

Critical Analysis of Strategy Implementation on Organization Performance in Service Delivery: Case of Lake Victoria South Water Services Board in Kisumu

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ABSTRACT

Although strategy is a practically central concern in contemporary management, putting it into action remains an essential challenge for virtually any organization. In situations where the organization's environment is changing, the organization itself is faced with a need to change. In this study, the intent was to investigate strategy implementation and its functional relationship with organizational performance in service delivery. Towards achieving this, the study purposively targeted a case of the Lake Victoria South Water Services Board (LVSWSB) in Kisumu to form a basis for objective generalization. The study participants were drawn from the water companies, District Officers, and the Board. Out of the 117 target population subjects, sampling was conducted by proportional stratified sampling to generate ultimate 66 respondents whose views and opinions led to the study's generalizations. However, 58 participants finally contributed to the study, representing 88% response rate. The study found that organizational structure, culture, employee involvement, and strategic leadership influenced strategy implementation at LVSWSB and its affiliate institutions. The organizational structures adopted at LVSWSB influenced implementation of strategic plans in the forms of task allocation, decentralization of authority, span of control, hierarchical length, employee co-ordination and integration, and structural flexibility. The cultural effects resulted from poor internationalization of mission and strategic content, lack of participation in making of rules and regulations, lack of operational manuals, insensitive employee development policies, and highly structured downward communication effected employees' mobilization to executing strategic plans. Moreover, to a large extent there was no significant inclusion of employees in core decision making. Moreover, individual strategy implementation contributions from non-management staff members were scanty in respect to core strategic handling. Most often than not, employees were factored into corporate functions late after strategy formulation and actual execution, meaning that they were forced to own what they did not help create. Lastly, strategic leadership influenced strategy implementation through managerial involvement, employee support, downward communication, conflict resolution, and employee representation in key decision making. Based on the aforementioned conclusion, it is the recommendation of this study that experts are involved in regular reviews of adopted organizational structures. Further, it is recommended that institutional management units take note of cultural dynamics so that an absolutely new slate of practices is enacted. In relation to employee involvement, the study recommends that management is sensitized on the significance of collective participation in formulating objective strategies and value of the resulting synergy during implementation. Finally, on leadership, it is recommended that top managers undergo executive capacity building sessions to realize their corporate objectives through team work and not through just supervision and issuance of instructions.

Key Words: Strategy Implementation, Organization Performance in, Lake Victoria South Water Services Board in Kisumu.

1.0 Background Information

Over the past decades, researchers have investigated the effects of formal corporate plans on overall performance in organizations. Many have concluded that there is no consistent association between the process leading to strategy implementation and performance (Cappel, 2000). Steiner (2009) provides a thorough conceptualization of strategy implementation that it is an attitude and an outcome of a process concerned with the future consequences of current decisions. Despite research by Steiner (2009) and others founded on the critical assumption that implementation plans are important, the debate rages on in the literature; the key question being if there is really a link between plan formulation, implementation and organizational performance (Steiner, 2009).

Langley (2008) provided support for the benefits of strategy implementation, identifying four roles of formal planning. In the public role, formal plans are intended to impress or influence outsiders. The information role provides input for management decisions. The group therapy role is intended to increase organizational commitment through the involvement of people at all levels of the organization. Finally, the direction and control roles are fulfilled when plans serve to guide future decisions and activities toward some consistent ends. According to Roach and Allen (2003), the implementation plans are the product of the best minds inside and outside the corporation. The process considers future implications of current decisions, adjusts plans to the emerging business environment, manages the business analytically, and links, directs, and controls complex

enterprises through a practical, working management system. This process plays a vital role in firm performance (Roach and Allen, 2003). Cartwright (2007) suggests that effective implementation plans are not as rational and analytical as it has been portrayed in the literature. Robinson and Pearce (2004) argues that formal strategies are a conceptual activity suited solely to larger firms and therefore have no effect on the performance of small firms. Sinha (2010) appears to have empirically established some kind of a planning-performance linkage. He examined 1087 decisions made by 129 Fortune 500 firms between 1992 and 1996. Consequently, he concluded that characteristics of the decisions accounted for 15 percent of the variance in data and therefore should be regarded as important determinants of the contribution strategic plans make to decision making.

Implementing a strategy, according to Pearce and Robinson (2007), is the process through which a set of agreed work philosophies is translated into functional and operational targets. Kotter and Best (2006) support this position when they state that implementation addresses who, where, when and how, and it is thus the tactic that drives the strategy of the company. According to Hussey (2000), implementation follows a six step process namely, envision, activate, install, ensure, and recognize. He further states that the implementation planning remains one of the most difficult areas of management. Its success depends both on the selection of an appropriate strategy and converting that strategy into action.

Kotter and Best (2006) see the real challenge in strategic planning resting with turning tactic into a strategy for the company and doing this requires effective strategy implementation. Implementation involves activities that effectively put the plan to work. Implementation of the tactic drives the strategy of the company. Implementation planning is likely to be successful when congruence is achieved between several elements crucial to this process. This may be grouped into two groups of structure and process elements. Structure defines the configuration of a company showing the relationships that exists between the various parts of the company. The process element includes leadership, culture, resources and other administrative procedures. The structure of the company should be compatible with the chosen strategy. If there is incongruence, adjustment will be necessary either for the structure or for the strategy itself. Chandler (2002) points out that while structure follows strategy, there is also evidence that structure influences strategy in certain situations.

Hussey (2000) explores the subject of successful implementation planning by introducing the concept of “soft” and “hard” aspects of implementation. He argues that there are soft and hard elements which need to fit together if the strategy is to be implemented. The soft elements comprise the behavioural dimensions while the hard elements comprise the analytical dimensions to the process of making and the subsequent implementation of strategy. He contends that the issue then becomes one of creating a strategic fit between the soft and hard elements and organizational variables. To be successful, the implementation plan must have the support of every member of the firm. This is why the top office must be involved from the beginning. A company's leader is its most influential member. For effective strategy implementation planning, there is need for adequate leadership in the organization. This will ensure that all the organizations effort is united and directed towards achievement of the organizations goals (Pearce and Robinson, 2007).

It is important that the culture of the organization be compatible with the strategies. Roy (2004) argues that corporate culture is one of the important attributes characterizing the management of excellent organizations. Such organizations achieve a fit between their strategies and culture. Lack of this fit can lead to resistance that in turn may frustrate the strategy implementation effort. The strategy to be implemented, it should be realistic in relation to available resources. Human capital is an important resource in the organization, therefore training and development is very important for improved performance. Such training is important for enhancing ability to develop implementation plans. In order to enhance effective implementation planning, there is need to have adequate administrative process and procedures in place (Roy, 2004).

In Kenya, all public entities are now required to develop implementation plans which set attainable summative and formative goals. Implementation plans are regarded as internal management tools and hence not subjected to external critique (Mutoro, 2011). The water sector is equally subjected to strategic planning requirement owing to its importance in national development and attainment of Vision 2030. All the key institutions, such as Water Service Board, in the sector are obliged to conduct their own baseline surveys and come up with responsive strategic plans which normally stretch within 5-year period (Ombogo, 2009).

