

**STRATEGIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ADOPTED
BY MACHAKOS COUNTY GOVERNMENT FOR SERVICE
DELIVERY**

BY

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

NOVEMBER 2018

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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

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DEDICATION

To the Almighty God

I thank God for giving me the gift of life and constantly standing with me.

To My Dear Mother, Aunt and sister

This is to my dear mother for giving me the strength to overcome any challenges that have come my way. This is to thank you for being my ultimate role model and a source of pride. To my dear Aunt Rebecca you are a star to us all. To my sister, thank you for being my only sister and making me want to be the best role model.

To my exceptional husband and my two sons

This is a dedication to my husband Joel Mathooko Mutuku and my sons Jabyn and Jaheim, for being the greatest achievement in my life. You have always been a source of motivation to achieve all my set goals. For understanding that this venture took up a lot of time and never complaining. For always encouraging me not to give up when things get tough.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank the almighty God for enabling me to get this opportunity to undertake my Master in Business Administration. My sincere gratitude to all the people who contributed to the progress of my studies to this level and also towards the completion of my research project.

My genuine gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Regina Kitiabi for the exceptional guidance and readily availing herself for consultation at all times. Her mentoring on this project has played a major part in the completion of my research project.

I also take this opportunity to recognize my able moderator Professor Aosa, for his additional diligent input and guidance in my research work, making it more refined.

I would like to recognize my colleagues at Machakos County Government for the great input and support in my data collection, especially at the County Public Service Board.

God bless you all abundantly.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

RBV - Recourse Based View

ACRD - Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development in Kenya

IFMIS - Integrated Financial Management Information System

ADP - Annual Development Plan

CIDP - County Integrated Development Plan

ABSTRACT

Change has become inevitable in today's life for individual and institutions making it both pervasive and persistent. Therefore, the success of most institutions will depend on how well the change management process is implemented. The purpose of this study was to identify the strategic change management practices adopted by Machakos County Government to improve on its service delivery. The study sort to establish how the devolved systems of government have been able to implement strategic change management practices for service delivery. The changes in the devolved unit are mainly caused by political changes and constantly changing governance structures due to changes in management which arises after every general election. This research study adopted a case study design which was considered appropriate since it entails a cautious and comprehensive observation of social elements and also offers a broad understanding of those social elements or phenomenon under study. The primary data was gathered using a comprehensive interview guide. The study interviewed fifteen top and middle level management officials who are tasked with creating policies to govern change and also implementing change. The analysis of the data collected used content analysis approach since its nature was qualitative. The study concluded that Machakos County Government indeed uses strategic change management practices such as result based management practices, transformation of departmental image, citizen and employee participation in service delivery, internal and external stakeholders involvement, migration into digital era, improved financial and non-financial facilitation, intergovernmental relations and allocating refined roles. The study also concluded that strategic change management in Machakos County Government has led to improved service delivery. Strategic change management has strengthened and transformed the image of Machakos County Government, consequently improving internal and external strategic change management practices. Further, the study concluded that the key challenges facing Machakos County Government to be departmental cultural issues, inadequate resources both financial and non-financial, failure to communicate or give timely feedback to stakeholders, lack of a well formulated structures, high staff turnover, failure to equip the staff with relevant knowledge to adapt to strategic change and frequent transfers. Lack of involvement of all staff in the implementation of practices adopted for strategic change management has led to long bureaucratic processes which have led to inefficient service delivery and rise in corruption. The study recommends continuous restructuring, improvement in rewarding of staff, better resource mobilization and enhanced monitoring and evaluation process so as to implement and reinforce strategic change management practices in Machakos County.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Strategic practices adopted for change management are a major part of structure formulation in institutions (Burnes, 2014). Constant economic and political changes, technological developments and varying need for exceptional service delivery have led to the need to adopt strategic change management practices. To ensure continuity in implemented changes, a change management unit is required. This includes a team responsible for identifying, communicating, and implementing the original need for change. For effective service delivery, different institutions need to direct, coordinate and build effective communication channels between the management and employees. Rasul and Rogger (2018) indicate that the usage of public institutions, service market and values in contracting can lead to better service delivery. Rasul and Rogger (2018) further suggest that preferences of stakeholders and democratic processes create the values for optimum service delivery. Besides, public law and organizational structure define the contracting tools available for harmonizing competing values. Furthermore, a complex blend of strategies is needed to make sure that employees are both willing and able to deliver quality services.

This study was anchored on one theory and one emergent change model; resource based view theory and Lewin's change management model. The resource based view theory states that resources owned by the firm highly determine the performance and sustainable competitive advantage of institutions. Lewin (1947) theory of change emphasized on analyzing and evaluating a system first before embracing the change. Lewin's model for change includes three phases, unfreeze, freeze then refreeze (Burnes, 2014). All these

phases can be applied to change management in the Public Sector organizations. They focus more on the psychological process in human change, where people experience the process of unfreezing where they unlearn their daily routines, followed by freeze where they allow in a different thought process and refreeze where they reinforce the implemented new changes. This is Lewis's effort to restructure an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes and perceptions (Cummings, Bridgman and Brown, 2016).

Machakos County Government acts as an administrative institution for the entire Machakos County. It was created as an approach of devolution, which has in turn led to improved administrative, financial and political roles in the reform process. A service charter as well as a number of strategic change practices have also been established and put in place to guide effective and efficient service delivery. Regardless of the number of positive effects of the new system of government as can be seen from the Constitution, Machakos County Government has had so many changes and challenges which are causing a paradigm shift in the adoption of strategic practices for change management in order to survive. Therefore, this study sought to identify the practices for strategic management of change adopted by Machakos County Government in their service delivery

1.1.1 Concept of Strategic Change Management

Strategic practices for change management are the adopted techniques, tools and procedure to successively manage the employee side of deviation to attain the required institutional change (Mullins and Christy, 2010). Strategic change management involves the institutional practices that can be used to enable individuals make effective personal change and reduce the time frame for acceptance and awareness of change.

Hornstein (2015) defines strategic change management as the practices adopted and implemented during the change process. These activities include good leadership, elaborate communication channels, stakeholder participation and employee involvement among others. Strategic change can be affected by the internal structures in an institution and its external environment. The fit between an institution and its external environment determines the performance of an organization and hence it is important to watch for arising threats and opportunities in the external environment to quickly adapt.

Institutions are encouraged to change their strategy in response to the environmental change. An institution's environment has a great effect on the choice of strategy it adopts. Some administrations would opt to keep their structure and strategy (Kaufman, 2017). The main aim of strategic change is to select specific practices that ensure competitiveness in the organization and continuous adaption of the institution to diverse unstable environmental scenarios.

Individuals resist the shift that has to be experienced to incorporate change since the actual change is situational whereas transition is a process (Chemengich, 2013). One way of ensuring the sustainability of an institution is through constant innovation. There is continuous need to embrace innovation by loosening very rigid structures and controls. Institutional success can be sought by broadening the quest for new ideas, maintaining a link between innovators and mainstream operators and finally improving communication channels (Karmarck, 2013).

There is need to modify projects and programs to incorporate best practices for change management in institutions (Cummings, Bridgman and Brown, 2016). Change is mainly possible when it is referenced against the framework of an institution's particular past and presents.

1.1.2 Strategic Change Management Practices

Change is a process that can be either planned or unplanned which leads to a shift from one situation to another (Armstrong, 2006). He further indicates that management of change is a process of managing effective implementation of strategies set by a given organization. This process aims at ensuring that long-lasting changes in goals, systems, behaviors, processes and relationships are achieved, which is vital in the public sector.

