CHALLENGES FACED BY KENYATTA UNIVERSITY IN IMPLEMENTING ITS COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

BY

JANET KAVENGI MUTHIMI

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2013

Declaration

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

Signed: ……………………………….. Date: ………………………………..

Janet Kavengi Muthimi **Reg. No. : D61/72793/2009**

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

Signed: …………………………………… Date:………………………………..

Professor Peter K'Obonyo,

Department of Business Administration

School of Business

University of Nairobi

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Almighty God for giving me sufficient grace, mercy and blessings which has seen me through this program. I sincerely acknowledge the invaluable and tireless counsel, commitment, encouragement and commendable support of my supervisor, Prof. Peter K'Obonyo. He accorded me scholarly guidance, instructive feedback and constructive critics in the intricacy of learning.

I am greatly thankful to my family members: My dear parents Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Muyalo, my brothers and sisters Phoebe, Onesmus and Fransica, Reuben, Monique, Ken and Faith for their continuous encouragement. Special gratitude goes to my dear husband Victor, daughter Michelle and my lovely son Alvin, you always reminded me of the need to work hard. Last but not least, I owe it all to my respondents the Senior Managers in Kenyatta University for real forces that made this study successful. I could not have done it without you. Finally, my sincere gratitude goes to all who contributed towards the completion of this project. I may not be able to mention all but will be forever grateful.

Dedication

This research project is dedicated to my family and parents for their love, patience, help, support and encouragement and their prayers which saw me through in my course. Special appreciation goes to my husband Victor, my children Michelle and Alvin for their encouragement and undiminishing support during the course.

Abstract

The objective of the study was to determine the various challenges faced by Kenyatta University in implementing its competitive strategies. A case study approach was used to have an in-depth on the challenges faced by the University in the process of implementing its competitive strategies. Primary and secondary data were used. The respondents were drawn from the top level management who are involved on corporate strategic management issues. Interview guide was used to collect primary data from the correspondents. The results of the study indicated that there were several challenges facing Kenyatta University in its bid to implement its competitive strategies. The findings of the study indicate that Kenyatta University is on track in implementing its strategies. This has been made possible through having staff who are committed, having annual plans, sound leadership, supportive organization structure, supportive systems and procedure, and resources/budget allocation. However, the shortcomings came from lack of training for staff and inadequate communication in the organization. The findings of the study should be understood in light of the limitations of the study. This study is helpful to Kenyatta University as they engage in monitoring and evaluation of the already implemented strategies on a yearly basis and plan towards implementing those that have not been implemented. The study should also be useful to other universities to gauge their challenges they face in implementing their competitive strategies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Strategy implementation refers to a set of decisions and actions that result in formulation and implementation of long term plans designed to achieve organizational objectives (Pearce and Robinson, 2007). It is defined as the process that turns strategies and plans into actions to accomplish objectives (Pride and Farrell, 2003). Successful strategy implementation involves creating a series of fits, hence between strategy and structure, skills and competencies, budget allocation, reward systems and corporate culture and policies as well as procedures (Bryson, 2005).

David (1997) observes that organizations that do not use a strategic management approach in decision making, resource allocation is often based on political or personal factors such as overprotection of resources, emphasis on short run financial criteria, vague targets, reluctance to taking risks and lack of sufficient knowledge. In organizations that are well managed there exists a relationship between strategic planning and planning done by managers at all levels (Mintzberg and Quinn, 1991). David (1997) indicates that strategic plans are of a commanding significance in strategic management. A strategy can only be said to be successful if it yields intended results. Mintzberg (1987) coined the term crafting strategy to suggest that it is one's involvement in a business that will determine the outcome or success of strategies formulated. This he brings out clearly in his choice of a potter whose final work depends on the interaction between the potter's hands and the clay to bring out what the potter envisaged.

The same is replicated in the business world where some strategies are well formulated but few of them come through to implementation. This is because the parties involved are passive as they play no active role in their implementation. Its purpose is to complete the transition from strategic planning to strategic management by incorporating adopted strategies throughout the relevant system (Bryson, 2005). Strategy implementation is important in that it bridges the activities of strategy formulation with strategy success. The poor implementation of an appropriate strategy may cause that strategy to fail (Kiruthi, 2001).

An excellent implementation plan will not only cause the success of an appropriate strategy, but can also rescue an inappropriate strategy. According to Alexander (1991), one reason implementation fails is that practicing managers and supervisors do not have practical models to guide their actions. Without adequate models, they attempt implementing strategies without a good understanding of the multiple factors that must be addressed to ensure success. Nobble (1999), notes that there is a significant need for comprehensive conceptual framework related to strategy implementation.

David (2003) describes strategy implementation as an action stage of strategic management. According to Thompson and Strickland (2003), there are no ten step checklist, no proven parts and few concrete guidelines for strategy implementation. Strategy implementation is the least chartered, most open-ended part of strategic management. Kimeli (2008) points out that different business practices, different competitive circumstances, different work environments, culture, policies, competitive incentives, different mixes of personality require customized approach to strategy implementation.

1.1.1 Competitive Strategy

According to Porter (1998), competitive strategy is about being different. This means deliberately performing activities differently and in a better way than the competitors. Every firm in an industry has a competitive strategy, whether explicit or implicit. This strategy may have been developed explicitly through a planning process or it may have evolved explicitly through the activities of the various functional departments of the firm. He further explains that competitive strategy aims at establishing a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industry competition. This includes identifying sources of competition in the changing environment and then developing strategies or a strategy that match organizational capabilities to the changes in the environment.

Competitive strategy comprises of all those moves and approaches that a firm has and is taking to attract buyers, withstand competitive pressure and improve its market position (Thompson and Strickland, 2002). It concerns what a firm is doing in order to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. Porter, (1980) asserts that there are three approaches to competitive strategy. One is striving to be the overall low cost producer, therefore being a cost leader, another is seeking to differentiate one's product offerings from that of one's rivals, which is a differentiation strategy while the third one involves focus on a narrow portion of the market, which is focus or niche strategy.

1.1.2 Challenges in the Implementation of Competitive Strategy

Strategy implementation can pose a number of challenges. The challenges arise from the sources that are internal and external to an organization. The particular challenges that will face strategy implementation will depend on the type of strategy, organization and prevailing circumstances. Many challenges in strategy implementation can be avoided if strategy development is coupled with implementation. The lack of understanding of a strategy and the inability to connect strategy formulation and implementation has an impact on successful implementation, (Musyoka, 2008). The implementation of the appropriate competitive strategies remains one of the most difficult areas of management.

Mintzberg (1994) noted that the plan, rather than the implementation comes in for scrutiny when a strategy fails because it is less problematic to analyze. He further notes that strategy implementation normally faces numerous challenges especially in the turbulent environment, which need to be addressed on a continuous basis in order to attain the long term objectives. Thus, execution must be controlled and evaluated if the strategy is to be successfully implemented and adjusted to the changing environmental conditions. However, during the implementation process, various challenges are encountered and need to be addressed if the strategy is to be realized. Implementation can be defeated if the attitudes and habits of managers and employees are hostile or at crossroads with the needs of the strategy and if their customary ways of doing things block strategy implementation instead of facilitating it.

