigler (2011) confirmed that around 90 percent of the detailed systems of firms in the USA (United State of America) and Europe are not executed as required and don't viably accomplish the expected outcomes. According to White Paper (2006) of Strategy Implementation of Chinese Corporations, strategy implementation has become the commonest challenge facing various kind of organization. The survey report indicated that 83 percent of the surveyed companies failed to implement their strategy smoothly, and only 17 percent felt that they had a consistent strategy implementation process. It is apparent that strategy implementation is a key challenge for today's organizations. Different strategic management practices can influence the success of strategy implementation including individuals who communicate or implement the strategy, organization structure, systems or mechanisms in place for coordination and control, availability of both resources financial and non-financial (Machuki, 2011).

In Africa, a study conducted on South Africa organizations concluded that effective and efficient strategy implementation was perceived by most of the respondent organization as more vital than strategy formulation and by a large extent the study revealed that the ability for organization to effectively translate their strategies and plans into reality and successfully implement their strategy was highly valued (Fourie, 2009). A study at Makerere University (2010) conclude that the intractable challenge that faced the institution was the execution of its strategy, this was realized when the institution was establishing a well defined ICT policy and master plan which was to be used as a vehicle to a winning strategy in assure successful integration of ICT.

In Kenya, a study done in Mazar Kenya revealed that the industry forces mainly competition and the change in economic conditions greatly influences strategy implementation (Ruth, 2013). Similarly, Oanda (2013) conclude upon investigation of private security firms in Kenya that the most common challenge was in the implementation of its strategy. In the public sector success on implementation depends largely on the capability of the heads of departments to translate the company policy into patterns of action. Effectiveness depends on their ability of managers to align the company resources, outputs and tasks to the needs of the society (Reed, 2004). The government development agenda demands the public service employees to ensure successful implementation of the set strategies to achieve the Vision 2030 strategic decisions. The heads of departments continue to be constrained from all sides while being expected to deliver on the implementation of the targets on Vision 2030. Most of these constraints continue unabated though they can be overcome in the planning process or through provision of adequate resources in a timely manner (Kilonzi & Kiama, 2013).

Strategic management practice

Strickland (1996) elaborated strategic management practice as the process where managers establish the firm's long - term direction, set specific performance objectives; develop strategies to achieve these objectives in the light of all the relevant internal and external circumstances, and undertake to execute the chosen action plans. Wheelen & Hunger (2008) stated that strategic management practice consists of four basic elements, strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation and control. It is within these four elements that strategic management practices are manifested and is also described as the strategic management process. Kvint (2009) argued that each of these strategic management practices of environmental scanning, strategic formulation, strategy implementation and finally evaluation and control should be done on a continuous basis for an organization to achieve its ultimate goal. Similarly, Johnson (2009) referred to strategic management practice as the process of strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation and control on the basis of micro and macro environmental factors which have in the past studies been seen to influence the competitive positioning of the firm in the industry thus determine the performance.

De Wit and Meryer (1998) noted that strategic management followed a particular order stage one: determination of the vision and mission of the firm which provide direction and scope for the firm's activities as well as guidance for the firm's strategic objectives and strategies. Stage two: situation analysis which involves environmental analysis both externally and internally, external analysis involves the identification of opportunities and threats in the external environment while internal analysis is pegged on at determining the strengths and weaknesses in a firm's resources. Stage three involves formulating strategic objectives taking into account the finding in stage one and two. Stage four is strategic analysis which occurs at both the corporate and business level. The corporate level it involves determining the appropriate business portfolio while at the business level it's where strategy is operationalized transforming strategy into plans and tactics which are more implementable. Evaluation and control of the strategy involves taking corrective action when there is a deviation from the strategy this requires continuous reviews.

Devolved government system in Kenya

The enactment of the constitution in Kenya realized an alternate arrangement of government which had two levels, the County and national government headed by the President and the County governments previously alluded to as province governments, headed by governors (Obiga, 2014). Makau (2014) noted that in devolved government the structure is established in a manner that National government and the County government hold some degree of power and responsibility at each level. This is important for the various counties in the country to exercise some degree of discretion as opposed to the central government of the past which had eight provinces under it.

In an effort of making sure there is a clear separation of power the fourth schedule of the constitution outlines the functions allocated to each level of government. County governments are charged with a total of 14 functions while the rest remain with the national government (annual development plan, 2014 Straightforwardness International Kenya (2014) recognized that for devolution to accomplish its ideal target, there are various structures that must be set up including the workplace of the senator, the County Executive Committee, County Assembly, County Public Service Board, Senate and Women Representatives. The region government has the command to make laws, raise income from general society, set up strategies, plan for spending plan and administration. The area bureau or the County Executive Committee is the best organ for settling on choice it is made out of not in excess of ten individuals who run key administration conveyance offices.

Statement of the problem

According to Lorette (2016) argues that a strategic plan is in vain to an organization if not properly implemented. Implementation is the most essential part of the strategic planning process. Thompson and Strickland (2011) pointed that for organizations to overcome environmental challenges well formulated strategies must be adequately executed at all levels. According to Karami (2007) strategy implementation has been the focal point of increased study and research for potential solution; especially because the process of strategy formulation to implementation is not efficient and is inadequate. Similarly, Lumiti and Ateng (2007) concluded that good strategies have been established but very little has been achieved in their implementation. David (2001) suggested that without understanding and commitment, strategy implementation efforts face major challenges and that managers are prone to overlook implementation realities.

In the public sector the national government required each region governments to reconsider how they work together, evaluate the ramifications of duplication of administrations and to expand coordinated effort when conceivable and appropriate (GoK, 2003 and Obongo, 2009). The introduction of performance management system by the government that was designed for strategy implementation by communicating goals and objective, reinforcing individual accountability for achieving the pre-determined objectives as well as evaluating individual and organizational performance results (Bourne, 2003) However, implementation of strategy in the county level is still inefficient despite the efforts made by the government. Consequently the reason of this study is to analyze the factors that influence strategic management practice on strategy implementation in Kiambu County.

Objective of the study

The following were the objective of the study;

General objective

The general objective of the study was to determine the influence of strategic management practice on strategy implementation in Kiambu county government.

Specific Objective

- i. To determine the influence of situation analysis on strategy implementation in Kiambu County.
- ii. To examine the influence of strategy planning on strategy implementation in Kiambu County.
- iii. To determine the influence of strategy operationalization on strategy implementation in Kiambu County.
- iv. To establish the influence of strategy evaluation and control on strategy implementation in Kiambu County.