The growing demand for water and its increasing scarcity could result in conflicts and catastrophes. The country is a water scarce category of 647 cubic meters per capita against the global benchmark of 1000 cubic meters. The country's surface water potential remain at 7.4 billion cubic meters (BCM) and groundwater potential at 1.0BCM per annum yet only 1.6BCM per annum is utilized. This indicates that water as a resource is underdeveloped and the actual supply is far less than the built potential (Ombogo, 2009).

In recognition that Kenya is a water scarce country, the Government prioritized increasing access to sustainable and affordable water services within its overall policy framework of the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC). Subsequently, the sector has undergone major structural reforms aimed at improving service provision. Empirically, the Government through the Ministry of Water and Irrigation found it necessary to modernize the sector to conform to emerging challenges like climate change, population pressure,

environmental degradation, and limited endowment of water resources, temporal variation in the availability of water, national policies, increased water-use conflicts, rapid urbanization and the challenges of low-income areas (Onjala, 2006). In addition to ERSWEC, Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) is among the key issues emphasized under the social pillar of the Kenya Vision 2030. The Vision envisages availability and access of water to all by the year 2030 (Ombogo, 2009).

In order to address the challenges associated with access and provision of water services, the Kenya water sector underwent significant reforms after the Water Act 2002 was enacted by parliament. The main objective of the reforms was to manage water services and resources efficiently by separating responsibilities of providing water to consumers from water provision and management. Before the water sector reforms, there lacked meaningful sustainable water service delivery which is essential for socio-economic development (Asante, 2010). Sustainability of water systems in the rural water sector in Kenya received relatively little attention. There was also no adequate administrative machinery to implement reforms in Kenya (Wilfrido, 2003).

Onjala (2006) reports that there was overlapping of roles and responsibilities of key public actors in the water sector which were the main causes of conflicts and poor performance. Ministry of Water Irrigation and Ministry of Local Government would formulate, regulate and provided services and this diminished checks and balances, accountability and escalated conflicts thus adversely affecting service delivery. This meant inadequate institutional set-up which resulted in poor water sector performance. There was also no sound base for expanding the knowledge that supports integrated management of multi-sectoral use of the water, training of personnel and institutional development. Previous water sector reforms were not consistent with national economic and social plans. This was coupled with lack of equitable water allocations and permits based on allocation plans (Onjala, 2006).

The introduction of Water Act (2002) aimed at providing harmonized and stream lined management of water resources and water supply. It provides for three main aspects: the management, conservation, use and control of water resources, acquisition and regulation of rights to use water and the regulation and management of water supply and sewerage services. The Act establishes an independent management authority, the Water Resources Management Authority (WRMA), Water Services Regulatory Board (WSRB), Water Services Boards (WSB), regional catchments offices, catchments area advisory committees (CAACs) and the establishment of water users association (WUAs). The establishment of these institutions allows for decentralization, participation and sustainability in the management of water resources (Ombogo, 2009).

The LVSWSB was established under the Water Act 2002 vide gazette Notice No. 1714 of 12th March 2004 as a state Corporation reporting to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and subsequently commissioned on 7th December 2004. The Board, whose core mandate is infrastructure development and licensing of Water Service Providers (WSPs), serves a total of 36 districts in 10 counties, and within its operational arm pits are 39 and 9 rural and urban WSPs respectively (LVSWSB, 2013).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Majority of the target consumers constituting 57% did not have water within the recommended 1000 meters radius and a lot of supply plants were aging. Therefore, despite targets of water act (2002) which emphasized commercialization and decentralization of water institutions, so little progress had been attained or achieved 10 years after the inception of the act. WSPs still depended on the government for support since there was rampant corruption, poor technical input and over inefficiency as confirmed by Ombogo (2009). This study was found on the aforementioned and sought to determine the contributive influence of design and implementation of strategies on organization performance in water service delivery taking a case of LVSWSB. This meant transfer of financial burdens to the newly established County governments which would force re-allocation of the limited resources to address inherited gaps. Thus, it was justifiable to analyze strategy implementation and its influence on organization performance in service delivery at LVSWSB.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Literature

2.2 Strategy Implementation

Although formulating a consistent a strategy is a difficult task for any management team, making that strategy implementation work throughout the organization – is even more difficult (Hrebiniak, 2006). A myriad of factors can potentially affect the process by which implementation plans are turned into organizational action. Unlike strategy implementation formulation, to implement it 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, 2000). It is thus not surprising that after a comprehensive strategy or single strategy implementation has been formulated, significant difficulties usually arise during the subsequent implementation process. The best-formulated implementation plans may fail to produce superior performance for the firm if they are not successfully put into action.

An Economist survey found that discouraging since 57 percent of firms were unsuccessful at executing strategy implementation initiatives over the past three years, according to a survey of 276 senior operating executives in 2004 (Allio, 2005). According to the White Paper of Strategy Implementation of Chinese Corporations in 2006, putting strategy into action was the most significant management challenge which all kinds of corporations faced at the moment. The survey reported in that white paper indicates that 83 percent of the surveyed companies failed to put their strategy into action smoothly, and only 17 percent felt that they had a consistent implementation of plans put in action. It is thus obvious that putting implementation plans into action is a key challenge for today's organizations. There are many (soft, hard and mixed) factors that influence the success of strategy implementation, ranging from the people who communicate or implement the plans to the systems or mechanisms in place for co-ordination and control (Allio, 2005).

2.3 Organization Structure

Organizational structure exists as an important foundation for organizational effectiveness. Due to the complex nature of organizational effectiveness and the many ways it can be characterized, Robbins (2007) defined organizational effectiveness as "the degree to which an organization attains its short- (ends) and long-term (means) goals, the selection of which reflects strategic constituencies, the self-interest of the evaluator, and the life stage of the organization.

Richards (2006) asserts that over time, many scholars have claimed that goals and strategies are the biggest determinants of organizational structure. Strategy, defined largely as the long-term goals of an organization coupled with the actions that will produce those goals, has since been classified as only one of many elements that determine structure. Several studies have attempted to reveal a conclusive relationship between strategy implementation and structure. In the end, no definite conclusions can be made as to how one affects the other. What was introduced, however, was the fact that the industrial environment of the organization influences strategy implementation and therefore, structure.

Peters (2003) did not claim the existence of a good or bad structure, but one that is appropriate to strategy, markets, internal policy, customers, culture, and people. He maintained that the purpose of examining organizational structure is to develop ways that structure may be better suited to strategy. He proposed ways to think about the organization so that changes may be made to structure in order to enhance strategy. By thinking about what the organization does, the ways the customer is exposed to the organization, the activities necessary to achieving organizational goals, and how communication flows between these activities, one may determine which organizational design is best suited to the organization. After making the necessary changes in organizational structure, constant evaluation will reveal whether or not that particular structure fits with the organizational strategy implementation

According to Richards (2006) as organizations grow the size and number of their functions and divisions increase. To economize on bureaucratic costs and effectively coordinate the activities of people, functions, and divisions, managers must develop a clear and unambiguous hierarchy of authority or chain of command that defines each manager's relative authority from the CEO down through the middle managers and first-line managers to the non-managerial employees who actually make goods or provide services. Hill and Jones (2010) supplement that when managers know exactly what their authority and responsibilities are, information distortion problems that promote managerial inefficiencies are kept to a minimum, and handoffs or transfers can be negotiated and monitored to economize on bureaucratic costs.

