

**STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT SAFARI PARK HOTEL AND  
CASINO**

**MAKHONGE JANET NEKESA**

**RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**DECEMBER 2017**

**DECLARATION**

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for examination to any other university.

**Signature..... Date.....**

**MAKHONGE JANET NEKESA**

**D61/83824/2016**

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the

**University Supervisor**

**Signature ..... Date .....**

**MR VICTOR NDAMBUKI**

**LECTURER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First and foremost I thank the almighty God for giving me strength through my MBA program and taking me this far in my academic journey. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Mr. Ndambuki for his professional guidance and immense support that has made this project a success.

My appreciation goes to all my respondents at Safari Park Hotel and Casino for the real forces and their time to provide the information I required that made this study a success. I could not have done without you. I am grateful to my classmates at the University of Nairobi for their support and advice and all others who contributed in one way or another and whose names are not mentioned here.

Thank you all.

## **DEDICATION**

This research project is dedicated to my Dad and Mum for their passion, love, moral support and encouragement throughout my course. Special dedication goes to my fiancé for his encouragement and undiminishing support during the program. Thank you for your encouragement and believing in me.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>KATA</b>	Kenya Association of Travel Agents
<b>KATO</b>	Kenya Association Tour Operators
<b>KAHC</b>	Kenya Association of Hoteliers and Caterers
<b>KTB</b>	Kenya Tourism Board
<b>RBV</b>	Resource Based View

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**DECLARATION..... i**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT..... ii**

**DEDICATION..... iii**

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..... iv**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS .....v**

**LIST OF APPENDICES ..... vii**

**ABSTRACT..... ix**

**CHAPTER ONE .....1**

**INTRODUCTION.....1**

    1.1 Background of the Study..... 1

        1.1.1 Concept of Strategy ..... 3

        1.1.2 Strategy Implementation..... 4

        1.1.3 The Hospitality Industry in Kenya ..... 5

        1.1.4 Five Star Hotels in Nairobi..... 6

        1.1.5 Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi ..... 7

    1.2 Research Problem..... 8

    1.3 Research Objectives ..... 10

    1.4 Value of the Study..... 10

**CHAPTER TWO .....12**

**LITERATURE REVIEW .....12**

    2.1 Introduction ..... 12

    2.2 Theoretical Foundations ..... 12

        2.2.1 Resource-Based View Theory ..... 12

        2.2.2 McKinsey 7s framework ..... 14

2.3 Strategy implementation process .....	16
2.4 Challenges in Strategy Implementation .....	19
<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	23
3.2 Research Design.....	23
3.3 Data Collection.....	23
3.4 Data Analysis .....	24
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>4.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>26</b>
4.2 Demographics.....	26
4.3 Strategy Management practices and Implementation .....	27
4.4 Role of Hotel management in strategy execution .....	28
4.4 Factors influencing strategy implementation .....	29
4.4.1 Resource allocation and strategy implementation .....	30
4.5 Challenges of strategy Implementation.....	31
4.5.1 Hotel culture and strategy implementation.....	31
4.5.2 Creation of workforce motivation .....	33
4.5.3 Communication of responsibility, skills, accountability and involvement middle and lower level employees in strategic plan preparation.....	34
4.5.4 High turnover rates and inadequate staff .....	37
4.6 Measures to ensure effective strategy implementation .....	38
4.7 Solution to challenges of strategy implementation .....	39
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>42</b>

<b>SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION .....</b>	<b>42</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	42
5.2 Summary .....	42
5.3 Discussion .....	43
5.4 Conclusion.....	45
5.5 Limitation of the study .....	46
5.6 Recommendation.....	47
5.7 Suggestions for further research.....	48
<b>References .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>55</b>



## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>Appendix 1:</b> Interview guide on Strategy Implementation and challenges at Safari Park Hotel and Casino .....	55
<b>Appendix 2:</b> The letter of introduction .....	57

## **ABSTRACT**

The hotel industry is one of the biggest industries in Kenya's economy. With the turbulent nature of the hotel industry, hotels encounter many challenges that demand effective operation strategies. The study explored strategy implementation at Safari Park Hotel and Casino and the challenges they face while implementing them. In order to satisfy the objectives of the study, a case study method was adopted. The study established strategic management practices and the major challenges to implementing the strategy in the hotel. The study considered two theoretical frameworks, that is, Mckinsey 7s framework and the Resource-based view theory. A case study was carried out and data collected by use of interview guides conducted with the top officials in four management departments in the Hotel that is Sales and Marketing, Human Resources, Front Office, and Food and Beverage departments. The data collected was qualitative hence content analysis method was adopted to analyze the information collected. From the analysis, Safari Park Hotel was found to have strategic implementation practices managed by the management in conjunction with departmental heads. The management was found to play role of resource provider and leadership needed. Hotel culture, communication barriers, lack workforce motivation, inadequate resources, high turnover rates and inadequate staff were identified as the main challenge in strategy implementation. Safari Park Hotel was found to have put in place strategies for smooth strategy implementation that included staffing, effective communication channels, training of staff and resource availability and planning. The Hotel also had put in place strategy to overcome challenges faced in strategy implementation. It is recommended that five-star hotel put in place strategies for effective operation for efficient service provision.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Strategy implementation is significant to the company success as it addresses how, when, where and who to attain the desired objective and goal by the company. The entire organization is focused, and implementation is carried out according to environmental scans, SWOT to analyze and identify strategic topics and objectives. According to Johnson and Scholes (2008), strategy implementation involves putting the strategy into action, which is usually problematic and poses a challenge to many companies. Strategy implementation is a complex process which requires a lot of time to prepare or formulate a strategy. Most managers easily adopt the strategy formulation, with slow implementation. However, successful complete strategy implementation does not result in strategy implementation success. Implementing the strategy requires a successful teamwork participation of all the employees of the organization. It involves assigning people with responsibilities that enable the organization meet the targeted goals. While organizations develop strategy, its' implementation is what determines performance. Successful and effective execution of strategy is, however, influenced by external and internal factors of the organization, so it is more challenging than formulating a strategy (Aosa1992; Machuki, 2005). Implementing the strategy is an important part of the strategic management process, which includes strategy formulation, implementation, control and monitoring. Implementation entails systematic enactment of logically formulated strategies (Shah, 1996)

A number of theories support strategy implementation concept and how organizations allocate resources towards strategy implementation. These theories include; the Resource Based View theory and McKinsey 7 s model. The theories give insight on how organizations structure and resources play a significant part in hotel industry's strategy implementation (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington 2008). The resource-based view focuses on organization's strategic capability in relation to its competencies and resources, to create new opportunities or/and gain competitive advantage. For instance, an organization may put to use some of its resources, for example, strong brands. Waterman (1980) McKinsey 7 s model consists of seven elements categorized into two. The soft elements comprising of strategy, systems, structure and the soft elements skills, shared values staff and style. All the elements are interdependent in that when one element changes, it influences changes to the others as well. For example, the introduction of new systems will have an impact on the skills as well as the structure and strategy.

In Kenya, the hotel industry has developed and become more complex to operate in owing to the emergence of new five star hotels that have created stiff competition. In the past decade, there have been many new entrants in the hotel industry (Kamau and Waudu, 2012). Some of the new international hotels which have ventured into the Kenyan hotel industry in the last two years are Radisson blue Hotel and Villa Rosa Kempinski. Despite the good facilities and high quality, competition has become very high of late especially with the reduction of tourist arrivals in the country due to increase in terroristic attacks. Reduction in tourist arrivals normally affects the performance of these five-star hotels because most of the visitors to these hotels are foreigners. They are

normally quite expensive, and thus average Kenyans cannot afford to wine and dine at these luxury hotels. Due to this reduction in clientele, they have been forced to resort to implementation of aggressive competitive strategies to survive in the market.

### **1.1.1 Concept of Strategy**

Strategy is defined differently by different authors; although all the definitions point to a guided outline that enables planning at all levels that ensure organization success. Bryson (1995) defined strategy as an outline of objectives, decisions, actions, programs, policies, and resource allocation that defines the organization, its undertaking and the reasons for the undertakings. On the other hand, Thompson et al. (2010) defined a strategy as the set action plan of the management that focus on business growth, satisfy the visitors and clients, and ensure operations are successfully completed. Ansoff (1987) defined strategy as resource allocation and pattern of action formulated to attain the expected institution goals. Strategy can be defined as the approaches an organization put in place to gain a competitive advantage over its competitors using the resources it has and effectively meet its customers' needs. An effective strategy integrates organization's commitments, programs, policies, objectives and major plan into a single cohesive plan. It marshals and allocates resources to attain organizational performance. Strategy was defined by Johnson Scholes and Whittington (2008) as the organization's long term direction and scope that is beneficial in a business environment that is changing in the alignment of expertise and resources to achieve the expectations of its partners. They state that various levels of strategies exist in various levels in an organization. Corporate level strategy focus on the overall scope of the organization and value addition in the various sectors of the

organization. Business level strategy assesses organization successful competition in particular market, and operational strategies assesses how the different organization parts ensure effective attaining of business and corporate strategies based on people, processes and resources. An organization should implement a strategy directed toward ensuring high efficiency in meeting the needs of customers and other organizations' main actors. A strategy is thus a detailed modern plan which defines the ways through which the organization will lower competitive disadvantage, maximize competitive advantage and attain its objective and mission (Johnson Scholes and Whittington 2008).

