

**EFFECT OF COORDINATION FUNCTION ON STRATEGY  
IMPLEMENTATION IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KWALE,  
KENYA**

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## **DECLARATION**

This research project report is my original work and has not been submitted to any other university for award of a degree.

Signature.....Date.....

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This research project report has been submitted for examination with my authority as the university supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my late father, Mr. Ali Mohammed Mwakatonya whose love and words of wisdom and encouragement keeps me focused on my academic career, my dear mother Ms.Mealii Mwalimu Ganyuma, my loving wife Saida, my daughters Thuweibah, Khadijah and Nusrat and my son Ali Mgua for their love, encouragement and support and understanding during the cause of my study.

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*To all I say, thank you very much.*

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CGK</b>	County Government of Kwale
<b>CIDP</b>	County Integrated Development Plan
<b>M &amp; E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organisation
<b>OC</b>	Organizational Culture
<b>RBT</b>	Resource-based Theory
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom

## ABSTRACT

Many organisations have the ability to formulate excellent and promising strategies. However they may fail to achieve their organisational goals due to poor implementation of the strategies. There are a number of factors which can affect strategy implementation. One of these factors is coordination of resources, people, systems, processes and structure in the implementation of the strategy. The promulgation of the 2010 Constitution ushered in a two-tier system of governance in Kenya with 48 Governments, one national and 47 county governments. The County Government of Kwale (CGK) was conceived in 2013 to implement devolution. The county government developed its organisation structure and established departments to carry out functions as stipulated in schedule 4 part II of the Kenya Constitution 2010. CGK formulated its strategic plan as a roadmap towards achieving its vision of becoming a competitive, industrialized and socio-economically, self-sustaining and secure county. The county strategies were given in the first County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017. This plan was to be implemented using the resources, systems, processes, people and the structure in the county. Strategy requires the best fit among people, structure, processes and resources for it to be implemented effectively. Coordination is necessary to ensure there is unity of action and harmonization to implement the strategy to achieve the desired organisational objectives. The objective of this study was to assess the effect of coordination on strategy implementation in the County Government of Kwale, Kenya. The research design used was a case study. The study used both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was derived from CGK strategic plans and annual implementation reports while primary data was collected using a self-structured interview guide. The interviews targeted senior level managers at the CGK. Content analysis was used to make interpretations and conclusions of the information gathered. The study established that CGK embraced coordination in the implementation of strategies. Coordination of resources, systems, processes, people, and structure affected strategy implementation. Coordination of resources, people, structure and culture impacted strategy execution positively. However the coordination of systems and processes which includes the M and E system and the communication processes adversely affected strategy implementation. The study concluded that CGK employs coordination function in strategy implementation. Coordination is essential because it provides unity of action of diversified resources, skills, activities and perceptions. Coordination becomes necessary for the County Government of Kwale as the county continues to grow in size, in the specialization of labour and the diversity of its employees. The study recommends that CGK improves on coordination of M and E system and communication process to strengthen strategy implementation. The study also recommends that CGK upholds the good coordination of resources, people, structure and collaborative culture. The study further recommends that the leadership of CGK should strengthen coordination to ensure effective strategy execution.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Crafting a good strategy may be a difficult and time consuming work but implementing it is often a hard task. According to Bhasin (2010), strategy requires the best fit among people, structure, processes and resources for it be implemented effectively. One of the determinants of successful strategy execution in an organization is how the various departments and agencies are integrated and how the individuals' skills and resources are matched in the implementation process. In management this function is referred to as coordination. Coordination is necessary to ensure there is unity of action in implementing the strategy of the organisation to achieve its desired goals. This process of coordination once undertaken well can result in organizational effectiveness (Barrows, 2014).

This study is anchored on five theories; the resource-based theory, stakeholder theory, systems theory, institutional theory and the 7S model. According to Barney (2013) the resource based theory place organizational resources at the epicentre of strategy implementation. Effective strategy implementation will require good resources organization. On the other hand, the stakeholder theory is premised on the relationship the organisation has to its stakeholders (Langfield, 1997). According to Kaplan (2009), the systems theory opines that the organization is an open system and through its interaction with the environment can influence or being influenced by others. The institutional theory suggests that organisations legitimize their social behaviour and culture through their norms, values, structures and routines in the wider environment. (Montgomery, 2004; Freeman, 1994 & Kaplan, 2009).

In the year 2010, Kenya enacted a new constitution which gave birth to a two –tier system of governance with one National Government and 47 County governments. The main purpose of devolution was to bring equitable development in the country. County governments as independent entities are required by the constitution to prepare their own integrated development plans as their road map in implementing the devolution strategy. The County Government of Kwale prepared its first county integrated development plan (CIDP) to be implemented in the period 2013-2017. To implement the plan the County Government of Kwale developed its own organisational structure with ten departments and functions as given by the Constitution 2010(Schedule 4). In addition, clear roles and responsibilities were specified as well as the chain of command and lines of authority. The existence of various structures, departments, agencies, functions, individual skills, processes and systems requires harmonization and unity of action to effectively implement the strategic plan. This study will attempt to assess how the coordination of the various functions, departments, organs, roles and activities in the County Government of Kwale have influenced implementation of the strategic plan.

### **1.1.1 Coordination Function**

According to Mooney and Reelay (2018), coordination is the orderly arrangement of group efforts to provide unity of action in the pursuit of common goals. In any organisation the most challenging work of leaders and managers is to see how the different parts can be moved together in one direction, linked and interlinked to function as a whole or as an integrated unit. Coordination encompasses all the other functions of management including planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. It is thus referred to as the “mother” principle of management.

According to Richard (1998), the power to coordinate activities during strategy implementation lies with the managers in the organisation. The managers have the knowledge of the skills and capabilities of the employees and through their sound organizational skills they can arrange teams and assign duties and activities for effective implementation of strategy. The process of coordination once undertaken well can result in organizational effectiveness (Barrows, 2014). Apart from improving organizational effectiveness, coordination can help to motivate workers, raise their loyalty and commitment. This can be done where there is a democratic environment such that tasks, objectives, targets and strategies are discussed freely and agreed upon. In addition where roles and responsibilities are clearly spelt out conflicts are curbed, trust is built and inter-personnel relations among workers improved.