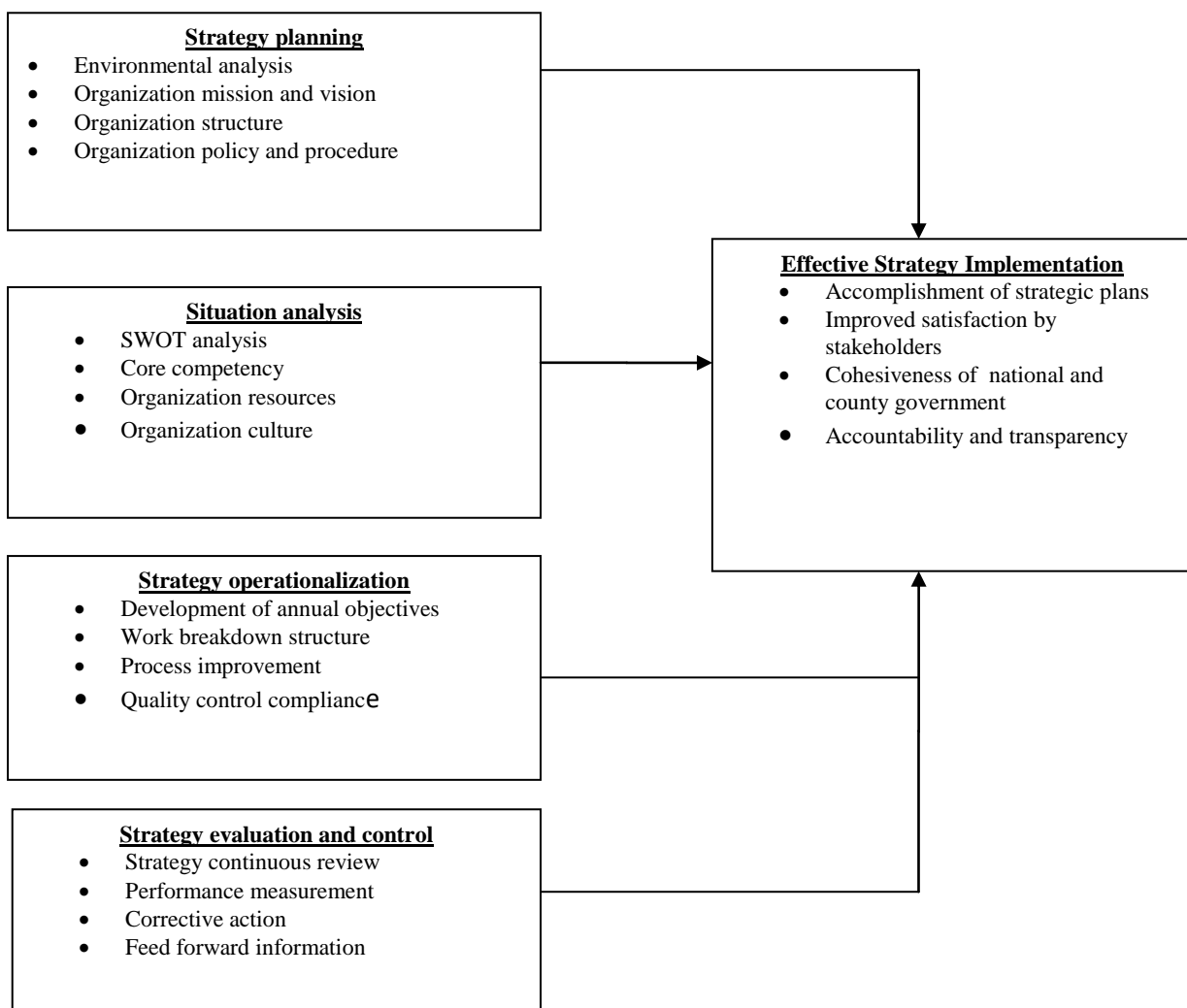
Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions;

- i. To what extent does situational analysis influence strategy implementation in Kiambu County?
- ii. How does strategy planning influence strategy implementation in Kiambu County?
- iii. To what extent does the strategy operationalization influence strategy implementation in Kiambu County?
- iv. How does strategy evaluation and control influence strategy implementation in Kiambu County?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The underpinning theories of this study included; the resource dependency theory, strategic fit theory, Mckinsey 7s model and finally the stakeholder theory. To illustrate the fundamental concepts of strategic management practice on strategy implementation. a conceptual framework that integrates the independent and dependent variables was developed as shown in figure 1



Empirical Review:**Strategy implementation process:**

Various authors have observed the dilemma of strategy implementation, with others stating that it is a complex business challenges that managers have to overcome (Opano, 2015). Ungerer, Pretorius and Hernhold (2007) suggested that having a strategy is not going to yield results unless that strategy is implemented. They put forward a cycle that should be followed in implementation of strategic plans. The cycle has the following stages a careful evaluation of current position and look at what the future holds, creating alternatives, formulation of a vigorous strategy plan and the implementation stage. Mint berg (1998) and Opano (2015) argued that it depended on what one's opinion was on the strategy. Thus holding other factors constant, an organizations competitive advantage is dependent of its manager's competencies in implementing strategy.

According to Elbanna (2006) in the boundaries of strategic management there has been a substantial amount of research on strategy processes which have been described as how 'a strategy decision is made and implemented and the factors which affect it'. However, there is no sufficient evidence with regards to implementation as attention is largely been paid to the formulation of strategy. The existing literature on strategy implementation in public organizations is limited in its extent, and also in the lack of a connection of implementation processes with subsequent performance. An organization needs to have strong corporate governance in order to implement its strategies effectively. Corporate governance is the set of mechanisms used to manage the relationship among stakeholders to determine and control the strategic direction and performance of organizations (Crossland & Hambrick, 2007).

In establishing a plan for implementing and executing strategic objectives, the managers can begin probing an assessment of what the company intends to creatively and better carry out its strategy successfully (Macmillan,2007).In multinational corporation with geographically scattered operating units, the action agenda of senior executives mostly involves communicating the case for change to others, building consensus on how to proceed, installing strong allies in positions where they can push implementation along key organizational units (Govindaranjan, 1988). During implementation, top management deals directly with frontline managers and employees, personally orchestrating the action steps and implementation sequence, observing firsthand how implementation is progressing, and deciding how hard how fast to push the process along (Bryson, 2005).

Identification of the institutions vision and mission is the first step of any strategic planning process. This help in infusing the organization with a sense of purpose and direction and giving it a mission. A mission is a statement broadly outlines the organizations future course and serves as a guiding concept. Once the vision and mission are clearly identified the institution must analyze its external and internal environment (Harrison & St. John 1998). The environmental analysis performed within the frame work of the SWOT analysis, analyses information about organization's external environment (economic, social, demographic, political, legal, technological) and internal organizational factors. The act of setting formal performance objectives converts the organization's mission and direction into specific performance targets to be achieved and protects against drift confusion over what to accomplish and toleration undemanding results (Arthur 1989).

The company is able to establish short-term strategic plans which draw attention to what immediate results to achieve while long term strategic plans ponders what to do to have the organization in pole position to give results later. The organizations then assess the difference between their current position and the pre-determined objective through Gap analysis. To close up the gap and achieve its desired state the institution must develop specific strategies. Strategic evaluation and control involves not only evaluating strategy for deviations from intended course but also for flexibility towards responding to the new challenges and determining the effectiveness and the pace of the implementation The institution should measure current performance against previously set expectations, and consider any changes or events that may have impacted the desired course of actions. The revised plan must take into consideration emergent strategies and changes affecting the organization's intended course (Johnson & Scholes, 2003).