David (1997) stated that 10% of the formulated strategies are successfully implemented while 90% of well formulated strategies fail at implementation stage. Ansoff and McDonnell (1990) noted that while implementing strategies is an important activity, it is not as easy as it seems. Most excellent strategies fail when attempts to implement them are made. According to Pearce and Robinson, (2004) the reason that have been advanced for the success or failure of strategy implementation revolve around the nature of the strategy itself, the policies and support system, alignment of the strategy to the short term objectives and sub strategies, the allocation of the resources, the fit between the structure and the strategy, leadership, communication process and the organization culture.

Past literature details several factors responsible for successful implementation of strategies and also the challenges expected or encountered in the process of implementing the competitive strategies. Successful strategy implementation depends upon the skills of working through others (delegation), organizing, motivating, culture building and creating strong fits between strategy and how the organization does things. Strategy implementation is successfully initiated in three inter-related stages (Pearce and Robinson, 2004). First, identification of measurable, mutually determined annual objectives which convert long-term objectives into specific short-term ends, secondly, development of specific functional strategies which translate grand strategy at the business level into current action unit plans and thirdly, development of concise policies to guide decisions and provide guidelines for operation while executing strategies.

Other challenges will come in the form of creating a fit between the strategy and the internal organization structure, strategy and allocation of budgets and staff size, strategy and organizational systems of reward and incentives, strategy and internal policies, practices and procedures, strategy and internal organization atmosphere, that is, values and beliefs shared by managers and employees, the philosophies and decision making style of the managers. (Thompson and Strickerland, 1997).

1.1.3 Kenyatta University

Strategy implementation in public universities is a key guideline in institutions of higher learning as the quench for higher education continues to persist hence each University has to lay down its competitive strategies and align them with the ever changing environment and market trends. It is in this note that each University is striving to come up with strategic plans to guide its operations and give it a competitive edge over others and be able to attract more students than the other universities. This is evidenced by the fact that there are 22 public universities and 14 private universities who are competing to provide higher education.

Kenyatta University's administrative structure and management are governed by the Kenyatta University Act of 1985 and currently by the Universities Act 2012. The University operates as a state corporation under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The ministry channels the government's contribution which is received from the exchequer to the University's budget. The Council is the overall administrative governing body of the University and the Senate is in charge of the academic functions of the University.

There is also the University Management Board which is in charge of the day-to-day running of the institution and includes the Vice-Chancellor who is the CEO, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars and Chief Finance Officer. KU has adopted various competitive strategies, key among them: promotion of high standards in teaching, learning and scholarship; enhancing access to university education to meet the ever-increasing demand for higher education; promotion of research, science, technology and innovation; institutionalization of good governance practices at the University; improved productivity and work ethics of the University staff; marketing the University so as to enhance its corporate image and promotion of social responsibility; institutionalized use of ICT; increased and improved infrastructure and other physical facilities in order to enhance service delivery; delivery of quality service to all customers; promotion of the principle of equity in all the University programmes and activities; implementation of an efficient monitoring and evaluation system; institutionalized quality and relevance in all programmes and operations and enhanced financial base of the University, Kenyatta University Strategic and Vision Plan (2005-2015).

1.2   Research Problem

For organizational success, strategy implementation is very vital. According to Thompson and Strickland (1990), strategy implementation is an inter-play between several forces where the chosen strategy is the centerpiece. David (2003), points out that work begins at implementation. Organizations large and small worldwide spend billions of money on strategy formulation and management recognizes the importance of implementation only as an afterthought. The environment in which organizations implement strategies is unpredictable and very dynamic. All organizations must struggle with the challenges of changing environment.

Kenyatta University has formulated a strategic and vision plan and it in the implementation process. The University as one of the public universities in Kenya has a major role to play in the provision of higher education. There is therefore the need to establish the various challenges faced by the University in implementing its competitive strategies. In spite of the efforts that Kenyatta University has put in the strategic process, strategy implementation is still a challenge. This is evidenced by the fact that it is yet to achieve its world class status which has been its main objective in its 2005-2015 strategic plan.

In the current turbulent economic times, firms in Kenya operate under increasingly competitive and ever-changing environment. The ever changing environment in which organizations operate puts them under pressure to continually review their strategic plans or formulate new ones to suit the existing trends. Further, without a proper strategy implementation, even the most superior strategy is meaningless. According to Aosa (1992), once strategies have been developed, they need to be implemented; they are of no value unless they are effectively translated into action. This is necessary if such organizations are to remain competitive and relevant to current market trends.

Kenyatta University's ten year Strategic and Vision Plan (2005-2015 was reviewed in the years 2008 and 2010 so as to align it with the Kenya's Vision 2030. The University like any other institution is facing stiff competition from its rival institutions of higher learning both public and private and therefore there is need for effective strategy implementation to effectively implement strategic decisions and strategies due to threats and opportunities in an uncertain and dynamic environment.

Several studies have been done on challenges in strategy implementation within the Kenyan organizations. These include Aosa (1992) who studied the aspects of strategy formulation and implementation within large, private manufacturing companies in Kenya, Awino (2001) who studied the effectiveness and problems of strategy implementation of financing higher education by HELB, Koske (2003) who studied strategy implementation and its challenges at Telkom Kenya Limited, Musyoka (2008) who studied challenges in strategy implementation at Jomo Kenyatta Foundation and Nyakiri (2012) who studied the challenges of strategy implementation at the University of Nairobi. These researchers have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation. These include weak management roles, lack of proper communication, lack of commitment to strategy, lack of ownership and awareness or misunderstanding of the strategy. Other problems are unaligned organization systems, structures, resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable factors in the external environment (Muthuiya, 2004).

Although these researchers focused on areas of strategy implementation, there still exists knowledge gap as none of them has addressed challenges of strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. There is no study that has addressed these challenges. It is therefore against this background that this study sought to determine the challenges faced by Kenyatta University in implementing its competitive strategies. This study will address the following research question: What are the challenges faced by Kenyatta University in the implementation of its competitive strategies?

1.3   Research Objective

To establish the challenges facing Kenyatta University in the implementation of its competitive strategies.

1.4   Value of the Study

Firstly, the study is significant to the management of Kenyatta University and other managers in other industries as it provides an insight into challenges of strategy implementation and how to overcome them. It enables the management of Kenyatta University and other institutions of higher learning to successfully implement adopted strategies for better performance. Secondly, the study should be of invaluable use to institutions of higher learning and key education policy makers and stakeholders in the provision of teaching and learning as Kenya strives to eliminate illiteracy levels in its bid to achieve the Vision 2030 goals.

Thirdly, the study should contribute to the frontiers of knowledge by assessing the various factors that affect implementation of sectoral strategies hence aid other institutions of higher learning to critically assess the factors affecting the implementation of their respective strategies. Fourthly, researchers should be stimulated to make a follow up of the challenges affecting strategy implementation in the education sector and how to counter them. Finally, the study should open up further discussions on how game theory and resource-based view theory affect strategy implementation in firms who are in the process of implementing their competitive strategies in a highly competitive environment.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter will deal with the theoretical foundations of the study, concept of competitive strategy, strategy implementation and the common challenges of strategy implementation in organizations today.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations

This study will be based on two theoretical foundations namely Game Theory and Resource-Based Theory so as to be able to understand the challenges faced in the implementation of competitive strategies.