The growth in size or complexity (measured by the number of its employees, functions, and divisions) is coupled with lengthening of hierarchy of authority, making the organizational structure taller. Effective managers constantly scrutinize their hierarchies to see whether the number of levels can be reduced - for example by eliminating one level and giving the responsibilities of managers at that level to managers above and empowering employees below. Porter (2003) advocates that one important way to reduce the problems associated with too-tall hierarchies and reduce bureaucratic costs is to decentralize authority—that is, vest authority in managers at lower levels in the hierarchy as well as at the top. Authority is centralized when managers at the upper levels of a company's hierarchy retain the authority to make the most important decisions. When authority is decentralized, it is delegated to divisions, functions, and employees at lower levels in the company. Delegating authority in this fashion reduces bureaucratic costs because it avoids the communication and coordination problems that arise when information has to be constantly sent up the hierarchy, sometimes to the top of the organization, for decisions to be made and then back down again.

Much coordination takes place among people, functions, and divisions through the hierarchy of authority. Often, however, as a structure becomes complex, this is not enough, and top managers need to use various integrating mechanisms to increase communication and coordination among functions and divisions. The greater the complexity of an organization's structure, the greater is the need for coordination among people, functions, and divisions to make the organizational structure work efficiently (Hill and Jones, 2010).

2.4 Organization Culture

Lopez et al (2004) make a consensus on the idea that organizations making the effort to introduce a culture which encourages communication among their members and motivates employees to question fundamental beliefs will achieve a favorable working atmosphere. The pervasiveness of an organization's culture requires that management recognize underlying dimensions of their corporate culture and its impact on employee-related variables such as satisfaction, commitment, cohesion, strategy implementation, performance, among others. A noticeable influence of a powerful culture clears up on the subject of strategy implementation. As well as the formulation of a strategy seems critical, its execution should be considered vital. Only organizations which implement almost all their strategy achieve good records on profitability. However, only a few studies implicitly show the effect of culture on strategy implementation (Van Der Maas, 2008).

Lund (2003) alludes to the fact that the 1980s witnessed a surge in popularity to examine the concept of organizational culture as managers became increasingly aware of the ways that an organizational culture can affect employees and organizations. Between 1983 and 1986, most of the leading journals within the field have dedicated special issues to this topic and brought up many definitions for this notable issue. Mehta and Krishnan (2004) define organizational culture is defined as beliefs, assumptions, and values that members of a group share about rules of conduct, leadership styles, administrative procedures, ritual, and customs. Also, it has been mentioned the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes and norms inspire commitment and productivity. Also, culture provides a system of shared values and beliefs that interacts with a company's people, organizational structure, and control systems to produce behavioral norms (Lund, 2003). Dodek et al., (2010) remark culture is to an organization what personality is to the individual- a hidden, yet unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization.

Cultures can be categorized in a spectrum of weak to strong cultures. Mehta and Krishnan (2004) suggest that successful companies apparently have strong cultures. Dauber et al (2012) consider the key role of external environments as all elements outside the boundary of the organization to which an organization needs to adapt. Finally, Aten and Grenville (2011) imply that globalization has contributed to the rise of some organizational culture that carries significant weight in organizational setups.

2.5 Employee/Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder theory posits that an organization is a social construction made of interaction of various stakeholders. The organization is envisioned as the centre of a network of stakeholders, a complex system of exchanging services, information, influence and other resources (Mersland and Strøm, 2009). The theory further argues that an organization's value is created when it meets the needs of the firm's important stakeholders in a win-win fashion (Harrison et al., 2007). The concept of stakeholder refers to those categories of individuals or organizations that have a stake in an organization. According to Bryson (2003), the contemporary use of the concept refers to a claimant toward whom an organization has fiduciary responsibility.

According to Jawahar and MCLAughlin (2001), primary or key stakeholders include shareholders, investors, employees, customers and suppliers. Employees are the key to achieving effective strategy implementation. Staffing competent employees involves recruiting, training and retaining a capable and adaptable workforce. An organization can have all the resources but if the workforce does not have capabilities the achieving organizational objectives may be nearly impossible.

Rousseau and Shperling (2003) give another distinction in terms of their location, which includes internal and external stakeholders. The internal stakeholders are those groups which belong inside the organization, such as managers and employees. External stakeholders are groups that are outside the organization and have effects on the survival of the organizations. These groups consist of customers, suppliers, government agencies, local communities and unions. It is further argued that the core idea of stakeholder theory is not only to recognize internal stakeholders with whom stakeholder communication has been implemented for a longer time and has become obligatory, but also external stakeholders whose claims are patently political or social in nature.

Advocates of stakeholder theory further suggest that including stakeholder representatives on boards is a formal mechanism in place that acknowledges the importance of their relationship with the organization (Hillman et al., 2001). This implies that stakeholder groups represented are both powerful and legitimate, as well as a part of the organization's dominant coalition. Despite the importance of stakeholders, it is evidenced that stakeholder management, whether on boards or not, is often a challenge for many organizations (Harrison et al., 2007). Some reasons for this challenge are that there are many stakeholder entities and all of them have different stakes and different interests. Involving all of them in implementation planning may lead to a lot of conflicts of interests and politics (Gijssels, 2009).

2.6 Organizational Leadership

Leadership is the ability to influence others. Leadership is a set of behavior that enforces the people to formulate the organizational goals and then motivate them to jointly contribute in order to achieve organization's goals.

Basically leader plays a vital role in the decision making to ensure efficacy (effectiveness) and success of the organization. A leader should be supportive in order to guide subordinates. He should treat everyone equally without any discrimination. He should appreciate every one's involvement. It is the responsibility of the leader to build strong relationships within the whole organization in both vertically and horizontally. Leader should involve everyone in the strategic management process because it is positively relate with overall performance. It is the commitment of the leader that helps to achieve the strategic vision. Most importantly leaders objectives should be integrate with the organizations strategic goals and objectives to be champion. And for this, leaders' power should be use accurately with honesty and loyalty. Leader should have a clear mental approach about the need of change and organization's capabilities (Sami et al., 2011).

Organization's performance depends upon the strategies that are used to achieve company's vision. Leadership assimilates the strategy with vision to enrich the capability of the firm to perform well or according to the need. Today's business environment is rapidly changing and mostly leaders try to adopt flexible and process improvement strategies to ensure responsiveness of the organization towards change. Leadership influenced the whole decision making process and decision making is the core of the strategic management process. It facilitates the whole process starting from conceptual framework for strategy formulation and till the evaluation. Especially strategy implementation is fully depends upon efficient decision making. Basically leadership influences three areas of organization first, the vision, Secondly the strategies itself and finally the values. These three components jointly create the culture of the organization. It is the responsibility of the leader to introduce a clear understanding of the vision throughout the organization (Ashim, 2008).

