

**CHALLENGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION FACED BY  
MICRO AND SMALL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN NAKURU  
COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

I Gitau Maryann Wanjuhi hereby declare that this project is my original work and has not been submitted for an award of a degree in any other University for examination/academic purposes.

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### **SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL**

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

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my parents for their financial support and Lecturers of the University of Nairobi, School of Business for their tireless efforts of supporting me academically and emotionally as their continual guidance and support contributed to the completion of this project within the stipulated timeframe.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.1.1 Challenges of Strategy Implementation .....	3
1.1.2 Micro and Small Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya.....	4
1.1.3 Micro and Small Women Entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya.....	5
1.2 Research Problem .....	6
1.3 Research Objectives.....	9
1.4 Value of the Study .....	9
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	11
2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study.....	11
2.3 Strategy Implementation .....	13
2.4 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation.....	16
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	19
3.2 Research Design.....	19
3.3 Target Population.....	19
3.4 Sampling of the Population.....	20

3.5 Data Collection .....	20
3.6 Data Analysis .....	21
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	22
4.2 Academic Level of Respondents .....	22
4.3 Period of Operation.....	23
4.4 Understanding of Strategy .....	24
4.5 Challenges When Implementing Strategy .....	24
4.6 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation.....	25
4.7 Challenges of Strategy Implementation.....	30
4.8 Measures Taken to Mitigate Challenges of strategy Implementation .....	34
4.9 Discussion of Research findings .....	37
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 40</b>	
5.1 Introduction.....	40
5.2 Summary of the Findings.....	40
5.2.1 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation .....	40
5.2.2 Challenges of Strategy Implementation .....	41
5.2.3 Measures Taken to Mitigate Challenges of Strategy Implementation .....	42
5.3 Conclusions of the Study .....	43
5.4 Recommendations from the Study.....	44
5.5 Limitations of the Study.....	45
5.6 Areas Suggested for Further Research.....	46

<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>APPENDIX III: TARGET AREAS AND POPULATION OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>APPENDIX IV: SAMPLE POPULATION .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>APPENDIX V: NAKURU COUNTY MAP .....</b>	<b>viii</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 4.1</b> Academic Level of Respondents.....	23
<b>Table 4.2</b> Period of Operation .....	23
<b>Table 4.3</b> Understanding of Strategy.....	24
<b>Table 4.4</b> Challenges when Implementing Strategy.....	25
<b>Table 4.5</b> Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation.....	25
<b>Table 4.6</b> Challenges of strategy implementation.....	31
<b>Table 4.7</b> Measures taken to mitigate Challenges of strategy implementation.....	35



## ABSTRACT

The major drive behind this study was to investigate challenges of strategy implementation faced by micro and small women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya. The major objectives of the study were to; determine strategy implementation challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and determine the measures taken by the women entrepreneurs to address the challenges faced during Strategy Implementation process in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study used descriptive survey research design to determine strategy implementation and challenges facing small and micro women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya. The target population of the study included all small and micro women enterprises in Nakuru County (see appendix ii).A convenient sampling method was used for this study where the researcher only identified the respondents that can be interviewed based on their accessibility and availability for the interview. The target sample was 384 micro and small women enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya. Women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County were the respondents for the study. Questionnaires were the instruments of data collection for this study. The respondents consisted of the owners and managers of women enterprises in Nakuru County Kenya. Questionnaires were administered by the researcher during working hours of the week. Drop and pick later method was applied where respondents had no time to respond immediately. Secondary data was gathered from library material, journals, reports, media publications and various Internet search engines covering the women entrepreneurship in Kenya. The Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process and analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, mean, percentages and frequency tables were used to summarize and relate variables which were attained from the administered questionnaires. The findings from the study were presented using tables. The study established that internal and external factors were challenges of strategy implementation. Structure, style of management, communication, employees' skills, culture influenced effective strategy implementation. Political, economic, social-cultural, technological and ecological were the external factors that influenced effective strategy implementation. Therefore, the study recommended that for Women SME's to realize effective strategy implementation, both internal and external factors should be understood including structure, employee skills, styles of management strategy, political, economic, social-cultural, technological and ecological factors.

**Key Words:** Strategy Implementation, Challenges of Strategy Implementation, Micro and small women entrepreneurs.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

All business units are environment dependent and the link between a business and its environment is the strategy it adopts. More so, in the present day business environment that is characterized by a dynamic, complex and unpredictable environment, strategy is crucial. Business experience changes continually because they are open systems in constant interaction with the environment. These changes necessitate a firm to develop appropriate goals and objectives, identify necessary courses of action and allocation of resources necessary to achieve the set goals (Dacin et al., 2007).

Resource based and biological entrepreneurship theories were employed in this study. They helped to describe issues experienced by entrepreneurs in different environment locally and internationally. The resource based theory focuses on the idea of costly to copy attributes of the firm as sources of business returns and the means to achieving superior performance and competitive. While biological entrepreneurship theory focused on gender differences that distinguish men and women entrepreneurs in the dynamic business environment (Schumpeter, 1999).

According to Pearce and Robinson (2000), in order for a business unit to achieve their goals and objectives, it is necessary for them to adjust to their environment through strategy. In a firms' strategic process, implementation of appropriate 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.

But the whole point of a strategy is that it will be implemented successfully. Effective implementation results when a firm's resources and actions are tied to strategic priorities and set objectives achieved, and when key success factors are identified and performance measures and reporting are aligned (Deloitte and Touche, 2003). Implementation of an organization's strategy involves the application of the management process to obtain the desired results.

Women entrepreneurs in Kenya are the key to economic growth because they are generating employment. But women owned businesses could contribute more than what they are doing today. A growing amount of research shows that countries that fail to address gender barriers are losing out on significant economic growth. Without increased attention to the gender dimensions of economic development, Kenya is therefore unlikely to meet its growth targets. This therefore demonstrates that addressing gender barriers in Kenya could generate significant economic growth for the country.