2.2.1 Game Theory

Grant (1998) states that the emergence of game theory which discusses competition in a market came about as a criticism of Porter's five force model that failed to take full theory account of competitive interactions among organizations. According to this theory, strategic competition is the interaction amongst players such that the decision of one organization affects other players. Johnson and Scholes (2010) stated that game theory is concerned with the interrelationships between the competitive moves of a set of competitors. He further states that game theory is helpful in understanding the competitive dynamics of markets and in considering appropriate strategies in this light. It provides a basis for thinking through competitors' strategic moves in such a way as to pre-empt or counter them.

A company creates competitive advantage by having an edge over its rivals in securing customers and defending against competitive forces (Thompson and Strickland, 2002). This concept of competitive advantage emerged in 1985 when Porter discussed the basic types of competitive strategies that a firm can possess which are cost, differentiation and focus to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. A firm has to depend on its core competencies and resources that yield long term benefits to organization which must be evaluated overtime to anticipate any competitor moves in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

In Kenya, the higher education sector currently is experiencing drastic changes brought about by fierce competition between the current players and also the new entrants in the industry. This is as a result of the fact that the industry is quite dynamic as new technologies are being developed rendering the old technologies obsolete and as individuals embrace new and better ways of operations. Players such as Kenyatta University therefore have a need to implement competitive business strategies to fortify their market share against a rapidly changing business landscape. To be competitive players need to have in place competitive strategies which make their customers stay with them in spite of temptations from the competition.

2.2.2 Resource-Based View Theory

In resource-based view, the significantly divergent market positions of relatively close competitors revert back to the combination of resources and capabilities typical of and unique to a given firm. Further, to act as sources of sustainable competitive advantage, these resources and capabilities shall fill a number of conditions, which are value, rareness, inimitability and substitutability, (Barney, 1991).

Secondly, resource or capabilities should be rare; resources which are valuable in themselves but commonly available do not offer competitive advantage. Thirdly, resources and capabilities shall be inimitable which is availed by their immaterial, abstract or systematic nature and patentability. Fourthly, resources and capabilities shall be sustainable i.e strategically relevant function cannot be vulnerable to the change of one key person (Barney, 1991; 1997)

2.3 Competitive Strategy

Thompson, Strickland & Gamble (2007) explain that a company's strategy deals exclusively with the specifics of management's game plan for competing successfully. He proposes three questions that can be used to test the merits of one strategy versus another and distinguish a winning strategy from a flawed one. These questions are firstly, how well does the strategy fit the company's situation? Secondly, is the strategy helping the company achieve a sustainable competitive advantage? Finally, is the strategy resulting in better company performance?

Barney (1997) argues that firms pursue competitive strategies when they seek to improve or maintain their performance through independent actions in a specific market or industry. Five distinct competitive strategy approaches stand out. These are low-cost provider strategy, a broad differentiation strategy, a best-cost provider strategy, a focused (or market niche) strategy based on low costs, and a focused (or market niche) strategy based on differentiation. A company's competitive strategy is increasingly effective the more it provides good defenses against the five competitive forces, shifts competitive pressures in way that favour the company, and helps create sustainable competitive advantage (Thompson, Strickland & Gamble, 2007).

2.4   Strategy Implementation

David (2003), describe strategy implementation as hard and time consuming but vital phase in strategic management. Thompson and Strickland (1990) view it as an interplay between several forces. There is no one best way of strategy implementation but organizations must successfully implement their strategic plans. One of the hallmarks of any well managed organization is the ability to optimally reposition itself in a competitive business environment (Drucker, 1954). This can only be achieved by anchoring core activities of the organization to the realization of the set objectives. Strategic management forms a basis on which such businesses are run. The strategic management process involves formulation, implementation and evaluation of decisions geared towards achieving organizational objectives. Strategy implementation though deemed difficult (David, 1997), is undoubtedly a critical phase for organization's survival. Formulated strategies may fail if implementation is not effectively and efficiently done. (Steiner,1979).

According to Johnson and Scholes (1999), successful strategy implementation is a factor of organizational structure, resource allocation and strategic change management. In the world at large, strategic plan formulation and implementation is a statutory requirement for most state corporations. Whether it is merely an act of compliance to the law or for the benefits derived from adoption of strategic plans, organizations are increasingly embracing them. The strategic plans stipulate the company's objectives and the strategies that have been put in place to bring the organizational goals to pass.

Success in strategy implementation is measured by the organization's ability to meet or exceed its strategic objectives, excellence in financial performance and exude good progress in achieving the strategic vision. This is however not an easily achievable task. In describing the magnitude and intensity of what successful strategy implementation takes, David (1997) asserts that work starts at implementation. Thompson and Strickland (1990), suggest that the implementation stage of strategic management is primarily administrative where one ensures a fit between the chosen strategy and organization culture. Culture is seen as employee shared beliefs and values which dictate the pattern for activities and actions within the organization. Culture is an organization's strength when it eases achievement of organizational strategy with minimal costs. Besides, the culture, other forces come into play in influencing strategy implementation.

Thompson and MacMillan (2007) argue that the overall leadership and management of the organization determine how effective an organization's strategy can be executed. The efficiency in strategy implementation is a factor of personnel skills which is basically having the right person for the right job. As David (1997) puts it, strategy implementation entails mobilizing employees and managers to turn formulated strategies into action. Strategy implementation involves converting broad plans into concrete, incremental actions over a period of time. These steps need to be monitored in order to assess whether the overall strategy is on-course or if changes need to be made in view of developments realized during implementation.

2.5   Challenges of Strategy Implementation

A number of challenges have been attributed to the low score in successful implementation of strategic plans. Mintzberg and Quin (1991) observe that fewer than 45% of strategies are effectively implemented. Difficulties associated with the implementation include lack of awareness on the existence and content of the strategic plan due to poor communication, lack of management commitment, conflict of individual interest versus organizational obligations, influence from external environment among others.   Poor implementation has been cited as one of the factors that have seen beautifully crafted strategic plans yield nothing in terms of expectations. The most common challenges to strategy implementation are the limited resources.

David (1997) argues that allocating resources to particular divisions and departments does not mean that strategies will be successfully implemented. This is because a number of factors commonly prohibit effective resource allocation. These include overprotection of resources, too great emphasis on short-term financial criteria, organizational policies, vague strategy targets reluctant to take risks and lack of sufficient knowledge.   Thompson and Strickland (1989) state that strategy implementation challenge is to create a series of tight fits between strategy and the organization's competencies; capabilities and structure, between strategy and budgetary allocation, between strategy and policy, between strategy and internal support system, between strategy and reward structure, and between strategy and corporate culture. Some of the main implementation challenges include managing resources, managing change and analysis by paralysis where managers do not know when to stop analysis and start implementation.