According to Barrows (2014) strategy coordination is the work of managers and can be achieved through various means. Managers can implement programmes in their organizations and gauge progress through informal meetings, project teams, standing committees and task forces. The leadership style can also assist in coordination of operations in the organisation. A leadership which has a shared vision communicates the strategic intentions well and allow negotiation on tasks, outputs, outcomes and targets for each individual worker will make the process of supervision easy and the coordination of activities. According to Edinger (2012), coordination involves constant communication of the vision, mission, objectives and strategies of the organisation to all the workers. This is done by managers in their functional areas. The managers will translate strategies into action through their persistent communication.

### **1.1.2 Strategy Implementation**

According to Bhasin (2010) strategy implementation refers to the manner in which an organization will operationalize its chosen plan of action. It involves the development and utilization of various organizational elements including people, structures, processes, resources and systems to achieve its desired goals. A strategic plan will give the course of action the organization will pursue to achieve its objectives. However unless this plan is actualized it will remain a dream.

According to Starkey (2004), the challenges of implementing strategic decisions often arise during the execution process. Implementers often have energy and morale at the start of strategy execution. However the anxiety, energy and stamina are lost on the way resulting in poor strategy implementation. In other cases, leaders and managers leave implementation of the strategy to their subordinates who do not conceive the intent, purpose and urgency of executing it. According to Henry (2004), the main challenges of strategy implementation include the lack of fit between strategy and structure; poor communication systems and information flow; the weak link of performance and pay to strategies, poor resource allocation, lack of innovation and new skills and non-existence of a supportive culture.

Rapa and Kauffman (2005) places top management's commitment at the center of successful strategy implementation. Managers own the process of implementation. They must therefore show their eagerness and dedication to implement the strategy. Effective Communication is another factor which aids the strategy implementation process. According to Miniace and Falter (2006), timely communication of any new developments within the organisation is important to all employees so that they can participate in the implementation process effectively.

Aaltonen and Ikåvalko (2012) talks about organizational culture as a factor influencing strategy implementation. According to Marginson (2012) strategy would be best executed through collaboration and participation of all work groups. Al Ghamdi (2008) argues that for most of the firms, strategy implementation takes more time than originally expected due to lack of coordination.

### **1.1.3 County Government of Kwale**

The County Government of Kwale was inaugurated in March 2013 following the first elections of 2012 after the promulgation of the Kenya Constitution 2010. The County Government was formed to implement devolution in Kwale. Administratively, Kwale County has four sub counties namely; Msambweni, Matuga, Kinango and Lungalunga. The four sub counties are further divided into 20 wards and 77 village units.

The County Government established structures to undertake the implementation of its first strategic plan, the County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017. The County has ten departments comprised of County Executive Committee members, Chief Officers, county directors and departments' staff. The County Government also has an assembly that enacts laws and approves policies for implementation of county programmes.

### **1.2 Research Problem**

Strategy formulation is often a very engaging task but implementation is even more complex and difficult for many organizations. There are many factors that affect strategy implementation. These factors include organisation structure, organizational culture, leadership style, communication, information availability and accuracy, coordination, technology, human and financial resources among others.



Each of these factors has its own degree of influence on strategy implementation. Organizations have been faced by a number of factors which have affected their ability to effectively implement strategy. Kwale County Government developed its first strategic plan in 2013 to implement devolution thereby addressing its development challenges and achieve rapid transformation. The journey towards achieving faster county transformation has not been easy.

The County Government has had its fair share of challenges in implementing the devolution strategy. A number of factors have affected the implementation of the strategy in the county. Due to its large domain of operations and organisation structure, coordination is necessary to harmonize and bring together the various units to work as one whole unit to achieve the county desired goals. Coordination is one of the factors which can affect strategy implementation in the counties.

Many studies have been done on factors affecting strategy implementation. Lorange (2013) places coordination of activities at the forefront of the factors affecting strategy implementation. Lorange argues that it is people who really influence strategy implementation in an organization. When an entity is organised in such a manner that the right people with requisite skills and knowledge are put in the right positions and tasks, effective strategy implementation can be achieved. If this is done in all work groups and they are well coordinated towards achieving a common goal then strategy implementation becomes easy.

According to Cater and Pucko (2010), leadership style can influence strategy implementation. Leaders utilize their planning and organisational skills to execute strategy. In their study they assumed reorganizing of the organization structure in implementation of the strategy will influence work performance positively.

This study was done in Slovenia involving 172 companies. Due to the different environment in which Cater and Pucko based their study, it leaves a research gap which the current intends to explore. Again the study was done in the private sector context while the current study will be done in the public sector context. A study done by Kalali (2011), in Iran sought to investigate the factors which can cause strategy implementation failure. The study concluded that unfit human resources and different hierarchical structure can inhibit effective strategy implementation. Since this research concentrated on why strategy execution fails there exists a research gap in that variables affecting strategy operationalization were not attended to.

Another study done by Eisenstat, (2003) at the Western Australian Public Service to find out the relationship of staff behaviors towards work adaptability. The study revealed that workers would embrace changes in their work environment if they have a higher degree of understanding of the tasks attributes, deemed compensation value, hierarchical responsibility and emotional prosperity and also a higher level of instructive accomplishment. The focus was workers attitudes and not factors impacting strategy execution thus a gap exists for this current study to investigate.

Mbaka and Mugambi (2014) analysed the factors that influence strategy execution in the Water Sector in Kenya. A number of factors were enumerated and analysed which include weak strategy formulation, leadership commitment, communication, organisation structure, implementing tactics, and technology, human as well as financial resources. This study though done in the public sector was not emphatic and explicit on the effect of coordination function on strategy implementation. It therefore leaves a research gap.

Another study done by Igecha (2014) investigated the factors affecting strategy execution at the Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya. The study revealed that top management commitment, organization culture, the communication process and coordination of activities affects the implementation of strategy. This study focused on the institute of Quantity surveyors but the current study will look at strategy implementation in the County governments in Kenya.

Muturi (2005) on the other hand did a study to determine the strategic responses of Christian churches in Kenya to changes in the external environment. He based his survey on evangelical churches in Nairobi. This study focused on a different context and concept from what the current study seeks to cover. Gachie (2014) assessed the implementation of strategy at the H-Young and Company construction firm in Kenya. The study established that strategy implementation is influenced by top level management, organisation culture, communication and the coordination of activities. This study was done in the corporate context different from the current study.