Leadership is responsible for development of strategies to achieve the vision. Basically strategy formulation means is to provide road map and this road map should be clear and focused. It is the duty of leadership to relate the strategy process with the vision. It should develop a culture of learning by providing a clear set of values for the organization. Values demonstrate the behavior of the organization and lead the organization towards right. Both vision and strategies should reflect these values. Once the leader understand the importance of values the process of strategy formulation and implementation becomes easy. The most important role of the leadership is to integrate the people with the strategic management process. It should involve everyone to ensure responsiveness towards change (Rich, 2008).

2.7 Empirical Literature Review

Both Skivington and Daft (2001) and Noble (2000) classify implementation variables into two dimensions: framework and process, but with different content in their categories. Skivington and Daft (2001) stipulate two generic types of strategic decisions - low cost and differentiation - that need to be implemented through two organizational modalities, namely framework and process. An organization's framework is represented by its rules and resources. The organization's process is represented by interactions, meanings, and sanctions. Skivington and Daft's findings begin to bridge the gap empirically between framework and process views to capture the multidimensionality of business level strategy implementation. Their findings indicate that low cost and differentiation strategy implementation employ different variables, and that a specific pattern of variables may exist for each type of strategy.

The study of Skivington and Daft (2001) and Noble (2000) reviews strategy implementation research from a structural view (emphasizing organizational structure and control mechanisms) and an interpersonal process view (emphasizing strategic consensus, autonomous strategic behaviors, diffusion perspectives, leadership and implementation style, communication and interaction processes). Noble and Mokwa (2003) add a third view – the individual-level processes view, emphasizing cognition, organizational roles and commitment besides the structural and interpersonal process view.

Beer and Eisenstat (2000) examined 12 profiles in depth from 4 companies – 10 for business units and 2 for corporate. They put forward six silent killers of strategy implementation which are rarely publicly acknowledged or explicitly addressed just as follows: top-down or laissez-faire senior management style (9 of 12 cases); unclear strategy and conflicting priorities (12 of 12 cases); an ineffective senior management team (10 of 12 cases); poor vertical communication (9 of 12 cases); poor coordination across functions, businesses or borders (9 of 12 cases); inadequate down-the-line leadership skills and development (8 of 12 cases). Among them, poor vertical communication is treated as a core barrier which not only hinders strategy implementation but also impedes discussion of the barriers themselves. The six killers are grouped into three categories: quality of direction, quality of learning and quality of implementation.

Studies lead by Pettigrew (2005) group implementation variables into a larger number of categories. These categories are: strategic content, context (consisting of organizational context: organizational structure, organizational culture; and environmental context: uncertainty in the general and uncertainty in the task environment), process (operational planning, resources, people, communication, control and feedback) and strategic outcome. Okumus (2001) also adopts the above framework, but adds three new variables. The revised implementation framework includes four parts: content (strategic decision, multiple project implementation),

context (internal context: organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational learning; external context: environmental uncertainty in the general and task environment), process (operational planning, resources allocation, people, communication, monitoring and feedback, external partners) and outcome (tangible and intangible outcomes of the project).

Manyasi (2009) took a study on Crisis Management and revealed that managers do not use a proactive approach to crises management during strategy implementation. They lack knowledge about strategic actions such as integrating crises management into strategic process, integrating crises management into statements of corporate excellence, creating crises management teams and including external expertise. The organizations did not have a crisis management plan. The researcher recommends inclusion of competent public relations officers to perform all functions including crises management, training and workshops in crises management, and executive development programmes. Finally, Bidemi (2009), in his study on strategic implementation for higher education in Kenya expressed that the public has become targets for the extraction of revenue. Private entry schemes increased workload of instructors and consequently lowered quality without evaluating implications of access, standards and equity issues.

2.8 Critique of Existing Literature

As demonstrated in the preceding literature review, strategy implementation is elevated as a determinant of success or failure that is deeply connected to the formulation process, and the functioning and structure of the organization. However, in spite of its relevance, implementation is by far the least studied and documented stage in the strategy implementation process according to Hitt et al. (2006). In general, studies in the field place formulation and implementation at the same level in the strategy process, as if being one continuous stage, while evidence and logic suggests that although highly intertwined, they are two very different phases. Similarly, the secondary source in the Kenyan context referring to implementation of strategic plans is scanty especially within the precincts public governance.

General literature also suggests that implementation could be a major determinant of the organizational performance (Hitt et al., 2006). In the eventuality of two firms implementing the same strategy the resultant performance is likely to be different. This might be explained once again in terms of resources and capabilities, and the uniqueness resulting from their distinctive use and development over time. Although resources might be the same, the resultant objective will anyway differ in terms of performance and eventually in terms of quality. A strategy, thus, produces different performance according to the characteristic functioning and structure of the organizations that is determined by its unique use of resources and capabilities. These unique resources have hardly been exhaustively investigated and documented by any research for comprehensive analysis and dissemination. This has resulted to theoretical frameworks with a widening consistency-variance providing a prelude to knowledge disharmony.

2.9 Research Gaps

Strategy Implementation in organizations is a research area that cuts across different fields of social sciences including strategic management, organizational theory, and organization development. According to Hitt et al (2006), the result of this intertwined complexity is rightly construed to activate a comprehensive investigative endeavor to bring forward a universal model concerning reality and ideal-think underpinning the concept of strategy implementation.

Despite heightened interests on formulation unlike implementation of strategic plans, there is an evident geographical bias when deciding most studies' operational scopes. As a result, most of the generalizations regarding strategy implementation are based on populations extracted from developed economies and advanced organizational set-ups as opposed to small and developing contexts. This augurs well for a subjective reference but adds little value if objectivity and exclusivity are the bases for deductions. It is this argument that informed the design of this study where none of the same had been conducted with the intent of adding diversity to existing subjective knowledge. The choice of the LVSWSB coverage as study location and variable scope was embedded on the ideals of fair inclusion and geographical representativeness which were key ingredients towards universal theory formation. Also, most researchers had concentrated on other factors which were different from these ones. Based on proposed design and methodology on the target population, it was highly anticipated that this study would induce a renewed debate and further researches on relationship between an organization's institutional factors and optimality in strategy implementation execution.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design which, according to Yin (2003), is structured to examine a number of logical sub-units or units of analysis within organizations. Morris and Wood (1991) acknowledge the importance of descriptive design especially when the intent is gaining broader understanding of the context of

the research and processes being enacted. Moreover, they argue that the design has considerable ability to generate answers to the questions of ‘why?’, ‘what?’ and ‘how?’ questions.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was based at the LVSWSB region which covered 36 districts in ten counties. Within these counties, there were 9 Water Service Providers (WSPs) which were delegated with the responsibilities of directly serving the populace with water and sanitation services. The geographical region under study covered the whole of former Nyanza province and the South Rift in the larger rift Valley. LVSWSB is based at the Lake Victoria Lake-side Kisumu town which is about 600km west of Nairobi city.