Most institutions today acknowledge the fact that change has evolved to be a constant part of institutions, which requires good planning and managed if institutions wants to achieve sustainability (Li, 2011). Changes in innovation, political scenarios, social settings, information frameworks, technology, economy, and workforce demographics, have a great impact on strategic practices adopted and services delivered.

Two of the vital strategic practices for change is employee participation and leadership. By aligning employees toward the change process was an advantage at the Kenyan High Court (Carol, 2012). The leaders were tasked with implementing strategic practices that ensured that employees adapted to change at the Kenya High Court. This research concluded that the alignment of employee to change involved more than their verbal agreement or promise that they will embrace change.

It requires the leadership responsible for change to be willing to own the change by accepting the responsibility for implementing elaborate communication channels in their locus of control. Mwangi (2009) observed that it is more valuable to ensure employees involvement in implementing strategic change process. The participation of employees can be done by ensuring that the lower level employees in the organization take part in the change process. Institutions are required to provide employees with well-defined roles to encourage and align employees' initiative with the organizational strategy for change.

Another vital practice in strategic change management is stakeholder involvement. Bryson (2016), states that internal and external stakeholders should be involved since they may have information that cannot be obtained without their input. Participation of stakeholder is necessary to ensure effective implementation of initiatives based on the analysis. Stakeholders influence and power is mainly determined by the position that they hold in the change process. The change management team should take into consideration the effect that the parties involved have on the change process. The change managers should also be aware of how the change process will affect different stakeholders.

Communication is the transmission of intended information from an individual or group to another by using communally understood semiotic rules and signs (DeVito, 2015). According to Mwangi (2009), strategic changes are normally communicated using the top-down approach from the management to the employees. The communication can be done by the middle-level management, heads of departments and supervisors. Strategic changes should be communicated to the employees through staff meetings, circulars, e-

mails, and internal memos. The above methods of communication are best used together in order for them to be effective.

Participation of stakeholder gives an organization a competitive advantage (Nyambura, 2009). The involvement of stakeholders contributes to the success of the change process by ensuring that institutions have an opportunity to harness new ideas in its strategy. It makes sure that the organization has allies during the change process. Nyambura (2009) concluded that participation of stakeholder is a great initiative that is undertaken to reduce opposition and conflicts in implementation of change. This process eventually leads to the success of the change process in institutions.

Institutions need to give employees strategic roles in the change process in order to motivate and align employees' performance with the organizational strategy. This highlights the concern as to how institutions can give employees clear strategic direction and also inspire change, innovation and flexibility. Mwangi (2009) when the strategic practices are well defined and communicated properly, managers can come up with decisions that develop instead of undermining the organization's change strategy. Therefore, strategic practices or a mission statement help internal and external stakeholders understand an institution's direction and goals.

1.1.3 Service Delivery

Service delivery is the processes of ensuring that services are provided to the recipient in good time and are able to meet the expectations of the targeted individual or group. Rockhill, Carlisle and Myers (2017) described service delivery as the degree of sustainable brilliance on the part of an institution. Rasul and Rogger (2018) viewed

delivery of services as the adoption of technological advancements that sets an institution apart from the rest. The public service is a major contributor to the economy of any given country by providing quality service as a strategy for success.

Enhancing the delivery of services in the public service is a key role for any government to its citizens. Governments administrations are faced with many challenges which have forced them to implement new advanced service delivery structures to mitigate and solve any arising issues (Cummings, Staw and Greenwich, 2015).

Sarshar and Moores (2006) indicate that stakeholder inclusion and preferences creates an environment where optimum service delivery can be achieved. Therefore, a well-tailored mix of strategic practices is needed to make sure that employee participation delivers the expected quality services. Internal and external stakeholder participation is encouraged to be able to excel in a customer oriented and service driven environment. This can be achieved by engaging the right work force, training employees to deliver quality services, provide the required support systems and retain the best skilled employees (Sarshar and Moores, 2006).

1.1.4 Machakos County Government

Machakos County was created after the 2013 elections according to the Kenyan Constitution, 2010 article 174 on devolution. The county population totals to 1,098, 584 and consists of 264,500 households with an approximate area of 6, 208 Sq. Km. The population density in Machakos County for each square kilometer is 177 people. Machakos County is comprised of eight constituencies; Mwala, Machakos Town, Mavoko, Kangundo, Masinga, Matungulu, Kathiani and Yatta.

Policies are created by the County executive who consists of the County Governor, the Deputy Governor, County Secretary and the county executive committee members. Chief Officers, Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors are tasked with implementing policies and daily management of the County (Government of Machakos, 2013). Machakos town acts as the administrative headquarters for the entire county. Machakos County is a semi-arid area with most parts having a hilly terrain.

The county has many small-scale entrepreneurs who are either established or upcoming and an all blooming hospitality industry. The area practice subsistence farming where they plant maize, sorghum and millet (which is a drought resistant crop). The County was chosen to host the upcoming Konza Technology city since it is near Nairobi, has good infrastructure and has big land which has not yet been developed.

Machakos County border Nairobi County to the East and is home to both residential and industrial centers such as Athi River and Mlolongo (Government of Machakos, 2013). Unfortunately, the varied development does not extend to the other parts of the county. That will change once the development of the Konza Technology City is complete (Machakos County Government, 2016).

The County Government of Machakos is tasked to perform and deliver services in its eight sub counties. Under the new Constitution, it is easy to gauge the performance of a given area. Performance in county governments is measured through the service it delivers to its citizens. Machakos County is faced with the challenge of ensuring that service delivery is not biased to specific sub counties.

Few towns have been developed since the county is still young, thus there is needs to enact some changes in the structures implemented for service delivery. These strategic changes management practices will encompass service delivery, technology, leadership, information and communication (Machakos County Government, 2016).

1.2 Research Problem

Diverse strategic change management practices adopted by organizations enhance the quality and impact of service delivery. Institutions keep on restructuring their strategies in order to mitigate to environmental change. Organizations would prefer to keep their strategy and structure as they are due to resistance that may arise due to change (Kaufman, 2017). County government departments and units are encouraged to change their structure to adjust to the changing internal and external environment.

The management is supposed to identify the different variables that affect an institutions overall output. Change is successful if the strategy implementation process takes an inclusive approach of all those involved in order to achieve the desired outcomes (Benn, Edwards and Williams, 2014). Machakos County Government as an administrative unit is constantly under pressure to improve on performance and service delivery. This can be used as a strategy for selecting the preferred strategic practices for change management, the County government has adopted various strategies that will enhance its ability to effectively and efficiently enhance service delivery. County governments have not truly appreciated the role of strategic choice in the change management process.

Several researches related to strategic change management practices and their effects on service delivery have been undertaken. Muogbo (2013) conducted a research on the influence of strategic change management on the growth of Nigeria manufacturing firms in Anambra state. The study found out that strategic change management was not widely used in the Anambra state manufacturing industry. However, it was a reliable instrument for improving organizations competitiveness, enhancing the expected performance and restructuring in Anambra State manufacturing companies as a whole.