The studies mentioned differ from the current study in terms of context and concept. In terms of context, Eisenstat (2003), Carter and Pucko (2010), Kalali (2011), and Lorange (2013) studies were done in different environment from the current study. Muturi (2005), Mbaka and Mugambi (2013), Gachie (2014), Igecha (2014) concentrated on the factors influencing strategy implementation generally and their studies were not explicit on the effect of coordination on strategy execution though done in similar environment.

From the foregoing analysis, there is a clear gap which this study intends to fill. Specifically, none of the studies dealt with the functioning of County Governments. The current study will assess the effect of coordination on strategy implementation in County Governments in general and Kwale County in particular. Towards this end, the study will seek to answer the question; what is the effect of coordination on strategy implementation in the County Government of Kwale?

### **1.3 Research Objective**

The objective of this study was to assess the effect of coordination on strategy implementation in the County government of Kwale.

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

Studies have shown there is need for more knowledge on theory, policy and practice of strategic management. This study will provide more knowledge on strategy implementation. This study also enriches the resource based theory of strategic planning by analysing the resources available to Kwale County government. The findings of this study are beneficial to the policy makers of Kwale County government. Further, the study enables policy makers in the government to take necessary measures to strengthen devolution in Kenya. Most of the Counties are more likely to face the same challenges in implementing this strategy.

The findings of this study will highlight how devolution strategy is being practiced in Kwale County government and this can be a benchmark to the other counties. The study findings will help scholars in strategy management to further investigate the success rate for strategy implementation among government and non-governmental institutions. This study will serve as a reference point for academicians in the subject of strategic management especially the core concepts of strategy execution.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundation on which this study was based on which include the systems theory, resource based theory, the stakeholder theory, the institutional theory and the 7S Model of Strategy. It gives a critique of previous studies done on factors influencing strategy implementation. Lastly it gives the empirical assessment and a summary of the literature review and knowledge gap which this study sought to fill.

### **2.2 Theoretical Foundation**

This research is based on four main strategic management theories; the resource based theory, stakeholder theory, systems theory, institutional theory and the model 7S. This part discusses those theories and how they link to strategy implementation. The relevance of the theories to the current study will also be highlighted in this section.

#### **2.2.1 Resource Based Theory**

This study revolves around the strengths and weaknesses of both the physical and human assets of an organisation and how these resources are organised and utilised in the execution process (Wernerfelt, 2014 & Barney, 2013). According to Montgomery (2014) the resource-based viewpoint in this way implies that the resources an organization possesses and how they are coordinated can affect strategy implementation. According to Barney (2013) to effectively actualize strategies, resources must be key. This theory is relevant to this study as it looks at management of resources that the public sector facilities have in order to improve service delivery.

### **2.2.2 Stakeholder Theory**

This proposition asserts that the value of an organization is embedded on how it does business with its stakeholders. The leaders of an organization have the discretion on the value they would wish to develop and what brings its core stakeholders together (Langfield, 1997). It also postulates that managers of an organization will chose the path they would wish to develop with its stakeholders to achieve its desired objectives. Studies done have come up with suggestions that can be utilized to understand the stakeholder-organization relationship. Researchers contend that when leaders have a free will to decide on the kind of relationships they would wish to enter into and how they would wish to interact with its stakeholders it pushes them to execute strategies better.

Freeman (1999) strongly held the view that we do not require hypotheses that come together but various propositions that may give different approaches which are helpful in comprehending the organisations' stakeholder relationships. The public sector deals with many stakeholders including the central government, donors and the society at large. This theory is therefore relevant to this study as it will give insights as to how coordination of stakeholders will impact strategy implementation.

### **2.2.3 Systems Theory**

The theory assesses the concepts found in large organisations consisting of many different connected parts and the ways that can be applied to outline them. According to Kaplan (2013), modern organizations operate as open systems and in the interaction with their surroundings they can influence and be influenced by other players. He continues to suggest that modern organizations being dynamic they can acquire new traits and thereby effectively carry out the strategy in an ever changing environment.

Systems analysis grew autonomously of systems theory, applies systems standards to help a chief with issues of distinguishing, recreating, streamlining, and controlling a framework while considering numerous targets, limitations and assets (Jauch, 1984). For the general population area to accomplish their goals they should cooperate with their interior and outer conditions. The directors and administrators ought to deal with their relations with these situations keeping in mind the end goal to accomplish their vital points. This theory is relevant in this study as it highlights the importance of organizations working as systems which in effect implies the coordination function.

#### **2.2.4 Institutional Theory**

Kaufman (2011) asserts that many areas of study regard the institutional theory and its aspects as essential. These aspects would be influenced by the wider organizational environment. The institutional environment legitimizes the norms, beliefs, practices, processes, rules and structures in an organization (Paauwe & Boselie, 2003).

Greenwood et al (2008) observed that institutionalism started to oppose and deter excessive logical and scientific point of view of the 1960s. Institutional proposition postulates that the ways an organization does business is embedded in their missions, values, standards, assumptions and general attitudes and work culture. Consequently, therefore an entity will adapt to institutional changes in the wider environment for its prosperity and survival. County governments ought to respond to the institutional pressures in order to continue to serve the community well and adjust to their changing needs.