The Kenyan government recognizes that women entrepreneurs have not been on an equal footing when it comes to their access to opportunities and assets but it has yet to effectively address the barriers facing women in business (Athanne, 2011). Promoting women's economic and political empowerment has gained greater attention over the last three decades (Yeshiareg, 2007). The institutional theory recognizes the embedment of institutional actors in an environment of formal and informal rules. Institutional theorists suggest that organizational actions and processes are driven by their actors in order to justify and plausibly explain their actions.

Strategy implementation are rationally accounted for by organizational actors and rooted in the normative and social context that motivates actors to seek legitimacy (Dacin, Oliver *et al.*, 2007). Through various cognitive, normative and regulative forces organizations adopt a standardized set of practices (Scott, 2001). In other words, an organization is composed of three pillars: the cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative elements that together with associated activities and resources provide stability to social life. Companies try to fit in with the norm by adopting strategy implementation that validates them as part of the organizational field.

### **1.1.1 Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

Despite the opportunities micro and small enterprises provide to developing countries, quite a number of challenges experienced during implementation of various strategies (Yabs, 2007). Women entrepreneurs face challenges of raising adequate capital to support their business in the turbulent business environment. Efforts to access credit facilities from micro finance institutions and commercial banks become fruitless due to high interest rates charges when borrowing money. Most of the women entrepreneurs are illiterate in terms of financial management (Johnson, 1987). With little knowledge of managing financial resources, most of the business fails to survive due to poor management. Gender disparities are major barriers to women enterprise success.

Men dominance MSE sector tend to overlook women enterprises in the competitive business environment. Women's concerns and gender-related constraints tend to negatively affect equal participation of both sexes at the local, institutional and policy levels Strict legal and regulatory policies by Government authorizes including local

authorities make it difficult for women enterprises to succeed. Complex registration procedures and high levies charged discourage women entrepreneurs in Kenya. Lack of appropriate trainings for women entrepreneurs has led to poor performance of women enterprises in Kenya. Lack of marketing information, financial management training, ICT skills result to poor performance of women enterprises in Kenya (Bodorick, Dhliwal and Jutla, 2002).

### **1.1.2 Micro and Small Women Entrepreneurs in Kenya**

Micro and small women enterprises play a pivotal role in the Kenyan economy by providing employment opportunities in the informal sector. Developing countries rely on micro and small enterprises to promote social economic developments. Micro and small enterprises in Kenya make up 72% of the Gross National Product. Both men and women enterprises are recognized in Kenya despite the internal and external challenges faced (2012), clearly indicated that there are 812,848 women in MSEs in Kenya, accounting for 47.4 % of all those in MSEs. The results showed that women tended to operate enterprises associated with traditional women's roles, such as hairstyling, restaurants, hotels, retail shops and wholesale outlets.

In general, women tended to operate smaller enterprises than men, with the average number of employees in a women-owner/managed MSE being 1.54 versus 2.1 in men-owner/managed MSEs. In women-owner/managed MSEs, about 86% of the workers were women owner/managers themselves, 4% hired workers, with the remainder made up of unpaid family members and/or apprentices. Whereas, in men-owner/managed MSEs, only 68 % of the workers were men owner/managers themselves, 17 % hired

workers and the remainder made up of unpaid family members and/or apprentices. The survey also indicated that women tended to operate smaller MSEs than men. The MSEs sector, therefore, holds more promise for women in providing and accessing employment opportunities (Athanne, 2011).

Based on available growth statistics, the MSE sector, which is growing rapidly, has the potential to provide employment to the majority of Kenyans including women entrepreneurs.

### **1.1.3 Micro and Small Women Entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya**

Micro and small women enterprises in Kenya play a major role in informal sector employment. Nakuru County is one of the 47 Counties in Kenya that is contributing to National development in terms of Micro and Small Women enterprises (KIPPRA, 2013). Small enterprises in Nakuru County provide one of the main sources of employment and generate widespread economic benefits to the County. According to Ocha (2011), In Kenya “Micro-enterprises” are those that comprise of 10 or less workers while Small enterprises comprise 11-50 workers. The 1999 National Micro and Small Enterprise Baseline Survey define MSEs as enterprises employing 1-50 workers (Republic of Kenya Sessional paper No.2, 2005).

With the dispensation of the new constitution in Kenya, it has been found that Micro and Small Women Enterprises are major driving forces behind interrelated flow of trade, investment and technology at the County level. Micro and Small Women Enterprises are active instruments for rural and social development and a source of development of specialized product niche and above all are indeed a source of employment (Kiiru, 1991).

According to Nakuru County Ministry of Trade (2014), women enterprises operating in Nakuru County add up to 65,492. With increased number of unemployment in Kenya, most women invest in Micro and Small Enterprises to sustain their livelihoods despite the external challenges they face. Nakuru County has been striving to empower Micro and Small Women Enterprises despite the challenges experienced during strategy implementation (Kimunga, 2009). Initiatives that have been put in place by the County Government to empower women entrepreneurs include; encouragement of women to take loans from SME's development funds, providing entrepreneurship trainings to women through partnerships with Non-Governments Organization and micro finance institutions (Kimunga, 2009).

## **1.2 Research Problem**

A firm's strategic plan is expected to be a guiding document for the organization; however, a poor implementation of the plan can result in it becoming an ineffective document (Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006). Under such a circumstance, it will not matter how good the strategic plan is, instead what will be important is how to convert the documented strategy to tangible results, a process which will involve effective implementation process. The transformation of the existing knowledge by a firm, into a meaningful action, is an important strategic process and in most of the cases creates a gap in implementation.

Gole (2005) assert that one of the main causes that organizations cite for the knowing-doing gap is that organizations come to the belief that if they just talk about doing something, this very action of discussion will magically lead to execution. It will be

inconsequential to an institution, for example, to come up with effective strategies but fail to achieve an effective implementation. The small and micro enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in the Kenyan Economy. According to Ansoff & McDonnell (1990), most organizations especially small scale businesses generally lack managerial abilities in running and operating small scale businesses. They argued that skills are indispensable for growth and survival of small scale businesses.