### **1.1.2 Strategy Implementation**

Strategy implementation is the process of putting a firm's resources towards executing of the crafted strategies so as to achieve the firm's goals. Strategy implementation involves allocating the company's resources to execute sophisticated strategies to achieve business goals. Strategy is an important tool for any organization's management that captures multiple dimensions with different authors defining it differently. Strategy involves an effective matching of the resources and skills of the organization, the risks and the opportunity from the operational environment as well as the goals to be achieved (Thompson, 1993). The function of strategic implementation is the provision of direction and guidance on the various organization undertaking. Since the strategic decisions influence the organizations' reactions towards the operational environment, it is important for the company to develop well-thought resolutions that are efficient in the current environment. The strategic purpose is to create guidelines that will help the organization to meet its targeted objectives and respond to risks and opportunities from its operation (Pearce and Robinson, 2007).

Olson et.al. (2005) reported that many companies are facing difficult situations due to continuous variations in the environmental business conditions. To cope with unprecedented changes, the businesses need to develop good strategies and implement and evaluate the processes involved in the execution of strategies. Effectively implementation of a strategy can be difficult because it requires well-coordinated efforts by people or employees in the entire organization. Senior managers must identify the fundamental success activities for the company's strategy and develop the organizational structure that supports these activities. For a strategy to increase the superior performance, it must be implemented based on the company characteristics and employees' skills and behavior. Managers need to create a system and culture to promote the success of the formulated strategy. According to Chandler (2002), the structure of the organization follows the strategy in certain circumstances, however, Hussey (1998) focused on the effective implementation of the strategy by soft and hard aspects of implementation. In his argument, soft and hard elements must fit together for the strategy to be employed.

### **1.1.3 The Hospitality Industry in Kenya**

The economic sector of hospitality is a service sector that has evolved with the arrival of the transport industry and the beginning of trade (Waudu and Kamau 2012). This is one of the oldest professions and is a major business activity trades worldwide. Its popular name is hotel and restaurant industries. It includes lodging, food service, leisure, conventions, travel and attractions. The hotel industry is a very labor-intensive economic service sector offering employment opportunities for millions of people.

The Kenya's hospitality industry was developed for the first time in the coastal region. This was due to the construction of the railway line and Arab traders' arrival in the region. The increased number of traders and worker facilitated the development of the first catering facility in the coast region currently known as Manor Hotel but was initially called The Grand Hotel of Mombasa (Kamau and Waudu, 2012). The increased demand for food and services in the hotel industry demanded the services of qualified personnel. By 1960 some of the hotels had attained the international five-star ranking. Kenya Utalii College was started due to the formation of hotels in 1975 although it had low capacity. The economy hotel service in Kenya is one of the main sectors of the country that generate more income and employment opportunities. It includes hotels, restaurants and pubs. The hotel industry offers services such as food and beverages and lodging services (Wadongo et al., 2010).

The hotel industry in Kenya has the support of different organizations that consist of industry participators who have come together for purposes of lobbying and supporting of each other in the industry. They include the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), the Kenya Association Tour Operators (KATO), the Kenya Association of Hoteliers and Caterers (KAHC) and the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB).

#### **1.1.4 Five Star Hotels in Nairobi**

As per the Kenyan Gazette Notice No. 3976 (Vol. CV- No. 62), there are currently sixteen five star hotels in the country with eight of them being situated in Nairobi. The hotels have a bed capacity ranging from forty-six beds to seven hundred beds. Published information by the authority of the Republic of Kenya, the five-star hotels include Safari



Park Hotel, Nairobi Serena Hotel, The Stanley Hotel, The Norfolk Hotel, Nairobi Hilton Hotel, Laico Hotel and Intercontinental Hotel. Other new 5 star hotels have been added to the Kenyan market and include Radisson Blue Hotel and Villa Rosa Kempinski.

Hotels with 5-star rating stand out from other hotels due to location, services, best luxury, comfort and convenience. In general, the guests have special privileges of accessing complete hotel services such as concierge services, swimming pools, tennis court, modern gym and fitness facilities, luxury spa, and golf courses. There are very high quality services with professional staff and many services such as 24-hour room service. In hotels with larger properties, excellent business centers and conference rooms are available. The rating of the stars hotels is a general quality indicator and should only be considered as general guidelines to measure the overall quality of a hotel, facilities and customer satisfaction; ratings are not absolutely accurate.

#### **1.1.5 Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi**

The Hotel began about 50 years ago as British Military Barracks. It was known as the Spread Eagle and was mainly frequented by tourists on transit to and from Mt. Kenya who consisted mainly of the army. The hotel was also visited by the local people. It was owned and ran by a British couple called the Boswell family as a family Hospitality Business. Safari Park Holdings (K) Limited was established and registered after successful acquisition of the Spread Eagle Hotel from the Boswell family in 1974. The hotel, which by then had 105 rooms and rated as 3-star hotel changed its name to Safari Park Hotel and country club. In 1985 a fire burnt down the reception which led to renovation of the hotel creating the New Safari Park Hotel. It was then opened by the

former president, his Excellency Danielle Torotich Arap Moi. It then changed to Paradise Safari Park Hotel but it is currently known as Safari Park Hotel and Casino and rated as a five star Hotel.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Many factors determine the failure or success of implementation strategy. The factors include the organization culture, communication process, leadership, match between organizational strategy and structure, resources allocation, the relationship between short term goals and strategy, support and policy systems, and the strategy nature (Stoner et al. 2003, Pearce and Robinson, 2007). There are many central ideas that many managers and scholars agree upon relating to strategy implementation. First, a strategy must be put to action through specific rules, procedure, and policies that will inform decision making and planning by the employees and management. Secondly, the strategy has to be incorporated or institutionalized into the organizational operation as roles, norms, and values that inform and modify the behavior of employee thus facilitating attaining of the strategic goal. Thirdly, the organization structure is key in strategy implementation success. 90% of well-formulated strategies fail at Implementation stage (Mintzenberg and Quins, 1991)

Okumus (1999) recent studies done on hospitality Strategic Management revealed there is inadequate knowledge and information on strategy implementation framework. For strategy implementation to be successful there must be a fit among the variables affecting it such as strategy formulation, environmental uncertainty, resource allocation, organizational culture and people (employees). Effective linking all the variables in

operation will increase the success of strategy transformation. Internal factors play crucial part in effecting strategic decisions thus focus on implementation alone while ignoring other factor provides an unclear picture on strategy implementation. The challenge is in recommunicating strategy implementing in case the chosen official and employees leave the organization.

The dynamic nature of the business environment has made managing of hotels in Kenya more complex. The hotels in Kenya are faced with many challenges to effectively meet the customers' needs as well as embracing the complex new technologies in production and service processes. Kamau (2008) identifies tourism sector that includes hotels to be encountering many challenges that threaten its viability and existence in Kenya. These challenges include economic challenges, technological changes, sociocultural changes and competition. The Hotels, same as other businesses, are embracing strategic management and performance drivers to enable them to meet the requirement for international recognition for membership in professional bodies, star rating, company of the year's awards and standardization certificates (Ongore and Kobonyo, 2011). Due to the nature and characteristics of the hotel industry such as intangibility, perishability and variability of the product, strategies need to be reviewed and changed from time to time to suit the changing customer needs and preferences. It is also a highly labor intensive industry as most of the things cannot be easily programmed. High labor turnover rates affect the implementation process as new employees need to be informed on the existing strategy which is time-consuming and costly. Achieving effective implementation is still a challenge for those responsible for executing strategies. Very often Managers formulate strategies but fail to create change after the plans have been developed.

The study seeks to get an insight to strategy implementation Safari Park Hotel and Casino and the challenges faced during implementation. It will thus attempt to answer the following questions: What are the strategy implementation practices at Safari Park Hotel and Casino? What challenges do they face when implementing their strategies?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The study will address the following two objectives;

- (i) To determine strategy implementation practices at Safari Park Hotel and Casino.
- (ii) To establish the challenges of strategy implementation at Safari Park Hotel and Casino.

### **1.4 Value of the Study**

The study will equip Hotel Managers with ways to successfully plan and implement strategies in the organization and the benefits through allocation of organization resources in areas that are profitable by identifying their distinctive competencies. It will also be helpful for Hoteliers to enable them to overcome challenges during strategy implementation.