3.3 Target Population

The study targeted collecting information that represented the guided knowledge of three key strategy implementation clusters in the water sector within the LVSWSB region. These included the Head Office at Kisumu City, District Water Officers (DWOs), and the 9 WSPs spread across the jurisdiction area. While all the 36 DWOs qualified for direct inclusion, the study targeted additional information from the Board’s 22 divisional and four departmental heads. Further, the WSP cluster participated through all their five departmental heads, totaling to 45. Apart from these, the 9 MDs and Board’s CEO were recruited as informants. The study’s ultimate target population, therefore, constituted an aggregate of 117 accessible participants.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The researcher administered instruments on sample respondents who were objectively constituted using stratified random sampling method at 0.5 sampling ratio. The stratification was based on distinct roles performed by the different study entities. According to Bell (2005), a minimum number equivalent to a third of entire population for statistical analyzes provides a useful rule of thumb for each study category. On the other hand, study informants were included for interview. Table 1 explains further on how the 66 sample participants were selected.

Table 1: Sample Size

Study Cluster	Population Size	Sampling Ratio	Sample Size
District Water Officers	36	0.5	18
LVSWSB Head Office	22	0.5	11
Water Service Providers	45	0.5	23
LVSWSB Departmental Heads	4	1.0	4
LVSWSB CEO/MDs	10	1.0	10
TOTAL	117		66

Source: LVSWSB (2013)

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The study deductions were pegged on both secondary and primary data. The secondary data formed the basis for comparison with findings and as a building block to answering research questions. This was obtained through desk reviews of documented sources. On the other hand, primary data were collected using questionnaires and interviews.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

To ascertain the primary data from various identified respondents, the researcher preferred the use of researcher administered questionnaires which were executed by trained research assistants. This option was reinforced by Casley and Kumar (2003) who argued that well standardized and tested questionnaires are most effective tools for a structured survey.

Keeping the central objective of study in mind, the researcher adopted both open-ended and closed question items that were sufficient to yield only relevant information. The open-ended questions served the purpose of allowing respondents to give explicit details on issues the researcher’s knowledge was limited, while the closed-ended items were designed in such a way that they generated specific information or responses of value to the study. A clear set of alternatives after every question was meant to limit irrelevance so that coding and analysis were easily accomplished.

3.5.2 Interview Guide

Interviews were used to collect data from the Chief Executive Officer at the Board and the nine Managing Directors of the WSPs. The adopted format of interview allowed the researcher to probe for more detailed

responses where the respondent was asked to clarify what they have said. According to Arksey and Knight (1999), interviewing is a powerful way of helping people to make explicit things that have hitherto been implicit and to articulate their tacit perceptions, feelings and understandings. Other than enhancing the study's response rate, the interviews were used to elicit the range and depth of answers required for efficient generalization. To enhance objectivity, the interviewers underwent training on administration prior to field assignment.

3.5.3 Document Analysis

Prior to primary data collection, the researcher reviewed written and documented articles and findings regarding the water sector particularly to ascertain basic features and characteristics with respect to strategic plan implementation. The significant documents reviewed included strategic plans, WSP implementation plans, Service Provision Agreements (SPAs), Co-financing Agreements (CFAs), Implementation Proposals, Media Reports, and relevant online materials. The reviews were guided by an elaborate checklist which was prepared in advance.

3.6 Pilot Testing Instruments

According to Dornyei (2003) pilot testing is one comprehensive procedure towards enhancing instrument reliability. This underlined the intent of this study to conducting a rigorous instrument validation exercise through pilot-testing. The process ensured that the researcher got first-hand experience with the study context while focusing on refining the data collection instruments. Pilot units, equivalent to one-tenth of the proposed sample size, that is 7 potential participants, were obtained from comparable members of the population from which the sample for the full study was taken. This size was informed by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who regard the proportion as sufficient for pilot testing. Further, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) acknowledge the significance of pilot-testing in enhancing instrument validity and reliability, while acknowledging its rationale in giving the researcher first-hand experience in instrument administration. In quest of avoiding respondent contamination and possible resistance, those respondents identified for the pilot were not included in the final completions.

3.7 Instrument Validity and Reliability

The research instruments were designed with the intent of collecting data that would consistently and competently answer the research questions. Hence, their validity and reliability were guaranteed as explained.

3.7.1 Validity

The study's content validity was attained through expert identification of relevant indicators attainable by extensive search of the literature on the concept to be measured, while the criterion validity was accomplished through a good knowledge of theory relating to the concept so that the researcher decided what variables were expected to be predicted by and related to it and a measure of the relationship between the measure and those factors.

3.7.2 Reliability

The reliability of instruments was guaranteed by ensuring that the quality of questions asked was high and unambiguous through pre-testing process. According to Grey (2004), unambiguous and clear questions are likely to be more reliable, and the same goes for items on a rating scale for observers. Another way was by measuring a construct with more than one item. When more items are used, individual errors that respondents can make when answering a single item (misreading a question, for example) cancel each other out. That is, more items mean higher reliability. Also, the survey instruments were kept shorter so that respondents did not drop out and to avoid careless hurry in completion.

3.8 Statistical Analysis of Data

The researcher examined the collected quantitative data to make inferences through a series of operations involving editing to eliminate inconsistencies, classification on the basis of similarity and tabulation to relate variables. Subsequently, the refined data were analyzed using descriptive statistics involving percentages and mean scores to determine varying degrees of response-concentration. All the required study statistics were generated with aid of the computer software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.0. The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis technique. This involved the making of inferences about textual data by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics, classes or categories within them.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Organizational Culture and Implementation of Strategic Plans

Aosa (2002) noted that lack of compatibility of strategy and culture can lead to resistance to change and frustrate strategy implementation efforts. In this study, such compatibility was measured using indicators such as understanding and subscribing to corporate mission, rules and regulations, operational manuals, employee development policy, strategy innovation, and decision making.

4.2 Subscribing to Organizational Mission

On an ascending ordinal scale of 1-3, respondents were asked the extent to which employees working under them understood and subscribed to the LVSWSB's mission content. The responses were analyzed by use descriptive statistics as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Work Compliance with Corporate Goals

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Extent of Subscription to LVSWSB Mission	58	2.07	.704	-.094	.277
Valid N (list-wise)	58				

Source/ LVSWSB Research Data (2014)

The distribution's means score was found to be 2.07, meaning that employees' understanding and support towards attainment of corporate mission was marginally above average. Moreover, the derived standard deviation of less than 1 ($\sigma = 0.704$) implied that the extent of response-agreement was high, but inclined more to the left hand-side as reflected by the -.094 value of skewness. The interpretation for this is that though all employees worked for the LVSWSB, some of them did not understand core corporate objectives underlying their individual responsibilities.

4.3 Corporate Rules and Regulations

Wilson (2009) asserts that allowing employees to participation in key decision-making process results in successful value creation in many organizations. In this study, two main parties responsible for decision making of work-related rules and regulations were established as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Source of Corporate Rules and Regulations

Source	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Parent Ministry	34	58.7	58.7
Management Only	24	41.3	100.0
Total	58	100.0	

Source/ LVSWSB Research Data (2014)

The study found that 59% of the rules and regulations applied on employees at LVSWSB were a creation of the parent Ministry. Notably, however, some rules and regulations, equaling 41%, originated from the top echelon of Board management. This meant that shop-floor employees were rarely or hardly involved in making or contributing to essential rules and regulations that governed their relationships. Such findings contracted with the idealism advocated by Wilson (2009) and a sheer threat to efficiency in implementing strategic plans.