Challenges of strategy implementation:

Implementation of strategy remains one of the most difficult areas of management. Its success depends on both the selection of an appropriate strategy and converting that strategy into action. If any of these aspects are deficient, the strategy may either fail or be less effective than intended (Hussey, 2000). Strategy implementation relatively recognized as a time costly process as management invest a substantial amount of their time in strategy formulation and place little

emphasis on implementation of already agreed upon strategies. It involves the fully comprehension of the mission, vision and goals of the County executive committee members who liaise with the department's chief officer to establish operational activities that the staff should carry out and in so doing ensure that all the activities are coordinated towards achieving overall organization objective (Hiriyappa, 2011).

At a public sector organizational level, it might be expected that the political nature of governments would make it more difficult for rational models of strategic management to be implemented, given the almost inevitable interpenetration of politics into that arena (Lynn (1987, 1996). Implementation of strategic plans in the public sector is faced by a number of challenges. The critical challenges that influence strategy implementation include: Establishing strategic planning, mission and vision that is not inclusive of all stakeholders the public participation allows ideas generation and feedback and as a result instill a sense of ownership from all stakeholders, Inefficient situation analysis that does not take into consideration of both internal and external environment, lack of a clear strategy operationalization that translate the strategy into short-term functional plans and tactics that are easily implementable and inadequate strategy control that tend to only take place annually hence does not allow to respond quickly to both internal and external changes.

Strategic planning as a challenge to strategy implementation:

According to Armstrong (2010) Strategic planning is a proactive alternative to long-range planning and it's a core task of senior management which involves fourteen processes These processes are designing objectives, planning strategy, establishing goals, developing company philosophy, policies, procedures, organization structures, establishing personnel and facilities, capital, establishing standards, programs and operational plans and institutionalization, evaluation and control. Hesterly (2006) was of the view that the process of strategic planning need to be designed well to be able to it meets the specific needs of organization. The strategic management planning process involves the mission and vision of the organization, environmental analysis, selection of objectives and analyzing strategic choices (Porter, 2008).

According to Kohtamaki (2012), the participative strategic planning improves personnel consideration with regards to company's strategy and strategic goals as a result help implementing the strategy efficiently, creates a sense of shared purpose for the employees as well as increase personnel commitment to implementation of strategy. Similarly Wheelen & Hunger (2008) argued strategy planning includes; definition of the corporate mission, specifying attainable but at the same time challenging objectives, developing strategies, choosing the most appropriate strategy to achieve the objective and finally setting policy guidelines.

Macmillan & Tampoe (2000) noted that the process of strategy planning is mainly carried out at three levels, which include the corporate level, business level and the functional level. The lower level managers drive the functional strategies, which have short-term horizons and relate to a functional area. Bakar (2011) revealed that most of the firms practicing strategic management had a clear objective, a winning strategy to achieve the objective and a sound mission statement to guide the organization toward success.

Situation analysis as a challenge to strategy implementation:

According to Bejeman (2007) organizations identify strategies through both the social networks and through monitoring the external environment and through both purposeful search and accidental discovery. Humphrey Albert (2005) stated that an organization carries out situational analysis by focusing on both the internal environment of the organization as well as the external environment immediate the organization. The organization does this by working out a SWOT analysis which entails a structured planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats involved in a project or in an organization. Similarly Hill T & Westbrook (1997) noted that a SWOT analysis involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective.

According to Pearce & Robinson (2007) the management of a firm analyses the company's options by matching their resources with the external environment. Simultaneous assessment of the external environment and the company profile enables a firm to identify a range of possibly attractive interactive opportunities. These opportunities are possible avenues for investment. However, they must be screened through the criterion of the company mission to generate a set of possible and desired opportunities. The screening process results in the selection of options from which a strategic choice is made. Slater, Olson, & Hult (2006) noted that an active and systematic assessment of environmental conditions was very critical as a formal internal and external environment generated information that enabled top level management taking proactive

actions in uncertain environments. Similarly Pedersen & Neergard (2008) argued that organizations should carry out both internal and external analyses to understand stakeholders' needs and consequently incorporate those needs into their strategy.

Strategy operationalization as a challenge to strategy implementation:

Joe Evans (2012) stated strategy operationalization entails defining the initiatives to implement the plan in accordance with a work breakdown structure while addressing all of the programs associated with plan goals and the major initiatives underneath those programs which include budgets, resources, timelines, deliverables, accountability and structures. Pearce & Robinson (2007) argued that Operationalization of strategy entails the development of annual objectives short term strategies that are compatible with the selected set of long term objectives and grand strategies. Short-term objectives are the desired results that a company seeks over a period of one year or less. They are logically consistent with the firms' long term objectives. Companies typically have many short term objectives to provide guidance for their functional and operational activities. Thus there are short term marketing activities, raw material usage, employee turnover and sales objectives.

According to Gregory, Lumpkin & Marilyn (2005) strategy operationalization assist an organization in the provision of guidance on how an organization can fulfill or move more towards the "higher goals" in the objective hierarchy-the mission and vision. As a consequence, they tend to be more specific and cover a more well-defined time frame. Setting objectives demands a yardstick to measure the fulfillment of the objectives. If an objective lacks specificity or measurability, it is not very useful, simply because there is no way of determining whether it is helping the organization to move toward the organization's mission and vision. According to Analoui & Karami (2003) strategy operationalization focuses on the functional level which pays more attention on the operational activities, management, and control of automation systems as well as internal processes of the organization.

Kristie Lorette (2013) noted that strategy operationalization emphasizes on the addressing the: who, where, when, and how of reaching the desired goals and objectives. It focuses on the entire organization, therefore it involves assigning individuals to tasks and timelines that will help an organization reach its objectives. According to Krajewski & Ritzman (2002) operations management that forms the foundation to functional strategy and has its utmost need in the control and management of processes, identification and removal of bottle-necks to map the outputs at the functional level to the strategic objectives. Mintzberg (1984) argues that various variables namely: automation and use of technology platforms, coordination and communication control, compliance, quality control and process improvement.

Strategy evaluation and control as a challenge strategy implementation:

According to Hitt (1996) the process of evaluation entails four steps major steps that include; setting standards of performance, measuring that performance against pre-set standards, analyzing the variances between standards and results; and finally taking corrective action on the identified undesirable variances. It is therefore an important process since it provides feedback on performance, either validates or invalidates strategic choices, and ensures there is congruence between decisions and strategic intentions as well as feed forward information to new strategy formulation.

However, strategy control entails the use of long-term and strategically relevant criteria for the evaluation of business-level managers' actions and performance. According to Pearce and Robinson (2008) Strategic control is concerned with tracking the strategy as it is being implemented, detecting problems or changes when deemed necessary and making the necessary adjustments therefore it sheds light on the efficiency and effectiveness of the comprehensive plans in achieving the desired results.

Cravens & Piercy (2013) noted that management need to continually monitor performance and, when necessary, revise their strategies due to changing conditions. Similarly Hunger & Wheelen (2011) noted that although evaluation and control is the final major element of strategic management, it also especially important in pinpoint weaknesses in the formerly implemented strategic plans and thus stimulate the entire process to begin again. Kazmi (2008) argued that strategy evaluation and control importance lies in its ability to coordinate the tasks performed by managers through the control of performance. In the absence of coordinating and controlling mechanisms, managers may pursue goals, which are inconsistent with the overall objectives of the organization. Therefore, it can be construed that strategic control is aimed at monitoring the course of progress in the predetermined direction, and evaluation of organizational performance of organizational units to assess their contribution to the achievement of organizational objectives.