In reference to the Economic Survey (2006), the sector contributed over 50 percent of new jobs created in the year 2005. Despite their significance, past statistics indicate that three out of five businesses fail within the first few months of operation (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2007). According to Amyx (2005), one of the most significant challenges is the negative perception towards SMEs. Potential clients perceive small businesses as lacking the ability to provide quality services and are unable to satisfy more than one critical project simultaneously. Often larger companies are selected and given business for their clout in the industry and name recognition alone.

Several studies have been conducted on strategy implementation and its challenges, Kimunga (2009) revealed that small scale businesses face unique challenges such as; lack of management skills, inadequate education, technical skills, access to financial services and legal and regulatory issues, which affect their growth and profitability and hence, diminish their ability to contribute effectively to sustainable development. As such, every effort should be made to boost their growth. The above study does not tell us the challenges faced by women small scale enterprises. This study therefore seeks to fill that gap by investigating on the challenges faced by small scale women enterprises in Kenya.



Wanyama (2011) carried out a survey of the challenges of financing small and micro enterprises (SMEs), he found out that a few challenges are from external forces that SMEs have little or no influence. It was concluded that the SMEs need to carry out a SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat) analysis and change their operations to remain effective and efficient, to influence the external parties by ensuring constant availability of information that may influence third parties perception for better.

Specific main challenges identified include; lack of sufficient past financial records, lack of modern accounting system, lack of proper tools of monitoring and evaluating the projects, negative attitude toward SMEs by commercial banks, bias evaluation and rating of SMEs by potential lenders, lack of well trained staff, misclassification of SMEs as NGOs by some partners, lack of collateral, inability to service loans and lack of tools to evaluate projects that need to be implemented. The above study only focuses on challenges of small and micro enterprises; it does not tell us in particular challenges faced by small scale women enterprises.

Gakuru (2008) found out that most small scale enterprises failed due to poor strategy implementation attributed to poor management by the owners and managers of small scale businesses enterprises. From this study, it is quite clear that strategy is very fundamental for the success of a business more importantly small scale business. However, the findings of the study reveal a gap since they do not tell us challenges faced by small scale women enterprises in Kenya. To the best of researcher's knowledge no researcher took their time to focus on challenges faced by small scale women enterprises in Kenya during strategy implementation. Therefore, this research project seeks to bridge

that gap and specifically address this question: What are the challenges facing women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

- i. To determine strategy implementation challenges facing women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County.
- ii. To determine the measures taken by the women entrepreneurs to address the challenges faced during Strategy Implementation process in Nakuru County.

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

The findings from this research will help women managers of small scale businesses in Kenya to understand the challenges faced by small scale businesses and ways to cope with these challenges. The government also stands to benefit from these findings since they can be able to understand the challenges that women entrepreneurs face in Kenya especially those who are in the informal sector. The findings of the study will be benefiting the employees of the Nakuru County Government in the Ministry of Trade to come up with appropriate measures to empower women entrepreneurs in the County through training. It will provide guidance to the entire management hierarchy in the County by making clear what the County can do to promote social economic developments through SME's.

This study will therefore increase the existing body of knowledge in the area of strategy implementation to SME's. It will add into the available literature in this field which is evolving. This study will benefit the Ministry of Trade in establishing effective and

efficient policies of overcoming challenges of strategy implementation in micro and small enterprises in Kenya. This will enable them gain competitive advantage over other players in the industry. The management will be proactive in dealing with the challenges that they face in the implementation since they will be anticipated. Researchers and academicians also stand to benefit from this research through developing and expanding the syllabus in respect to this study thus providing a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by small scale businesses and how to solve those problems. Future scholars can use this study to enrich on their literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical and empirical review of strategy implementation. It will also examine the challenges of strategy implementation and factors influencing strategy implementation.

### **2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study**

This study is based on the Resource based and biological theory of entrepreneurship to describe issues experienced by entrepreneurs in different environment. The resource based theory focuses on the idea of costly to copy attributes of the firm as sources of business returns and the means to achieving superior performance and competitive advantage (Barney & Conner, 1991). Prehald (1990) suggested that firms match their resources, skills and expertise into core competences and distinctive competence to gain competitive advantage. From their definition, core competence are those activities that a company does best in relation to other while distinctive competence is what a firm does better than all its competitors. A strategy acts as an integral process between the organization's goals or objectives and the realization of the same objectives.

The biological theory of entrepreneurship is based on the gender differences that distinguish men and women entrepreneurs in the dynamic business environment. It argues that cultural or even biological differences between men and women influence entrepreneurship spirit in a given environment (Schumpeter, 1999). It is evident that gender differences are core aspects of what it means to be a successful entrepreneur.

However, gender differences in behavior should be expected to change along with other social changes. Moreover, even theories of more stable gender differences generally also admit the co-existence of more malleable gender differences. Risk has long been a central concept in the entrepreneurship literature (Schumpeter, 1999).

Entrepreneurial activities are frequently assumed to involve risk-taking, especially relative to managerial activities within established corporations (Aiman et al., 2002). It has also been suggested that women may be less willing to undertake activities-such as raising external financing-that put them at risk of losing control of their business to outside stakeholders. Small elite groups of women entrepreneurs approach risk-taking in a manner similar to men, but that on average, women entrepreneurs are much less willing to undertake substantial business risks (Schumpeter, 1999). Further, men build businesses of all sizes, but most women build only very small businesses, with a few building large firms.

Entrepreneurial firms base their strategies solely on opportunities that exist in the environment, using opportunities as a starting point for developing strategies (Aiman et al., 2002). They tend to pursue new opportunities without regard to resources currently controlled, identifying the resources necessary to exploit an opportunity after they have assessed a new strategy. Administratively managed companies, on the other hand, tend to look more at the resources they already control when developing strategies. They may be aware of the opportunities in the environment but tend to think in terms of how to best utilize and exploit the resources they already control as efficiently as possible in order to exploit new opportunities (Schumpeter, 1999).