4.4 Employee Contribution in Strategy Implementation

On an ascending scale of 1 to 5, respondents were asked to indicate their extent on agreement or disagreement on employee contribution to the strategic implementation process at the LVSWSB and affiliate institutions. The feedbacks were aggregated in mean scores and standard deviations are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Employee Contribution to Strategy Implementation

Statement on Employee Contribution	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees well aware of implementation action plan	58	3.09	.923
Employees well involved to achieve success	58	2.81	.868
Employees allocated clear objectives	58	3.03	.898
Management makes use of individual expertise	58	2.76	.979
Valid N:	58		

Source/ LVSWSB Research Data (2014)

The research found that employees were moderately (3.09 mean score) aware of the existence of strategic implementation action plans at the studied key water service institutions. This was further emphasized by the observed small standard deviation ($\sigma = 0.923$) which implied a higher degree of agreement. Similarly, employee allocation of clear strategy objectives was at a moderate level with a mean score of 3.03 and smaller deviation of 0.898. Employee involvement in seeking success and management use of individual technical expertise were lowly ranked with mean scores of 2.81 and 2.76 respectively. Overall, it could be deduced that institutional Managements were not so keen to maximizing individual employee contributions to the successful strategy implementation.

4.5 Perceived Exploitation of Employee Technical Skills

The last indicator use to evaluate employee involvement in strategy implementation was the respondents' perception on usability of their technical expertise in service delivery at the various water sector institutions at the LVSWBSB jurisdictional coverage. The various opinions collected were as presented in Fig. 1.

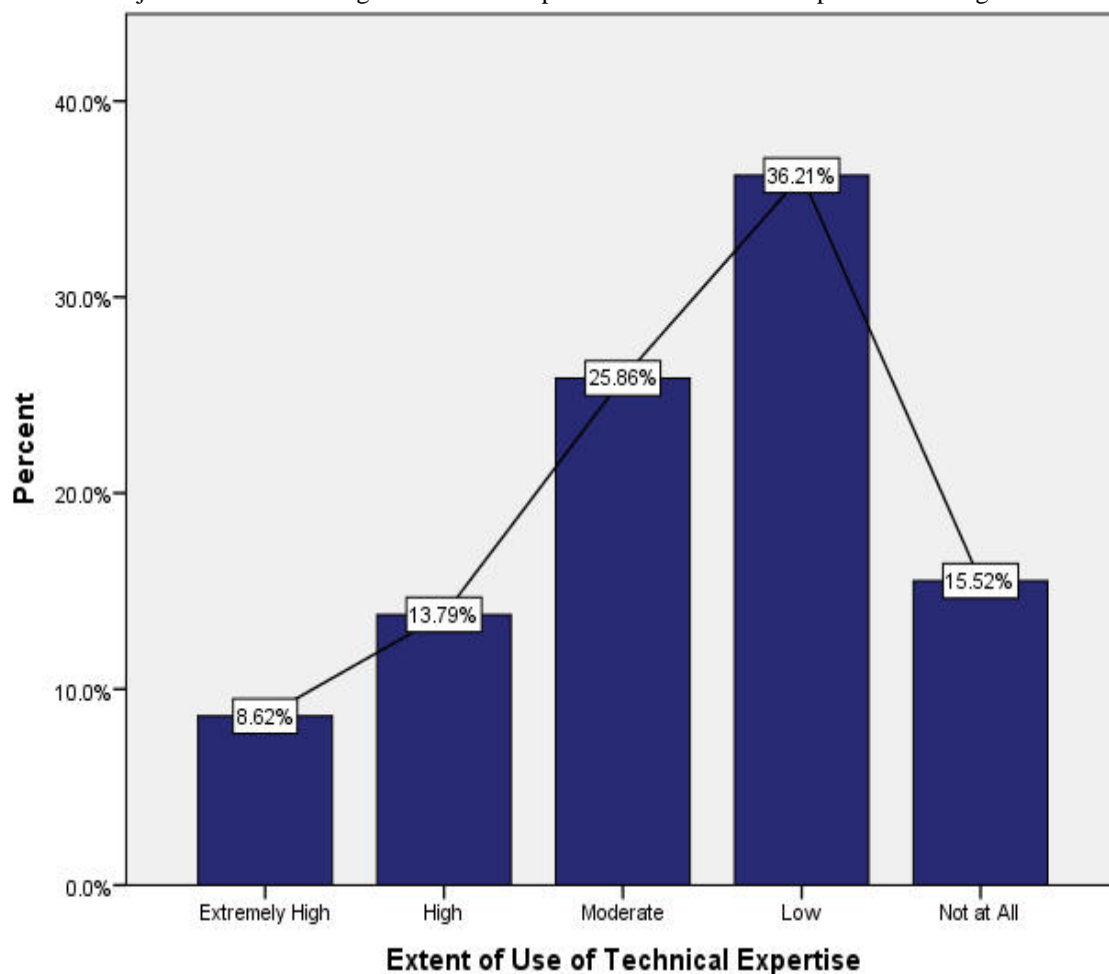


Fig. 1: Extent of Application of Technical Expertise
 Source| LVSWBSB Research Data (2014)

Fig.4 shows that 36% of the employees regarded themselves highly and technically qualified but lowly utilized by their respective institutions in service delivery. Besides this category, 26% of the taskforce regarded their involvement as moderate, while for 16% application of their technical expertise was not sought at all. On the higher extreme, there were 14% whose technical skills were highly made use of and another 9% who ranked their technical usefulness as 'extremely high'. Generally, thus, only a minority of the employees saw commitment of their institutions in converting their technical competency to results.

4.6 Corporate Leadership and Implementation of Strategic Plans

According to Nutt (2006), strategy implementation, rather than strategy formulation, is the key to superior organizational performance. However, high failure rate of strategy implementation efforts is well documented,

and many barriers to effective strategy implementation exist. A lack of leadership, and specifically strategic leadership, at the top of the organization has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation. In turn, strategic leadership is also viewed as a key driver to effective strategy implementation. Based on Nutt (2006) proposition, this study sought to analyze the influence of top organizational leadership on implementation of strategic plans among the selected water institutions using parameters of involvement, employee support, downward communication, conflict resolution, and employee representation in key decision making.

4.7 Perceived Management Commitment

The respondents were queried on the extent of their managers' perceived commitment in actual implementation of strategic plans. The consolidated feedbacks were as summarized in table 5.

Table 5: Commitment by Top Management

Involvement	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Extremely High	8	13.3	13.3
High	6	10.7	24.0
Moderate	20	34.7	58.7
Low	19	33.3	92.0
Extremely Low	5	8.0	100.0
Total	58	100.0	

Source| LVSWSB Research Data (2014)

Generally, it was found that top managers were not satisfactorily committed to the practical implementation of strategic plans. Majority of respondents, 34.7%, felt that their top managers' commitment was to a moderate extent. Close to this group was another of 33.3% who regarded the commitment as low. To a higher extent, however, there were 13.3%, and 10.7% for the high extent. The extreme low involvement was an opinion by 8% of the respondents. It would, hence, be deduced that top managers at LVSWSB were to a large extent not perfect part of the implementation success.