Employees or hotel staff in various departments will be able to understand the concept of strategic planning and implementation that will contribute to successfully achieving success to the whole organization since strategy needs to involve everyone in the

organization. In the long run the study will be making a contribution to the theories of Resource based and McKinsey 7s framework and their application in the Hotel Industry.

Academicians and Researchers will make use of the research findings as a point of reference and help in discovering other researchable areas and gaps. It will also contribute to already existing knowledge in Hotel Strategic Management and related industries as a whole.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework, research that has been done by other scholars on strategy implementation and the accompanying challenges.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Foundations**

The study will be based on two theoretical foundations namely; McKinsey 7S Framework and Resource Based Theory. The theories will be beneficial in understanding the challenges encountered when implementing strategic planning and the strategies that are embraced in putting it in place.

##### **2.2.1 Resource-Based View Theory**

The resource-based view (RBV) theory assesses the human resource of the organization and its effect on strategy implementation. The resource based theory (Barney, 2003; Wernerfelt, 2004) look into the organization's internal weaknesses and strengths of the resources available, evaluates operation management, resource allocation and utilization to ensure the strategies are implemented successfully.

The resources have to be well planned for the strategy to be implemented successfully. Resource based ideology incorporates the main organization factors such as communication, team work, structure, and coordination which are important especially in information coordination among employees and the organization key stakeholders with a

focus on successful strategy implementation (Barney, 2003). Utilization of resources that exists is key to effectiveness of a firms' strategy. In the case where the firm has underutilized resources, they create firm-specific opportunities that can be explored (Montgomery, 2004).

Diversification is one of the ways through which the existing underutilized resources can be explored. Firm diversification is the procedures embraced by the organization in assessing firm's unique resources and make a decision on the best way to leverage the resources to put in place effective strategies. RBV, therefore, represents a focus on organization's resources or those of partners; and other capabilities or resources that determine organization performance, and failure or success in the long term (Montgomery, 2004). RBV ensures that there is clear perspective of the resources available in the firm during and before the development of organizational strategy and the process of decision-making. RBV assesses the area for improvement in the organization for effective strategy implementation. It also assesses the organization management, its limitation to information access and ability to operate effectively and efficiently within the scope of the strategy (Montgomery, 2004).

Finally, RBV stresses on the organization showing how to alter the capabilities and resources to attain its full potential. Theoretically, the main aim of RBV is to assess the reason why organizations differ, and how the organization utilizes the resources they have in attaining and maintaining a competitive advantage. Clearly, these concepts are not new. In 2003, Barney presented a well-defined framework for identifying the properties of the resources required to develop sustainable competitive advantage. The properties entailed whether the resources are valuable that is if they exploit beneficial

opportunities or are neutral in the organization operation environment, inimitable, non-substitutable and rare among organization's potential and current rivals (Barney, 2003). RBV basis is the opinion of heterogeneity of the organization's resources. Wernerfelt (2004) identified the importance of resource viewpoint new strategic management field. He proposed that assessing the organization based on resources would provide more insights that were different from the traditional perspective.

The central view of RBV research perceives organization to be heterogeneous based on strategic resources it controls. The heterogeneity is perceived to be because of the organization's inability to change their accrued resource stock over time, immobility of resources and imperfection of the resource market (Barney, 2003). Under heterogeneity, an organization may be theorized based on the inimitable capabilities and resources that is intangible and tangible (Wernerfelt, 2004). Resources are defined as the assets that the firm owns and utilize semi permanently (Werner felt, 2004). The resources comprise of organizational, technological, commercial, human, physical and financial assets utilized by the organization come up, produce and supply services and product to the targeted consumers (Barney, 2003). Resources can be categorized into intangible (i.e., knowledge, organization procedures, brand names, and organization's reputation) and tangible (physical or financial). In the ever-changing operational environment, the organization has to continuously acquire, cultivate and improve its resources and abilities to remain competitive and grow (Montgomery, 2004).

### **2.2.2 McKinsey 7s framework**

Waterman et al. (1980) proposed a strategy implementation framework and argued that organization effectiveness originates from the interaction of several factors (non-linear



relationships) and concluded that the interaction of the following seven factors (S's) play a critical role: Structure, Strategy, Systems Style, Skills, Staff and Subordinate goals. They concluded that the recommended framework emphasized interactions and fit among all the seven "S's" and for an organization to achieve its objectives; all these variables must be aligned. Even though Waterman et al. (1980) clearly elaborated and defined the seven factors, they did not provide a detailed explanation and examples for assessing the interactions and relationship between them. This model needs to be evaluated empirically to learn how the relationships among variables make strategy implementation happen.

Peters and Waterman (1982) come up with a framework that identifies the main factors that describe the high performance of organizations after evaluating top companies in America in the 1980s. The framework was to give useful conceptualization of the main factors the managers have to put under consideration in effective strategy implementation (Pearce & Robinson, 1991). The framework proposes six factors to be considered in making sure effective implementation after the strategy is formulated. The factors include staff, style, skills, shared cultural values, systems and structure of the organization. The factors are part of the McKinsey 7S Framework (Peters and Waterman, 1982) The framework nature can be considered rational and logical. The section of the logical part is consideration of the challenging area of putting in place a strategy for instance structure of the organization, information, control and reward systems. The framework, however, presents less focus on the human or soft aspects apart from the culture in implementing a strategy. For instance, there is little focus on issues such as employee motivation, socialization and selection, leadership and coaching and counseling. There is also less focus on power and politics affecting organization.

Strategy implementation leads to issues of power to arise in the organization. The idea of having changes in an organization challenges existing norms. Therefore, politics and power affect implementation of the strategic plan. Additionally, the framework pays minimal attention in the strategy Implementation context. Even though context components have been factored in such as reward system, staff, culture and structure, they are considered as variables that can be changed. This makes them be categorized as variables that can affect strategy implementation. Furthermore, small focus has been put to external variables and of an individual level that may affect implementation process.

### **2.3 Strategy implementation process**

Mintzberg (1999) defines strategic management process as an approach for business to come up with strategies that assist the organization to react to arising challenges in time. Strategic management is also a systematic resource based process for making major decisions in organizations.

Mintzberg (1999) provide five strategy definitions: Strategy as a plan - where it is defined as a direct course of action to attain targeted objectives; same as the concept of strategic planning; strategy as a pattern-, which is a steady pattern of previous behavior as the strategy is identified with time rather than intend or plan. When the pattern identified differed from the intend, the strategy was known as emergent. Strategy as a position, which involved tracing companies, goods and brand in the market using the other stake holders and consumer conceptual framework where the strategy is determined based mainly on external factors of the organization; Strategy as ploy- a precise approach planned to outsmart a rival; and a strategy as perspective which is effecting a strategy on

the basis of a “theory of the business” or ideology or natural mindset viewpoint of a firm (Mintzberg 1999).

Strategy implementation is a well thought and informed process that ensures the formulated strategies are implemented effectively to attain the targeted organization’s objectives. The process is usually continuous in providing response that makes sure the formulated strategies appropriate, effective and objective in attaining the goals of the organization. Schermerhorn (2010) identifies five main activities for strategy implementation: Identify firm’s objectives and mission, evaluate the present performance vis-à-vis objectives and mission, develop a strategic plan to meet the objectives and purposes, implement the strategic plans and evaluating the outcome, change strategic plans and/or implementation process as necessary (Pearce & Robinson, 2003). If the strategy does not add value to the organization, it cannot be implemented. Effective implementation starts at the time when the strategy is being developed, when the issue of how it will be done is considered and what to be done is determined. Crafting and executing strategy are the core management functions. Thompson et al, (2006) relate effective execution of strategy to be a resilient match between the strategy and organization’s structure and work climate, internal systems, reward structure and organization capabilities. Implementation of strategy can be through four interrelated steps: Ascertain short-term objectives, initiating particular functional approaches, empower people through informing them about policies and come up with a good reward system

Operationalization of strategies is critical for the effective implementation process. Implementing strategy entails identifying responsible parties for the implementation, identifying the most appropriate organization structure that facilitates implementation. The significance of adapting the systems utilized in organization management (Johnson and Scholes, 2002), the main activities to be undertaken and necessary alteration of the organization's resource mix and role of every firm divisions; and information system to be implemented for monitoring the progress and resource planning (Pearce and Robinson, 1997). Operationalization of strategy will, therefore, require that implementers of strategy be involved right from the formulation stage so that they can own the process. One of the tools of strategy implementation is the McKinsey's 7-S Model (Peter and Waterman, 1982). The model identifies the seven variables that are crucial in accurate implementation of strategy. The variable includes culture, shared values, skills, staff, systems, structure and strategy. (Pearce and Robinson, 2007). To increase the chances of successful implementation of strategy, the strategy has to be broken down into actionable activities, which provides a framework for detailed daily undertaking, by the organization. In implementing strategy, the firm's managers must direct and control actions and outcomes and adjust to change. Every organization that aspires to succeed in the ever chaotic and turbulent business environment must ensure that once strategies are formulated, they must be successfully implemented. Aosa (1992) identifies that once strategies are developed, they are required to be effected; they are of no significance unless they are converted to action. Effective implementation is attained when the firm's action and resources are linked to the strategic priorities and when the main factors of success are identified, and performance measures and reporting are aligned.