A well organized and formulated strategy plays an important role in assembling and allocating an organization's resources into a unique and viable posture based on its relative inner competencies and shortcomings, anticipated changes in the external environment and contingent moves by intelligent opponents. In reference to Mintzberg (1987) he defines a strategy with a broad viewpoint: as a plan, pattern, and position and finally as a perspective which the organization or individual has in mind towards achieving a certain goal.

Hrebiniak (2006) strategy as a plan involves how leaders organize themselves in order to establish a direction that is compatible with the organization's goals and objectives. Hence, a firm's strategy acts as a ploy and is intended to give an organization a competitive edge against its competitors. Strategies are abstractions which exist in the minds of an individual or an organization that want to implement a strategy to remain competitive in the market or attract prospective customers. Therefore, a major issue in strategy formulation is how to read the collective mind and to understand how the intentions diffuse through the system called an organization in order to be shared through exercising actions directed towards achieving a goal (Hrebiniak, 2006).

### **2.3 Strategy Implementation**

Strategy formulation forms the basis of a challenging task where most managers and implementers of strategies must be at the forefront in articulating sensitive issues involved in implementation of strategies for example: restructuring, technological changes, change of policies, resource mobilization as well as leadership changes.

A strategy could be well thought but its implementation may be poor and thus the strategic objective for which the strategy was meant may not come to pass. A well designated, developed and executed strategy brings success in a firm's operations (Woodridge, 1990).

Strategy implementation is a very important activity in a firm however, it is not easy. According to (Johnson, 1987), it is evident that almost all organizations have strategies nonetheless, out of 100 companies only 20 can successfully implement strategies. Strategy as a process focuses mainly on monitoring the effectiveness of set objectives as well as the functional policies with respect to the mission and the function of employees of the firm. It is therefore apparent that the nature of decision and the level of the organization in which it is taken, this decision can only be deemed effective if it receives full support of its implementers and achieves the objectives it is related to (Sababu, 2007).

Managing implementation and execution of any strategy must take into account operations of the organization through making things happen which is aimed at shaping the performance of core business activities in a strategic manner (Yabs, 2007). Strategy implementation is indeed the most demanding and time consuming part of a strategy management process. The process of converting strategic plans into actions and results basically tests the abilities of a manager influencing organizational change, motivating employees, leading by example strengthening company's competencies, creating a strategy supportive of work climate as well as meeting performance targets (Thomson et al, 2006). Strategy implementation is such a difficult task that requires leaders who have

the capacity and the capability to influence and make important decisions that are in line with the organizations strategy (Sababu, 2007).

Kaplan and Norton (1996) despite the need to modify an organization's strategy, executing approaches to the particulars of its situation, certain management bases have to be covered no matter what the circumstance. Eight managerial tasks crop up repeatedly in an organization's efforts to execute a strategy successfully; marshaling sufficient money and people behind the drive for the strategy execution; instituting policies and procedures that facilitate rather than impeded strategy execution; adopting best practices and pushing for continuous improvement in how value chain activities are performed (Yabs, 2007).

Installing information and operating systems that enable company personnel to carry out their strategic roles proficiently; tying rewards directly to the achievement of strategic and financial targets and to good strategy execution; instilling a corporate culture that promotes good strategy execution; and finally exercising strong leadership to drive execution, and achieve forward, keep improving on the details of execution, and achieve operating excellence as rapidly as feasible (Wooldridge, 1990).

How well managers perform the tasks has a decisive impact on whether the outcome is spectacular success, a colossal failure or something in between (Thompson et al, 1992).

In devising an action agenda for implementing and executing strategy, where managers can start is probing an assessment of what the organization intends to differently and better to carry out its strategy successfully (Macmillan, 1986). In big organization with geographically scattered operating units, the action agenda of senior executives mostly involves communicating the case for change to others, building consensus on how to



proceed, installing strong allies in positions where they can push implementation along key organizational units (Govindaranjan, 1988).

In small organizations, top management deals directly with frontline managers and employees are the ones tasked with taking actions that will lead to the implementation of the strategies (Bryson, 2005). Regardless of the organization's size and whether implementation involves sweeping or minor changes, the most important leadership traits are a strong, confident sense of what to do and how to do it. Having a strong grip on these two things comes from understanding the circumstances of the organization and the requirements for effective strategy execution (Thomson et al, 1992).

#### **2.4 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation**

According to Pearce and Robinson (1997) strategy implementation is the process of transforming strategic intentions into actions, then into acceptable results. Successful strategy implementation is as critical and difficult as the strategic choice itself. It requires consideration of the resources to be used, human resource requirements, structures and systems. It involves the design and management of organizational systems to achieve the best integration of people and structure, allocating resources, managing human resources and developing information and decision processes to achieve organizational objectives. Pearce and Robinson note that "to effectively direct and control the use of the firm's resources, mechanisms such as organizational structure, information systems, leadership styles, assignment of key managers, budgeting, rewards, and control systems are essential strategy implementation ingredients".

After the creative and analytical aspects of the corporate strategy have been formulated the priority of the management is to convert the strategy into operationally effective action. A strategy is never complete, until it gains a commitment of the firm's resources and becomes embodied in its organizational structure. Formulation of an effective strategy, making the strategy work and implementing it throughout the company is a complex task to competitive firms (Hrebiniak, 2006). Many internal and external factors potentially affect the process by which strategies formulated are turned into organizational action. Unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation is more of a craft, rather than a science. After successful formulation of the business strategy, difficulties usually arise during the subsequent implementation process (Raps & Kauffman, 2005).

The structure of the organization should be in a way that it can respond to pressures from the external environment that pursues potential opportunities which are already predetermined (Lorsch and Shealther, 1967). According to Thompson & Strickland (1980) implementation of strategy calls for working with and through other people and institutions of change. It is imperative to note that when designing organizational structure, key aspects such as employee motivation, empowerment and reward should be taken into consideration. Culture is defined as a set of assumption that employees of a certain organization share in common (share beliefs and values). Organizational culture enhances dissemination of core values and nurturing the talents in achieving goals and objectives of the organization. Implementing a new strategy mainly focuses on adjustments in the structure, systems, employees and the culture of doing things to adjust to the perceived needs of the strategy (Pearce and Robbinson, 1997).