According to Alexander (1991), one reason implementation of strategy fails is that practicing managers and supervisors do not have practical models to guide their actions. Without adequate models, they attempt implementing strategies without a good understanding of the multiple factors that must be addressed to ensure success. Johnson and Scholes (2002) have extensively underscored the importance of resources in strategy implementation, but are quick to point out that they (resources) by themselves do not guarantee strategic success. Inadequacy of resources may imply inadequate funds, inadequate equipment and facilities, inadequate human resource skills and experience.

Strategic capability is essentially concerned with how these resources are deployed, managed, controlled and in case of people, motivated to create competencies in those activities and business processes needed to run the business. The experiences of strategic plan implementation differ with organizations (David, 1997). State Corporations have to deal with the country's law and statutory obligations in their pursuit of corporate strategy. Olali (2006) focusing her research in the banking industry found out that the industry encounters challenges in strategy implementation. This she alluded to factors such as rapid growth beyond the anticipated market competition, changes in technology, change in management and overregulation in the banking industry. These findings point out to the fact that change in any aspect especially if underrated or unexpected is a major challenge during strategy implementation. Majority of documented challenges arising from sources internal to the organization are related to inappropriate systems utilized during the process of operationalization, institutionalization and control of the strategy.

The process of institutionalization relies heavily on the organization configuration that consists of the structures, processes, relationships and boundaries through which the organization operates (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). Koyio (1999) noted that the search for appropriate organizational structures has never been a new activity at any point in time. It dates back to the 1950[s.] Literature indicates that weak management roles in implementation, a lack of communication and commitment to the strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, unaligned organizational systems and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable environmental factors are some of the difficulties in implementing strategies (Alexander, 1985), Lares-Mankki (1994) and Beer and Eisenstat (2000). Over and above, an organization configuration can help or hinder strategies Koske (2003), Johnson and Scholes (2002), Awino (2001) and Aosa (1992).

Challenges of strategy implementation are also found in sources external to the organization. The macro-environmental forces such as the political-legal forces may hinder favorable legislative framework. Further, political instability may impact negatively on strategy implementation by affecting political goodwill towards resources mobilization for the strategic plan. Civil unrest may destabilize the human resource competence and cause destruction of infrastructure meant to facilitate the process of institutionalization. The macro-economic may also impact on strategy implementation especially where economic sanctions and inflation interfere with the market share and hence overall profitability.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter explains issues related to how the research will be conducted that is research design, data collection and data analysis.   Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem.

3.2   Research Design

A case study design was used. According to Kothari (1990), a case study is a form of qualitative analysis which involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit be it a family, a person, a cultural group, or an entire community or institution. The study focuses on strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. The results will provide an insight on how public universities should carry out successful strategy implementation in order to remain relevant and competitive in the current turbulent and sometimes hostile environment especially the higher education sector.

Yin (1994) also points out that a case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. It is a method of study in depth rather than breadth and lays more emphasis on a limited number of events and other interrelations. Previous studies of similar nature have successfully used this method Kandie (2001), Koske (2003), Muthuiya (2004), Machuki (2005), Olali (2006), Atandi (2010), Miako (2011) and Nyariki (2012) among others. Since the focus of the study is one organization, a case study is the most appropriate design.

3.3   Data Collection

In this study, primary data will be collected through the use of interview guide. The nature of data to be collected will be qualitative. The researcher will have a chance of clarifying any unclear issues with the respondents. The respondents of the study will be drawn from the top management team of KU, key among them the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance, Planning and Development), Director, University Advancement, Chief Finance Officer, Human Resources Manager, Procurement Manager whom by virtue of their roles are involved both in strategy formulation and implementation on behalf of the University. Secondary data will also be collected from the University's Strategic and Vision Plan, Newspaper Supplements, Newsletters and other publicity materials.

3.4   Data Analysis

Data will be qualitatively analyzed using content analysis techniques. Weber (1990) points out that the best content-analytical studies use both qualitative and quantitative methods. The information will be analyzed and evaluated to determine its usefulness, credibility, consistency and adequacy. Content analysis technique will be used because it assists in making inferences by objectively identifying specific information and relating the same to occurrence trends. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the main purpose of content analysis is to study existing information in order to determine factors that explain a specific phenomenon. In coding qualitative data, the researcher will read all the responses, identify key information and relate it to emerging patterns. The outcome will be compared in an attempt to get more revelation on the processes and challenges of strategy implementation at Kenyatta University.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and findings. Data was gathered through an interview guide and analyzed using content analysis. The findings were on the challenges faced by Kenyatta University in the implementation of its competitive strategies. According to the data found, all the six senior manages projected in the previous chapter to be interviewed were interviewed which makes a response rate of 100%. The commendable response rate was achieved at after the researcher made frantic effort at booking appointment with the senior managers of Kenyatta University despite their tight schedules and making phone calls to remind them of the interview.

The presentation of this chapter starts with a demographic data followed by analysis of the challenges faced by Kenyatta University in the implementation of its competitive strategies. During the interview various challenges were highlighted that were found to have affected the strategy implementation by the University.

4.2   Demographic Information

The study, in an effort to ascertain the interviewees' competence and conversance with matters regarding Kenyatta University asked questions on the position of the interviewee held in the University.

According to the findings, all the interviewees were senior managers in charge of various divisions such as Administration, Finance and Planning, University Advancement, Human Resources and Procurement. The researcher also asked questions on the years that the interviewee had worked for Kenyatta University. According to the interviewees' response, all of them had worked for the University for at least six years as most promotions are done internally, within the University. Hence, the interviewee's responses can be treated with confidence since the positions they occupy in the University allow them access to all issues concerning and affecting the University.

4.3   Findings on the Challenges of Implementing Competitive Strategies

The objective of the study was to establish the challenges faced by Kenyatta University in implementing its competitive strategies. To achieve this, the respondents of the study were interviewed and were drawn from the top management team of KU, key among them the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance, Planning and Development), Director, University Advancement, Chief Finance Officer, Human Resources Manager, Procurement Manager whom by virtue of their roles are involved both in strategy formulation and implementation on behalf of the University. The interview guide was structured appropriately to capture majority of the aspect covering their respective departments/divisions. The challenges of implementing competitive strategies at Kenyatta University were of two types; internal and external.

4.3.1 Internal Challenges

Organizational structure is one of the internal challenges that Kenyatta University faces in strategy implementation. Organizational structure deals with the roles, responsibilities, boundaries, processes and procedures as well as relationships of the various positions. Kenyatta University has an organizational structure which is dictated by the nature of business the organization is engaged in. It was however established that some aspects in this structure impede successful strategy implementation. The task of developing the strategy takes place at the centre of the institution. The job of implementing it falls to the various functional areas. According to Chandler (1962), once a strategy has been developed, it is necessary to consider the structure needed to carry it out. It might require extra resources or new personnel or equipment which would alter the work of an organization, making a new organizational structure necessary.