Ravi (2014) did a study on all major fail in implementing corporate change effort caused by lack of effective strategic planning in Oman banks. The study findings indicated that the failure to utilize strategic change management practices caused a major fallback in the performance of Oman Banks. Ravi (2014) expounds that the assets showed a decline in the gross on-performance on the percentage of the total assets. The drop was to 2.1% in the year 2008 from 10% in the year 2004. It rose again in the year 2009 after a cyclical recession in the economy. This was majorly accredited to the inefficiencies present in their strategic planning process. On the other hand, Rex (2010) looked at challenges attributed to strategic change management in reforms made by the Danish police; the study found that the whole planning process of how the policies were going to be implemented brought about the need for change management practices.

Locally, Wanjiru & Njeru (2014) conducted a study on the influence of strategic change response on the financial performance in Kenyan commercial banks. Based on this study, banks need to focus on adopting strategic practices to survive a dynamic environment. They also need to be strategic in deal with upcoming challenges in their environment and industry.

Nyangau (2011) studied the influence of cultural changes on strategic planning in the in Kenyan Commercial Banks, specifically the Central Business District in Kisii. His study concluded that cultural changes had a huge effect on commercial banks' strategic planning. On the other hand, Kimaku (2010) examined features of change management at Barclays Bank of Kenya in regards to the banking industry. He discovered that Barclays Bank of Kenya applied intimidation in implementing changes wherever they experienced any form of resistance.

The studies above have taken a generalist approach in regards to the strategic practices adopted for change management. This study main purpose was to identify, what are the strategic change management practices adopted by Machakos County Government for service delivery?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to identify the strategic change management practices adopted by Machakos County Government for service delivery.

1.4 Value of the Study

To academicians, the research has contributed to existing literature in the field of strategic change management practices and service delivery. It will also act as stimuli for more research to enhance present study in Kenya.

This study is significant to the county governments in Kenya. More specifically the study would help Machakos County Government embrace strategic change management practices for better leadership and service delivery. The County Government would be

able to know how to tackle changes in its environment and at the same time know how to deal with challenges in implementing change. The study is of great importance to stakeholders in the County Governments in understanding the dynamics of strategic change management and also regulating it. This is important because change does not just happen but rather it's planned proactively to ensure the organization remains relevant.

The Kenyan government will benefit from these research findings since they will be interested to know the progress of change management in the devolved systems of government. The findings can also provide invaluable information on how strategic change management can be adopted and enact policies to guide and encourage public institutions in and out of the country in implementing the necessary changes. Private corporations will also have a ready pool of knowledge which they can use to implement strategic change management.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This segment covered the theoretical framework for the study. This chapter reviewed the literature available on strategic change management practices and the factors leading to the successful service delivery. The section also looked at the challenges faced in implementing the strategic change management practices.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Various theories exist in the area of change management and service delivery. Change simply means introducing something new to an environment. Efficiency is important in case a given organization wants to succeed. Complexity theory is a new effective way of viewing several aspects which seem to quantify the need for change; this comprises of structures, capabilities and roles and also includes restructuring of systems.

Bedford, Malmi and Sendelin (2016) came up with the term mechanistic and organic systems of organizations. Mechanistic systems tend to have its operations being dominated by its superiors while at the same time seen by its authors as being necessary to ensure stability. Organistic systems were preferred especially for changing conditions since they are more democratic.

2.2.1 Resource Based Theory

The resource-based view theory was originally discussed by (Wernerfelt, 1984). He concluded that clients can receive more value in terms of products sold and services provided which increases competitiveness. The theory suggests that an organization's internal resources have a major effect in the long term sustainability of an institution.

Assets which are owned internally by the organization determine the level of sustainability of the organization or any projects being managed by the company (Alvarez and Barney, 2017). The ownership of valuable, inimitable, rare and non-substitutable resources ensures optimal productivity of organizations compared to rival competition.

The usage of resources that are knowledge based, non-substitutable and potentially value-creating, ensures overall organizational sustainability and productivity. Other scholars and theorists have tried to explain the concept. They argue that success or failure in varied institutions is all founded on resource based view theory. This means it is very important for institutions to put their existing resources to maximum use so as to achieve a high competitive advantage (Hitt, Carnes and Xu, 2016).

Scholars argue that institutions need to examine their systems so as to identify the bases of competitive advantage instead of linking it to the competitive external environment. As per the RBV features, it is practical to utilize external opportunities using external resources in a new way rather than acquiring a new skill at every opportunity that comes along. RBV model indicates that resources play major roles in aiding institutions achieve their goals and perform better.

Sabiu, Mei and Joarder (2016) states that organizational development is supposed to be evolutionary and a collective process of resource learning, whereby more knowledge is acquired on how the organization's resources help create varied options to further grow and increase the absorptive capacity. Sabiu, Mei and Joarder (2016) conclude that an

institution is an administrative unit as well as a collective tool for resources either monetary, physical or human resources.

This study has used resource based view theory to emphasize on concept of strategic change management. Therefore, it is quite hard to condense a common denominator from all the sources which connect this phase to the conceptual maps in institutional development. One of the most important resources in an organization is its people. How they are managed and organized is significant to improved performance and achievement its set goals. The RBV helps us understand that leaders are an important resource in a firm hence strategic change management should be implemented in an organized way to ensure continuity of quality service delivery.

2.2.2 Lewin's Three Phase Model

Anderson, (2016) the change theory by Lewin was created by Kurt Lewin in the year 1940. This is a theory which involves three steps that provides a high level approach to management of change. It provides the team managing change and various change agents a framework to implement the three phases, which in many cases is very delicate and has to be made seamless.

The three phases process includes unfreeze, move then refreeze. The unfreeze stage emphasizes on the purpose for change. Here, Lewin explained change as a regular aspect experienced in organizations despite the sector, age and its size falls under (Cummings, and Brown, 2016). The model indicated that the most effective way of implementing change was to unfreeze or plan in advance to embrace the changes that are experienced.

Unfreeze phase entails collapsing existing routine practices before an organization can invent new procedures to align with the change. Change is normally activated when steering forces overshadow the resisting forces. The steering forces enhance communication channels and restructuring of systems. However, as long as it is more viable to keep the old structures, then the expected change will not be achieved. Thus the this phase states that to activate change one has to shift the balance of the existing current condition in order to activate the next stage (Anderson, 2016).

The move phase can also be referred to as the changeover phase. Here, people have started shifting towards change and have been unfrozen. This is the most difficult phase in the whole change process since all involved stakeholders are unsure of the future hence a lot of support is required so as to reach the optimal output (Hayes, 2014). It is distributed into numerous minor steps which aid in implementing change. At first there is shock since people first instinct is to resist a new condition which is brought about by the insecurity and uncertainty experienced.

These feelings are evaded in the denial step where individuals look for evidence to explain change is not requires and want to go hold onto their normal practices. As the process evolves, people understand the need to have embrace change but despite this realization they still do not accept to change by believing that change does not personally affected by them. This stage is elaborated as rational understanding (Hossan, 2015).

Lewin's change model enables us to identify that the change process consists of creating the perception that change is needed, then after the change, the appropriate behavior to have during the change and new behavior after change has happened. Lewin's change model insists on the participation of individuals affected by the change to ensure that the change initiatives do not fail. Leaders need to be prepared for change as well as the other employees in an organization. This guarantees that the individuals will first understand the need for change. The model is flexible since it sets foundations on how change should be carried out.

2.3 Strategic Change Management Practices in the Public Sector

Armstrong (2006) states that change is a process that can be either planned or unplanned which leads to a shift from one situation to another. He further indicates that management of change is a process involving effective implementation of strategies set by a given organization. This process aims at ensuring that long-lasting changes in goals, systems, behaviors, processes and relationships are achieved, which is vital in the public sector.