Wehrich and Koontz (1993) perceived culture as a general pattern of behavior, common beliefs and values members share in the organization. Culture can be defined from the way people do things and how they conduct themselves in the organization.

Organizational structure cannot solely guarantee successful implementation of strategy. Effective leadership is instrumental enhancing strategy implementation. A leader plays an important role in influencing others towards attaining goals and objectives enshrined in the organizational constitution. Leaders seek to move people the entire organization towards attaining certain goals. In the contemporary business environment, a leader adds a lot of value in providing effective leadership as well as sharing a clear vision, direction and purpose for the organization (Bateman and Zeithaml, 1993). Leadership is fundamental in facilitating effective strategy implementation. The CEO of a company plays a fundamental role of guiding employees in implementation of strategies in the organization.

Thompson et al, (1992) contend that effective strategy implementation depends on competent personnel and effective internal organizations systems. No organization can hope to perform the activities required for successful strategy implementation without attracting, motivating and retaining talented managers and employees with better skills and intellectual capital. The task of implementing challenging strategic initiatives must be assigned to executives who have the skills and talents to handle and can be counted on to turn decisions and actions into results to meet established targets. Building a capable organization is thus a priority in strategy execution.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology that was applied in conducting the study. This includes the research design, population of the study, data collection and data analysis method.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The study is qualitative in nature based on opinions of respondents. The researcher used descriptive survey research design to determine strategy implementation and challenges facing small and micro women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) assert that a survey is a means of collecting information about a large group of elements referred to as a population. In this study, the focus is to determine the challenges facing small scale women entrepreneurs and the factors influencing small scale enterprises in Nakuru County.

### **3.3 Target Population**

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), explains that a target population should have some observable characteristics to which the researcher intends to generalize the results of the study. The target population of the study includes all small and micro women enterprises in Nakuru County (see appendix ii).

### 3.4 Sampling of the Population

A convenient sampling method has been used for this study where the researcher only identify the respondents that can be interviewed based on their accessibility and availability for the interview. To obtain a sample size that has an adequate size relative to the goals of the study, the researcher adopted Yamane's formula as follows:

$$n = Z^2 pq / d^2$$

Where, n= desired sample size, Z= standard normal deviation set at 1.96 (95% confidence level), P= proportion of the targeted population that have the characteristic focusing in the study estimated at 0.5 In this study the particular characteristics are the women who have small and micro business enterprises which is taken as 0.5 (default) since the exact proportion is not given by the county government on their report. q=1-p, d= degree of accuracy set at 5% / degree proportion of error that should be accepted in the study (0.05) since the study is at 95% confidence level.

$$\text{Thus Desired Sample (n)} = \{ 1.96^2 * (0.5 * (1-0.5)) / 0.05^2$$

$$\text{Hence; } n = \frac{(1.96 * 1.96) * (0.5 * 0.5)}{(0.05 * 0.05)}$$

$$(0.05 * 0.05)$$

$$n = 384$$

### 3.5 Data Collection

The study relied mostly on primary data which was collected using structured questionnaires. Women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County are the respondents for the study. Questionnaires were the instruments of data collection for this study. The content

of the questionnaires was divided into three sections which covered the following areas: demographic data, challenges facing micro and small women entrepreneurs and the factors influencing micro and small enterprises in Nakuru County. The respondents consisted of the owners and managers of women enterprises in Nakuru County Kenya. Questionnaires were administered by the researcher during working hours of the week. Drop and pick later method was applied where respondents had no time to respond immediately. Secondary data was gathered from library material, journals, reports, media publications and various Internet search engines covering the women entrepreneurship in Kenya.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data collected in the research was edited, coded, classified on the basis of similarity and then tabulated. To permit quantitative analysis, data was converted into numerical codes representing attributes or measurement of variables. Descriptive statistics technique was chosen because it makes it possible to show the distribution or the count of individual scores in the population for a specific variable. The Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process and analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages and frequency tables were used to summarize and relate variables which were attained from the administered questionnaires. The findings from the study were presented using tables.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected from the Respondent and discusses the research findings on the Challenges of strategy implementation faced by micro and small women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya. All completed questionnaires were edited for accuracy, uniformity, consistency and completeness. The response rate of 70% (225) respondents was achieved from the total target of 384 Micro and Small Women Enterprises operating in Nakuru County-Kenya. This good response was attributed to the fact that quite a good number of the respondents were given questionnaires in advance and knowledgeable to fill the questionnaires. Summaries of data findings together with their possible interpretations were presented by use of mean, percentages, frequencies, variances, standard deviation and tables.

### **4.2 Academic Level of Respondents**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate their level of education and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 Academic Level of Respondents**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
O-Level	80	36%
A-Level	70	31%
Diploma	35	15%
Degree	20	9%
Postgraduate	20	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in Table 4.1; 36% of the respondents interviewed were O-level holders. 31% were A-level holders. 15% were Diploma holders. 9% were Degree holders and 9% were postgraduate holders.

#### **4.3 Period of Operation**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate their level of education and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.2:

**Table 4.2 Period of Operation**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Below 1 year	4	2%
2-5 years	75	33%
6-10 years	61	27%
11-15 year	42	18%
16-19 years	38	16%
20 and above years	5	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100</b>



As shown in Table 4.2; majority (33%) of the respondents had operated their small businesses for a period of 2-5 years. 27% had operated their small business for a period of 6-10 years. 18% of them had operated their businesses for a period of 11-15 years. 16% of them had operated for a period of 16-19. While 2% of them had operated their businesses for a period less than 1 and above 20years.