Another internal challenge to strategy implementation at Kenyatta University is lack of autonomy in decision making among middle level managers raises questions on the positioning and definition of some of the functions in the structure. For instance, decisions on staff matters raise conflicts between various departments hence leaving the issues unresolved for a long time. This leads to low morale towards strategy implementation by employees. It was however established that the University's current organizational structure supports implementation of strategies documented in the University's organogram where each officer is held accountable for any decision taken under his or her line of operation.

The study found out that the University recently created the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation and Outreach) and detached the planning aspect from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Finance and Development so as to create a post of a Registrar Planning to fall under the Vice-chancellor's Office in order to improve service delivery and fill gaps in the structure. Inadequate financial resources are yet another challenge in strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. Before strategy implementation begins, managers need to determine what resources will be needed and then consider whether the current budget can provide those resources. The study found out that inadequacy of financial resources is a challenge in the University's strategy implementation. Underfunding of organizational activities impedes strategy implementation.

The study indicates that Kenyatta University operations have been affected by the dwindling resources, against the background of an increasing demand for higher education. This forces the University to diverged from its core business of provision of excellent higher education and instead engage in income generating activities so as to substitute its financial resources. Public universities have now to compete for the scarce government resources. The alignment of these financial resources to the new strategies is a major challenge since Kenyatta University has not been able to marshal financial resources adequate to support new strategies.

Organizational culture is another challenge facing Kenyatta University in implementation of its competitive strategies. Culture is the organization's way of doing things. It consists of norms, values and beliefs that are held over time in the course of doing business. The match between strategy and culture is crucial for successful strategy implementation.

The study sought to find out whether or not such match exists, and if it does not how challenging is it to effective strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. The University has a mix of values and beliefs that have been propagated over time by those who have held senior positions. The aspects have been instilled into other university units and sections and have been defined as "the way of doing things around here". The study found out that some aspects of culture promote negative attitude among employees. A culture of *We vs Them* was noted where the strategic plan is regarded by other officers as their plan. This is particularly true of middle level manager vis-a-vis top management. One respondent pointed out that resistance from junior members of staff was the most serious challenge management faced in strategy implementation.

The other internal challenge is unsound rewards system. In order to ensure effective strategy implementation the skills and competence of employees is key. The study established that Kenyatta University has a pool of skilled and competent staff and a lot of funds have been channeled towards updating their skills especially the teaching staff. It was however found out that implementation problems emanate from lack of motivation for mostly the non-teaching staff who are mainly the implementers of strategy due to lack of a clear training policy and hence, they feel unrewarded. Most respondents were quick to point out that every effort is being made to ensure proper remuneration for staff, especially during this time of trade unionism. Salary review in the University depends on the economic state of the country since it is a government corporation and particularly a non-profit entity.

However, according to respondents the University management has tried to improve the reward system particularly allowances where it has the ability to improve using its internal resources without necessarily involving the government. Another challenge to strategy implementation at Kenyatta University is internal communication. Most respondents maintained that the University keeps an open door policy. While this is true, the research established that not all staff are free to provide feedback to management as most of them fear being victimized hence most of them keep their suggestions to themselves which if given an opportunity would help the management in improving the general operations of the University. This has recently been resolved after the Vice-Chancellor allowed members if staff and students to come up with ideas and innovations which can improve the University and in return if ones ideas are deemed unique to the University, a reward is pegged to it.

However, the management has been encouraging schools, departments and various divisions to align their unit's strategic plans with the University's overall Strategic Plan. An insufficient human skill is another internal challenge to strategy implementation facing the University. Increasing sophistication of the Kenyan economy demands more skilled personnel to meet the needs of the more enlightened market. Findings of the study established that the University's management has the requisite skills for successful strategy implementation. The same is also evidenced by the University's continued support to staff training especially through the Vice-Chancellor's Ph.D facilitation programme where those without Ph.Ds are facilitated by the University through time off and research funds to attain the same within a stipulated timeline.

Those not teaching are also sponsored to attend short courses within and across the region so as to enhance their skills in their areas of expertise. The emergence of trade unionism among traditionally non-unionized staff and the increased number of unions in public universities is yet another challenge to strategy implementation. This has greatly influenced focus on terms and conditions of services for the staff. Kenyatta University has three trade unions for its staff; University Academic Staff Union (UASU), University Non-teaching Staff Union (UNTESU) and Kenya Union of Domestic and Allied Workers Union (KUDHEIHA) all representing teaching staff and non-teaching staff. It therefore means that practically all the staff are represented by a union and hence no clear cut lines exists as to who represents the University management when salary negotiations are being carried out.

Leadership, politics and corporate governance is also another internal challenge to strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. Leadership is the ability to influence people to follow you voluntarily. Leadership style is a critical element in strategy implementation in an organization. At the top management, Kenyatta University's leadership is well spelt out. However, the strategic units and operational levels still face leadership challenges. According to respondents, the University faces leadership challenges. Some departmental heads lack the necessary exposure to influence other employees to undertake strategy implementation in the University. The University continuously trains departmental heads on leadership skills so as to show leadership in their respective departments and depict management's expectations.

Resistance to change is also an internal challenge to strategy implementation. Some respondents indicated that lack of lower management commitment and resistance from staff were some of the challenges of strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. According to most respondents, resistance is attributed to failure of management to include all staff in the formulation stage if its strategy and to only surprise them with shift of responsibility during implementation. The result of this is conflict of interest, fear of the unknown and mistrust hence poor implementation. One respondent pointed out that it is not possible to involve everybody in strategy formulation as the University works through committees with members from various departments represented. However, there is need to continuously review and improve employees skills in order to march the ever changing market trends. An organization's ability to marshal the human resources needed to support new strategies and steer them to appropriate organizational units has a major impact to strategy implementation process.

4.3.2 External Challenges

One of the external challenges faced by Kenyatta University during strategy implementation include; competition from locally incorporated and foreign institutions of higher learning. The most popular strategy used by competitors is an increase in students' numbers and academic programmes. The international ranking of universities compounds the competition which has significant implication for the strategic positioning of the University. Foreign universities have made inroads into the Kenyan economy in large numbers thus making competition more intense. There is also the aspect of global trends in the education sector which remains a major challenge.

Secondly, stakeholders' perception is the other external challenge to strategy implementation facing Kenyatta University in the implementation of its competitive strategies. While internal stakeholders' perception of the University is fairly positive and the external perception is improving, there is still a challenge. The negative external perception is largely informed by past incidents of students' unrest. There is also the challenge of negative publicity both in the press, print and public opinion websites. Unsubstantiated allegations about examinations cheating, fake degree certificates, substandard research and incompetence of the university graduates as well as irrelevant courses being offered are quite common with most of the universities in Kenya. The perception of declining quality education as well as institutional crisis associated with them and the mentioned changes has been the subject of consideration and debate since 1990's and is yet another challenge. However, research and workshops as well as commissioned studies by various stakeholders have generated information and understanding on stakeholder perception.

The other external challenge facing Kenyatta University in implementation of its competitive strategies is changes in technology. The world of information technology is fluid. It keeps changing thus calling for an update to keep the pace. This requires an increasingly adaptive and sophisticated workforce. Kenyatta University resolves its information technology needs through fibre optic connectivity within its campuses and increase of bandwidth through KENNET so as to improve its internet connectivity. Training of staff to embrace information technology is a challenge due to inadequate finances and staff resistance to change. One respondent pointed out that resistance to change was mainly due to fear of change in technology.