Most institutions today approve that there has been a change evolution making it a constant occurrence which has to be well planned by management if an institution wants to be sustainable (Li, 2011). Changes brought about by innovation, political scenarios, social settings, information frameworks, technology, economy, and workforce demographics, have a great impact on strategic practices adopted and services delivered.

A vital practice in strategic change management is stakeholder involvement. Bryson (2016), states that internal and external stakeholders should be involved since they may have information that cannot be obtained without their input. Participation of stakeholder is necessary to ensure effective implementation of initiatives based on the analysis. Stakeholders influence and power is mainly determine by the position that they hold in the change process. The change management team should take into consideration the effect that the parties involved have on the change process. The change managers should also be aware of how the change process will affect different stakeholders.

Participation of stakeholder gives an organization in the public sector enhanced service delivery (Nyambura, 2009). The involvement of stakeholders contributes to the success of the change process by ensures that institutions have an opportunity to harness new ideas in its strategy. It makes sure that the organization has allies during the change process. Nyambura (2009) concluded that participation of stakeholder is a great initiative that is undertaken to reduce opposition and conflicts in implementation of change. This process eventually leads to the success of the change process in institutions.

Two more vital strategic practices for change management are employee participation and leadership. By aligning employees toward the change process was an advantage at the Kenya High Court (Carol, 2012). Most leaders are tasked with implementing strategic practices that ensured that employees adapted to change at the court. This research concluded that the alignment of employee to change involved more than their verbal agreement or promise that they will embrace change.

It requires the leadership responsible for change to be willing to own the change by accepting the responsibility for implementing elaborate communication channels in their locus of control. Mwangi (2009) observed that it is more valuable to ensure employees involvement in implementing strategic change process. The participation of employees can be done by ensuring that the lower levels of the organization feel that are part of the decision making process. Institutions are required to provide employees with well-defined roles to encourage and align employees' initiative with the organizational strategy for change.

Mwangi (2009) Communication is the transmission of intended information from an individual or group to another by using communally understood semiotic rules and signs. According to DeVito (2015), strategic changes are normally communicated using the top-down approach from the management to the employees. The communication can be done by the middle-level management, heads of departments and supervisors. Strategic changes should be communicated to the employees through staff meetings, circulars, e-mails, and internal memos. The above methods of communication are best used together in order for them to be effective.

The public service institutions need to give employees strategic roles in the change process in order to motivate and align employees' performance with the organizational strategy. This highlights the concern as to how institutions can give employees clear strategic direction and also inspire change, innovation and flexibility. Mwangi (2009) when the strategic practices are well defined and communicated properly, managers can come up with decisions that develop instead of undermining the organization's strategy.

Therefore, strategic practices or a mission statement help internal and external stakeholders understand an institution's direction.

2.4 Empirical Studies

Changes which lead to disruption of day-to-day routines and threaten the maintenance of performance standards will be resisted by people unless strategic change management practices are implemented to facilitate the transition process (Denrell, 2004). These assessments operate either to create a motivational boost to do what is necessary to overcome the barriers that arise with change. This is putting effort into mastering the change as quickly as possible in order to accelerate the slope of the recovery curve, which will decelerate the recovery curve and prolong the duration of performance problems subsequent to a change.

While change leaders to senior managers and change managers refer to middle managers, practically the two roles are interdependent. This is due to the fact that the strategic practices adopted to lead and manage change involve activities that are carried out simultaneously in organizations that are faced with constant changes (Diefenbach, 2009). There is need to align systems, projects and programs to effectively manage change in organizations.

Development of effective strategic practices for change management seems to be a priority for many organizations. One of the main reasons why organizations are not able to achieve their set goals is that they treat change and management as two separate things instead of interrelated entities. For better organizational performance and service delivery, institutions need to incorporate strategic practices in their change management

efforts. Managers at all levels of the organization need to overcome resistance when change occurs by promoting deviation from the dominant norms and behaviors. They thus create the best learning environments for managers to develop effective skills as well as acquire the aspects of successful change implementation.

It is evident from the review of past studies above that few studies have attempted to evaluate the strategic practices change management adopted for service delivery in the devolved systems of government. Owoiye and Dahunsi (2014) their research revealed that communication played a vital role in the management of Ekiti State University in Nigeria. The research showed that information flowed down from the librarian to other employee; this communication channel was an effective tool for service delivery. Employees who did not utilize this communicate system set up at Ekiti State Library provided poor services.

Zvavahera (2013) found out that leadership had a significant effect on service delivery at the University of Namibia. Poor coordination and lack of system restructuring led to early and ineffective services to the people who utilized the university library. This study further established that the universities' leadership did not motivate individual and organizational development. He also concluded that leadership should promote employee participation in order to enhance human capabilities and capacities. Poor leadership led to the staff being discontented and demotivated thereby resulting in poor performance.

A study was conducted to investigate the practices for change management at the Kenyan Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACRD). The research study concluded that formation of change management teams, stakeholders' involvement in the

change process, motivating employees to adapt change, financial facilitation for the change implementation process and ensuring effective change leadership are vital in successful change implementation. The study also highlighted the challenges faced by ACRD in implementing change effectively as; inadequate finances, opposition of change by both internal and external stakeholders and cultural diversity (Munjua, 2012).

Kimaita (2010) the research on strategic management of change within the Kenyan Teachers Service Commission, used a case study in collecting primary data as their research design. The study concludes that it is essential for an organization's leadership to identify key considerations for undertaking an effective and efficient strategic change process. The Teachers Service Commission practices strategic change management by utilizing good leadership to ensure success in implementing change.

A study was undertaken on the effect of strategic management of change at the Kenyan High Court. It concludes that the practices for strategic management of change at the Kenya High Court are: ensuring good leadership in the change process, systems restructuring, employee participation and training (Mwanza, 2012). The major challenges faced at the Kenya High Court were resistance to change by the staff, financial constraints in resource allocated and skill gaps in change management.

This study greatly anchored on the Resource Based Theory and Lewin's Three Phase Model. The study conducted identified the practices for strategic management of change that exist and how managers adapt to strategic changes at the County Government of Machakos and how they influence service delivery. This research observed that fewer studies have evaluated the issue particularly the devolved systems of government in

Kenyan. The government of Kenya has in recent years adopted strategies to enhance on quality service delivery such as; incorporating information technology (IT) advancements into its day to day operations, use of balanced scorecard, management of performance, and strategic personnel management. Therefore, the gap that this study seeks to fill is how the devolved systems of government have been able to utilize strategic practices for change management in service delivery.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research approach that the study used. It gives details of research design to be used, methods of collection data including the tools and processes adopted in data collection as well as the targeted population. The techniques enabled the researcher to collect views, backgrounds, opinions, motivations, attitude, interest and feelings about strategic change management practices. Also, the research methodology will highlight the challenges in implementation of strategic change management practices in the Machakos County Government Administration. The chapter was concluded with a description of the data analysis procedures and tools which were used during the study.

3.2 Research Design

A case study was the research design used for this particular research. The research design is the framework or strategy that gives a guide into the various stages of the research. Another definition by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), describes a research design as the framework, scheme or strategy that are adopted to get a conclusion for research problems. The reason why a case study research design was used was because the design is useful in equipping the researcher with an exhaustive examination of an occurrence, organization, or individual. It entails a cautious and complete statement of social items or a phenomenon (Kothari, 1990).