Institutionalization of strategy stands out as a key aspect as far as strategy implementation is concerned, since it permeates into the daily choices and activities in a way that aligns with strategic success in the long-term. According to Pearce and Robinson (1991), four essential features have to be looked into for the strategy to be established: these are organization leadership, structure, leadership, culture and rewards. It is of critical importance to directly link the company's daily activities and work efforts so as to accomplish the strategic plan. It will be impossible to implement strategies if this link is not made. Thompson and Strickland (1998) notes that the implementation process of a strategy affect every all section of the organization, from the smallest unit such as frontline work group to the largest unit of the organization. They point out that each manager has to assess what is supposed to be done in his/her field in relation to strategic plan and what is to be done to ensure effective implementation. It is therefore the responsibility of each manager to ensure that the process is on course, through careful monitoring and evaluation to guarantee effective implementation process.

## **2.4 Challenges in Strategy Implementation**

Ineffective Communication; Poor or ineffective communication, i.e. bottom up, top-down, and across divisions and functions, could adversely influence implementation of strategy. At the point when information is not flowing successfully from bottom to top, the top administration may not know about issues imperiling the strategy implementation, and thus not ready to react to these issues (Alexander, 1985; Al-Ghamdi, 1998; Beer et al, 2000). The flow of information does not only incorporate individuals exchanging information but also the systems that are used to monitor the

effort of strategy implementation. These sometimes do not give sufficient data for the top administration (Al-Ghamdi, 1998).

Raps (2005) the challenges encountered in strategy implementation as follows: Commitment of top management, the involvement of middle management valuable knowledge, clear assignment of responsibilities. The most important was the top management commitment to strategic direction because top management is crucial in effective implementations of strategic change and provisions of a role model for other managers to imitate when evaluating significant environmental factors. The head of management has the responsibility of determining the structure of the organization. The management needs to identify the current culture of the organization and operate within it or put in place new parameters, which will suit the new strategy. The management should take part in the development and control of the organizational reward and the system of incentive and ensure the provision of timely and accurate feedback concerning the organizational performance.

Risk identification: significant risks associated with external and internal issues that could impact strategy implementation have not been identified appropriately prior and during strategy implementation. Consequently, major issues can occur at the time of implementation that can result in interruptions or hindrance in strategy implementation (Corboy et al.; 1999; AlGhamdi, 1998; Alexander, 1985). Executives have stated that the head of management have a higher probability of underestimating the possibility of risks and may even not be aware of the risks they may encounter (Alexander, 1985).

Aosa (1992) also argues that incompatibility between culture and strategy can result in increased resistance to change and motivation by the organization. Culture refers to the general mindset of human being that distinguishes between one group of humans to the other. It comprises accepted values and is unique to the organization, developed patterns of expected and accepted behaviors, prevailing attitudes and habits. Organizational culture can impede or facilitate change since it can resist change, respond to change, accept change and initiate change. It is paramount to assess the compatibility between strategic change undertaking with the cultural and is evaluated on the basis of compatibility to a new strategy.

Poor Strategy Formulation; the procedure of strategy development does not always produce the expected outcome. What is considered a strategy sometimes turns out to be an objective or a tactic, which are not strategies. The strategy must be set on a long-term basis, be inspirational, innovative, and its effect must be felt directly by the competitors and customers (Corboy et al, 1999). The strategy must be feasible in order to be implementable. Strategies are most developed without consideration its implementation that makes the strategy actionable.

Tasks and Responsibilities; when the strategic objectives, activities on putting in place and the role of each employee can also greatly affect strategy implementation. If the employees working on the strategy do not fully understand the strategy, it will be challenging for them to effectively meet the targeted goal. Furthermore, if the employees have not mastered their roles, some activities may be forgotten or result to conflicts during implementation (Alexander, 1985, Al-Ghamdi, 1998, Corboy, 1999; Beer et al.,

2000). Robbins and Coulter (1996) in their research found that no matter how effective the business have planned its strategies; it cannot be successful if they were not put in place properly.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Research methodology is part of a project that shows the design of the study, the population of the study and data collection techniques. It also shows the type of data collected, the source of data and the method that was used in analyzing the data.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design refers to the blueprint, plan, or framework that provides the researcher with guidelines about the research process. For this study, the research design was a case study of Safari Park hotel and Casino. A case study is defined as a type of qualitative research that comprises of detailed assessment and observation of a social unit irrespective of the type of unit being studied (Kothari 1990; Young, 2000). A case study design was deemed suitable since it entails an analysis of one unit of study targeted as it allows for a detailed and focused assessment of a phenomenon that is not well understood. In this study, the focus was strategy implementation and challenges at Safari Park Hotel and Casino.

#### **3.3 Data Collection**

Primary data was used in this case study and it was collected by use of interview guide. Primary data is defined as data used in research originally obtained through surveys, interviews and direct observation for the first time by the researcher. Primary data was

collected through personal interviews. The instrument that was used to collect the data was an interview guide because it seeks to investigate a specific area of the organization. The interview guide was developed using semi-structured interview questions. The interview method used was face-to-face interview. The respondents were top level managers and top officials in the various departments who were in charge of strategy implementation at the hotel that include the Sales and Marketing Manager, Human Resources Manager, Front Office Manager, and Food and Beverage Manager. The interview guide contained Part A and part B. Part A was used to capture the background information of respondents and the company. Part B was used to capture the information on strategy implementation and challenges faced by the Hotel. The interview guide contained open ended questions.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Content analysis was used to analyze the data collected from respondents since it was qualitative in nature. According to Kothari (2004), content analysis refers to the exploration of the content of verbal and documented materials and presents it as qualitative analysis assessing the importance of the information in existing materials and evaluates pervasiveness. The information was analyzed and evaluated to determine its usefulness, credibility, consistency and adequacy. Content analysis technique was used because it aids in making inferences by objectively identifying key information and relating the same to occurrence trends. According to Mugenda and Mugenda. (2003), the key importance of content analysis is to assess the available information to identify factors that best describe a specific phenomenon. In coding qualitative data, the researchers read all the responses, identified key information and relate it to emerging

patterns. The outcome was compared in an attempt to get more revelation on the processes and challenges of strategy implementation at Safari park hotel and Casino.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and discusses the empirical result of the study. It starts by describing the general information of the respondents before evaluating the different aspects of strategy implementation and the challenges that were assessed.

#### **4.2 Demographics**

Four top employees representing the Sales and Marketing, Human Resources, Front Office, and Food and Beverage departments were interviewed through use of the semi structured interview guide. All the respondents had bachelor's degree in respective fields and had worked at the top position for at least three years. The human resource professional was in charge of staff placement and recruitment process. The food and beverage professional was in charge of the kitchen staff as well as the restaurant staff and their operations. The front office personnel was responsible for all hotel room bookings, checking in and out of the hotel guests, room service, housekeeping and, ensuring are served professionally and attending to guests in the hotel. Sales and marketing professional was responsible for enhancing sales of the services offered by Safari Park Hotel and Casino through embracing the marketing mix strategy.

### **4.3 Strategy Management practices and Implementation**

Strategy planning and implementation is crucial for the operation and success of any business (Lendel & Varmus, 2011). The research sought to establish whether Safari Park Hotel and Casino engages in Strategic Management practices. From the interviews, all the respondents agreed that the Hotel had strategic management practices that were in place. The practices however were evaluated from time to time to ensure they help the organization to achieve its objectives and long-term sustainability due to the nature of the hospitality industry, which is subject to seasonality and variability as a result of changing customer needs and preferences. According to (Pegg, et al., 2012) seasonality interfere with the operations in hospitality industry thus have to be considered in strategy implementation.

The implementation of the strategic plan of the Hotel is usually an activity involving all the employees of the organization (Barney, 2003). The managing director in conjunction with the general manager and the Human resource manager were identified as the key players in planning the implementation of strategic plan of the organization. Each of the employees however was involved in strategic plan implementation as each have their own responsibilities and objectives to be met. The departmental heads were responsible in overseeing strategy implementation in their respective organization. Every employee in a five star hotel thus plays a crucial role in strategy implementation. The activities concur with Thompson et al, (2006) who identified linking organization structure to strategy implementation to be very important for its success.