External environmental turbulence is also another external challenge to strategy implementation in the University. In one instance, the respondent pointed out that external environmental turbulence and future uncertainty is a major challenge to strategy implementation in the institution. For example the diminishing capability of the exchequer to continue meeting fully the financial needs of public universities largely due to budgetary pressure on the government and the shift towards the provision of free primary education and subsidized secondary education. This has resulted into a policy that devolves a greater responsibility of financing higher education to each university and hence posing a serious challenge.

Diminishing performance of the Kenyan economy which leads to lack of job creating for graduates is also a challenge to strategy implementation. This leads to many unemployed graduates. As a result society now questions the relevance of university education. Respondents reported that this questioning presents Kenyatta University with challenges that require it to focus on its mandate in the economy and the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the fulfillment of the mandates. Respondents pointed out at the slow pace of some of the reform initiatives especially for donor funded projects as a challenge. This is due to stringent procedures leading to delay in reforms, delay in amendments and lack of supportive infrastructure for ICT in Kenya as well as challenges of public sensitization on the same.

4.4   Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

Respondents were unanimous that though the process of strategy implementation is not easy, Kenyatta University must successfully implement its strategic and vision plan if it has to remain relevant and survive in today's competitive environment in the higher education sector. This is in line with the theory of strategic management where strategy implementation though deemed difficult (David, 2003), marks a critical phase in an organization. Compared to strategy formulation all respondents concurred that real work begins at its implementation stage.

Management is required to show results for that which they have put on paper, hence, a call for them to successfully implement strategic plans. According to Richard (2009), by whatever methods strategies are selected, there will come a time when every organization will need to put its strategies into practice, therefore to implement them.

The findings further revealed that the existence of a Strategic Plan has helped Kenyatta University to strategically position itself. This is because the environment in which it operates is dynamic and requires strategy for it to succeed. Kenyatta University has to embrace strategic implementation as a management tool. In reference to the environment in which Kenyatta University operates, respondents revealed that strategic plans have provided a road map to practice management in a turbulent environment in a way that leads to success in accordance to Ansoff (1990) strategic management theory. From these arguments, it is evident that the findings concur with theory to a large extent.

Kenyatta University makes the use of an action plan matrix, which is a plan on periodic implementation process of the strategic plan. The University also uses annual performance contracts as an implementation tools with contractual activities for each unit or department curved out of the ten year Strategic and Vision Plan. Incremental implementation programme ensures that he University implements its strategy in piecemeal and gradually in line with the available financial resources per year. This is to ensure that strategy is implemented within a given and financed budget.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are summarized, discussed and conclusions drawn. The chapter also highlights limitations of the study and recommendations and areas thought necessary for further study.

5.2   Summary

This section dwells on summary of the findings obtained from date analysis. The objective of the study is to establish the challenges facing Kenyatta University in the implementation of its competitive strategies. From this study the researcher found that Kenyatta University takes various tasks for effective strategy implementation. For instance one question as to whether Kenyatta University is open to change management, all the respondents were emphatic that without embracing change, the University would not be where it is currently. This is an indication that the University's management is committed to strategy implementation as a tool of change management. Respondents pointed out that this is considered as an important management aspect. One respondent pointed out that Kenyatta University operates in form of committees and hence teamwork. Emphasis was laid on the importance of team players to remain committed and keep confidential information for management use only.

In order to deliver efficiently and effectively teams were committed into an annual performance contract by the top management. One respondent ascertained that all Management Board members, Deans of Schools, Chairmen of Departments, Directors of Centres and Institutes and Section Heads usually sign their performance contract with the University and work towards achieving their targets. According to one respondent, performance contract is a commitment by members of the team to achieve specific objectives which are within their means.

Respondents pointed out that Kenyatta University in striving to achieve its desired position, it ensures that the advancement of the whole institution takes precedence over the advancement of any single unit and the progress of any single unit fits into the plan of the whole. The University's diversity must inform the entire planning effort to build on synergies that will transform Kenyatta University into a world-class University. According to the respondents, the strategic plan assumes that the need for change is a genuine concern for all stakeholders, that the concerned parties will seek appropriate solutions and that they are capable of working together.

Overall, the critical strategy implementation areas were identified as management commitment to strategy implementation, achievement of strategic objectives through teamwork, training and sensitization of staff on strategy implementation, development of strategic plans, signing and fulfillment of performance contract tasks and the use of internal auditing systems for constant reviews and evaluation of strategy implementation. All the respondents were unanimous that the internal audit system process is taken seriously by most members of staff as they believe that it helps streamline their operations and better serve their customers.

The study established that a review of the strategy and taking collective action was not initially in place but it is now being carried out by evaluation and monitoring team on a quarterly basis. Annual reviews are based on quarterly reviews. Annual implementations are carried out by use of performance contracts signed between the University and the government of Kenya. To ensure effective implementation internally the contracts are signed between the University Management and the respective heads of division/departments/sections and further cascaded down and signed between individual employees and the university in that order.

5.3   Conclusion

In conclusion, it is clear from the findings of this study that for any organization to survive the turbulent environment, it must put in place necessary efforts to respond to the changes in the environment. All these challenges can make an organization fail in implementing its strategic plan and hence not realize its vision. It will also be very expensive for an organization to abandon a strategic plan because of challenges. This study proposes that an organization should be more proactive that reactive in dealing with challenges to strategy implementation. Strategy managers should seek to detect challenges before they arise and take appropriate action. The organization must direct its resources and systems towards strategy implementation challenges, with special emphasis on those that have greater impact in order to achieve its objectives. It is however important to note that there is no one best way of dealing with strategy implementation challenges. The effort should be geared towards deploying a combination of the above listed strategies.

Overall findings of the study showed that Kenyatta University has been effective in implementing its strategic plan. However, there are challenges affecting the process which include challenges of culture, structure, procedures and processes, resistance to change, corruption, inadequate information, non-motivated staff, mismatch between the workload and available personnel in some departments among others. Information system in place was noted to be efficient, but its interpretation, acceptance and adoption among the implementers were necessary for it to achieve its objectives. Findings further revealed that the said challenges affect other organizations as well; hence, they are not unique to Kenyatta University.

5.4   Limitations of the Study

One limitation that the researcher encountered was the presence of organizational rules that do not allow release of information to the public hence it was difficult to obtain some of the useful information. Most of the University's activities are not recorded when accomplished hence results would be subjective as respondents gave what they would remember.

The other limitation noticed during the research was inaccessibility of some respondents especially those in Management Board by virtue of their office demands making the study to take longer than expected as the researcher had to interview all of them so as to come up with a conclusive research. Giving of inaccurate information by some managers for fear of victimization or contradicting management was also evident. Some of the respondents were unable to provide enough information since their position in management does not warrant them to do so.