#### **4.4 Understanding of Strategy**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate whether they understood the meaning of strategy in the context of their businesses and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.3:

**Table 4.3 Understanding of Strategy**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Yes</b>	210	93%
<b>No</b>	15	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100</b>

Majority (93%) of the respondents clearly indicated that they understood the meaning of strategy to their business as they applied various strategies to survive in the dynamic business environment. While 7% of them indicated that they did not understand the meaning of strategy due to inadequate information and knowledge.

#### **4.5 Challenges When Implementing Strategy**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate whether they faced challenges during strategy implementation and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.4

**Table 4.4 Challenges When Implementing Strategy**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	194	86%
No	31	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in Table 4.4; 86% of the respondents indicated that they faced various challenges during strategy implementation. While 14% of them indicated that they did not face challenges.

#### **4.6 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate factors that influenced strategy implementation practice in their businesses and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.5:

Some of the factors revealed by the study and influenced strategy implementation include; staff turnover, rigid organization structure, and inadequate company resources to support strategy implementation activities, lack of innovation culture, poor staff motivation, and bureaucratic leadership styles among others.

Most of the respondents indicated that the organizational structure was too bureaucratic. Most of decisions could not be made at the departmental/branch level. They were made at head office level. This delayed the decision making process and at times led to impractical and uninformed decisions which could not be applied on the ground. This had an effect on staff motivation due to the lack of their involvement in the decision making process.

There is a move to move decision making for routine decisions back to the branches/ departments in order to shorten the decision making process. Organizational structure and strategy have to be linked for the success of the any firm. The firm's strategies need to be aligned to its structure. Leadership is the process of influencing an organization in its efforts towards achievement of its long term goal (Johnson and Scholes, 2002).

It was also revealed that the leadership style which was practiced by managers of SME's was autocratic. This is whereby the decisions are made unilaterally by the top management with minimal consultations with their juniors. As a result staff did not feel as if they were part of the decisions which were being made. This has led to some of the strategies not being realized as the staff do not understand or see the value of implementing the strategies. This is supported by Thompson et al (2006) who argue that effective strategy implementation, the top leadership of an organization has to constantly monitor progress, anticipate obstacles and take corrective actions where necessary, in order to ensure that the organization is agile to changing market conditions and competitive forces. Therefore it is evident that lack of strategic leadership within the organization will result to poor performance of the firm in the market. Strategic leadership is regarded as one of the key drivers of strategy implementation (Leslie & Lloyd, 2009).

The study revealed that inadequate financial resources was another factor influenced effective strategy implementation. It is also evident as indicated by John & Richard (2011) that adequate budgetary allocation promotes successful strategy implementation. This is helpful especially in ensuring that activities of the company are carried out efficiently so as to strengthen the implementation of strategy. If the strategy being

formulated exceeds those limitations, the need for additional sources of capital becomes itself a strategic issue and an iterative process of considering strategic alternatives begins. Finance must be prepared to offer reasonable assumptions for these alternatives based on prior understanding and investigation of potential sources of capital (Andrew and DuBrin, 2009).

The study showed that organizational culture was a major hindrance in the implementation of the SME's strategy. They still work in accordance with their job descriptions but without taking personal responsibility for their actions. This has been a big challenge for the management to change as it involves a total change in the mindset of the employees. Also as pointed out by Thompson et al (2006), corporate culture entail the character of a company's internal work climate and personality, as shaped by its core values, beliefs, principles, traditions, ingrained behaviors and style of operating as strength, culture can facilitate communication, decision making, and control, and can create cooperation and commitment.

The study revealed that employees working at SME's were unsatisfied by compensation criteria that was used by the management. There was no clear compensation policy in place to reward good performing workers. Most of middle level and lower level employees did not understand that criteria that was used to promote workers. A high rate of staff turnover was highlighted as a challenge to SME's. Competent, experienced and skilled members of staff are crucial to the strategy implementation process.

It was revealed by the study that Information Communication Technology was a practice that was not adopted by SME's due to challenges of employee training and inadequate

support from the management. Majority of the employees clearly indicated that they were not conversant with new technological advancements of the in the changing business environment. Also as proposed by Boyle (2007), effective strategy implementation is determined by the extent of ICT adoption in the subsystem of the organization. Innovation, research and development activities of an organization are influenced by ICT adoption. It must be realized that globalization is not limited to the financial markets, but encompasses the whole range of social, political, economic and cultural phenomena.

Further, political, economic, social, technological, ecological and legal policies were identified to be factors that influenced effective strategy implementation of SME's in Kenya. This is supported by Boyle (2007), who argues that external factors are uncontrollable variables that influence strategy implementation exercise of competitive firms in the global market.

**Table 4.5 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation**

<b>Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>To a Very Large Extent [5]</b>	<b>To a Large Extent [4]</b>	<b>To a moderate Extent [3]</b>	<b>To a small Extent [2]</b>	<b>Not At all [1]</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>S.E</b>
To what extent do your skills help you to implement strategies formulated?	384	<b>51.2</b>	2.4	17.1	26.8	2.4	100	3.56	.154
To what extent does your leadership skills help you to implement strategies formulated?	384	0.00	<b>41.5</b>	29.3	0.00	29.3	100	3.52	.121
To what extent does your organizational structure help you to implement strategies formulated?	384	<b>39.0</b>	2.4	22.0	2.4	34.1	100	3.50	.148
To what extent do employees you use help you to implement strategies formulated?	384	0.00	<b>41.0</b>	32.1	2.4	24.4	100	3.46	.129
To what extent does the system of your organization help you to implement strategies formulated?	384	0.00	<b>39.0</b>	34.1	2.4	24.4	100	3.42	.110
To what extent does financial resources help you to implement strategies formulated?	384	<b>80.1</b>	19.9	0.00	0.00	0.00	100	3.41	.162
To what extent do you apply strategies in your business?	384	10.2	<b>50.3</b>	22.0	15.4	4.9	100	3.39	.162
To what extent do you receive trainings to implement strategies formulated?	384	4.9	4.9	22.0	24.4	<b>43.9</b>	100	3.29	.162
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>								

As indicated in Table 4.5; 56% of the respondents indicated that they used their skills to implement various strategies for survival of their businesses in the turbulent business environment with a mean of 3.56. Technical skills and interpersonal skills helped them to implement strategies successfully. 42% of them indicated that their leadership skills were key to successful strategy implementation with a mean of 3.52. Ability to influence and manage employees to achieve their goals enabled them to implement strategies. 39% of them clearly indicated that the structure of their business enabled them to implement strategies since they took little time to make decision with a mean of 3.50.