#### **4.4 Role of Hotel management in strategy execution**

The management plays a crucial role in strategic implementation as pinpointed by the respondents (O'Reilly, et al., 2010). The management of the hotel was responsible in developing the strategic management and developing guidelines and framework on how the strategy implementation has to be undertaken. The management was also identified to provide the necessary resources that were required for implementation of the strategic plan. The resource availability is important in strategy implementation thus this role of the management is very crucial for the success of strategy implementation. Raps (2005) identified that commitment of the top management enhance the success in strategy implementation and thus can point to success of strategy implementation at Safari Park.

Leadership in strategy implementation was considered important especially due to complexity of the process (O'Reilly, et al., 2010). The respondents identified the organization management as an important source of was internal leadership that is needed in the implementation of the strategic plan. The leadership ensures efficiency in the overall process of strategy implementation and provision of effective solution to any problem that arises in the process of implementation. The commitment of the organization management in strategy implementation found to be intensive as it supported the execution of strategic plan fully. This concurs with O'Reilly et al. (2010) who identified that leadership to enhance strategy implementation as was evident at Safari Park.

#### **4.4 Factors influencing strategy implementation**

The respondents cited many factors to influence strategy implementation in the hotel industry. The factors were classified into changing macroeconomic environment, innovations and ideas in the customer service policy and customer needs. Under changing macroeconomic environment, competition was the main point of focus for strategy implementation at the Safari Park Hotel. The entries of new five star hotels and other lower star hotels have made the hotel industry to be very competitive. Other issues such as political stability were also cited as to lower the number of customers and thus increasing competition to win more customers. The competitive market thus had forced Safari Park Hotel from time to time to implement strategies that would improve its competitive advantage. The findings concurs with those of Bukirwa (2017) who highlighted that hotels in Kenya put in place strategies to remain competitive locally and internationally in the changing market condition. Tavitiyaman et al. (2012) also emphasized on the role of competitive strategies as a success factor in the hospitality industry.

Innovations and ideas in the hotel industry, which have been changing over time to improve service delivery to the customers (Orfila-Sintes & Mattsson, 2009), were identified as other factors that contributed to need for strategy implementation at Safari Park Hotel. The general changes in the industry influences how hotels such as Safari Park Hotel to develop and implement strategic management practices. For example, e-booking, Customer relationship management (CRM) system among other innovation were cited to warrant strategy management change that integrates the new innovation in the hotel operations.

The customer needs in the hotel industry was also identified as a main factor influencing strategy implementation. “The customer is always at the center of the of the organization strategy management in order to have a customer centered strategy” responded one of the respondents on factor influencing strategy implementation. The needs of the customer’s in the hotel industry may change and this may warrant the organization to adopt strategy that accommodates the changing demands of the customers (Lo, et al., 2010). The customer thus influence the strategic practices in the hotel industry as all the strategies are meant to provide the customers with quality services that meets all their needs. The same influence Safari Park hotel push to put in place strategy implementation.

#### **4.4.1 Resource allocation and strategy implementation**

The respondents identified allocation of resources to influence the strategy implementation in the Safari Park hotel. Allocation of the resources at the Hotel was on need basis with prioritization of specific sectors of strategic implementation. One of the main themes that came out on resource allocation was the delay in some of the sector of strategic planning due to delay in resource allocation. The delay result to some of the strategy planned to take more time that had been projected and thus the organization cannot meet the targeted goals.

In resource allocation, the hotel leveraged human resources, tangible resources such as equipment and non-tangible resources such as location and brand in strategy implementation. Safari Park Hotel and Casino had been in existence for many decades thus had built a strong organization image in the 5-star hotel market. The brand image quality and association was implemented in marketing and selling strategies of the organization and which was considered effective. The proximity of hotel to the city



center was also considered an important non tangible resource vital in strategy implementation as it provided customers with a good place to relax away from the city environment. The accessibility due to nearness to Thika super highway was also considered by the respondent as a crucial advantage to competitive strategy implementation of the organization. Brand management through use of resources concurs with M'zungu et al. (2010) conclusion that identified brand management to enhance brand orientation of the organization and creating value in the organization.

The human resource was considered a crucial factor for successful implementation of the strategic implementation. Diversification of skills and experiences of human resource was vital in implementation of strategy, as different skills were required for undertaking different experiences. Effective planning of allocation of resources was identified as the crucial way of overcoming the shortcoming that arises from delayed resource allocation. The execution of strategies was perceived to be easier when the resources were available during the resource allocation. Enz (2009) identify the importance of linking organization resources with the other stakeholders of the organization in strategy implementation. This supports Safari Park strategy of enhancing human resource capabilities in undertaking the strategy implementation.

#### **4.5 Challenges of strategy Implementation**

##### **4.5.1 Hotel culture and strategy implementation**

Although the respondents had perceived culture as a limiting factor to strategy implementation in the hotel industry, the respondents identified culture as more of a strength to the organization than a challenge in strategy implementation. The main

challenge of culture was identified to occur only in some instances when the organization operation or part of the operation had a partial or total overhauled. For instance in changing from manual operation to digital platform in the operation of the organization. This was especially in purchasing of new equipment and systems. The challenge was however perceived only in the human resource and food and beverage departments. Aosa (1992) argued that lack of compatibility between strategy and culture can lead to high organizational resistance to change and lack of motivation. It was necessary to examine the cultural fit with the strategic change implementation at Safari Park hotel to ensure success of strategy implementation. The existence of culture always results to resistance to change due to lack of collective responsibility procedures, modern skills and delayed implementation of strategy (Aosa, 1992). The respondents perceived training as the solution to the challenge caused by the hotel culture in order to adopt new culture that is aligned with the strategy implementation practices.

The organization too had embraced succession culture in which employees pass skills and experience to other employees within the organization, which ensure adoption of culture that is aligned with strategy implementation strategies for successful strategy implementation and execution. The new culture ensures that there is continuous information trickling down from the experienced generation to the new employed employees. The culture is considered a cost effective method for enhancing human resource capability of the organization. The finding concur with the finding of Zheng, et al. (2010) who identified that organization culture is important and preserving organization culture facilitate knowledge management within the organization.

Knowledge management in hospitality result to long term sustainability of operations and contribute to organization success.

#### **4.5.2 Creation of workforce motivation**

Motivation of workforce is very crucial for employees to undertake their responsibilities effectively and maximize the skill and knowledge they have for the success and profitability of the organization (Maroudas, et al., 2008). According to the respondents interviewed, Safari Park Hotel had put in place motivation strategies for successful strategy implementation. Modification of the duties that align to strategic implementation was one of the ways through which the organization motivated employees to pursue the targeted objective. The change ensured that all the members of the organization worked accordingly to meet both departmental and organizational objectives.

Providing the staff with good compensation was the second method that was identified by the respondents as a motivation for good performance at safari Park. The allowances plus overtime allowances was found to be a crucial strategy in ensuring the workers worked to attained the organization targeted objectives. Maroudas et al. (2008) identifies the incentive provided to the employees to be very important in motivating them to undertake the responsibilities in strategy implementation. Payment as an incentive is an important method in effecting successful strategy implementation.

Effective communication and regular meetings in the organization ensured that all the issues and grievances of the employees were solved to pave way for conducive working environment. The availability of a good working environment ensures that the employees provided their best performance in organization operations and in successful implementation of organization strategies and enhance profitability of the organization.

The measure of creating a conducive working environment for worker thus helps in motivating the workers to perform towards strategy implementation. The finding concurs with the findings of Alexander (1985) and Beer et al (2000) who identified the communication as a good method of improving organization performance.

Safari Park Hotel was identified to have embraced reward system for motivating the employees to perform better. Exemplary performers in all the departments including the top ranking workers are rewarded in appreciation for their hard work. The reward thus motivates other workers to give their best by focusing on emerging the best in the different departments. The rewards system thus motivates the employees to work towards successful strategy implementation within the organization. Christensen and Rog (2008) echoed the importance of reward as an important motivation strategy of employee who found that employee motivation through reward increase their satisfaction and enhance employee retention. The strategy thus in the long-term will enhance Safari Park to retain employee as well improve their productivity.

Motivation of employees at Safari park hotel was evaluated efficiently and strategies to overcome it as a challenge to strategic implementation put in place. Work force motivation was thus not a challenge in strategy implementation at the organization.

#### **4.5.3 Communication of responsibility, skills, accountability and involvement middle and lower level employees in strategic plan preparation**

Raps (2005) argued that involvement of middle level and lower level employees, Valuable knowledge and clear assignment of responsibilities is essential to effective implementation of strategies within an organization. Implementation of the strategic plan at Safari Park Hotel was identified to face some challenges relating to communication,

technology and responsibilities. The challenges were categorized into seven main themes based on the responses of the participants.