Critique of the literature review:

Collins (2007) contends associations that can accomplish a fit between their system and structure can make a noteworthy upper hand, while Organizations that don't have a fit are left powerless against outer changes and inside wasteful aspects. Slope and Jones (2010) additionally proposed that associations can't actualize a vital arrangement in light of disappointment by administration to incorporate their way of life with their vital plans. Johnson (2008) likewise noticed that best administration association and responsibility is basic in the survival of procedures and structures in key arranging. Nonetheless, Magambo (2012) contended that insufficient staffing, absence of best administration duty; authoritative culture and structure were never in any capacity a test to the usage of procedures openly segment in Kenya. The above examinations have been directed in brought together sorted out frameworks and none said executing technique in a declined or decentralized composed framework. Therefore a research gap can be discerned.

Research Gaps:

Unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation is often seen as something of a craft, rather than a science, and its research history has previously been described as fragmented and eclectic (Noble, 1999). According to Elbanna (2006) within the field of strategic management strategy implementation is a process that takes longer unlike strategy formulation and despite having been a significant amount of research on strategy processes which have been described as how 'a strategy decision is made and implemented and the factors which affect it', there is only a small amount of evidence on implementation as most attention has traditionally been paid to the formulation of strategy. More so existing literature on strategy implementation in public organizations is limited in its extent hence there is a need more research on the effectiveness of implementation of county government strategy as well as the efficiency of coordination and cohesiveness between the county and National government.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**Research Design:**

This study used a descriptive case study and correlational research design to justify the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables. The main aim for the choice of these two research designs is to allow the study to determine the strength and direction of a relationship so that later studies can narrow the findings down and, if possible, determine causation experimentally.

Target Population

Target population constitutes the entire or totality of the items under study (Kothari, 2004). This study targeted 86 key respondents that have the pertinent experience and insight on the subject matter being sought in Kiambu County government.

Table 3.1: Target population

Category	Population	Percentage
County Assembly members	60	69.8%
County Public Service members	6	6.9%
County Executive Committee members	10	11.6
Department Chief Officers	10	11.6
Total	86	100%

Source: County Government Act, 2012

Sampling frame:

The sampling frame for this study consists of members of county assembly County public service members, county executive committee members and department chief Officers.

Sampling size and Sampling technique:

According to Zikmund (2010) sampling is defined as a selection of a subject of individuals from within a population of making predictions based on statistical inference. A sample size refers to a number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample (Kothari, 2004). Kothari (2004) advocates that a good sample should be truly representative of the population, result in a small sampling error, viable, economical and systematic. Sampling makes it

possible to draw valid inferences or generalizations on the basis of careful observation of variables with a relatively small proportion of the population (Gall & Borg, 2007). A simple random sampling was used to obtain a population sample a target population of 86 respondents in Kiambu county government. The simple random sampling technique presents each individual in the population of study with an equal chance or probability to be selected (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) considers a sample size of 10%-50% as sufficient enough, this study therefore, made use of 50% of the population size.

Table 3.2: Sample size

Category	Population	Sample size
County Assembly members	60	30
County Public Service members	6	3
County Executive Committee members	10	5
Department Chief Officers	10	5
Total	86	43

Data collection Instruments:

According to Creswell (2003) data collection is the means by which information is obtained from the selected subject of an investigation. The instruments of data collection are tools used to collect both primary and secondary data that are suitable and sufficiently adequate data for the study were collected through administering questionnaires. Mertens & Wilson (2012) define a questionnaire as a list of questions on a specific topic compiled by the researcher to which answers and information are required. They further state that the use of questionnaires is cost effective, easy to analyze, familiar to most people, reduces bias and are considered less intrusive. Similarly Dempsey (2003) noted that questionnaires are effective data collection instruments that allow respondents to give much of their opinions pertaining to the researched problem.

Data collection procedure:

The questionnaires were sent electronically using the Internet, posted to respondents or delivered by hand to be filled by the respondents at their convenient time and collected later and as such the questionnaires were self-administered. For the purpose of this study, the questionnaires communicated to the respondents the intended and elicited responses in terms of empirical data necessary for analysis. The questionnaire was structured and contained open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Pilot Study:

Pilot study was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. According to Dempsey (2003) pilot study is the process of conducting preliminary test of data collection instruments in order to eliminate data collection problems that may led to low data validity and reliability. Pilot study was thus conducted to help in identification of errors in data collection instruments and make necessary adjustment in order to ensure valid and reliable data was collected. Juppe (2000) describes validity as the extent to which an instrument measures what is supposed to measure. Data need not only to be reliable but also true and accurate. Reliability refers to the consistence, stability, or dependability of the data.

Whenever an investigator measures a variable, he or she wants to be sure that the measurement provides dependable and consistent results (Cooper & Schindler 2003). Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) argued that a reliable measurement is one that if repeated a second time gives the same results as it did the first time. If the results are different, then the measurement is unreliable. To measure the reliability of the data collection instruments the researcher used SPSS software (SPSS version 24) where the results from pilot study were carefully studied to assess the reliability of the instrument. The number of respondents in the pilot study was 9 which translate to 10% of the total target population of 86 respondents. This is in line with the rule of the thumb that stipulates that 10 percent of the sample population can be used in pilot study (Neuman, 2006).

Data Analysis and Presentation:

The use of closed-end and open-end questionnaires contributed towards gathering of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data collected from the document analysis were analyzed statistically using the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS version 24). All qualitative data gathered during the study was analyzed through content analysis

and presented descriptively. SPSS was considered appropriate since it allows the researcher to follow clear set of quantitative data analysis procedures that leads to increased data validity and reliability and demonstrates the relationship between the research variables. SPSS also assisted in producing frequency tables for descriptive analysis. Inferential statistics were applied through correlation analysis and the use of multiple regression analysis.

Correlation analysis was used to establish a statistical significance, the nature of the existing relationship between the dependent variable as well as the independent variables. The aim of conducting a correlation was to allow the study to make a prediction on how a variable deviates from the normal. The study tested the significance level of each independent variable against the dependent variable at 95% confidence level using ANOVA, Correlation and regression techniques. A 95% confidence interval reflects a significance level of 0.05 shows that for an independent variable to have significance effect on the dependent variable, the p- value should be below the significance level of 0.05. This regression model was used to test the relationship between strategy management practices on strategy implementation as a linear function of the independent variables.

Regression analysis model:

The regression analysis was used to determine with statistical significance, the influence or effect that the independent variables had in the dependent variable. The multiple regression models were of the form:

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

Where:

β_0 = Constant

Y= strategy implementation

X1= Situation analysis

X2= Strategy planning

X3= Strategy operationalization

X4= Strategy evaluation and control

β_i = Coefficients of regression for the independent variables X_i (for $i = 1,2,3,4$)

ϵ = error term

4. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate:

Out of the 43 questionnaires administered, 43 questionnaires were duly returned in time for data the analysis represents a response rate of 100%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) 50% and above of the response rate is appropriate in conclusion of research findings and consequently, the response rate for this study was sufficient for further analysis

Reliability Test:

As presented in Table 4.1 the Cronbach alpha values range from 0.747 to 0.945. According to Mohsen and Dennick (2011) a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher indicates consistency. The level of reliability was sufficient thus the level of internal consistency was acceptable. Therefore, all items were included in the survey instrument.