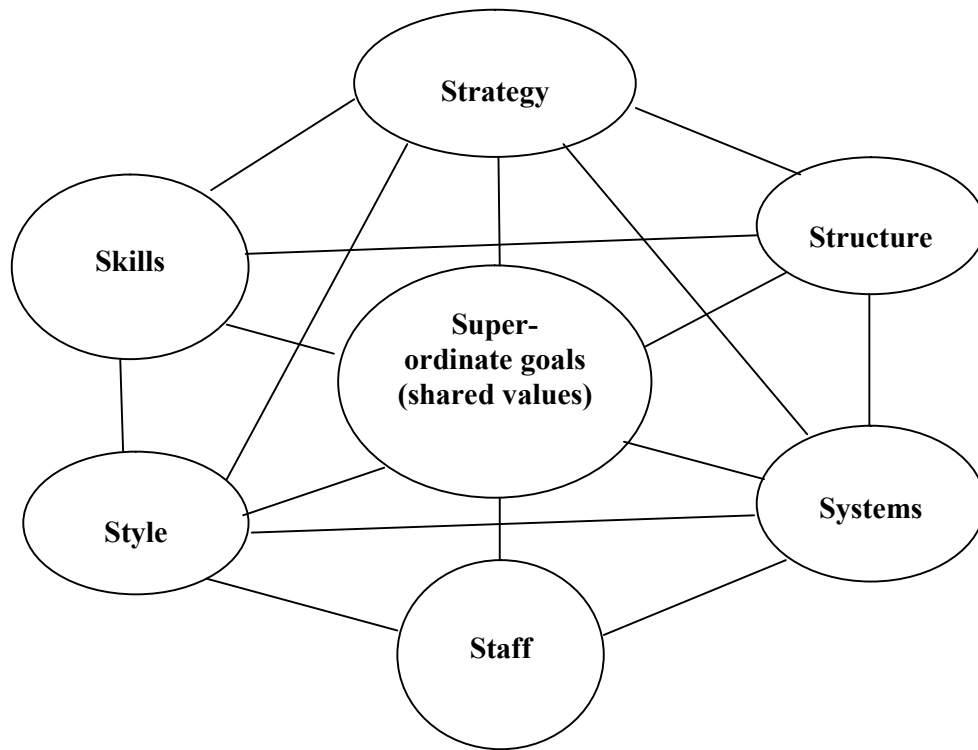
### **2.2.5 The 7S Model**

The model 7S was developed by Peterson and Waterman at the McKinsey & Company in the early 1980s. The model proposes seven internal factors of an organisation which must be coordinated to ensure effective implementation of strategy. The model consists of three “hard” and four “soft” elements. The “hard” elements are system, structure and strategy and the leadership in an organisation can manipulate them. The soft elements include style, staff, skills and shared values. They are hard to define and are influenced by the organisations culture.

In the model, the hard elements include strategy which explains how the organisation will achieve its vision and how it will interact with its stakeholders. Structure refers to the ways how the organisation is structured which will in away support the implementation of the strategy. Systems will include the processes, procedures, inputs and activities that will support strategy execution.

On the other hand, style relates to the kind of leadership which will drive strategy. Staff are the employees in an organisation who contribute to the success of the strategy. Skills are the actual competencies and abilities of the organisation. Development of skills, extension of knowledge and learning and acquisition of experiences are instrumental in effective strategy implementation. Shared values influence the effectiveness of the other factors and are embedded in the organisation’s mission. This model gives insights to the factors that can affect strategy execution. The model also espouses on the importance of coordination in strategy implementation. This model is relevant to the study as the researcher will investigate how each of the factors is coordinated in the implementation of strategy at the County Government of Kwale.





**Figure 2.1: Model 7S by McKinsey Company**

### **2.3 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation**

This section discusses the factors influencing strategy implementation. Specifically the section discusses commitment of senior management, process of communication, co-ordination function and organizational culture. The discussions given here are relevant to the study.

#### **2.3.1 Commitment of Top level Management**

According to Rapa and Kauffman, (2005) commitment and support to the strategy from the highest hierarchy in the organization will definitely ensure successful strategy execution. Thus it is imperative for the top level management to show dedication and tireless efforts in implementing the strategy. This will motivate other members in the organization to progressively work towards undertaking their responsibilities, accomplishing their tasks and thereby ensuring effective strategy

implementation. Chakravarthy and White (2011), opine that top administrators have the choice to use diverse courses of action with respect to three issues: passage level instruction and preparing, worker advancement, and organisation- school relations. They suggested that top management's dedication to transformation and institutionalizing organizational change by reducing the workforce and work redesign can strengthen strategy execution.

### **2.3.2 Communication Process**

Effective communication in an organization is an essential factor for successful strategy execution. Strategy implementation is challenging in many organizations due to the absence of a two-way form of communication .Free flow of information and feedback mechanism assist in ensuring effective execution of the crafted plan of action. In the absence of communication and the inability to give feedback on the strategy, the workforce may not be able to decipher what is expected of them with regard to the changing tasks and activities in the midst of new organisational developments (Rapa & Kauffman, 2005). Further when the changes in the working environment are not embraced by the employees, performance will be undermined and thus affect the organisation (Alexander 2003).

According to Rapa and Kauffman (2005), timely communication of organisational changes and their sound presentation to the employees should be made at each stage of the execution process. They further suggest that employees of an organization will readily embrace the strategy when presented in a manner that persuades and convinces them to implement it effectively. A coordinated communication system should be designed as a fruitful instrument for enabling the workforce to recognise the urgency and rationale of the chosen plan of action.

### **2.3.3 Co-ordination Function**

Coordination is sometimes referred to as the mother principle of management. This is because coordination function integrates all the other functions of management including planning, staffing, organizing, directing, budgeting and controlling. According to Richard (1998), in most organizations the onus to coordinate roles, responsibilities and tasks is on the managers. Further due to their understanding of the individual workers skills and capabilities they are in a position to arrange work by ensuring a good fit for delivering the desired goals of the organization.

According to Al Ghamdi (1998) effective coordination of the activities in an organization will influence strategy implementation. Poor or lack of coordination in many organizations is associated with weak implementation of strategy. Organizations often find it hard to stay focused in the implementation process due to pressures from other quarters. Disagreements on work formulae and targets and the lack of clarity on tasks make coordination difficult. Due to lack of coordination and poor planning in organizations, important issues are left unattended and strategy execution takes more than the expected time. Al Ghamdi (1998) concluded that coordination will be effective when diversions are minimal and sufficient work details and data frameworks are availed.

### **2.3.4 Organizational Culture**

Organizational Culture (OC) refers to the underlying social attitudes, norms, values, and beliefs, written and unwritten rules of an organization which will influence strategy implementation. According to Aaltonen and Ikåvalko (2012), it is leaders who communicate and shape the organizational culture. It is the leaders who can advocate for a strong coalition culture in the performance of tasks and implementation of the organisation's strategy.

According to Marginson (2002), strategy implementation advances either from a process of winning team dedication through a participative decision making. He further suggested that the culture of collaboration of all employees in the execution process will ensure effective implementation. Another constraint in the execution of plans of action which is as a result of corporate culture is the effect of poor coordination and the separation of strategy “formulators” and “implementers” (Aaltonen & Ikåvalko, 2002).