The first category was resistance because of inconveniences that resulted from some the strategy implementation. Some of the implementation that ought to be adopted by the organization such as automated system and online booking is facing-off some of the job opportunities in the organization. The affected parties were reluctant to accept the changes and resist some of the changes that affect them or exposes them to job insecurity. The implementation of some of the strategies, which require compensation to some of the affected staff, increased the costs incurred by the organization. These factors thus resulted to resistance of strategy implementation within the organization. The same finding were reported by Furst and Cable (2008)

Inadequate skills and experience was another challenge that was faced by the organization while implementing strategic plan. Some of the strategic practices that are implemented in the organization are usually new and a total departure from the known norms of the organization such as adopting new technology and equipment. Such a change finds the organization with no enough skilled labor to effect the practices and maximize its benefits to the organization. The organization thus is forced to weigh solutions such as hiring new staff or training the existing staff to adapt to the new working environment. Choi and Dickson (2009) find similar result in which they considered training program to be vital in improving employee adoption to organization changes as well as enhance their job satisfaction level.

Customer feedback is another challenge that was faced by the organization in strategy implementation. The strategy targets to ensure the customer needs are effective met and

of high quality. The customer feedback is thus crucial in determining if the strategies are effective. Lack of feedback from customers and negative feedback negatively influences strategy implementation thus becoming a challenge. Changing customer preferences from feedback received result to already developed strategies not being implemented or the one implemented be removed or adjusted to fit the customers' preferences and needs. Some of the strategies take longer than anticipated during the implementation. This thus delays achievement of the set goal by the organization. This poses a challenge in the attainment of the intended goal and the benefits that were expected from implementation of the strategy to be delayed or not maximized over time. The delay in implementation may lead to the organization losing the competitive advantage in the market as other players may implement similar strategy.

Inadequate resource was another challenge that was mentioned by the interviewees. Strategy implementation is a resource intensive process involving both tangible and non-tangible resources. The resources are required in different areas of operation and some time the resources available cannot meet the demand for the entire department for strategy implementation and this poses a challenge. Prioritizing of the resources ensures distribution of resources to the main activities of strategy implementation although this can result to other sectors of the strategy to be implemented slowly thus the overall goal of strategy implementation may not be achieved. Resource availability and allocation thus was a challenge in strategic implementation.

Ineffective communication in organization hinders effective operationalization of strategies. Three of the respondents did not view communication challenge existing in the organization in implementing the organization strategic plan but only one viewed it as a

challenge due to the need for timely delivery of information to the different stakeholders of strategic implementation. Those who did not view communication as a challenge currently cited the various strategies that the organization had put in place to ensure effective communication had overcome communication challenge that had existed. Strategy implementation is usually complex and involves many moving parts (Lendel & Varmus, 2011). In some cases, lack of clarity of the strategy objectives, goals or responsibilities for the different parties involved was identified as possible challenge in the implementation of strategic plan. This could arise due to ineffective communication, complexity of activities involved or poor planning. The misunderstanding in the implementation could result to delay in strategic implementation and misuse of organization resources (Enz, 2009).

#### **4.5.4 High turnover rates and inadequate staff**

The Hotel industry is highly seasonal, there is increasing changes in workforce demand (Pegg, et al., 2012). During the low season, have low responsibilities due to reduced services demand. On the high season, there is high demand for services and in some instances required hiring staff on contract to meet demand. In some cases, the organization may not get enough qualified staff for the different tasks thus limiting the implementation of strategic plan. The Hotel industry too have high staff turnover rate. The turnover rate result to the organization loosing qualified staff, which poses a challenge to strategy implementation in the organization. The challenge has far reaching effect especially where quality of service and cost differentiation was the competitive advantage (Iverson & Deery, 1997). Cho, et al. (2006) argued that implementation of human resource management strategy will overcome the challenge of high workforce

turnover rate in the hospitality interest. The challenge of work force turn over in Safari Park Hotel thus could be resolved with effective staff management.

#### **4.6 Measures to ensure effective strategy implementation**

Strategy implementation in the hotel industry is highly dependent on the internal systems set by the organization. Evans (2005) pointed out that although there are many challenges faced by managers and organizations in strategy implementation, the involved parties adopted different strategies to facilitate operationalization and control of strategy implantation practices. From the interview, Safari Park Hotel was found to have put in place strategies that ensure smooth implementation of strategic management.

Staffing the organization with personnel with the different skills that is required to implement the different strategy implementation was one of the crucial internal strategy that are put in place to ensure effective operationalization. The human resource department representative identified the seriousness of employing qualified and experienced staff as the expertise are responsible in taking different responsibilities in strategy implementation.

Building and strengthening strategy of the supportive competencies was identified as another crucial measure in effective implementation of strategic management in different departments. There are different methods that have been adopted at Safari Park Hotel in improving competencies of the staff. One method was through sensitization and training of the staff on the different aspect of their responsibilities in relation to the overall goal of strategic practices. The training is usually specific to department as different departments have different responsibilities in the installation of the strategic management. Training in



improving the employees' competency is also identified by Hallin and Marnburg, (2008) who found it to be an effective method in enhancing employees' performance.

The second important method that is impended in the organization culture is through the experienced workers nurturing new employees on the different responsibilities that are required to be undertaken at specific departments. The strategy ensure that the tacit knowledge within the organization for long time sustainability. Ensuring the installation of required infrastructures that facilitate strategy implementation at Safari Park. This includes installation of information and operation system that the staff requires in implementing their responsibilities. The finding concur with the finding of Zheng, et al. (2010) who identified that organization culture is important and preserving organization culture facilitate knowledge management within the organization

#### **4.7 Solution to challenges of strategy implementation**

There were many challenges that were identified by the respondent that limits effective implementation of the strategic management of the organization (Galliers & Leidner, 2014). For the communication challenge, various measures were identified to have been put in place to overcome it at Safari Park. First was sending of information direct to personal emails of the employees on issues relating to strategic management. This ensures that all the employees get the information on time and respond to it. Memos are also used in the organization in broadcasting information to the employees on issues relating to strategic implementation. Encouraging bottom up communication within the organization is encouraged in ensuring there is free communication among the employees irrespective of their position. The strategy ensures that all the barriers of communication are alleviated from the organization and this facilitates effective communication and

understanding of strategic implementation responsibilities and practices within the organization. The organization been able to overcome communication challenges in strategic implementation.

For the challenge of new equipment use and new process that needed to be undertaken, training was undertaken by the organization to instill the required expertise and knowledge to employees. The training was frequent as the changes in the different aspect of operation and strategy implementation changed over time. In addition, the organization hired experienced employees in the various sectors to ensure that all the required human resources are available of the implementation of the strategy. The importance of training concurs with that of Choi and Dickson (2009) on solution of employees' incompetence in strategy implementation.

The implementation of the strategic plan requires the availability of resources for attaining the different goals that are set by the organization (Cho, et al., 2006). Effective allocation of the resources require planning in order to prioritize areas that require resources as well as estimate the required resources for smooth operation. The Hotel had started to embrace budgeting and planning early before execution of the different phases of strategy implementation in order to overcome resource inadequacy. The strategy also provides a crucial basis for the organization to overcome the different effects associated with poor resource availability and allocation.

Clearly outlining the responsibilities of each and every employee in the organization is another solution adopted by the organization to overcome challenges faced in strategy implementation on overlapping responsibilities and confusion in undertaking the different responsibilities by the staff. The outlined responsibilities were termed important as they

ensure all the sections of the strategic implementation are effectively covered. The finding concurs with that of Christensen and Rog (2008) and O'Reilly et al. (2010) who identified the role of human resource management and leadership role in assigning responsibilities in strategy implementation.

Lastly, Safari Park Hotel has created an interactive platform in which all the views of the employees are heard and considered in decision making on strategic implementation. The measures ensured that all the employees are certain of what they are supposed to undertake and ensures they feel as part of the organization strategic implementation. The incorporation of all the employees ensures smooth operation of the organization in meeting the targeted goal and improving the overall performance of the organization. Beer et al. (2000) propose the same in ensuring that the challenges of communication in organization operation are resolved.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the research finding, the conclusion and recommendation for further studies. The summary is based on the findings in chapter four.

#### **5.2 Summary**

The study utilized qualitative research to answer the research question. Interviews were used to collect the require information from top officials at Safari Park Hotel who represented lSales and Marketing, Human Resources, Front Office, and Food and Beverage departments. The interviewed persons had high education qualification and had different responsibilities in the organization. They were however involved in strategic plan implementation at the organization.