4.8 Employee Support

Further to managerial commitment, responses were obtained regarding the support originating from the employee to managers in quest of attaining strategic targets. Feedback concerning if employees supported management or not was processed, analyzed and presented as in Fig. 2.

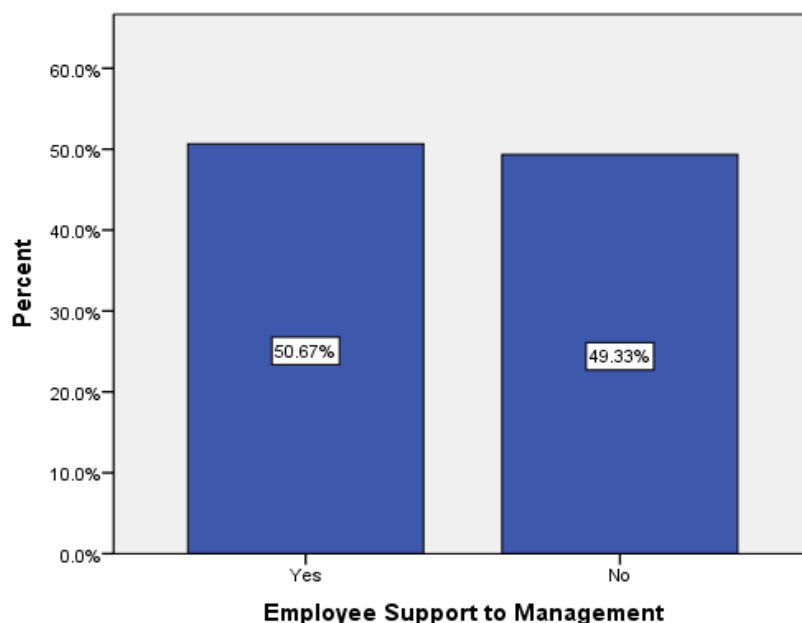


Fig. .2: Support of Employees to Management

Source| LVSWSB Research Data (2014)

An aggregate of 51%, representing the majority responses, were of the opinion that most managers had not won support from their shop-floor employees. This was not, however, the case for the rest 49%. The fact that majority of employees did not subscribe to top managerial instructions posed a challenge to the water entities in achieving the anticipated success in strategy implementation. The findings contradict the idealism presented by Hitt et al. (2007) that strategic leaders have a role to play in each of strategic actions. In turn, each of these strategic leadership actions should positively contribute to teamwork and effective strategy implementation.

4.9 Communication Modes to Employees

Hunter (2007) observes that, regardless of the precise nature of a policy or strategy, and the support that exists for it, if the means to implement it are either non-existent or inadequate in terms of communication efficiency, then it will count for little. This was considered in the study by analysis of communication modes adopted by the LVSWB. Table 6 presents the findings.

Table 6: Preferred Mode of Communication

Modes	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Circulars	21	36.0	36.0
Notices and Memos	14	24.0	60.0
Staff Meetings	14	24.0	84.0
Management Meetings	9	16.0	100.0
Total	58	100.0	

Source/ LVSWB Research Data (2014)

The research found that 36% of the communications adopted circulars which were supposed to be adhered to. Among the rest, 24% used notices and memoranda while staff meetings delivered 24% of the communications. The least used was management meetings at only 16%. According to Hunter (2007), communications that foster personal touch are effective in implementing strategic plans. Hence, in the case of water institutions studied, there was no communication efficiency since to a higher extent circulars and notices were preferred yet they negated the requisite personal touch. Jones (2008) asserts that communication actions should be geared to get people motivated and remove the blocks that have prevented the strategy from working in the past; blocks that may be embedded within the culture of the organization. They should get people behind the strategy, adding to it and making it work in their part of the business.

4.10 Conflict Management Procedures

Conflicts can emerge in any organization when disagreements, differences, annoyances, competition, or inequities threaten something of importance to one or more groups or individuals. The basic aim of constructive conflict management is to seek lasting resolutions which create a balance among the differing parties, the situation, and the consequences of actions to be taken. Organizational leadership takes responsibility towards ensuring tranquility between team implementing a strategy (Hunter, 2007). The extent of employee satisfaction through management's input in conflict resolution was found as presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Satisfaction with Conflict Resolution

Satisfaction	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Extremely High	6	10.7	10.7
High	6	10.7	21.3
Moderate	21	36.0	57.3
Low	21	36.0	93.3
Extremely Low	4	6.7	100.0
Total	58	100.0	

Source/ LVSWB Research Data (2014)

The study found that only 11% of employees were satisfied with conflict resolution to an extremely high extent. A similar portion was satisfied to a higher extent, while 36% were moderately satisfied, and another 36% lowly satisfied. The extremely low satisfaction index affected 7% of the employees. Evidently, therefore, conflict resolution was one of the major barriers to effectiveness in implementing strategic plans.

4.10 Employee Representation in Decision Making

Successful organizations understand the importance of creating plans to achieve goals. Before implementing strategic plans, making decisions regarding how the plan or project will develop is essential. Decision-making strategies set out management techniques, leadership styles, implementation requirements and key factors to be considered for a smooth transition from the decision to pursue a plan to the implementation of it. Ideally, all involved parties need to participate in the decision making process (Aosa, 2002). In this study, the ways through which employees were represented in decision making was evaluated as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Employee Representation in Decision Making

Representation	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Adequate Sensitization	8	13.3	13.3
Prior Notices	4	6.7	20.0
Prior Consultations	9	14.7	34.7
Representatives	25	44.0	78.7
Departmental Heads	12	21.3	100.0
Total	58	100.0	

Source/ LVSWSB Research Data (2014)

The study found that 44% of the LVSWSB water institutions' decision making processes accepted representatives from employee groups. Alternatively, departmental heads were utilized to represent their department at 21%. Those who consulted staff before decision making were 14.7% while 13.3% sensitized their employees adequately on decisions to be made. The least of 6.7% used prior notices communicating implementation decisions. A more participatory approach would be recommended for the entities to fully utilize their staffers' talents while enhancing appreciation.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The extent to which organizational structures at the LVSWSB and affiliate institutions influenced strategy implementation was measured using task allocation, decentralization of authority, span of control, hierarchical length, employee co-ordination and integration, and structural flexibility. The study found that the water service institutions adopted various approaches to duty allocation in strategy implementation. While others favoured management teams, some favoured staff inclusion, independent implantation unit, or use of experts. Regarding decentralization of authority, the water institutions were dissimilar on how they allowed their staffers to hold lien in performing specified official duties relating to implementing strategic plans. Majority of them exercised centralized authority, while the minority unfairly distributed authority. Most often than not, they allocated 30-40 employees under supervision of one operational manager. Based on this, the study further found that most employees were negatively affected by the spans of control.