It also informs widely concerning social models or phenomenon under study. Case study is a process of comprehensive learning rather than breadth and gives more details on the contextual investigation of a few of occurrences or conditions and other inter-associates, which depends on qualitative data. Researchers such as Guchu (2013) and Odida (2011) used case study successfully in their studies

3.3 Data Collection

Secondary and primary sources were utilized to acquire data for the study. The primary data was to be sourced using a comprehensive interview guide. An Interview guide is a vital tool in every case study, because it needs many sources of knowledge to be adopted for authentication and extensiveness (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). Interviewing participants personal was adopted since it was the most acceptable primary information assortment technique considering the strategic methodology of the study in addition to the complex and predominant qualitative nature of the investigations (Kothari, 2004).

The interview guide had open ended questions (unstructured) to elicit detailed information from the interviewees. Through this technique, the researcher was able to collect views and opinions and even feelings of the interviewees on strategic change management practices at the Machakos County Government. The targeted fifteen (15) interviewees were senior level and middle level management who were charged with formulation and implementation of overall goals, strategies and operating policies, in Machakos County Government. Secondary data was sourced from relevant publications and reports, strategic plans, websites newsletters, newspapers, magazines, journals and

other internal documentations. This helped to enrich the researcher with in-depth information concerning the area of study.

3.4 Data Analysis

This study generated qualitative data from the interview schedules. The data collected was coded, verified for completeness, accuracy and consistency and then analyzed. The mode of analysis was to be done using content analysis because of the data's qualitative nature. This was a method of constructing inferences with the aid of systematically and objectively opting for exact traits of messages as the basis to relate trends (Taylor, Bogdam and DeVault, 2015). It was able to pick qualitative views of respondents, concerns, ideas, outlooks and feelings. Furthermore, it presented invaluable cultural insights through evaluation of texts. It was an informed way of analyzing interactions and provides insights to intricate models of human inspiration and language use.

During the data analysis process, the information provided was organized into respective themes and concepts from which generalizations were formulated and interpretations and comparisons made in line with established theories. The final report was narrative in nature, providing a rich description of the findings revolving around the aspects of the strategic change management practices and service delivery.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights data analysis and the research discussions. The objective of this research was to establish the strategic change management practices adopted by Machakos County Government for service delivery. Primary data was acquired by utilizing an interview guides which were given to senior level and middle level management, who are tasked with implementation and formulation of overall goals, strategies and operating policies in Machakos County Government. The data was subsequently examined anchoring on the purpose of the study and the findings are as presented as per the different responses.

4.2 General Information

The interviewees were asked on how long they had worked for the Machakos County Government and what were their major roles. The respondents interviewed were top level and middle level management officers who are also involved in some level of formulation and implementation of strategic practices for change management. The top level management of Machakos County Government is consists of the county executive which comprises of the Governor, Deputy Governor, County Secretary and the County Executive Committee. The middle level management in Machakos County consists of Chief Officers, Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors.

4.3 Strategic Change Management in Machakos County Government

4.3.1 Top management support in the change process

The respondents were questioned on how the top management supported the change process. The respondents were further asked to specify ways in which they supported and

participated in the strategic change process. Majority of the interviewees agreed that change was inevitable thus supported any change strategies suggested as long as they were in line with the proposed objectives. One way in which the respondents supported change was through understanding and communicating the change to the technical staff.

Change was not complex but a journey which meant that strategic change management was a process and to move from crisis to control, they had to follow a structured process. They also mentioned that they had to engage the internal and external stakeholders of Machakos County Government in the change process. Majority of the interviewees stated that they strived to gradually re-structure current systems in order to gain greater efficiency in service delivery. One of the interviewees indicated that shifting rapidly or failing to progressively implement changes has led to failure of the change management process. One of the Directors highlighted the fact that hastening the change process only creates the illusion of speed and never produces satisfactory results.

Some departments have made critical mistakes by skipping some of the phases indicated in the Lewins' Change model which has had a devastating impact of slowed momentum in the change process. The executives in Machakos County Government said that they need to assess potential risks and stir up a sense of urgency among workers and stakeholders in order to generate motivation to spur change within Machakos County Administration. However, one of the senior section head said that the sense of urgency has to be strong enough and perpetuated by both internal and external stakeholders in order to propel change forward.

The respondents agreed that they have had to unit in order to create a shared vision for the successful strategic change implementation in Machakos County Government. This vision should go beyond the normal five-year forward looking plan generated due to the fact that a new regime might be elected for the county after the general election which takes place after every five years. The vision should be elaborate and easy to understand once communicated. A transformation effort will fail unless the administration understands, appreciates, commits and tries to make the change happen. The guiding principle is simple, use every existing communication channel and opportunity available to inform on the change.

The respondents also indicated that they monitor improvement and progress of the changes they are implementing by reviewing the strategic practices adopted. The interviewees understood that the progress of change can be affected by a premature declaration of victory which can slow its momentum. Change of structures and institution culture can be incorporated to ensure that the progress of strategic change implementation moves forward. One director indicated that the management used the small victories as the motivation to delve more deeply into the implementation of change.

This has been done by exploring changes in the basic culture and identifying the system relationships in the organization that need re-structuring by moving people committed to the new ways into key roles. The interviewees stated that they institutionalize the new strategic practices by coming up with structured policies that mitigate the changes. At the end of the day, change sticks when it seeps into the bloodstream of the county administration and becomes the way thing are done in Machakos County Government. This has led to the management's continuous attempt to show people how the new

approaches, behavior and attitudes have helped improve the Machakos County Government, which in the long run will make the next generation of leaders believe and embody the new ways.

4.3.2 Implemented Strategic Change management Practices

The respondents were asked whether there were any strategic change practices adopted by the Machakos County Government administration. The study established numerous strategic change management practices adopted by Machakos County Government from the respondents. One being the Result Based Management practices, for example performance contracting; another being transformation of the departmental image.

Another change management practices in Machakos County Government is citizen participation in service delivery, for example the inclusion of public by inviting them for public participation. Public/Stakeholder participation is in adherence with the county government act, it can involve any of the following, budget participation, Annual Development Plan (ADP), County Integrated Development Plan (ADP) and finance Bill among others. Also the County has adopted rationalization of human resource and administrative units by ensuring that the administrative structures are in line with the devolved system guideline as spelt out in the Constitution and by matching employee skill with the tasks they perform best to ensure quality service delivery. The interviewees indicated that migration into digital era, for example using financial systems such as the Integrated Financial Information System (IFMIS) to be able to manage the County's financial resource in order to ensure accountability. This has ensured that the facilitation for the strategic change management is planned and budget for in advance.

The county has ensured improved staff mobility and office space, for example provision of motor vehicles to inspectorate officers and motor cycles for chief to enable easier access to remote areas enhancing service delivery. The county administration has approved financial facilitation such as quarterly funds for security operations to all officers in charge of administrative units. This has motivated employees significantly reducing resistance to changes implemented and has greatly improved the quality of service delivery in Machakos County.

The county has been able to use intergovernmental relations, cooperation and refined roles as strategic practices for change management. The interviewees stated that Machakos County Government utilized the aid of the transition authority (TA) to be able to change structures and adapt to changes that came up due to devolution.

The interviewee's stated that teamwork was highly encouraged as a strategic change management practice since it was necessary to enhance the momentum of restructuring caused by changes implemented. They also added that team work encouraged employee participation when implementing change and inspired the spirit of unity and togetherness. Majority of the respondents indicated that indeed, strategic change management practices had been partially put into use, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

4.4 Factors that Influence Change Management Strategies in Machakos County Government

4.4.1 Existing Structures during the Change Process

The respondents were asked if the existing structures were modified during the change process or if they were adapted as they were. They first agreed that transformation of

Machakos County has always been a collective responsibility of the executive, management, technical staff and both internal and external stakeholders. The change aspect is in its essence a set of interrelated complex processes required for the rearrangement of the existing operation of Machakos County.