#### **2.4 Empirical Review**

Cater and Pucko (2010) in their investigation of the factors inhibiting strategy execution concentrated on leadership traits and styles their study examined 172 companies in Slovenia. Bad leadership and poor authority were found to be the main hindrances to strategy execution. Findings of the study seem also to suggest that weak administrator’s skills in coordination and negotiation impact strategy implementation negatively. This study concentrated more on strategy tasks and impediments to strategy execution. The research gap is that it did not address the factors influencing strategy execution as well as being a study in Slovenia. This study will be based in Kenya hence findings may differ.

A study done by Kalali (2011) in Iran sought to investigate the factors which can cause strategy implementation failure. The study was done in the health services sector and revealed that content measurement is the main reason behind choices of strategies. The study concluded that unfit human resources and different hierarchical structure can inhibit effective strategy implementation. Since this research concentrated on why strategy execution fails there exists a research gap in that variables affecting strategy operationalization were not attended to.

Awino (2013) studied the effect of selected variables on corporate performance using 49 large private insurance firms in Kenya. The study concluded that both financial and non-financial performance were affected but to varying degrees by selected variables. The focus of this study was corporate performance variables and not factors influencing strategy implementation hence a gap exists.

In his study of “aspects of formulation and implementation of strategic plans in Kenya”, Aosa (1992) surveyed 51 large private manufacturing firms through a survey. Using questionnaires and a drop and pick method, Aosa (1992) concluded that management, culture and communication were the key factors that influenced strategic plans formulation and implementation. This study only focused on strategic plans formulation and implementation but did not address the factors influencing strategy implementation hence a gap exists for this study to explore.

Kiptugen (2003) did a study to determine the strategic responses of Kenya Commercial Bank to a changing competitive environment. Since he focused mainly on strategies that can be adopted in a competitive environment; the study failed to cover the processes involved in strategy implementation and performance. Muturi (2005) on the other hand did a study to determine the strategic responses of Christian churches in Kenya to changes in the external environment. He based his survey on evangelical churches in Nairobi. This study focused on a different context and concept from what the current study seeks to cover. Mbaka and Mugambi (2014) reviewed the factors that affect strategy implementation in the Water Sector in Kenya.

The study identified strategy formulation process, relationship among different departments and different strategy levels, communication, implementing tactics, commitment, organization structure, and inadequate resources as some of the factors that affect strategy implementation. The methodology used in this study also differs from the current study. Gachie (2014) assessed the implementation of strategy at the H-Young and Company construction firm in Kenya. The study established that strategy implementation is influenced by top level management, organisation culture, communication and the coordination of activities. This study was done in the corporate context different from the current study.

Another study done by Eisenstat, (2003) at the Western Australian Public Service to find out the relationship of staff behaviors towards work adaptability. A sample of 3,044 staff was used in the study. The study revealed that workers would embrace changes in their work environment if they have a higher degree of understanding of the tasks attributes, deemed compensation value, hierarchical responsibility and emotional prosperity and also a higher level of instructive accomplishment. The focus was workers attitudes and not factors impacting strategy execution thus a gap exists for this current study to investigate.

Igecha (2014) did a study on the determinants of implementation of strategies at the Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya. The study found out that strategy implementation at the Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya is for the most part impacted by top management commitment, communication process, coordination and organizational culture. The study focused on the institute of quantity surveyors but this study will look at the County governments hence filling in the research gap.

## **2.5 Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gap**

Past studies did not investigate the determinants of successful strategy implementation in the County governments. Most researchers concentrated on the leadership engagement in strategy implementation (Cater & Pucko, 2010). Leadership involvement in strategy takes care of only one element of the ingredients of good strategy implementation. This leaves a window of opportunity for researchers to venture in.

The implementation crevices espoused by past researches including weak leadership, weak communication and absence of stakeholder participation will be looked into. The studies have concentrated on factors influencing strategy implementation with different context, concept and methodology. There exists a research gap in that no known study has looked at the effect of coordination on strategy implementation in the devolved governments in Kenya in general and the county government of Kwale in particular.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research design that was used, population of study, data collection instruments and procedures, and the techniques for data analysis. It also show how content analysis was used to make interpretations on the qualitative information gathered from the respondents. The analysis and interpretations will be made in consideration of the objective of the study.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design used was a case study. Young (2013) posits that a case study is a powerful form of qualitative analysis that involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, irrespective of what type of unit is under study. Kothari (2014) describes case study as a comprehensive study of a social unit be that unit a person, a group, a social institution, a district or a community. The study focused on Kwale County Government hence meets the criterion for a case study.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The study used both primary and secondary data. Secondary data on strategy implementation was derived from Kwale County government corporate plans while primary data was collected using a self-structured interview guide (See appendix 1). The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions developed in line with the objectives of the research. The interviews targeted senior personnel of the Executive arm of the County Government of Kwale. This comprised of chief officers who are the accounting officers in departments and members of the County executive committee who head the departments.



The Executive arm of the County Government develops strategies for implementation of the county priorities. The selected personnel were chosen due to their understanding of the County strategic plan. They were also in positions of management and authority and were in charge of the strategy implementation process.

The interview guide was structured into two parts: Part A focused on the general information and the factors influencing strategy implementation. Part B was to collect views on the influence of coordination on strategy implementation. Categories of personnel interviewed are presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Categories of Staff**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Executive Committee member	8	26.7
Chief Officer	7	23.3
County Director	15	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: County Government of Kwale (2018)

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The aim of data analysis is to test for validity, completeness and consistency with the statement of the problem. Prior to data analysis, the filled interview guides were checked for completeness; entries checked for consistency and coding done. This being a case study data collected was analysed and presented qualitatively using content analysis. Content analysis helps to determine the presence of key words or concepts within text. This tool helps researchers quantify and analyse the presence, meaning and relationships of such words and concepts and make inference about messages. This method further enables the researcher to include large amounts of information and systematically identify its properties (Kondracki & Wellman, 2012).

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the study findings, analysis of data collected and the discussion of results. This study adopted a case study design. The research used an interview guide to collect information from senior management of the County Government of Kwale based on the objective of the study. These are the key personnel who are involved in strategy implementation. The study had one main objective; to assess the effect of coordination function on strategy implementation in the County Government of Kwale, Kenya.