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of test Items
Strategy implementation	0.821	5
Situation analysis	0.916	5
Strategy planning	0.745	5
Strategy Operationalization	0.912	5
Strategy evaluation and control	0.778	5

General characteristics of the respondents

Thus, the study sought to establish the demographic characteristics which included level of education to work experience of the respondents.

Experience of the respondents

This study sought to find out the work experience of the respondents.

Table 4.2: Experience of the respondents

Respondents Experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	10	23.3
Between 5 and 10 years	19	44.1
Between 10 and 15 years	9	20.9
Above 15 years	5	11.6
Total	43	100.0

The results on the work experience of the respondents showed that 19 (44.1%) of the respondents which represents the majority of the respondents had more than 5 years experience. Hence, they were perceived by the researcher to be sufficiently experienced to provide the required information on the objective of the study.

Level of Education:

The study sought to establish level of education of the respondents

Table 4.3: Education level

Education level	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	17	39.5
Degree	18	41.9
Masters	5	11.6
PhD	3	7.0
Total	43	100.0

The results on the level the level of education indicated that all the respondents had attained a college/ university degree. This meant that they were competent to respond to the questions in the research instrument in the study objective.

Descriptive statistics and Discussions:

In this section the descriptive statistics for study variables are analyzed discussed. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the following situation analysis statements. Each item had a 5 – point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Table 4.6 presents the results of the respondents.

Situation analysis:

The incorporation of both internal and external environmental factors is critical in the implementation of strategy and therefore, this study sought to establish the influence of situation analysis on the implementation of the county strategy.

Table 4.4: Situation analysis

		1	2	3	4	5	
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
The county has competent employees to conduct situation analysis	Freq	1	1	3	5	33	4.58
	%	2.3	2.3	7.0	11.6	76.8	
Analysis of community-based issues is an essential prerequisite to county strategy planning	Freq	0	0	4	15	24	4.46
	%	0	0	9.3	34.9	55.8	
The county utilizes systematic monitoring of environmental condition to review its strategy	Freq	25	8	5	3	2	1.81
	%	58.1	18.6	11.6	7.0	4.7	
The county analysis its strengths and weakness to actualize it's strategy	Freq	18	12	7	3	3	2.10
	%	41.9	27.9	16.3	7.0	7.0	
The county periodically evaluates its environmental threats and take advantage of prevailing opportunity	Freq	2	10	17	6	8	3.18
	%	4.7	23.3	39.5	13.9	18.6	

The results from the study revealed that majority of the total respondents 33 (76.8) of the respondents strongly agreed that the county has competent employees to conduct situation analysis, a clear indication that the county is well competent to conduct a situation analysis. The results are in line with a mean of 4.58. In determining whether the county considers an analysis of community-based issues as essential prerequisite to strategy planning, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents either strongly agreed with 55.8% (24) and 34.9% (15) of the respondents agreed. However, 9.3% (4) of the respondents were undecided the results also showed a mean of 4.46. Regarding whether the county considers systematic monitoring of environmental conditions as necessary to strategy planning, the study revealed that majority of the respondents strongly disagreed 41.9% (18) while 27.9% (12) of the respondents disagreed. However, 16.3% (7) of the respondents were neutral, 7.0% (3) agreed and 7.0% (3) strongly agreed. The results also showed a mean of 1.81.

In relation to the question of the analysis of the county strength and weakness to generate information that guide the action of the county in the uncertain environment to actualize its strategy implementation, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were undecided with 39.5% (17) and 4.7% (2) strongly agreed while 23.3% (10) of the respondents disagreed, however, 13.9% (6) of the respondents agreed while 18.6% (8) strongly disagreed. The study also revealed a mean of 3.18.

In determining whether the county continuously evaluates and generate information regarding environmental opportunities and threats to guide in strategy planning, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were undecided with 39.5% (17) and 4.7% (2) strongly agreed while 23.3% (10) of the respondents disagreed, however, 13.9% (6) of the respondents agreed while 18.6% (8) strongly disagreed. The study also revealed a mean of 3.18 thus suggesting that most of the respondents agreed on the importance of situation analysis as a critical element in the successful implementation of the county strategy.

Strategy planning:

Strategy planning is the road map that guides all the employees including the management towards the overall objective and it sets the foundation onto which smaller goals will be established. Strategy planning is vital in determining the appropriate organization structure, number of employees along with the necessary competence or expertise needed to implement the strategy. Therefore, it is with this in mind that the study sought to determine the influence of strategy planning in the effective implementation of its strategy.

Table 4.5: Strategy planning

		1	2	3	4	5	
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
The county has sufficiently competent strategy planning employees	Freq	2	3	0	8	30	4.42
	%	4.7	7.0	0	18.6	69.8	
The county conducts the necessary public participation before establishing its strategic plans	Freq	10	18	9	3	3	2.33
	%	23.3	41.9	20.9	7.0	7.0	
The fixed term tenure of politicians doesn't influences long-term strategy planning	Freq	5	5	0	6	27	4.05
	%	11.6	11.6	0	14.0	62.8	
The county encourages the participation of employees in decision making	Freq	11	20	0	6	6	2.44
	%	25.6	46.5	0	14.0	14.0	
The county organization structure is efficiently designed to implement its strategy	Freq	5	8	2	12	16	3.60
	%	11.6	18.6	4.7	27.9	37.2	

In an effort to establish strategy management competence of county top management, 69.8% 30 respondents while strongly agreed, 18.6% (8) agreed, while 7.0% (3) disagreed and 4.7% (2) strongly agreed. The items realized a mean of 4.42 implying that it was clear the county did not lack the competency of strategy planning. The study further enquired from the respondents if the county conducted the necessary public participation required in strategic planning.

The respondents 23.3% (10) strongly disagreed while the majority 41.9% (18) of the respondents strongly disagreed, 20.9% (9) were undecided and finally 7.0% (3) agreed and 7.0% (3) strongly agreed. The results were supported by a mean of 2.33. The respondents were also asked if in their opinion the fixed term tenure of politicians did not influenced the long-term strategy planning of the county, the results indicated that 62.8% (27) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 14.0% (6) of the respondents agreed, 23.2% (10) both strongly disagreed and disagreed. The results are supported by a mean of 4.05. The respondents were also asked if they thought in their opinions the county sufficiently encouraged them to participate in decision making. 25.6% (11) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while the

majority of the respondents agreed, representing a 46.5% (20) disagreed, however, 14.0% (6) agreed and 14% (6) strongly agreed both had an equal response rate. The results are supported by a mean of 2.44. The respondents were asked if they thought the county organization structure is not efficiently designed to implement its strategy. 27.9% (12) of the respondents agreed while the majority of the respondents representing 37.2% (16) strongly agreed while 4.7% (2) were undecided, 18.6% (8) and 11.6% (5) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. The results were supported by a mean of 3.60.

Operationalization of strategy:

After the objectives, corporate and business level strategies are established in the strategy planning phase. The first concern in the implementation of strategy is to operationalize that strategy through the county. Therefore, it is with this in mind the study sought to determine the influence of operationalization of strategy in the implementation of strategy.