One of the senior directors stated that changing the strategic direction of the county may be difficult to manage and could mean either changing the structure of the entire county or its management. This showed that majority of the existing structures normally change during the strategic change implementation process. The interviewees further agreed that institutional structure relied on the formal reporting relationships and responsibilities in Machakos County, whose major priority in implementing a carefully formulated strategy.

Normally, the activities, responsibilities, and interrelationships are normally aligned with the strategy; this has ensured that the county's structure is not left to evolve on its own. Strategy and structure have to be coordinated to avoid the probable results of inefficiencies, misdirection and fragmented efforts. The institutional structure is not the only means of organizing to implement the strategy. Reward systems, planning procedures, and information systems are other strategic practices that may be employed to achieve quality service delivery.

One of the county directors added that all forms of institutional structure are not equally effective in implementing a strategy and often the need for immediate and radical changes in structure is not immediately perceived. Once the need is perceived, strategic change management systems may be necessary before politically sensitive structures are changed or institutional power is redistributed.

4.4.2 Effect of employee dependency on strategic change management practices

The research was able to identify the effect of employee dependency on strategic change management in Machakos County Government. The term person dependence refers to the phenomenon whereby, institutions are overly dependent on specific individuals for their success and even for day-to-day operations. The interviewees indicated that excessive dependence on individuals is a risk, as we live in an uncertain world where change is inevitable and unexpected events happen to people at all times.

The interviewees noted that some departmental units in the county were dependent on individuals at the middle management level to perform all required tasks. This has left these departments in jeopardy since the success of strategic change implementation depends on specific individual and not on teamwork. Further, many change implementation teams in Machakos County often depend heavily on key county directors without whom it is perceived that operations cannot function efficiently.

One of the key directors indicated that Machakos County must reduce their person dependence because the individuals might quit, take emergency leave and in the extreme cases one might pass away. This would mean that once the individual is not in the picture, the Machakos County Government department which is highly dependent on the employee would be left in crisis. Other factors that were identified include the need for accountability and transparency in service delivery by county government administrative officers. The interviewees noted that this would curb the menace of corruption and win back the weaning public confidence. Also, the need to exercise involvement and participation by both administrative officers and the public is spelt out in the Kenyan

Constitution 2010 and the need to enhance focus on citizen satisfaction for services delivered by the Machakos County Government.

4.4.3 Culture and strategic change management practices

The respondents indicated that institutional culture is one of the most problematic aspects of change management in the county administration and comprises both formal and informal operational components. This is because the culture of Machakos County Government highlights the practices and beliefs embedded in the day to day operations of the county. The county administration's culture has to be affected when change is being implemented in order to achieve its mandate of service delivery.

Therefore, besides strategic change management, variation of institutional culture has also been vital in Machakos County. Interviewees noted that culture has constantly developed as an anchoring variable in determining the success of efforts to implementing strategic change practice in the county government. One of the executive officers stated that in disregarding the day-to-day operations essentials affects the administration's strategic change management practices.

4.4.4 Technology and strategic change management practices

The interviewee added that technology had an impact on change management in the County government. The world is becoming turbulent faster than institutions are becoming resilient. The respondents indicated that technological changes that have occurred slowly over time and have accelerated and transformed and enhanced the amount of time it takes to provide quality services.

4.4.5 Implementation of change management in Machakos County Government

The interviewees were asked to indicate the time the changes started in the County Government as well as the stage and the pace of the on-going change management reforms. Majority of the respondents indicated that changes in the Machakos County Government department started in the year 2013, when the devolved government in Kenya was adopted as provided in Chapter Eleven and in the First Schedule and Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. This was a part of the reforms in the public service initiated by the then Government in adherence to the Constitution to improve service delivery at the grass root level. According to the respondents, the reforms started after adoption of the new constitution, which merged the municipal authority, new county staff and the devolved staff into one administration. In addition respondents indicated that the on-going changes are continuous and the pace is evolutionary and gradual.

4.4.6 Challenges encountered in adopting strategic change management practices

The study asked the interviewees various questions relating to challenges faced by the County Government in implementing strategic change management practices and obtained various responses. This was meant to indicate the challenges encountered during the change period which will be of help to the institution's future strategic change managers. According to the interviewees, change is generally accepted although some resistance is normally experienced depending on either the nature or outcome of the proposed change. When change was introduced in the Machakos County Government Administration, there was resistance across the board, from top officials to the technical staff.

There was disbelief among the administrators especially those who thought status quo could not be challenged. The major challenges experienced include departmental cultural issues, inadequate and misuse of resources both financial and non-financial, failure to communicate or give timely feedback to stakeholders, high staff turnover, failure to equip the staff in relevant knowledge to adapt to strategic change, frequent transfers, lack of involvement of all staff in the strategic change implementation and long bureaucratic processes which results to inefficient service delivery and corruption. The respondents also mentioned that change evoked emotions such as uncertainty and fear, leaving staff to take out their frustrations on each other. Conflict was a common unintended consequence, so the leaders were held responsible to help staff overcome these difficulties. Also lack of communication was another challenge towards change implementation. In some instances, failure to communicate intended changes caused detrimental effects on how the county operated. Speculation and rumors were said to sweep the county administration, and a lack of trust made it difficult for staff to embrace change, especially when they were uninformed on what was required from them.

4.4.7 Top management attitude towards risk involved in strategic change management

The respondents were also asked if strategic change management practices adopted by the Machakos County were influenced by top management attitude towards risk. Majority of the respondents agreed that the county adopted strategic change management practices based on the management's attitude towards risk.

Developing a change management strategy provides direction and purpose for all other change management activities. By outlining the unique characteristics of the change and

its risks and potential resistance, change practitioners set themselves up for success. The respondents added that change always involves risk and they had to plan for that risk. One of the section heads said that any possible risks should be recorded, both overall and individualized by undertaking certain steps to deal with it.

The interviewees agreed that change experienced resistance in any given institution, since people liked doing things the way that they have always done. The Machakos county management had to figure out where the resistance came from by identifying those that are most impacted or saboteurs and come up with individual tactics to deal with the resistance. The county also needed to develop specific tactics to deal with the particular change that they were dealing with. The respondents also indicated that generalized tactics did not work for certain specific problem.

4.5 Strategic Change Management Practices and Service Delivery in Machakos County Government

4.5.1 Communication as a determinant on the level of employee involvement and its impact on service delivery

The respondents were asked to state how the need for change was communicated in order to determine the level of involvement and impact in improving service delivery. All the interviewees agreed that communication was important in strategic change management. Communication is one of the toughest issues in institutions, since effective communication channels need to be established. It is an area that is most frequently complained about by employees during institutional change, since it affects the daily norms.

One of the heads in the communication section in Machakos County noted that designing the communication phase, was vital in the beginning to prepare the administration for the transformation from current practices to new norms. At this time, section heads needed to prepare the messages that define the county's written principles and values. In doing so, the county executive would begin to set the stage for behavioral and structural changes.