The data collection was done by way of writing responses from the selected 30 senior staff of the County Government of Kwale. The data was then analysed and interpreted in line with the objective of the study using content analysis. Content analysis enables a researcher to include large amount of information and systematically identify its properties (Kondracki & Wellmann, 2002).

The analysis involved the interpretation of meanings and implications emanating from the respondents' information together with documented data regarding coordination and strategy execution. The respondents in this study were drawn from the senior level management which include County Executive Committee members, chief officers and county directors. These employees are involved in the crafting of the county strategy as well as its implementation. Further they were chosen due to their roles and positions of authority which enabled them to understand and answer the questions appropriately.

## 4.2 Profile of the Respondents

### 4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

The personnel interviewed were requested to indicate their gender. The analysis of the data collected based on gender indicated results given in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Gender distribution of the respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	21	70
Female	9	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research data (2018)

Table 4.1 shows that 70 percent of the respondents were male while that of female was 30 percent. This meets the constitutional requirement of minimum 30 percent gender representation. Majority of the respondents were male.

### 4.2.3 Years of Service

An analysis of the data collected in terms of the number of years respondents have worked at the County Government of Kwale revealed results presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Years of Service**

<b>Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Below 2 years	3	10
2-5 years	9	30
6-10 years	18	60
More than 10 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research data (2018)

Table 4.2 indicates that only ten percent of the respondents had worked for less than 2 years at the County Government of Kwale. Nine respondents which translates to 30 percent had worked for at least 5 years in the county while a majority (18) who constitute a large percentage about 60 percent have worked for more than 5 years. From this it can be deduced that a majority of the respondents were present during the implementation of the first County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017. The first County Integrated Development Plan contained the strategies for implementation of devolution in the county. Therefore the selected respondents were knowledgeable in the strategic matters of the organisation and would give appropriate information on coordination and strategy implementation at the county.

#### **4.3 Coordination and Strategy Implementation**

The study sought to establish the effect of coordination function on strategy implementation at the County Government of Kwale. The study revealed that the County Government implemented devolution in the first term adhering to the Constitution 2010 and other guiding legislations such as the County Government Act 2012 and the Public Finance Management Act 2012. The county implemented devolution using its roadmap which is the first County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017. The development plan contained the county priorities and the strategies to achieve them. The study looked at how the coordination of resources, systems and procedures, communication and the organisation structure and culture impacted strategy implementation.

#### **4.4 Coordination of Resources in Strategy Implementation**

The findings of the study revealed that the coordination of resources for strategies implementation starts from resources allocation. Resources allocation in the county government is guided by the planning and budgeting process. The planning and budgeting process is governed by the County Government Act 2012 and the Public Finance Management Act 2012. The budget making process includes a mandatory public participation which involves the engagement of citizens in deciding the allocation of resources.

Respondents revealed that there is good coordination in the conduct of public participation for planning and budgeting of resources for results. However there are isolated cases of delayed information for public participation, political interference and domination of meetings by influential groups. Respondents indicated that this is a key governance area that determines how resources are distributed for development.

The study findings revealed that the county faces challenges in release of funds from the state agencies- the Controller of Budget and the National Treasury. Coordination of financial resources requires the collaboration of the County Treasury and the state agencies. Due to some requirements not being met, there are delays in the release of funds. Respondents revealed that they are indeed delays in the release of funds which have caused late implementation of strategic priorities. Findings from the study have shown that some strategies were not adequately funded due to lack of resources. This was brought about by under budgeting during the planning process.

Respondents who are key personnel being the technical officers in the implementation of strategies revealed that they were not fully involved in the decision making process for allocation of resources. This was due to lack of coordination in the conduct of interdepartmental meetings for resources allocation of strategic priorities. These respondents indicated also that their views on resources allocation were not incorporated in the process. This rendered strategy implementation ineffective.

#### **4.5 Coordination of the Communication Process in Strategy Implementation**

Effective strategy implementation requires timely, persuasive and convincing communication of the plan of action and other organisational changes (Rapa & Kauffman, 2005). The key personnel in strategy implementation who were interviewed showed dissatisfaction with the way communication is coordinated at the County Government of Kwale. Respondents revealed that county strategies are not well communicated to the employees who implement them. In implementing strategy constant communication is required to reassure the implementers and drumming up support for the strategy.

Respondents also showed lack of frequent communication between superiors and their sub-ordinates. In implementing strategy, communication should be relayed to create the sense of urgency and continuous reassurance. In addition, to keep abreast of the “milestones” and ensure the “implementers” are on the right track. Modern organisations operate as open systems and in the interaction with their surroundings they can be affected by factors outside their control. This may warrant change of strategy or devising an emergent strategy. Such changes must be communicated to all stakeholders in the strategy implementation.

#### **4.6 Coordination of Systems and Procedures for Strategy implementation**

The County Government of Kwale comprised of ten departments which were involved in the implementation of the devolution strategy. The workings of the departments needed to be linked and interlinked for smooth operations and implementation of various programmes and projects. This could be done through good coordination of systems and procedures. The systems that were used in the implementation of the strategy include the integrated financial management information system (IFMIS) for public finance management. Findings from the study revealed that there was good coordination in the use of the IFMIS for funds processing in strategy implementation. The IFMIS system was decentralized to each department to make funds processing effective. This was due to good coordination.

Respondents revealed that there were challenges in the acquiring of goods and services by departments. This is due to long procurement procedures and weak coordination of processes. It was revealed that some county priority programmes were delayed in their implementation due to this.

The respondents informed that the other system which required coordination for implementation of the county priority programmes was monitoring and evaluation (M & E). The county devolution strategy was laid down in the first County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017. The County Government Act 2012 requires that the CIDP should have a monitoring and evaluation framework. Monitoring the performance of county strategies helps in increasing accountability and transparency and offer opportunity for evidence based decision making. Evaluation of the strategy assists in assessing its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Findings from the study indicated that there was weak coordination of monitoring and evaluation in strategy implementation. Respondents revealed that each department does its own M & E in the implementation of strategies. There was no established M& E system and policy to guide M & E in the county. In addition, there was no funding for M& E activities; there were no skilled staff to undertake M & E and there was also limited information sharing among departments. Respondents revealed that due to the lack of coordination, there is inconsistency and duplication of information. This weakened evidence based decision making in strategy implementation.