Safari Park Hotel was found to have strategic implementation management practices in place. The implementation of strategic plan at the hotel was found to involve all the employees and the top management official are in charge of the implementation. The hotel management was found to be crucial in the implementation of the strategic plan as they provide the required resources and the leadership required for the implementation. The management also is responsible in coming up with the strategic plan and the guidelines to its implementation. Changing macroeconomic environment, innovations and ideas in the customer service policy and customer needs were the main areas that

were found to influence the implementation of strategic plan at Safari Park hotel. Resource allocation was also identified to influence strategy implementation.

There were many challenges that were identified to face strategy implementation at Safari Park Hotel. Hotel culture, work motivation, workforce turnover rate and inadequate staff and Communication of responsibilities, accountability and involvement middle and lower level employees in strategic plan preparation were the main challenges identified. Work force motivation was viewed to be of low significance as the organization had put in place different strategies to motivate employees such as conflict resolution and compensation. Communication was viewed to be complex due to the large number of people involved in the strategy implementation. Responsibilities and knowledge challenges were due to lack of enough skills required to implement some of the strategies such as new technology or shift to automated system from the manual systems.

The hotel had put in place strategy to ensure effective strategy implementation. They include employing qualified staff, Building and strengthening strategy of the supportive competencies, effective resource allocation and availability of the technologies required for the strategy implementation. For the majority of the challenges that the organization was facing in strategy implementation, some resolution had already been put in place to ensure effective strategy implementation.

### **5.3 Discussion**

Five star hotels such as safari park have adopted strategic management practices to obtain the long-term sustainability and competitive advantage. The seasonality and Variability of the hospitality industry have forced hotels to continuously evaluate their strategic

management to ensure successful attainment of the intended goal. The management is responsible in developing and implementing of the strategic practices. The management cooperation with the employees plays a vital role for the success of strategic management.

The hotel culture in 5 star hotels is among the factors that are required to be considered in strategic management. Aligning of the hotel culture with the strategic practices enhances success of achieving the targeted goals of strategy implementation. Safari Park Hotel had put in place employee motivation strategies that enhance worker performance and adherence toward strategic implementation. High turnover rate and inadequate staff was a main challenge in Strategic implementation. Communication challenges within the organization were also identified to be a challenge in strategic implementation. However, five star hotel such as Safari Park has resorted adoption of measures that aim to overcome challenges faced in strategy implementation and make the process efficient. Some of the measures included staffing of the organization with skilled and qualified personnel, building and strengthening strategy of the supportive competencies, resource availability and effective communication strategies.

The five star hotels in Kenya require strategic practices in the ever-changing market environment as evident from Safari Park Hotel. Even so, the strategic plan has to be developed efficiently through wide consultation and researching to ensure all the factors that affect the implementation of the strategic plan. Inclusion of all the employees in the implementation and continuous evaluation and monitoring of the process are crucial in overcoming challenges faced in implementation of strategic plan.

The finding of the research has played an important role in adding to the body of knowledge in hospitality industry. The research identify the role of management in implementing strategy in five star hotel, challenges faced in strategy implementation and possible solution to the implementation. These adds to the available knowledge base on these area in literature.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The research was undertaken through interview in which four respondents drawn from Sales and Marketing, Human Resources, Front Office and Food and Beverage departments of Safari Park Hotel and Casino that was representative of the five star hotels. From the study the Hotel, it was evident that it had strategy implementation practices to increase its market share in the hotel service delivery market. The implementation of the strategic implementation involves all the members of the hotel although the management is in charge of the implementation. The role of management included provision of internal leadership for implementation of the organization, resource allocation and assisting conflict resolution during installation of the strategic practices.

The implementation of strategy implementation in a five star hotel was found to face various challenges. Resistance and inconveniences resulting from strategy implementation, inadequate skills and experience, poor customer feedback, inadequate resources, practices taking longer than expected, and ineffective communication were some of the challenges that were identified to be encountered during strategy implementation.

Competitive advantage, innovations and customer needs was identified as the main factor that necessitates strategy implementation in five star hotels. The organization culture and

resource allocation were also identified to influence strategy implementation in the organization. The organization culture was identified to strengthen employees' competencies in the different area of specialization. Resource allocation was on need basis and was majorly on prioritization of specific practices in strategy implementation.

The organization was found to focus on motivation of the employees in assisting the organization in meeting the intended goals. The motivation strategy embraced by five star hotels includes changing duties aligned with the targeted goals, provision of good allowances, creation of good working environment and putting in place reward system. The employee motivation was termed as important part that ensures strategy implementation in the organization. It is thus considered vital for any organization intending to successfully implement strategic plan.

There are various measures put in place to overcome the challenges faced by hotel industry in strategy implementation. The measure put in place include training of staff, employing new experienced and qualified staff, effective communication of issues relating to strategy implementation, effective planning in resource application, effective description and assignment of responsibilities and incorporation of all the employees in issues relating to strategic implementation in the hotel. The solution to the challenges focused on strengthening the organization human resource and effective implementation of the available resources to the different practices of strategy implementation.

### **5.5 Limitation of the study**

The research study had some limitations. First, the information on the strategy implementation at Safari Park Hotel was based on the responses of the respondents that



were interviewed. The accuracy of the report thus depends on the accuracy of information that was gathered during the interview.

The case study design was used in the research study where Safari Park hotel was used to represent 5 star hotels. The challenges, strategy implementation practices and the solution adopted by the hotel may not fully reflect all the five star hotels in the country. There may be other challenges that are faced by other five star hotels that is not experienced by Safari Park Hotel.

There were challenges during data collection as the organizational rules do not allow release of information to the public thus not giving enough information since their position in management does not warrant them.

Absence or inaccessibility of some respondents especially those in management due to nature of their duties thus consuming time for the researcher as planned to collect data and make conclusive results.

## **5.6 Recommendation**

From the study, the researcher recommends that five star hotels put in place effective strategies that overcome challenges that are faced during the strategy implementation. Such measures could include training, planning for resource allocation, increase skilled staff employment and ensure existence of culture that support implementation of strategic planning. Management must also fully implement documented strategies by obtaining enough financial resources and also come up with strategic plans.

Strategic training is recommended to all employees from top management to lower level employees to enhance performance in the hotel. Adoption of strategic management practices is considered essential and it should be part of all businesses in the hospitality

industries to enable them cope with the changes and challenges of the turbulent business environment and global economy.

Communication should be improved to ensure staffs are aware and understand in details the strategic management practices and strategies to be implemented by being involved from the early stages of formulation or crafting. Ensure staff especially those involved in strategy implementation discusses the already formulated strategies before implementation.

### **5.7 Suggestions for further research**

Further studies can be undertaken to compare the strategic management practices and challenges of strategy implementation practices in other five star hotels in relation to Safari Park Hotel. Other research can be done to compare the challenges and strategy implementation practices in four and three star hotel and evaluate how they differ from the ones in five star hotels.

## References

- Alexander, L.D. (1985). "Successfully Implementing Strategic Decisions", Long Range Planning, Volume 18, No. 3, pp.91-97
- Al-Ghamdi, S.M.(1998).“Obstacles to Successful Implementation of Strategic Decisions: The British Experience”, European Business Review, Vol. 98, No. 6, pp. 322-327
- Ansoff, I. (1987). *Corporate Strategy (Revised Edition ed.)*. Great Britain. Penguin books.
- Aosa, E. (1992). *Empirical Investigation of aspect of strategy formulation and implementation within large and private companies*. University of Strathclyde, Scotland Unpublished PHD thesis.
- Barney J. B (1997). *Gaining and Sustaining Competitive Advantage*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., USA.
- Barney, J. B. (2003). Firm Resources and Competitive Advantage, *Journal of Management*, 17(1) 99-120.
- Beer, M, and Eisenstat, R (2000). The silent killers of strategy implementation and learning, *Sloan Management Review Journal*, Vol. 41 No.4, pp.29-40.
- Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. K. (2009). Understanding strategic planning and the formulation and implementation of strategic plans as a way of knowing: The contributions of actor-network theory. *International Public Management Journal*12: 172-207.
- Bukirwa, S., 2017. Influence of competitive strategies on organizational performance of hotels in Kenya ( A surveys of hotels in mombasa county). *Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management* , 4(2), pp. 138 - 158.
- Chandler, A. D. (2002). *Strategy and structure*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Cho, S., Woods, R. H., Jang, S. S. & Erdem, M., 2006. Measuring the impact of human resource management practices on hospitality firms' performances. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 25(2), pp. 262-277.
- Choi, Y. & Dickson, D. R., 2009. A case study into the benefits of management training programs: Impacts on hotel employee turnover and satisfaction level. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, 9(1), pp. 103-116.
- Christensen, H. J. & Rog, E., 2008. Talent management: A strategy for improving employee recruitment, retention and engagement within hospitality organizations. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(7), pp. 43-7.
- Corboy, M., O'Corrbui, D. (1999). "The Seven Deadly Sins of Strategy", *Management Accounting: Magazine for Chartered Management Accountants*, Volume 77, Issue 10, November, pp. 29-30
- Enz, C. A., 2009. *Hospitality strategic management: Concepts and cases*. s.l.:John Wiley and Sons.
- Evans, N., 2005. Assessing the balanced scorecard as a management tool for hotels. *International Journal of contemporary Hospitality management*, 17(5), pp. 376-390
- Furst, S. A. & Cable, D. M., 2008. Employee resistance to organizational change: managerial influence tactics and leader-member exchange. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(2), pp. 453-465.
- Galliers, R. D. & Leidner, D. E., 2014. *Strategic information management: challenges and strategies in managing information systems*. s.l.:Routledge.
- Hallin, C. & Marnburg, E., 2008. Knowledge management in the hospitality industry: A review of empirical research. *Tourism Management*, 29(2), pp. 366-381.