Communication required a high level of circulation in order to reach at least 70 percent of the internal and external stakeholder. Based on the planning and preparation required, the team in charge of implementing strategic change management practices should repeat the message severally to ensure that 70 percent of the target audience internalized the message. The communication channel should have a feedback mechanism in order to ensure high credibility in order to effectively gauge paths of resistance or message interpretation.

4.5.2 Role of a\management in the development of strategic change management practices

The study sought to determine the opinion of the interviewees with regard to whether managers or section heads were involved in development of strategic change management practices. Majority of the interviewees agreed that managers were a key aspect in development of change management. Research suggests that people can be inspired to change even in trying circumstances, when leadership has met their psychological needs of autonomy, growth, and meaning. The interviewees indicated that effective and supportive leadership in Machakos County Government was available to drive and sustain change. The Machakos County Government management provided resources, negotiated changes, generated and supported momentum which put control on

progress of implemented strategic changes. The interviewee also noted that the County administration was always ready and available to listen to issues and operates an open door policy whereby any staff could access them.

4.5.3 Implication on service delivery from people responding to change

On the question of any implications on service delivery as a result of how people respond to change, the respondents agreed unanimously that as a result of the employees responding to strategic change, service delivery in the county administration had improved. The respondents stated that County administration officers have been able to respond faster to citizen demands. This has helped in aligning existing resources within the county allowing the county to assess the overall impact of change. It has also been effective and efficient in maintaining county projects which are linked to strategic change as well as employee performance in regards to service delivery.

4.5.4 The way forward for strategic change management practices

The study sought to establish the way forward for the strategic change management practices in Machakos County Government. The interviewees indicated that the change management process should be fast-tracked so as to be completed within the set timeframe. Further, policies governing strategic change management should be integrated in the strategic plan for the departments.

The interviewees noted that all administrative officers sensitized and were involved in the implementation so as to be part and parcel of the strategic change process. The respondents also cited reviewing of the performance reward system so that those who had embraced the change management to be rewarded and promoted according to their

performance. Also, the strategies change management practices like the performance contracts to be flexible in order to allow reviews based on opportunities and threats arising in both internal and external environment.

4.6 Discussion

From the interviews conducted, it was observed that Machakos County Government has adopted several change management strategies in order to achieve better service delivery. These strategic change management practices are result based management practices, citizen or public participation, rationalization of human resource and administrative units, migration into digital era, improved staff mobility and office space. These strategies enable the County to stay ahead in its mandate to improve on services delivery to its citizens.

The research found that top management supported the strategic change process in Machakos County Government. Successful strategic change management requires a large commitment from executives and senior management, whether the change is affecting a department or the county as a whole. Leadership from the senior team is the most significant factor in helping employees to buy into and support the strategic change management practice initiated.

Strategic change management practices used by Machakos County Government to manage and spearhead change include continuous monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the strategic change practices, welfare improvement both financial and non-financial. Strategic change management can be achieved and maintained through rationalization of human resource development and administrative units, continuous

funding of all the stages of the strategic change process and adherence to the constitution by abiding to aspect that regard to citizen involvement in change management process.

The research also establishes that a clear vision for the strategic change management process is needed. The county executives need to create a realistic vision of where the organization will end up and the anticipated outcomes. Once the vision is well communicated, each employee should be able to give feedback on the experience that the change is making. For employees, the most significant factor is the impact of the change on their jobs.

The study found out that the Machakos County's structures were one area affected by the implemented changes. The Machakos County Government needs to restructure some of its systems in order to be successful in implementing change. Structures are a valuable tool in achieving coordination, as it specifies reporting hierarchy by describes how individuals separate actions are linked together in the change process.

Various factors were identified that affected the adoption of strategic change management practices chosen by the county government in the change process. The interviewees identified one of the factors as being employee dependency, whereby excessive dependence on individuals is very risky as we live in an uncertain world where not all things can be planned for. County government culture was also found to affect strategic change management practices. The county's culture is one of the most problematic magnitudes of change management in the county administration and comprises both formal and informal operational components.

The County government has experienced some challenges in implementing strategic change management practices. The major challenges experienced included departmental cultural issues, inadequate and misuse of resources both financial and non-financial, failure to communicate or give timely feedback to stakeholders, high staff turnover, failure to equip the staff in relevant knowledge to adapt to strategic change, frequent transfers, lack of involvement of all staff in the strategic change implementation and long bureaucratic processes which results to inefficient service delivery and corruption. It was evident that communication was one of the toughest issues in organizations. It is an area that is most frequently complained about by employees during the change process since it affects their daily operations. The Machakos County's management was a key aspect in development and implementing of strategic change management practices. In conclusion when employees responded positively to the implemented strategies change management practices, service delivery in the county improved significantly.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. This study focused on strategic change management practices adopted by Machakos County Government for service delivery.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The strategic change management process is the sequence of steps or activities that a change management team follows to implement change in order to drive individual transitions and ensure the institution meets its intended outcomes. One way in which the respondents supported change was through accepting change since it is inevitable. In the county, it was the mandate of the county executive and management team to clearly communicate to the employees about change and its positive impact so as to reduce employees' resistance to change.

The findings also showed that the county directors are expected to guide the staff by into the positive aspects brought about by change and emphasize the importance of strategic change practice. The findings also showed that the Machakos County Government needs to work as a team to create a shared vision for change to be successful in Machakos County. The interviewees agreed that team work will assist the county government to consolidate the required improvement and progress the change forward.

According to the interviewees, a number of strategic change management practices have been adopted by Machakos County Government. They include, result based management practices, transformation of department's image, citizen participation in service delivery, rationalization of human resource management and administrative units, migration into digital era, improved staff mobility and office space, improved financial allocations, intergovernmental relations and refined roles. The driving force to these changes was the adoption of the Kenyan constitution 2010 and National Government Coordination Act, No.1 of 2013. The two legislations clearly stipulated how restructuring should be done to conform to the devolved system of government.

The executive, management team and departmental heads must all be at the heart of initiating the strategic change management practices. Their attitudes towards change and their change management skills directly contribute towards Machakos County's change capabilities and level of employees' acceptance towards change. From the findings, there was positive evidence that the Machakos County Government overall structure was one of the areas affected by change management. One of the senior directors stated that change was anchored on the overall vision that the county had created. Strategy and structure have to be coordinated to avoid inefficiencies, misdirection and fragmented efforts in the strategic change management process.

From the findings, employee dependency is a factor that affects the strategic change management strategies. The interviewees indicated that excessive dependence on individuals is a risk, as we live in an uncertain world where change is inevitable and unexpected events happen to people at all times. The interviewees noted that some departmental units in the county were dependent on individuals at the middle

management level to perform all required tasks. This has left these departments in jeopardy since the success of strategic change implementation depends on specific individual and not on teamwork.

County government structures have had an effect on the utilized strategic change management practices. Technology was also seen to have an effect as a strategic change management practice by enhancing efficiency in the amount of time it takes to provide quality services. The findings also showed that strategic change management practices were implemented after devolution was commissioned and governors chosen to head different counties.

The study revealed that major challenges experienced by the Machakos County Government in implementation of strategic change are varied. The challenges include departmental cultural issues, inadequacy and diversion of resources, failure to communicate or give timely feedback to stakeholders, high staff turnover and failure to equip the staff in relevant knowledge and skills to adapt to strategic change. Cultural challenges established included corruption, bureaucracy, persistence of institutional culture, laxity in service delivery, failure to reward success and that is rigid to change. Other challenges include inadequate resources both financial and non-financial, high staff turnover especially to county governments, communication breakdown, frequent transfers, inadequate involvement of all stakeholders in the change process, slow adoption of technological advancement.