Table 4.6.1: Operationalization of Strategy

		1	2	3	4	5	
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
The county have functional strategy to operationalize their objective	Freq	4	3	5	10	21	3.95
	%	9.3	7.0	11.6	23.3	48.8	
The county need more resource allocation to implement strategy	Freq	3	2	6	8	24	4.12
	%	7.0	4.7	14.0	18.6	55.8	
The county does not establish a clear annual objective	Freq	5	5	4	12	17	3.72
	%	11.6	11.6	9.3	27.9	39.5	
The county policies and procedure act as constrain to strategy implementation	Freq	3	5	8	11	16	3.74
	%	7.0	11.6	18.6	25.6	37.2	
The county action plan are inefficient in the implementation of strategy	Freq	3	2	6	9	23	4.09
	%	7.0	4.7	14.0	20.9	53.5	

In this section of descriptive analysis the study highlighted the results of operationalization of strategy. The study sought to find out whether the count has a functional strategy to operationalize its objective. Majority of the respondents 48.8% (21) strongly agreed while 23.3% (10) agreed, the items realized a mean of 3.95 implying that there was a general consensus that the county has an established functional strategy. In the determination of whether the county needs more resource allocation to implement its strategy, 55.8% (24) of the respondents strongly agreed representing majority of the respondents while 18.6% (8) agreed with that statement, the result summed up to a mean of 4.12.

To ascertain if the county establishes a clear annual objective, 39.5% (17) strongly agreed while 27.9% (12) agreed that the county establishes a clear annual objective; the results were supported by a mean of 3.72. The respondents were also asked if the existing policy and procedure acted as a constraint to strategy implementation 37.2% representing (16) respondents strongly agreed while 25.6% (11) of the respondents agreed with the statement, the results had an overall mean of 3.74. Finally the respondents were asked if the county action plans are inefficient in implementing of strategy, 53.5% (23) which represented majority of the respondents strongly agreed while 20.9% (9) of the respondents agreed, the overall results were summed up by a mean of 4.09.

Strategy evaluation and control:

Strategy evaluation and control is critical in ensuring that planning are kept on course by monitoring progress and taking corrective action in the event of any major deviation from the strategic plans. This section of the analysis highlights the major findings in the influence of strategy evaluation and control on strategy implementation in Kiambu County Government. Based on the results it was evident that majority of the respondents that were represented by 41.9% (18) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the county conducts timely corrective action in strategy implementation while 21% (9) of the respondents disagreed on that statement. Nevertheless, 4.7% (2) of the respondents were neutral while 23.3% (10) of the respondents agreed and a minority of the respondents representing 9.3% (4) strongly disagreed, this section was supported by an overall mean of 2.37. The respondents were also asked their opinion on whether they thought a proactive control mechanism was critical to strategy implementation, 53.5% (23) of the respondents which represents majority of the respondents strongly agreed while 21% (9) agreed, 7% (3) disagreed and 18.6% (8) strongly disagreed; the results involved a mean of 3.84. In an effort to determine whether political goodwill influences the quality of the control system in the county majority of the respondents representing 72.1% (31) of the respondents strongly agreed while 18.6% (8) of the respondents agreed 9.3% (4) of the respondents were undecided, the question was supported by a mean of 4.63.

The respondents were asked whether in their opinion they thought the county conducted frequent reviews of the strategy control policies, 65.1% (28) of the respondents strongly agrees while 14% (6) of the respondents agreed, nevertheless, 9.3% (4) of the respondents disagreed and 11.6% (5) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The results yielded a mean of 4.12. Finally, the respondents were asked their opinion on effective communication system was vital to mitigate inefficiency in the county implementation process, majority of the respondents 48.8% (21) strongly agree while 16.3 (7) of the respondents agreed 9.3% (4) of the respondents were neutral, however, 9.3% (4) of the respondents disagreed and 16.3% (7) of the respondents strongly disagreed, this section resulted to a mean of 3.72.

Table 4.6.2: Strategy evaluation and control

		1	2	3	4	5	
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
The county conducts timely corrective action in strategy implementation	Freq	18	9	2	10	4	2.37
	%	41.9	21.0	4.7	23.3	9.3	
A proactive control mechanism is critical in implementation process of county strategy	Freq	8	3	0	9	23	3.84
	%	18.6	7.0	0	21.0	53.5	
The political goodwill influences the quality of the county control systems	Freq	0	0	4	8	31	4.63
	%	0	0	9.3	18.6	72.1	
frequently reviews of the county strategy control policies is necessary	Freq	5	4	0	6	28	4.12
	%	11.6	9.3	0	14.0	65.1	
Effective communication system is vital to mitigate inefficiency in the county implementation process	Freq	7	4	4	7	21	3.72
	%	16.3	9.3	9.3	16.3	48.8	

Strategy implementation:

This section of the analysis elaborates the finding of the study on strategy implementation in Kiambu county government, below highlights the findings of the research. In this section the study sought to determine whether the county conducts timely corrective action in strategy implementation in Kiambu County, majority of the respondents 44.2% (19) strongly agreed, 28% (12) agreed while 4.7% (2) of the respondents were undecided however, 14.0% (6) disagreed and 9.3% (4) of the respondents strongly disagreed, the results were supported by a mean of 3.84. The respondents were also asked their thought on whether the county continually fails to fully implement their strategy, 51.2% (22) of the respondents strongly agrees while 16.3% (7) of the respondents agreed however, 11.6% (5) of the respondents disagreed and 21% (9) of the respondents strongly disagreed, this was supported by a mean of 3.65.

The respondents were also asked if they thought political transition severely affects implementation, overwhelming majority 81.4% (35) of the respondents strongly agreed while 16.3% (7) of the respondents agreed only 2.3% (1) of the respondent was neutral; this was supported by a mean of 4.80. The respondents were also asked whether misappropriation of resources by county management influences implementation of strategy, 48.8% (21) of the respondents strongly agreed and 23.3% (10) of the respondents agreed However 14% (6) of the respondents were neutral, 9.3% (4) disagreed while 4.75% (2) strongly disagreed, this section involved a mean of 4.02. Finally, the respondent were asked whether inadequate accountability and transparency in the County affects implementation of strategy, 34.9% (15) of the respondents strongly agreed while 23.3% (10) of the respondents agreed. However, 21% (9) of the respondents were undecided, 11.6 (5) agreed and 9.3 (4) strongly agreed. The results were supported by a mean of 3.63.

Table 4.7: Strategy Implementation

		1	2	3	4	5	
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
Majority of the county staff do not understand their county strategy	Freq	4	6	2	12	19	3.84
	%	9.3	14.0	4.7	28.0	44.2	
The county continually fails to fully implement its strategy	Freq	9	5	0	7	22	3.65
	%	21.0	11.6	0	16.3	51.2	
Political transition in the county severely affects implementation of strategy	Freq	0	0	1	7	35	4.80
	%	0	0	2.3	16.3	81.4	
Misappropriation of resources by county management influences implementation of strategy	Freq	2	4	6	10	21	4.02
	%	4.7	9.3	14.0	23.3	48.8	
Inadequate accountability and transparency in the county affects implementation of strategy	Freq	4	5	9	10	15	3.63
	%	9.3	11.6	21.0	23.3	34.9	

Correlation analysis:

The correlation analysis revealed that there was a no relationship between situation analysis and strategy implementation where ($r = -0.014$, p -value $< .01$). Likewise, the analysis demonstrated a positive relationship between strategy planning and strategy implementation where ($r = 0.028$, p -value $< .01$). Similarly, a firm relationship was identified between strategy operationalization and strategy implementation where ($r = 0.256$, p -value $< .01$). Finally, a strong relationship was revealed between strategy evaluation and control and strategy implementation where ($r = 0.412$, p -value $< .01$).