For others, there was a feeling that the study would be used to change the status quo in the organization thus affecting their current positions. The researcher established that there was deficiency of skills in the workforce which led to a gap between management expectations and the strategy in action. Lack of awareness among some managers was a major limitation. The absence of a separate monitoring and evaluation department was yet another limitation. Due to limited resources, the study also collected data fro a section of management team as opposed to all members of the organization particularly managers and supervisors.

5.5   Implication on Policy, Theory and Practice

From the findings and conclusions of this study, it is clear that organizations cannot do without strategies and that they must put in place good measures to counter both internal and external challenges that they may face in the process of implementing competitive strategies. Organizations must therefore formulate good strategy implementation structure to enable them succeed. Strategy implementation is important in that it bridges the activities of strategy formulation with strategy success. The poor implementation of an appropriate strategy may cause that strategy to fail. An excellent implementation plan will not only cause the success of an appropriate strategy, but can also rescue an inappropriate strategy. There is therefore a significant need for comprehensive conceptual framework related to strategy implementation.

5.6   Recommendation.

For Kenyatta University to fully implement its documented strategy it is recommended that it obtains enough resources, particularly financial resources. It should formulate financial plans and policies that will enable the institution access funds for implementation of the strategic plan. The findings of the study reveal that the challenges encountered during strategy implementation eventually work against the implementation team. It follows that when issues concerning this team are ignored, the implementation process is bound to be affected.   It is therefore recommended that the management of Kenyatta University be on the lookout on strategy implementation issues with the main focus being to empower and strengthen the implementation team and empowerment includes providing resources.

Respondents were divided as to whether the University involves her staff in strategy formulation. It was however apparent that some of the managers see the strategy document after it has been fully formulated and they are required to implement it in their respective units. This is perhaps the reason why the strategy is not implemented fully. It is important to note that separation of strategy development and implementation may lead to a situation where critical issues may be left out of consideration during formulation phase. The institution should ensure that the staff and especially those involved in strategy implementation discuss the strategies already formulated for them to own the process.

The average performance of Kenyatta University in strategy implementation may be attributed to lack of fit and coordination among various departmental strategies. The University should endeavour to align departmental strategies with its corporate strategy. This will ensure that the University implements its programmes as documented in its corporate strategy as well as ensuring that there is harmony in implementation of departmental strategies.

Kenyatta University is an organization operating under planned activities. For it to implement its strategic plan effectively, it is being recommended that it should evaluate its plan over the implementation period, consider its successes, failures and then change course. Having a working monitoring and evaluation tool on the strategic plan will also help the University to know what has so far been achieved and what is yet to be achieved within a specific period of time. The University should be specific while looking at how it can undertake measures to mitigate its challenges. It should set clear goals, allow university management board and the senate to delegate authority for the management of particular departments, expedite decision making process and avoid rigid and unsupportive bureaucracy.

The University should identify, strategy critical value chain, which is the main building block in an organization structure and decide how much authority to centralize at the top and how much to delegate to line managers. It should decide on how to deal with inter-departmental coordination and collaboration to strengthen internal competencies and capabilities. It should also create external collaboration with the outside world particularly institutions of higher learning.

Kenyatta University has to consider cutting down on its bureaucracy and recognize the fact that the necessary tools of organizational design are those where the managers and employees are empowered to make individual judgement. Re-engineered work processes and procedures, self-driven work teams, incorporation of internet technologies and networking with the outside to improve existing organizational capabilities as well as create new avenues should be the University's ultimate goal. The University should therefore have greater autonomy as well as recast its mission, vision and core values. This has been achieved by recasting the 2005-2015 Strategic and Vision Plan. The institution is further compelled to chart out a new strategic direction guided by a shared vision, strategic thinking and agility. It should also be aware of its position in the world context and try to maintain and improve it further.

On culture and resistance to change, the University should recognize the fact that when an organization culture is out of tune with what is needed for strategic success, the culture has to be changed. Successful culture change must be driven by top management. Only the top management has the power and organizational influence to major changes in the organization's culture. Management is therefore required to think strategically and create a paradigm shift in realizing that there is always other ways of doing things. Change in technology, procedures and policies such as reward policy, job evaluation, unbiased promotions and open door policy are necessary motivational tools to employees. Changes however, should be introduced gradually but at a pace faster that the competitors so as to minimize resistance to change. To overcome challenges associated with resistance to change, strategic change is often implemented at a slower pace.

On training, the University should invest more on sharpening employees' skills especially the non-teaching staff. Currently, the University allocates more funds for the teaching staff vis-à-vis the non-teaching staff who are also very important in the implementation of the institution's competitive strategies. The University needs to understand that successful strategy implementation is only possible if employees involved have the right and relevant skills. The training should be frequent, content oriented and adequate to support growth oriented strategies. Respondents pointed out that the University is very passionate about staff training and colossal sums of money are allocated to this cause every financial year. On resources the University should link strategy to budgets and this should be able to act as a tool for resource allocation.

On staff motivation, the University should recognize the fact that motivational techniques build a wholehearted commitment and a winning attitude among employees. There is also the aspect of well structured reward systems that recognizes each employee's contribution and rewards them accordingly. The University should understand that a well designed reward system is management's most powerful tool for mobilizing organizational commitment to successful strategy implementation. Implementation therefore needs to ensure that there is consistency between personal and organizational goals. More importantly, senior management's support to strategy implementation efforts is crucial. There should be fully flagged support from management to plan and support strategy implementation. The full strategy will not be 'known' in advance but will 'emerge' out of the implementation process.

Communication process in the organization should be enhanced to ensure that all the staff is aware and they understand the contents of the strategic plan so that goal congruence can be obtained. This will also ensure that staffs are involved from formulation stage thus developing a strong sense of ownership and support at the implementation stage. Whenever the vision is clear, the staffs do not view things as imposed on them, but rather they embrace it and long for it to reach completion.

5.7   Suggestions for Further Research

It is generally believed that no research is an end in itself. What this research has achieved in this area of study is minimal thus requiring further research. From the knowledge gained from the study, the researcher recommends the following which should act as a direction for further research:

There is need to undertake further research in strategy implementation in both public and private universities in Kenya given the stiff competition in provision of higher education. A cross-section study should be conducted so as to make comparisons between various public universities as well as private ones. This will reveal hidden problems common to the entire higher education sector. It will also reveal mitigating factors which can deal with the challenges of strategy implementation, variances that have taken place and a comparison with the current data done. Evaluation of such research work from time to time is also suggested to ensure that they conform to the emerging challenges in the environment.

The study can also be replicated in Kenyatta University, focusing the views of lower level managers and other general staff. The suggested studies if carried out soon can promote objectivity as well as validate the findings of this study. There is need to study the practices adopted to evaluate progress towards strategy implementation in organizations as they provide a feedback to inform revision. Further, adoption of such progress report will validate the findings and make it possible for future researchers to undertake studies along the same line.

REFERENCES

Ansoff H. I (1965), Corporate Strategy: *An Analytical Approach to Business Policy for Growth and Expansion; New York,* McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Ansoff H. I and McDonnel E. J (1990)*, Implanting Strategic Management*, Cambridge UK : Prentice Hall, 2nd Edition.