From the findings, every strategic change management practice comes with its own levels of risk. The management is influenced by their attitudes towards risk which influences the strategic change practices adopted. From the findings, the more ready an institution is for change, the lower the risk of failure of the change initiative. When leading a change initiative, you should focus on acknowledging, anticipating, and managing risk instead of avoiding it at all costs. To manage risk successfully, you need to be proactive in anticipating it in order and to lead a change initiative successfully, you need to be an honest communicator. Communicating with the change team and top management about risks related to the county projects has improved the ability to manage risk by fostering a culture that values positive thinking while encouraging open discussions about problems. Embracing change means embracing risk. In order to become a more effective change management team, one has to understand risk as a natural part of change by anticipating and managing it.

From the findings, need for change was communicated through efficient channels of communication. The county executive and the management were seen as the key contributors in the development of strategic change management in Machakos County. Research suggests that people can be inspired to change, even in difficult circumstances, when leadership can meet their psychological needs and create understanding. Successful implementation of strategic change management practices has led to better service delivery in Machakos County.

5.3 Conclusion

Changes in the internal and external environment are dynamic and Machakos County has had to undertake strategic change to be able to remain effective in the ever changing environment. The adoption of strategic change management practices taking place in Machakos County Government is for the better. This is clearly indicated by the enhanced departmental image, increased efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, improved staff welfare, taking of services closer to citizens through improved office space and mobility have contributed to success in implementing strategic changes.

Therefore, from the study we can conclude that most of the strategic change management practices at Machakos County Government have been a success and that it has met some of the management's objectives. Undertaking strategic change at the county level has been very important but there is need to ensure that all efforts are geared towards success in order to reduce risk of failure. This can be achieved by overcoming challenges associated with strategic change management, through involvement of all stakeholders in the process and ensuring that the best practices are utilized. The top management should also give all required support and be the role model in the change process. Kanter et al (1990) states that the essence of undertaking strategic change management practices is to move the organization forward and to be able to reap desired results

5.4 Recommendations

Successful implementation of strategic change management practices requires the progress of change to be monitored and evaluated progressively. Therefore, it becomes imperative that a monitoring and evaluation officer be put in place to give a progressive report of change. This officer will be tasked with continuously monitoring and evaluating

the progress of the change and if need be, a change of the implementation program will be necessitated to ensure that successful strategic change is made. Also the change management process in the counties should not only stop after five years, but be a continuous process so as cope with the changing needs of the dynamic environment.

Human resource motivation is a major factor in ensuring quality service delivery. The Machakos County Government departments have incorporated ways of motivating and rewarding their staff to encourage exemplary performance. The county motivates its employees by promotions for exemplary performer without basing on the years worked but on performance and also raise hardship and extraneous allowances. Some departments have incorporated team bonding and team building activities to enhance teamwork and alleviate stress related frustrations.

The Machakos County management promised to implement better resource mobilization to facilitate the whole change process. Change consultants should be used to facilitate better understanding of the strategic change process and to equip the departments with basic skills to ensure the change is always on course and resistance to change is completely done away with.

Thus, it is recommended that the county's top management should reduce the levels of directive strategy and be more consultative when initiating change. The county's management needs to allocate more resources when sensitizing people on strategic change management practices. It is important that the Machakos County Government also engages the services of external consultants to help manage change. Finally, the county management ought to make every effort to allocate adequate resources for the

management of structural change and engage all stakeholders likely to be affected by proposed changes so as to cushion them from the effects of resistance to changes.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

Time brings about new ideas and changes. The environment is also dynamic and may bring about new strategic change management practices. This study can therefore be replicated after five years to confirm if there are any changes on the strategic change management practices in Machakos County. In most organizations implementation of strategic change management practices has been viewed in a negative context. Also, the issue of resistance to change has always been included as part of notorious impediments throughout the strategic change management process.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The major challenge was getting the county executive members and the management to partake in the interview since they all had busy schedules. However, I was able to work around their busy schedule in order to collect the required data. Being a case study, research findings cannot be generalized, this is because management is sensitive to environmental and organizational factors. This constrained the scope as well as the depth of the research. The data collected was qualitative in nature and therefore the researcher was required to analyze this data using content analysis. The method is subjective and requires a lot of thorough deciding which may end up to differing conclusions by different researchers while analyzing the same data.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Research Gaps

Researcher	Research Topic	Major Findings	Knowledge Gaps
Owoiye and Dahunsi (2014).	Communication and Service Delivery	The study revealed that communication played a major role in the management of Ekiti State University in Nigeria. Findings showed that information flowed down from the librarian to other employees. It was also noted that communication is an effective tool for service delivery. Individuals who could not communicate at Ekiti State Library provided poor services	The study was focused on service delivery and communication therefore is limited as a broad set of information was reported as an overall concept of how communication affects service delivery
Zvavahera (2013)	The effect of leadership on service delivery in universities	The study found that leadership had a significant effect on service delivery at the University of Namibia. Poor coordination and a structured crisis led to early and ineffective responses to the clients of the university. This study further established that leadership underwrites the individual and organizational development and renewal.	The study does not focus on change management strategies
Kimaita (2010)	Strategic change management practices within Teachers Service Commission in Kenya	The study concludes that it is essential for corporation leadership to identify key considerations for undertaking effective and efficient strategic change process. The Teachers Service Commission practices strategic change management	The study mainly focuses on strategic change management practices specifically in the TSC not in the devolved systems of government

Mwanza (2012)	Management of Strategic Change at the High Court of Kenya	Management of strategic change practices present at the High Court of Kenya are: change of leadership, change of structure, training of employees and change of programs; while the challenges faced are resistance to change by the staff of the High Court, budgetary constraints in financial resource allocated, as well as skill gaps.	The study focused on strategic change management practices in the High Court and did not dwell on service delivery.
Munjua (2012)	Change management practices at the Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development in Kenya (ACRD).	Formation of working groups, effective communication of the change to all stakeholders, availing financial resources, reducing resistance to change, and adopting an appropriate leadership style, are the strategic change management practices in place at the ACRD, and that the challenges faced are insufficiency of finances, opposition to change from the stakeholders, cultural multiplicity and management.	The study focuses on change management strategies in ACRD and does not tackle service delivery

Appendix II: Interview Guide

Section A: General Information

1. What is your name (optional)

Section B: Adopted Strategic Change Management Practices in Machakos County Government

2. Has the top management supported change process in your County Government?
3. What are some of the change management strategies that have been implemented?

Section C: Factors That Influence Strategic Change Management Practices in Machakos County Government.

4. What strategies have been put in place to manage and spearhead change?
5. Were the structures modified during the change process or were they used up to the end?
6. What factors influence the change management strategies that were selected during the strategic change process?
7. To what extent did the organization dependency on its employees influence the strategic change management?
8. How did culture influence the strategic change management process?
9. Did the time it took to implement the change in any way affect the strategic change management practices adopted?

10. What challenges were encountered in managing the strategic change process?
11. Was the change management strategies adopted influenced by the top management attitude towards risk?
12. What other strategic change management practices were used during the change management process?

Section D: Change Management Strategies and Service Delivery in Machakos County Government

13. Would the manner in which the need for change is communicated determine the level of involvement and impact on service delivery?
14. Do managers develop the strategic change management practices at the County Government? Please explain.
15. Could you cite any implications on service delivery as a result of how people respond to change?
16. What is the way forward for the of strategic change management practices in Machakos County Government?