#### **4.7 Coordination in the Organisation Structure and Culture**

Findings from the study revealed that there was a well-organized division of labour and specialization. People's skills were matched with their respective jobs. Respondents informed that human resources were placed in right positions where they were competent. The matching of right skills to the jobs is a key factor in ensuring effective implementation of strategy.

Respondents showed that the organisation structure was supportive of the strategy. Kwale County had the advantage of formulating the strategy before fully establishing the organisation structure. The organisation structure which extends to the lowest level of administration that is, the village administrators is conducive for effective implantation of the devolution strategy. There was therefore good coordination in the performance of duties. The structure eliminated bureaucracy and improved service delivery.



Respondents observed that there was collaboration and team work in undertaking of interdepartmental functions and staff especially technical staff work together to accomplish projects. The technical staff interviewed revealed that in the case of interdepartmental projects there were always project committees which comprised of cross-sectional members. It was revealed that such committees would hold meetings to discuss the projects details and agree on the deliverables and work in harmony to achieve the organisational objectives.

From the foregoing findings, it can be deduced that there was effective coordination of people, skills and activities at the County Government of Kwale which led to effective strategy implementation. This coincides with the proposition by Al Ghamdi (1998) that effective coordination of work activities can result in effective strategy implementation. Respondents also informed there was supervision on the work as a result of the effective organisation structure and the way tasks are arranged. This is in line with Barrows (2014) view that good tasks arrangement in an organisation will ensure easy supervision of work.

The interview with the head of departments also revealed that there was cooperation in the performance of tasks and this is embedded in the entire organizational culture. Respondents also revealed that leadership supports coordination of departments and uphold team work spirit in strategy implementation. According to Rapa & Kauffman (2005) commitment and support of top level management will ensure effective strategy execution.

#### **4.8 Discussion of Results**

The objective of the study was to assess the effect of coordination function on strategy implementation at the County Government of Kwale. This assessment was to be done in a number of areas which require coordination for implementation of strategy. The areas include resources allocation, systems, communication, organisation structure and work culture. Strategy implementation entailed the execution of the county development strategies mentioned in the County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017.

The results indicated that in a number of factors coordination was good and therefore impacted strategy implementation positively. In the area of resources allocation for strategy implementation coordination had mixed results. Key personnel who implemented programmes were not fully involved in decision making in the planning and budgeting of resources for strategy implementation. This goes contrary to the proposition by Marginson (2002) which advocated for fully involvement of all stakeholders in both phases of formulation and implementation and avoiding the differentiation of formulators from implementers of strategy. Stakeholder theory asserts that the effectiveness of an organisation is embedded on how it interacts with stakeholders (Langfield, 1997).

Coordination of the communication process was found to be weak. There was no formal communication on policy matters, programmes and projects to employees of the county. The urgency and importance of the county strategic priorities were not well communicated. Communication on strategic issues was normally done at County Executive Committee level but was rarely cascaded downwards due to lack of coordination.

According to Beer and Eisenstat (2000), poor vertical communication is one of the silent “killers” of strategy. The findings from this study showed that there was uncoordinated communication system in the county. This would affect strategy implementation negatively. Some programmes and projects were not implemented on time as a result.

Weak coordination of communication was also manifested in the various changes made on strategy but information was not conveyed to the implementers. This implied the lack of support from implementers of the strategies. When changes in the working environment are not communicated and thereby embraced by employees, performance will be undermined and thus affect the organisation (Alexander 2003). When employees of an organisation do not understand the strategy they cannot support it and work towards achieving the organizational goals. This goes in line with the observation made by Rapa and Kauffman (2005) that employees of an organization will support and effectively implement a strategy when they have been made to understand and appreciate its urgency and importance.

The report on findings of this study indicated that the coordination of functions, roles and activities was good. Work arrangement was good in most departments as there was strong commitment on the heads of department to match peoples’ skills with their jobs. This impacted positively on work performance and therefore implementation of the county strategies. These findings seem to support the views of the study by Barrows (2014) that when tasks are arranged well in an organisation it will result in work accomplishment and effective strategy implementation. This study also indicated that leaders were committed to effective strategy implementation through the good coordination of work activities.

Al Ghamdi (1998), observes that effective coordination of the activities in an organisation will influence strategy implementation. Apart from ensuring the existence of a good fit between the structure and strategy, they also matched people skills and experience and work performance. Another study by Richard (1998) suggested that by ensuring a good fit between strategy and skills leaders can enhance performance of the organization.

Findings of the study also indicated the presence of a very strong coordinated and collaborative culture. The leadership had embraced this culture since its inception. The county has had a collaborative culture in the implementation of its strategies. Leadership has encouraged and developed this culture through strong coordination. According to Aaltonen and Ikâvalko (2012) it is the leaders who communicate and shape the organizational culture. It is the leaders who can advocate for a strong collaboration culture in the performance of tasks and implementation of the strategy. The study also showed that there are interdependencies between departments which also necessitate team work spirit. This has been made possible through good coordination. Success of strategy implementation results from a culture of dedicated collaborative winning team which entails cooperation of all employees (Marginson, 2002).

Coordination of systems and procedures had mixed results. Financial management systems were well coordinated. Financial management systems are key in strategy implementation .Due to many various changes in the systems; coordination was paramount to ensure seamless strategy implementation. Kaplan (2013) suggests that modern organizations being dynamic they can acquire new traits and implement the strategy effectively. The main area of weak coordination in systems was M & E.

Modern organisations operate as open systems and can be influenced by the environment in which they operate. The environment can change. This may necessitate the change of a strategy in order to achieve the organizational goals. Thus M & E becomes essential in this case to offer insights to the corrective action to be taken and the emergent strategy to be adopted.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, conclusions and recommendations. It also gives the limitations of the study and suggests areas for further research. The summary of findings is in line with the objective of the study which was to assess the effect of coordination function on strategy implementation in the County Government of Kwale, Kenya.

### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The results of the study indicated that County Government of Kwale embraced coordination in the management of its affairs. Coordination affected strategy implementation positively and results showed that where coordination was good, performance of county priorities was also good. There was good coordination in resources allocation, organisation structure and organisation culture. Good coordination in resources allocation enabled effective strategy implementation. The organisation structure was well coordinated such that there was a good fit with the strategy. Coordination of people's skills and their jobs and the work arrangement was also good. This assisted in the good performance of county strategic priorities, improved efficiency and productivity.