41% of them also indicated that employee skills and innate qualities enabled them to execute strategies with a mean of 3.46. Employees who were flexible to changes and creative to develop new products and services added a competitive edge to their businesses. 39% of them indicated that the systems that they used contributed to strategy implementation with a mean of 3.42. Customer database provided an opportunity to identify the needs and wants of customers from time to time. 80% of them indicated that financial capability was the fundamental pillar of strategy implementation with a mean of 3.41. Without financial support they were hindered by internal and external challenges. 50% of them indicated that they applied strategies in their business despite the challenges experienced with a mean of 3.39. 44% of them indicated that with inadequate training they were challenged to implement strategies with a mean of 3.29.

#### **4.7 Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate the challenges of strategy implementation in their businesses and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6 Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

<b>Challenges of strategy implementation</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>To a Very Large Extent [5]</b>	<b>To a Large Extent [4]</b>	<b>To a moderate Extent [3]</b>	<b>To a small Extent [2]</b>	<b>Not At all [1]</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>S.E</b>
To what extent do political factors hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>70.0</b>	30.3	0.00	0.00	0.00	100	3.46	.162
To what extent do Social factors hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>50.4</b>	30.0	10.0	5.4	5.9	100	3.36	.162
To what extent do cultural factors hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>40.5</b>	22.0	56.1	22.0	0.00	100	3.24	.153
To what extent do economic factors hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>56.1</b>	22.0	0.00	22.0	0.00	100	3.21	.144
To what extent do technological factors hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>65.3</b>	25.0	10.00	0.00	0.00	100	3.18	.138
To what extent do ecological factors hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>56.1</b>	22.0	0.00	22.0	0.00	100	3.00	.132
To what extent does the inadequate of financial resources hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>61.0</b>	22.0	4.9	12.2	0.00	100	2.80	.131
To what extent does inadequate training hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>68.3</b>	22.0	4.0	6.2	0.00	100	2.80	.127
To what extent does competitions hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>52.4</b>	28.0	11.0	9.2	0.00	100	2.56	.121
To what extent does poor leadership	384	<b>40.4</b>	30.2	10.4	20.2	0.00	100	2.48	.117



<b>Challenges of strategy implementation</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>To a Very Large Extent [5]</b>	<b>To a Large Extent [4]</b>	<b>To a moderate Extent [3]</b>	<b>To a small Extent [2]</b>	<b>Not At all [1]</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>S.E</b>
hinder your strategy implementation?									
To what extent does management style hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>81.3</b>	10.0	9.0	12.2	0.00	100	2.48	.115
To what extent does poor communication hinder your strategy implementation?	384	<b>50.5</b>	44.6	5.0	00.0	0.00	100	2.33	.112
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>								

As shown in Table 4.6; 70% of the respondents indicated that political environment was unpredictable and it contributed indirectly in strategy implementation with a mean of 3.46. Insecurity and post-election violence were among factors that contributed to poor strategy implementation among micro and small women enterprises in Kenya. 50% of them indicated that social factors like consumer preferences on products and services, lifestyles, education, religion and income level influenced strategy implementation with a mean of 3.36. 40% of them indicated that cultural factors like norms and beliefs influenced strategy implementation practices with a mean of 3.24. Since most of the consumers had diverse cultural values, their consumption patterns were influenced based on their lifestyles.

56% of them indicated that the economic trends in general like the Gross Domestic Product had a great impact on strategy implementation exercise with a mean of 3.21. Recession, inflation and economic booms were trends that influenced the performance of micro and small women enterprises. 65% of them indicated that technology was a factor

that influenced strategy implementation with a mean of 3.18. Innovation and creativity among workers was enhanced by technology used to produce market and distribute products. Efficiency and effectiveness were end results of micro and small women enterprises if they integrated technology in their business practices. 56% of them indicated that ecological factors influenced strategy implementation among their businesses with a mean of 3.00. Production of eco-friendly products and biodegradable packaging materials were aspects that influenced strategy implementation. Environmental regulation was constraints to micro and small women enterprises in Kenya.

61% of them clearly indicated that financial resources were key constraints to effective strategy implementation among women enterprises with a mean of 2.80. 68% of them indicated that inadequate training resulted to poor strategy implementation with a mean of 2.80. With scanty information of the external environment and knowledge, most women entrepreneurs were not in a position to manage their small businesses effectively. 52% of them indicated that stiff competition from well established firms posed a major threat to micro and small enterprises in Kenya with a mean of 2.56.

Competitive products produced at lower costs affected women enterprises. 40% of them indicated that poor leadership and poor management styles were factor that influenced strategy implementation with a mean of 2.48. Lack of democratic style of management and employee empowerment influenced strategy. Leaders who used autocratic styles of management were unlikely to succeed in strategy implementation. 50% of them indicated that poor communication factor influenced strategy implementation with a mean of 2.33.

Lack of feedback, employee appraisal, and isolation during decision making process were factors that influenced strategy execution.