Correlations		Situation Analysis	Strategy Planning	Strategy Operationalization	Strategy evaluation & control	Strategy implementation
Situation Analysis	Pearson Correlation	1	.220	.082	-.033	-.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.157	.602	.834	.927
	N	43	43	43	43	43
Strategy Planning	Pearson Correlation	.220	1	.322*	-.053	.028
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.157		.035	.737	.861
	N	43	43	43	43	43
Strategy Operationalization	Pearson Correlation	.082	.322*	1	.380*	.256
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.602	.035		.012	.098
	N	43	43	43	43	43
Strategy evaluation & control	Pearson Correlation	-.033	-.053	.380*	1	.412
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.834	.737	.012		.006
	N	43	43	43	43	43
Strategy implementation	Pearson Correlation	-.014	.028	.256	.412**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.927	.861	.098	.006	
	N	43	43	43	43	43

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2- tailed).

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

Test of Research Hypotheses:

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the joint causal relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The formulated research hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis results

Model Summary:

Table 4.8.1 below demonstrate the model summary of multiple regression model, the results showed that all the four independent variables (situation analysis, strategy planning, strategy operationalization and strategy evaluation and control). The results show a positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable ($R=0.426$). R^2 of 0.182 indicates that 42.6 % of variation in dependent variable is explained by independent variables that are included in the model.

Table 4.8.1: Regression Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.426 ^a	.182	.096	1.02401

a.) Predictors: (Constant) Situation analysis, Strategy planning, Strategy operationalization and Strategy evaluation and control

b.) Dependent: strategy implementation

ANOVA ANALYSIS:

In Table 4.8.2 Below the ANOVA was used to show the overall model significance. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05, then Situation analysis, Strategy planning, Strategy operationalization and Strategy evaluation and control had a significant explanatory power on strategy implementation (F = 2.109 and p value <0.05).

TABLE 4.8.2: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8.848	4	2.212	2.109	.06
Residual	39.847	38	1.049		
Total	48.695	42			

a.) Predictors: (Constant) Situation analysis, Strategy planning, Strategy operationalization and Strategy evaluation and control

b.) Dependent: strategy implementation

TABLE 4.8.3: multi regression analysis coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.872	.906		.963	.342
Situation analysis	-.021	.217	-.014	-.096	.924
Strategy planning	.017	.198	.014	.087	.931
Strategy operationalization	.149	.227	.112	.656	.516
Strategy evaluation and control	.541	.237	.370	2.283	.028

a.) Dependent variable: Strategy Implementation.

From the results on table 4.8.3 the following regression equation was obtained using the unstandardized beta coefficients. Unstandardized beta coefficients are used in determining how a unit change in independent variable will affect change in the dependent variables.

$$Y = 0.872 + 0.017x_1 + 0.149x_2 + 0.541x_3 + 0.370x_4$$

The initial objective of the study was to determine the influence of situation analysis on strategy implementation in Kiambu County. The research findings revealed that situation analysis had no significant effect on strategy implementation as $\beta_1 = -0.021$ (p-value=0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.005$ proving that situation analysis had no significant effect on strategy implementation. Moreover, the effect of situation analysis was impacted by the t-test value=-0.096 which implies that the effect of the situation analysis do not surpasses that of the error. The finding are supported by Coman and Romen (2009) in their study they found out that SWOT analysis was not only a one-time event but also it tends to culminate to a larger and more undifferentiated list of an organization strength and weakness and therefore as a result employees and management may create a false illusion that list making of strength and weakness is strategy planning.

The second objective was aimed at determining the effect of strategy planning on strategy implementation in Kiambu County. The results also indicated a statistically low relationship between strategy planning and strategy implementation ($\beta_1 = 0.017$ (p-value=0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.005$ numerically, this implies that for each unit increase in situation analysis there is up to 0.017 unit increase in strategy implementation. Strategy planning is shown by the t-test value of 0.087 which implies that the effect of strategy planning doesn't surpass that of the error. This finding was supported by Cobbold and Lawrie (2011) who in their study found out that majority of the companies had an excellent strategy nevertheless, the greatest obstacle was in the translation of the strategies into individual and team action.

The third objective sought to determine the influence of strategy operationalization on strategy implementation in Kiambu County. The study finding showed that strategy operationalization had a positive significant ($\beta_3 = 0.149$ (p-value = 0.034 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). This implies that for each unit increase in strategy operationalization there is up to 0.149

units increase to strategy implementation. The effect of operationalization is stated by t-test value=0.112 which indicates the effect of operationalization surpasses that of the error. This was supported by Gregory, Lumpkin & Marilyn (2005) argued that strategy operationalization helps to provide guidance on how the organization can fulfill or move towards the “high goals” in the goal hierarchy-an organization mission and vision.

Finally, the study sought to determine the influence of strategy evaluation and control in strategy implementation, the finding showed that $\beta_4 = 0.541$ (p-value = 0.000 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). The study finding showed that there is a strong relationship between strategy evaluation and control and strategy implementation. In the same vein this suggests that for each unit increase in strategy evaluation and control there is up to 0.541 unit increase in strategy implementation. The effect of strategy evaluation and control t-test value = 2.283 surpasses that of the error. This finding is in accordance with Kazmi (2008) argued that strategy evaluation and control importance lies in its ability to coordinate the tasks performed by managers through the control of performance and therefore leading to strategy implementation

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of findings:

The main objective of the study was to examine the influence of strategy management practice on strategy implementation in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study sought to establish the influence of situation analysis, strategy planning, strategy operationalization and strategy evaluation and control on strategy implementation. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings were presented using frequency tables, percentages and inferential statistics tables while respondents' response rate was 76%. The demographic information of the respondents indicated that while male were the majority the County adhered to the two, third gender rule in appointment of women in leadership position, implying that the County was well represented by all gender. In regard to education, it was evidently clear that the County was fairly educated.

Situation Analysis:

The first objective of the study was to examine the influence of situation analysis on strategy implementation in Kiambu County. The findings indicated that the county has competent employees to conduct situation analysis. Most respondents agreed that analysis of community-based issues is critical to an effective strategy planning laying up the foundation in the County by ensuring it does the right thing (effectiveness).

However, the county is not only yet to adapt a systematic monitoring of environmental conditions to review its strategy but also does not conduct an analysis of its strength and weaknesses hence identify its core competencies. There was neutrality among the respondents on whether the county conducts periodic evaluation of its environmental threat and takes advantage of its opportunity. Therefore, the study revealed that Kiambu County had conducted sufficient situation analysis to implying that it had no significant effect on strategy implementation

Strategy planning:

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of strategy planning on strategy implementation in Kiambu County; the research finding indicates that the county clearly had sufficiently competent strategy planning employees. The study also revealed that the fixed term tenure of politicians does not substantially influence long-term strategy planning and that the county organization structure is efficiently designed to implement its strategy.