Assessing the influence of culture on strategy implementation indicators such as corporate mission, rules and regulations, operational manuals, employee development policy, strategy innovation, and decision making were used. The study found that employees' understanding and support towards attainment of corporate mission was marginally above average. This implied that although all employees worked for the water institutions, some of them did not understand core corporate objectives underlying their individual responsibilities. Most often than not, the rules and regulations applied on employees were creations of the parent Ministry. However, some rules and regulations originated from the top echelon of management. The shop-floor employees were rarely or hardly involved in making or contributing to essential rules and regulations that governed their relationships.

Majority of studied institutions did not have operational manuals for most of the technical undertaking delegated to them. Only a smaller portion saw the need to incorporating manual documentations in guiding staff towards achieving common goals. This probably denied the organization's employees efficiency of synchronizing their focus towards realization of strategic goals. The study found that compensation by way of salary was the highest ranked feature, followed by job design in employment development policies. It was noted, however, some employees did not see significantly held features in their policies. This was explained that some employees did not know what was contained in the authority's capacity building policies. Recognition of talent and minimum training time were dismally rated. In addition, monetary rewards for individuals who demonstrated new implementation ideologies and models were least preferred, among others such as promotions, and non-monetary recognitions (such as certificates).

Regarding employee involvement, the study found that 34.5% of the employees were only considered for inclusion in major decision formulation at a moderate extent, while 24% were lowly engaged. Only 36% of the

employees were satisfactorily involved in core strategies. The research found that employees were moderately aware of the existence of strategic implementation action plans at the studied key water service institutions. This was further emphasized by the observed small standard deviation which implied a higher degree of agreement. Similarly, employee allocation of clear strategy objectives was at a moderate level. Employee involvement in seeking success and management use of individual technical expertise were lowly and below average mark. Further, none of the strategic decisions went unregulated. In fact, 33% regulation of core strategic water plans was a preserve of the various WSP Boards serving in the LVSWWSB region. Another set of 29% of the strategy implementation processes were governed by other regulatory bodies, while the LVSWWSB Board and Ministry ratified the least water service strategies equal to 22% and 16% respectively. Based on these findings, it was evident that strategic decision making at the team or institution level was to a great extent influenced by external forces. Moreover, the research established that only 26% of the employees were involved in actual implementation of water service strategies. The highest observed involvement took place during strategy appraisals (33%) followed by reporting of implementation performance (29%). There was, however, a proportion of 12% of the employees who were engaged from the initial decision making. Lastly, 36% of the employees regarded themselves highly and technically qualified but lowly utilized by their respective institutions in service delivery. On the higher extreme, an aggregate of 23% employees' technical skills were highly made use of by institutional management.

Lastly, under the thematic area of leadership, the study interrogated how well employees were coordinated and integrated at the LVSWWSB institutions using the respondents' opinions on individual commitment to achievement of corporate goals. It was evident that majority of employees were not in full psychological contract with their employers. This was a threatening indication to implementation of strategy, since commitment in an essential input. In terms of structural review, many of the institutions reviewed their operational structures bi-annually, while others did not conduct any reviews at all.

The study found that top managers were not satisfactorily committed to practical implementation of strategic plans. Further to managerial involvement, responses were obtained regarding the support originating from the employees to managers in quest of attaining strategic targets. It was established that most managers had not won support from their shop-floor employees. The research found that formal communications adopted circular which were supposed to be adhered to. Also notices and memoranda were used to a large extent. Concerning conflict resolution, most employees were dissatisfied. Finally, it was found that the institutions' decision making processes sparingly accepted representatives from employee groups. Alternatively, departmental heads were utilized to represent their departmental workforce.

5.2 Study Conclusions

From the study findings, it is concluded that organizational, structure, culture, employee involvement, and strategic leadership affected strategy implementation at LVSWWSB and its affiliate institutions. The organizational structures adopted at LVSWWSB influenced implementation of strategic plans in the forms of task allocation, decentralization of authority, span of control, hierarchical length, employee co-ordination and integration, and structural flexibility. Management did not give employees required independence in performing their implementation duties. Also, authority was more centralized than decentralized, making employees wait for instructions from the top. In addition, spans of control were relatively big and difficult for efficient control. The long hierarchy derailed most of the essential decisions as information flow delayed to a large extent. This also contributed to weakening of employee synergy. Structurally, the institutions were more rigid than flexible as they hardly conducted reviewed regularly.

In the culture domain, poor internationalization of mission and strategic content, lack of participation in making of rules and regulations, lack of operational manuals, insensitive employee development policies, and highly structured downward communication effected employees' mobilization to executing strategic plans. While all employees were employed to work for the institutions, not all of them understood the core corporate objectives and strategic direction of the LVSWWSB institutions. Also, operational rules were formulated elsewhere without direct involvement of individual employees. This was further complicated with most institutions lacking operational manuals, skewed human capacity development, and limited upward flow of information.

Inclusion of employees in core strategic functions was studied and it was revealed that to a large extent decision making from base employees was not significant. Moreover, individual strategy implementation contributions from non-management staff members were scanty in respect to core strategic handling. Most often than not, employees were factored into corporate functions late after strategy formulation and actual execution, meaning that they were forced to own what they did not help create. Besides, majority of the workers felt that management had not designed an appropriate mechanism to fully extract their technical expertise for the benefit of service delivery.

Lastly, strategic leadership influenced implementation of strategic plans through managerial involvement, employee support, downward communication, conflict resolution, and employee representation in key decision

making. The extent to which management committed itself to strategy execution was not satisfactory. This yielded employee resistance, meaning that management did not have super support from the shop-floor employees. Moreover, the downward communication was strictly formal and missing the requisite personal touch, while conflict resolutions did not meet the employees' benchmark. The way employees were represented was fair but much was desired to enhance individual contributions.

5.3 Study Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned conclusion, it is the recommendation of this study that experts are involved in regular reviews of adopted organizational structures. This should be the case to avoid monotony in job design and bureaucracies which barricade goal realization. In addition to experts, the organizations should have internal research and development units to constantly and consistently align their strategic outlooks to structural flexibility.

Further, it is recommended that institutional management units take note of cultural dynamics so that an absolutely new slate of practices is enacted. The internal culture that does not support ultimate realization of objectives should be avoided by first ensuring that all employees are well inducted into their roles and space in service delivery.

In relation to employee involvement, the study recommends that management is sensitized on the significance of collective participation in formulating objective strategies and value of the resulting synergy during implementation. Equally, the staff members need to be empowered through coordinated capacity building so that they remain objective and innovative in serving corporate systems.

On leadership, it is recommended that top managers undergo executive capacity building sessions to come to realization that their corporate objectives are easily attained through team work and not through strict supervision and instructions. Organization leadership should be converted from a barrier to an enabler by encouraging teamwork and winning support from all the staffers concerned.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study recommends further studies on cultural change as a result of structural shift agitated by the new County governance systems, which has now placed water service provision as a devolved function. The other suggestion is on effects of retained bureaucracies on strategic success. Finally, it is suggested to future researcher to conduct a study on effects of commercialization of water service provision on strategy implementation under devolved structures of governance.

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