Aosa, E (1992), *An Empirical Investigation of Aspects of Strategy Formulation and Implementation within Large, Private Manufacturing Companies in Kenya*, PhD Thesis, University of Strathcylde Scotland.

Atandi, K. B (2010), *Strategic Plan implementation at the Higher Education Loans Board of Kenya*. Unpublished MBA Project School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Awino Z. B. (2001), *Effectiveness and Problems of Strategy Implementation of Financing Highger Education by HELB*.MBA Project School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Barney J. B (1997), *Gaining and Sustaining Competitive Advantage*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., USA.

Barney, J. B. (2003). *Gaining and Sustaining Competitive Advantage*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley

Chandler, A.D. (1962). *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise*. Cambridge, MA : MIT Press.

Collins, D. J & Montgomery, (1998), *Creating Corporate Advantage*, Harvard Business Review, May-June pp 70-83

Cooper, D. R & Schindler, P. S (2003). *Business Research Methods*, 8th Edition, McGraw-Hill/Irwin

David, F.R. (1997). *Concepts of Strategic Management.* Prentice Hall, mc, New Jersey, USA.

Hamel G. (1991), *Competition for Competence and inter-partner learning within international strategic alliances*, Strategic Management Journal, 12.

Hamel and Prahalad (1994), *Compete for the future*, Harvard Business School Press Boston, Massachusetts.

H. Mintzberg and A. McHugh, "Strategy Formation in an Adhocracy," *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 30 (June 1985): 160-197.

Johnson G. and Scholes K. (1999), *Exploring Corporate Strategy*, Prentice Hall.

Joseph, K. K (2010), *Challenges of implementing of turnaround strategies at Telkom Kenya Limited.* Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Kaplan, R.S. & Norton, D.P. 2000. *The Strategy Focused Organisation: How Balanced Scorecard Companies Thrive in the New Business Environment.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Kaplan, R.S. & Norton, D.P. 2004. *Strategy Maps: Turning Intangible Assets into Tangible Results.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Karanja P. (2002), *Competitive Strategies of Real Estate Firms. The Perspective of Porter's Generic Mode*l, Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Kenyatta University Strategic and Vision Plan (2005-2015).

Kimeli, D (2008), *Challenges of Strategy Implementation at Kenya Revenue Authority*. Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Kiruthi J. (2001), *The State of Strategic Management Practices in Not-for-Profit organizations. The case of Public Membership Clubs in Nairobi*, MBA project, School of Business, University of Nairobi Kenya.

Koske, F. K. (2003), *Strategy implementation and its challenges in public corporations; The case of Telkom Kenya Limited*, MBA Project, School of Business, University of   Nairobi, Kenya.

Kothari C.R. (1990), *Research Methodology: Methods and techniques*. 2nd Edition. New Delhi.

Machuki, N. V (2005), *Challenges of Strategy Implementation at CMC Motors Group Limited*. Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Mibei W. (2007), *Competitive Strategies Adopted by Travel Agents in Nairobi,* Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Mugenda O.M and Mugenda A. G, (2003), *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative approaches*, Acts Press,Nairobi, Kenya

Mukami M. (2010), *Challenges facing implementation of Kenya Human Rights Commission's Five Year Strategic Plan (2008-2012).* Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Mureithi D. W (2010), *Challenges faced by Montessori Colleges in Kenya in implementing competitive strategies.* Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Musyoka L.W (2008), *Challenges in Strategy Implementation*: A case Study of Jomo Kenyatta Foundation. Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Mwaniki, J (2010), *Competitive Strategies Adopted by Stockbrokers in Kenya.* Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Namada M. (2004), *Competitive Strategies Adopted by Small Scale Enterprises in Exhibition halls in Nairobi*, Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Njenga, C (2008), *Development of Sustainable Competitive Advantage by Top Ranking Secondary Schools in Nairobi*, Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Nyakang'o, M (2007), *Competitive Strategies Adopted by Audit Firms in Nairobi*, Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Nyariki, K. N (2012), *Challenges of Strategy Implementation at the University of Nairobi*. Unpublished   MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Pearce, J.A.& Robinson, R.B(1991). *Strategic Management*; Formulation ,Implementation and Control .Irwin McGraw-Hill,Boston ,USA

Pearce, J.A.& Robinson, R.B(1997). *Strategic Management*; Formulation ,Implementation and Control .Irwin McGraw-Hill,Boston ,USA

Pearce, J.A.& Robinson, R.B(1988). *Strategic Management*; Formulation ,Implementation and Control .Irwin McGraw-Hill,Boston ,USA.

Pearce, J.A. & Robinson, R.B. 2007. *Formulation, Implementation and Control of Competitive Strategy*, 9th edition. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Porter, M. (1980). *Competitive strategy techniques for analyzing industries and competitors.* New York: The Free Press.

Porter, M. (1985). *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance.* New York: The Free Press.

Rothchild, W.E (1984), *How to Gain (and Maintain) the Competitive Advantage in Business*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

Thompson A.A and Strickland, J A (1989) Strategic Management; Concepts and Cases. Irwin Mc Graw-Hill, New York ,U.S.A

Thompson and Strickland (2003), *Strategic Management*: Concepts and Cases, 13th Edition, Tata

McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited, New Delhi.

Thompson A.A .et al. (2007).*Crafting and Executing Strategy* .Irwin McGraw-Hill ,New

York. U.S.A

Thompson, Strickland & Gamble (2007*), Crafting & Executing Strategy*: Texts and Readings,

15th Edition, McGraw-Hill, Irwin.

Appendix: Interview Guide

Interview Guide on Challenges of Strategy Implementation at Kenyatta University

Part A: Personal Details

1. Which department are you in?

2. What is your job title?

3. What are your main responsibilities in the University?

4. How many years have you served in your current position?

Part B: Challenges of Strategy Implementation in Kenyatta University

1. What are the challenges posed to the implementation of the University's competitive strategies by the current University structure?

2. What systems has the University put in place to ensure smooth process of strategy operationalization, institutionalization and control? How is the University's internal support system in terms of strategy implementation?

3. How does the University's allocation of resources affect the implementation of the University's competitive strategies in terms of funds, human resource skills and experience?

4. Does the University's culture pose a challenge to the implementation of the competitive strategies? If so explain how it has affected your division and what the University is doing to handle the challenge.

5. Has the University come up with a corporate culture for its employees and how is it passed on to the new employees?

6. How does the University ensure creation of a motivated workforce so as to have a successful strategy implementation?

7. How is the University's reward structure? and what strategies does the University use to motivate employees and create competencies in their areas of specialization?

8. Is communication a challenge to strategy implementation in your University? If so, what are the measures that the University has put in place to improve its communication channels with both internal and external customers?

9. What role does the university management play in strategy execution? Do they portray commitment of leadership to strategy execution?

10. How does the University deal with the organizational politics as a major challenge to strategy implementation?

11. How does the University manage change and policy implementation? Does the University Management have good models to guide their action?

12. What measures is the University's management taking to counter the challenges hindering the implementation of the competitive strategies?

=END=

THANK YOU