However, the study established that the county does not conduct the necessary sufficient public participation. Moreover, the county does little to encourage employees to participate in decision making however, the respondents revealed that. In this regard, the study revealed that the county had established a sufficient strategy plan as a result there was no significant relationship between strategy planning and strategy implementation.

Strategy operationalization:

With respect to determining the influence of strategy operationalization on strategy implementation in Kiambu County, the study revealed that the County had established the necessary functional strategy to operationalize their objective. However, not only did the research finding indicate that the county needed more resources allocation to operationalize their strategy and in the same vein reduce misappropriation of those resources but also that the county did not establish a clear annual objective.

It was also evidently clear that county policies and procedures act as a constraint to efficiently operationalize its strategy; the policies and procedure are characterized by long bureaucratic red-tape. Similarly, the study revealed that the county action plan were not efficient to operationalize their strategy. In with regard the study revealed that there was sufficiently more that needed to be done to translate the County strategy into individual and team actions and therefore, strategy operationalization had a strong effect on strategy implementation.

Strategy Evaluation and Control:

The final objective of the study was to determine the effect of strategy evaluation and control on strategy implementation in Kiambu County. The study revealed that the county is yet to conduct a timely corrective action in strategy implementation deviations and therefore the county was using a reactive control approach to strategy implementation as opposed to a proactive control approach. However, the study revealed that the respondents were generally in consensus of the importance of a proactive control mechanism in the implementation process. Furthermore, the study revealed that political goodwill has a great influence on the quality of county control systems implying that there was a possibility of political interference in the control systems with the intention of self-interest endeavors.

The study also found out that periodic reviews of the county strategy control policies are necessary for effective implementation as some outdated policies may constrain effective control. In addition, the study finding revealed that an effective communication system is vital to mitigate inefficiency in the county implementation process with some respondents suggesting an open communication system that transcends the bureaucratic structure. In this respect, the study revealed that strategy evaluation and control had a significant effect on strategy implementation.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that situation analysis is vital as it lays the foundation for the strategy intended to be implementation in Kiambu County. It can not only ensure that the county focuses on community-based issues but also able to identify its threat and opportunity in their environment, hence a county is able to identify its core competency. The challenge though is that Kiambu County does not effectively conduct a situation analysis through application of a systematic monitoring of environmental condition to review its strategy as a result the county does not effectively analyze its strength and weakness to actualize its strategy. Despite this, the county through the members of county assembly play a critical role in environmental analysis as they are in the best position to obtain information.

It can be concluded that strategy planning influences strategy implementation In Kiambu County. Through strategy planning the county is able to establish its vision and mission statement this helps it infuse a sense of purpose and direction, ultimately through this a county lays the foundation for the organization culture. While on the other hand, insufficient public participation by all stakeholders makes it difficult to implement the strategy that's not all inclusive. The county political leadership transition disrupted the implementation progress and in some cases completely halted their implementation. Despite this the county acknowledges the importance of strategy planning and has employed the services of competent employees in strategy management.

Furthermore, the study revealed that strategy operationalization has an influence on strategy implementation as it involves the translation of the long-term objective to more implementable short-term functional goals as well as annual objectives that enable the county to measure the implementation progress. However, the study revealed that does not establish annual objective and its policies and procedure act as an impediment to strategy implementation. Inefficient resource allocation in the county inhibits the efficient strategy implementation nevertheless the county has established functional strategies that facilitate strategy implementation.

Finally, it can be concluded that strategy evaluation and control has a positive influence on strategy implementation. It is through strategy evaluation and control that corrective action is conducted in the event of any deviation from the strategy. The study revealed that the county lacks a timely corrective action mechanism despite a significant number of the respondents acknowledging the critical importance of a proactive control mechanism in the implementation process. The respondents further revealed that an effective communication system is vital in the control process moreover; the political goodwill influences the quality of the control systems in the county.

Recommendations:

Recommendations are critical in both organizations, researchers and scholars these recommendation will be crucial in ensuring that Kiambu County Government as well as other counties are more aware of the impact of the strategy management practices they adopt as well as what areas they need to improve to ensure effective strategy implementation. Researchers and scholars will find the recommendations useful as they embark on further research on related studies.

Situation Analysis:

It was recommended that the county establishes an active and systematic assessment of environmental condition this will not only give the county an up to date issues affecting the county but also as will be a formal internal and external environment information generator that enables the county take proactive action in uncertain environment. The county should identify its core competency as part of its strength in not only empowers its county residence but also generate revenue.

Moreover, the county should assess its organization culture in a bid to align them with the County strategy. The county should conduct public forums and workshops to understand stakeholders' needs and consequently incorporate those needs into their strategy. This implies that situation analysis is a critical prerequisite to strategy planning.

Strategy planning:

It was recommended that the county adopts an all inclusive public participation in the strategy planning process as this will ensure that all stakeholders view are taken into consideration and no one feels marginalized or sidelined in the county development plans. The county should motivate and encourage employees within their docket to give their opinions and ideas and therefore contribute in the decision making process of the county. However, this may involve the restructuring of the communication structure to reduce the bureaucratic red-tape that inhibits efficient communication.

Finally, the study deemed it necessary that the county should establish an effective implementation structure that ensures smooth transition of responsibility and duties after the end of a fixed term by political leaders and those appointed by them. Therefore, creating a higher degree of certainty that implementation is not disrupted as a result of change in political leadership.

Strategy operationalization:

In regard to strategy operationalization it was recommended that the county needed to identify a more efficient way to translate the County strategy into functional strategies that is implementable. It was also recommended the County establish clear annual objectives to enable measure progress but also establish policies and procedure that facilitate rather than constrain the county action plans.

The study noted that due to the constraint in resources implementation was proving to be a challenge. Therefore, it was recommended that the county not only needed to avail more resource but also mitigate misappropriation of public resources and channel them in the operationalization of its strategy

Strategy Evaluation and Control:

Finally, with respect to strategy evaluation and control it was recommended that the county should adopt a proactive control mechanism that anticipates and takes prior measures to mitigate any changes that can have an adverse effect of the implementation process. The county should also promote political goodwill and accountability in establishing a quality control mechanism. Moreover, the county should instill a culture of integrity and transparency to improve on the control mechanism.

The study also revealed that that an effective communication system is essential as a result it was recommended that the county improves its communication system to ensure that employee understand not only their vision and mission statement but also their duties and responsibility that will ensure few control intervention in the implementation process.

Further Research:

This research was limited to only four variables and only in Kiambu County, therefore it is recommended that future studies focus on establish other factors which affect strategy implementation not only in Kiambu County but other

counties as well, this will be significant in establishing if the results of this study are consistent and identify any emerging characteristics and/or challenges in strategy implementation. It would also be intriguing if future research could ascertain the influence of the national government in strategy implementation in the counties especially on account of resource allocation. Furthermore, future studies need to consider the all too common but perennial and seemingly intractable challenge of mismanagement of public resources in our counties and how that affects strategy implementation.

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