On the other hand coordination impacted negatively on strategy implementation in the area of communication and also coordination of systems especially M & E. Implementation of strategic priorities was affected by the lack of adequate information. Some of the strategies, programmes and projects were delayed in their implementation due to untimely communication.

Lack of coordinated communication from the grassroots led to incomplete projects and some projects not taking off. Coordination of systems and procedures for project implementation had challenges. While systems for financial management were good in relaying resources for projects implementation, procurement processes were too long resulting in delayed projects take off. Coordination for a system of tracking progress of implementation of strategy was also weak. This led to some programmes performing dismally.

Coordination of the M & E function for strategy implementation was also weak. This was due to lack of a coordinated M & E system & E system requires policy for guidance, skilled M& E personnel, dedicated M & E unit, an operational budget, established baselines and good data collection and effective reporting systems. All these are lacking.

The study findings indicated that there was top management commitment in coordination of activities in the County Government. The top management supported a well-coordinated planning and allocation of resources for strategy implementation. The management provided a platform for discussion of strategy though this encompassed only the senior managers. The leadership also encouraged a coordinated and collaborative culture in the implementation of county strategic priorities. This affected the implementation of strategy positively.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study and the analysis of the information collected, the researcher concludes that CGK employs coordination function in strategy implementation. Coordination is essential because it provides unity of action of diversified resources, skills, activities and perceptions. Coordination becomes necessary for the County Government of Kwale as the county continues to grow in size, in the specialization of labour and the diversity of its employees. Due to the existence of differentiated work units and authority, embracing coordination will help in building synergies for effective strategy implementation.

Coordination was found to be strong in resources allocation, skills matching and work arrangement for effective strategy implementation. However efforts should be made to improve coordination of communication and systems especially M & E to achieve good strategy performance. This study concludes that CGK has enjoyed numerous benefits from the leadership commitment to ensure strategies are implemented effectively. Leadership commitment to coordination has helped in harmonizing individual and organisational goals and also achieved interdependencies between functions. This has resulted in accomplishing the organisational objectives. Therefore leadership support in coordination will affect strategy implementation positively. Most programmes and projects were accomplished and desired organisational goals achieved. The achievements the county has made in Health and Education are a living testimony to this.



This study further concludes that coordination plays a crucial role in strategy implementation. It has a strong positive effect on strategy implementation. Coordination will bring together all the activities of the organization and if there is good coordination throughout the organization it becomes easy to achieve organisational objectives quickly.

#### **5.4 Recommendations of the Study**

This study recommends that CGK should embrace coordination in M & E system for effective strategy implementation. In particular the leadership should support the development of well-coordinated M& E system to enhance reporting on performance and help track progress on implementation of county strategies. This will go a long way in ensuring organizational effectiveness.

The study recommends that CGK should improve coordination in the communication system. The use of communication information technology (ICT) should be embraced to offer real time information and feedback on programmes implementation. A coordinated communication system has several benefits. Apart from timely implementation of strategy, effective communication can motivate employees and can encourage stakeholders' ownership of projects and therefore their sustainability.

The study findings indicated good coordination of resources for strategy implementation. However the leadership should uphold good coordination to ensure adequate resources are provided. Coordination of work activities and people's skills should be upheld as well as the coordinated and collaborative organisational culture for effective strategy implementation.

### **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

This study aimed to make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on strategy implementation but had challenges. One of the limitations of the study was time. This was due to the fact that the personnel to be interviewed were busy people and there was limited time to hold the interviews. The study involved 30 key personnel who were involved in formulation of strategy and also its implementation. The findings were therefore based on their views. Inclusion of more personnel especially the implementers at the lower levels and the external clients who include the public and the private sector would have given additional insights and different views. The study was done on one entity the County Government of Kwale. However the results could have differed if done in other county governments.

### **5.6 Suggestions for Further Research**

The study investigated on the effect of one factor on strategy implementation. There are other factors which can affect strategy implementation in the County Government of Kwale. The study was conducted on one organization only that is, the County Government of Kwale. The findings can be verified by conducting similar study on a cross section of County Governments in Kenya. The study findings were based on the views of senior management of the CGK. The scope of the study could also be extended to cover lower level managers. The study can be extended to other aspects of strategic management including strategic formulation and strategic evaluation which may have a bearing on the county effectiveness.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Letter to Respondents



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS-MOMBASA CAMPUS**

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Telephone: 020 2059161  
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi  
Our Ref: D61/61125/2013

P.O. Box 30197 – 00100, G.P.O  
Nairobi, Kenya

12<sup>th</sup> November 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA FOR MANAGEMENT RESEARCH REPORT

The bearer of this letter, Athuman Ali Mwatunza of Registration Number D61/61125/2013 is a Master of Business Administration student of the University of Nairobi, Mombasa Campus.

He is required to submit as part of his coursework assessment a research project report. We would like the student to do his project on *Effect of Coordination Function on Strategy Implementation in County Government of Kwale*. We would, therefore, appreciate if you assist him by allowing him to collect data within your organization for the research.

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

Thank you.

  
Zephaniah Ogero Nyagwoka

Administrative Assistant, School of Business-Mombasa Campus

## Appendix 2: Interview Guide

### PART A: BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

1. Gender of respondent: .....
2. What position do you currently hold at County government of Kwale? :  
.....
3. How long have you worked for the County government of Kwale? :  
.....
4. Who are in charge of strategy implementation in your department?  
.....
5. How many employees report to you directly? .....

### PART II: COORDINATION FUNCTION AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

6. Does the coordination function influence the implementation of strategic plans in County governments? If no, please explain.
7. If yes, in what ways do you think coordination function influences the implementation of strategic plans in County Government of Kwale?
8. How are the resources for strategy implementation coordinated in County Government of Kwale?
9. In what ways does the County Government of Kwale coordinate monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation?
10. Kindly explain how the communication process is coordinated in the implementation of strategy in the County Government of Kwale?
11. When implementing strategies how does the leadership ensure coordination of key responsibilities in the County Government of Kwale?
12. Compared to other factors, do you think that coordination has a greater impact on the implementation of strategies in the County Government of Kwale?

*Thank you for your time and co-operation.*