- Hill, C.W.L., Jones, G.R. (2009).“Theory of Strategic Management with cases”, South-Western Cengage Learning, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, Canada.
- Hussey David 1998 Strategic Management from Theory to Implementation 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Pergamon Press
- Iverson, R. D. & Deery, M., 1997. Turnover culture in the hospitality industry. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 7(4), pp. 71-82.
- Johnson, G., & Scholes, K. (2008).Exploring corporate strategy: Text and cases. (6th ed.). New Delhi, India: Prentice Hall
- Kamau, F. (2008). Strategic Planning Practices Adopted by Tour and Travel firms in Kenya. *Unpublished MBA Thesis*. University of Nairobi.
- Kamau, W. S. & Waudu, J. (2012). Hospitality Industry, Employers’ Expectation of Employees’ Competence in Nairobi Hotels, *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism*, 3: 55-63.
- Kothari C. R (2004), *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, (2nd Ed.) New Delhi, New Age International.
- Kothari C.R. (1990), *Research Methodology: Methods and techniques*. 2nd Edition. New Delhi.
- Lendel, V. & Varmus, M., 2011. Creation and implementation of the innovation strategy in the enterprise. *Economics and management*, Volume 16, pp. 819-825.
- Lo, A. S., Stalcup, L. D. & Lee, A., 2010. Customer relationship management for hotels in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(2), pp. 139-159.

- Machuki, N. V (2005).Challenges of Strategy Implementation at CMC Motors Group Limited. Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.
- Maroudas, L., Kyriakidou, O. & Vacharis, A., 2008. Employees' motivation in the luxury hotel industry: The perceived effectiveness of human-resource practices. *Managing Leisure*, 13(4), pp. 258-271.
- Mintzberg, H., & Quinn, J. B. (1991).The strategy process: Concepts, contexts, cases.(Second Edition). Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentice Hall.
- Mintzberg, H., & Waters, J. A. (1985).Of strategies, deliberate and emergent. *Strategic Management Journal*, 6(3), 257-272.
- Montgomery, C. (2004), "Corporate diversification", *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 8, pp.163-178.
- Mugenda O.M and Mugenda A. G, (2003), *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative approaches*, Acts Press, Nairobi, Kenya
- M'zungu, S. D., Merrilees, B. & Miller, D., 2010. Brand management to protect brand equity: A conceptual model. *Journal of Brand management*, 17(8), pp. 605-617.
- Okumus, F (2003). A framework to implement strategies in organizations *Management Decisions*, 41(9), 871-882.
- Okumus, F. (2001).Towards a strategy implementation framework. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13: 327-38.
- Okumus, F., & Poper, A. (1999).A review of disparate approaches to strategy implementation in hospitality firms. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*.

- Olson, E. M., Slater, S. F., & Hult, G. T. (2005). The importance of structure and process to strategy implementation. *Business Horizons*, 48, 47-54
- Ongore, V., & Kobonyo P. (2011). Effects of selected corporate Governance
- O'Reilly, C. A. et al., 2010. How leadership matters: The effects of leaders' alignment on strategy implementation. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(1), pp. 104-113.
- Orfila-Sintes, F. & Mattsson, J., 2009. Innovation behavior in the hotel industry. *Omega*, 37(2), pp. 380-394.
- Pearce, J.A. and Robinson, D.B. (1991), *Strategic Management: Formulation, Implementation, and Control*. USA, Boston: Irwin Inc, 4th Edition.
- Pearce, J.A. and Robinson, R.B. (2007) *Strategic Management: Strategy Formulation and Implementation*. Third Edition, Richard D. Irwin Inc
- Pegg, S., Patterson, I. & Gariddo, P. V., 2012. The impact of seasonality on tourism and hospitality operations in the alpine region of New South Wales, Australia. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(2), pp. 659-666.
- Peters, T. and Waterman, R.H. (1982). *In search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best Run Companies*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Raps, A. (2004). Implementing strategy. *Strategic Finance* 49-53
- Raps, A. (2005). Strategy implementation. *Hand book of Business strategy* PP (141-146).
- Robbins, S.P., Coulter, M. (2004), *Strategic Management*, 5th ed., Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ,
- Schermerhon, J.R. Jr. (2010), *Introduction to Management*. John Wiley & Sons, 11 th edition.
- Shah, A.M. (1996). *Strategy Implementation: A study of Critical Factors*.

- Tavitiyaman, P., Zhang, H. Q. & Qu, H., 2012. The effect of competitive strategies and organizational structure on hotel performance. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 24(1), pp. 140-159.
- Thompson A., and Strickland, A., (1988). *Crafting and Implementing Strategy: Texts and Readings*. New York: McGraw Hill. Thompson, A., Strickland, A., Gamble, J., Jain, A. (2006).
- Thompson, A.A. Jnr, Strickland, A.J. III, and Gamble, J.N. (2010). *Crafting and executing strategy: the quest for competitive advantage: concepts and cases* 17th edition. McGraw-Hill/Irwin, New York.
- Thompson, S., (1993). *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases*, New York: Prentice Hall.
- Wadongo B., Odhuno E., Kambona O. & Othuon L. (2010). *Key Performance Indicators in Kenyan Hospitality Industry: A Managerial Perspective, Benchmarking: an International Journal*, Vol. 17(6), pp 858-875.
- Waterman, R. H., Peters, T. J., & Phillips, J. R. (1980). Structure is not organization. *Business horizons* 23: 14-26.
- Wernerfelt, B., (2004). A Resource Based View of the Firm, *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy*, Vol. 13, pp. 171 -180.
- Young, N. (2000). *Quantitative Research Approaches and Techniques*. Engage learning, Stamford, CT, United States of America.
- Zheng, W., Yang, B. & McLean, G. N., 2010. Linking organizational culture, structure, strategy, and organizational effectiveness: Mediating role of knowledge management. *Journal of Business research*, 63(7), pp. 763-771.



## Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Interview guide on Strategy Implementation and challenges at Safari Park Hotel and Casino**

#### **Part A: Personal Details**

1. Which department are you in?
2. What is your job title?
3. What is your highest level of education?
4. What are your main responsibilities in this Hotel?
5. How many years have you worked in your current position?

#### **Part B: Strategy Implementation and challenges in the hotel**

1. Does the hotel engage in strategic management practices?
2. What factors influence strategy implementation in the Hotel?
3. Who is responsible for strategy implementation in the Hotel?
4. What are the challenges posed to the implementation of the Hotel's strategies by the current Hotel structure?
5. What systems has the Hotel put in place to ensure smooth process of strategy operationalization, institutionalization and control? How is the Hotel internal support system in terms of strategy implementation?
6. How does the Hotel allocation of resources affect the implementation of the hotel strategies in terms of funds, human resource skills and experience?

7. Does the Hotel culture pose a challenge to the implementation of the strategies? If so explain how it has affected your division and what the Hotel is doing to handle the challenge.
8. How does the Hotel ensure creation of a motivated workforce so as to have a successful strategy implementation?
9. How is the Hotel's reward structure? and what strategies does the Hotel use to motivate employees and create competencies in their areas of specialization?
10. Is communication a challenge to strategy implementation in the Hotel? If so, what are the measures that the hotel has put in place to improve its communication channels with both internal and external customers?
11. What role does the Hotel management play in strategy execution? Do they portray commitment of leadership to strategy execution?
12. What measures is the hotel's management taking to counter the challenges hindering the implementation of the strategies?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Appendix 2: The letter of introduction



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

Telephone: 020-2059162  
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi  
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197  
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE... 5/10/2017

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

The bearer of this letter ..... MAKHONGE JANET NEKESA .....

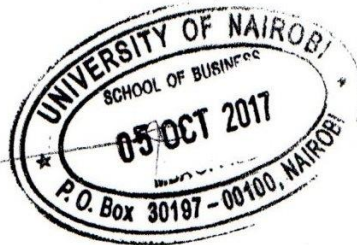
Registration No. .... DG1/83824/2016 .....

is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.



**PATRICK NYABUTO**  
**SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**