#### **4.8 Measures Taken to Mitigate Challenges of strategy Implementation**

The respondents of the study were asked to indicate the measures that would be taken to mitigate challenges of strategy implementation in their businesses and the following were the findings as shown in Table 4.7:

**Table 4.7 Measures Taken To Mitigate Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

Measures taken to mitigate Challenges of strategy implementation	N	To a Very Large Extent [5]	To a Large Extent [4]	To a moderate Extent [3]	To a small Extent [2]	Not At all [1]	Total (%)	Mean Score	S.E
Analyzing legal policies that influence business practices	384	36.6	39.0	4.9	7.3	12.2	100	3.88	.137
Adoption of appropriate leadership styles to manage people	384	53.7	34.1	7.3	0.00	4.9	100	3.76	.137
Employing qualified and competent staff	384	53.4	40.1	7.3	0.00	0.00	100	3.76	.137
Seeking Financial support from micro finance institutions and banks	384	70.0	22.0	18.0	0.00	0.00	100	3.68	.120
Attending entrepreneurship training on financial literacy	384	45.4	35.4	20.0	0.00	0.00	100	3.68	.120
Attending ICT trainings	384	61.0	4.9	22.0	12.2	0.00	100	3.45	118
Assessing competition before new product development	384	42.2	18.4	20.3	10.1	0.00	100	3.33	116
Looking for new markets for their produce	384	72.1	28.2	0.00	0.00	0.00	100	3.30	114
Forming strategic partnerships with Government export agencies	384	90.1	10.1	0.00	0.00	0.00	100	3.32	114
Analyzing the political environment before investing in a business	384	43.9	4.9	22.0	24.4	4.9	100	3.28	108
Analyzing social-cultural aspects that influence consumer behaviours	384	43.9	24.4	22.0	4.9	4.9	100	3.17	107
<b>Total</b>	384								

As shown in Table 4.7; 39% of the respondents indicated that analyzing legal policies like registration requirements of micro businesses and operational conditions before formulation and implementation of strategy would overcome challenges experienced during the implementation process with a mean of 3.88. 54% of them said that application of appropriate leadership styles by managers will minimize resistance to change from employees' hence effective strategy implementation with a mean of 3.76. 53% of them indicated that employing competent and qualified staff will minimize strategy implementation challenges with a mean of 3.76. 70% indicated that seeking financial support from micro finance institutions would contribute to effective strategy implementation with a mean of 3.68.

45% of them indicated that attending entrepreneurial trainings will equip women entrepreneurs with necessary skills to analyze the internal and external environments to mitigate challenges of strategy implementation with a mean of 3.68. 61% of them indicated that attending ICT trainings would give them a chance to market their products and services through online hence globalization with a mean of 3.45. 42% indicated that by assessing competition in the industry was one approach that would mitigate strategy implementation challenge with a mean of 3.33. Effective competitor analysis would result to strategic positioning of their products locally and internationally.

72% of them indicated that looking for new markets locally and internationally was another way of achieving their strategies despite the dynamic business environment with a mean of 3.30. 90% of them indicated that forming strategic partnerships with Government export agencies was a method of promoting micro and small women enterprises locally and internationally with a mean of 3.32. 44% of them indicated that

analyzing the political environment like security was another factor that influenced strategy implementation. Finally, 44% of them said that demographic aspects of the population like education, religion, income levels, lifestyles and beliefs were determinants of strategy implementation since they determined consumption patterns with a mean of 3.17.

#### **4.9 Discussion of Research findings**

The study established that leadership was a challenge to effective strategy implementation among women entrepreneurs in Kenya. Therefore, it is evident from literature that lack of leadership and specifically strategic leadership by the top management of the organization, effective strategy implementation will be a nightmare. Several identifiable actions characterize strategic leadership that positively contributes to effective strategy implementation include; determining strategic direction, establishing balanced organizational controls, effectively managing the organization's resource portfolio, sustaining an effective organizational culture and emphasizing ethical practices. Strategic leaders have a role to play in each of the above-mentioned strategic leadership actions. In turn, each of these strategic leadership actions positively contributes to effective strategy implementation (Peter and Kumssa, 2006).

The study identified that the structure of the organization hindered effective strategy implementation. This is supported by Johnson and Scholes (2002) who argue that local and global organization structure consists of activities such as task allocation, coordination and supervision, directed towards the achievement of organizational objectives. It simply means the formal framework by which job tasks are divided,

grouped, and coordinated to achieve its intended goal. The structures facilitate or constrain how the process and relationships work, hence affecting strategy implementation process. Changes in strategy implementation often require changes in the way an organization is structured for two major reasons (Johnson and Scholes, 2002).

The study found that financial resource management was a key challenge to strategy implementation. According to Peter and Kumssa (2006), without resource commitment, strategy implementation remains a key challenge to modern competitive firms. These resources include physical, financial, technological and human resources. It is not possible to implement strategies that demand more resources than the organization can benefit. Too little resources will tend to suppress the ability of the organization to carry out the strategic plan implementation (Johnson and Scholes, 2002).

Organization culture was identified as a challenge to effective strategy implementation. Therefore, this is supported by Pearce and Robinson (2002) who argue that culture affects not only the way managers behave within an organization but also the decisions they make about the organization's relationships with the external environment and its strategy. Corporate culture refers to the atmosphere of a company's internal work climate and personality, as shaped by its core values, beliefs, principles, traditions, ingrained behaviors and style of operating. Employees with a common culture are likely to work towards a common objective thus effective strategy implementation (Thompson & Strickland, 2003).

Finally the study established that employee skills influenced strategy implementation in the Ministry. This is in line with Chava and Nachmian (1996) who argue that investments in training and development of employees can make them more productive or more effective in their jobs, directly contributing to the bottom line. The purpose of training and management development programs is to improve employee capabilities and organizational capabilities to adapt in dynamic business environments. When the organization invests in improving the knowledge and skills of its employees, the investment is returned in the form of more productive and effective employees. Top management plays an ever increasing role to ensure that a knowledge-friendly culture is built in the organization.



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

## **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the major findings of this study. This study sought to find out the Challenges of strategy implementation faced by micro and small women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya. In addition, this chapter provides a direction for further studies and also gives some recommendations for policy making by the relevant authorities.

## **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

This study sought to establish the Challenges of strategy implementation faced by micro and small women entrepreneurs in Nakuru County, Kenya. Strategy implementation is a crucial stage in any organization that is characterized by several obstacles from the internal and external environment. To achieve objectives like profit maximization, offsetting costs of operations, business survival and gaining competitive advantage in the market, micro and small women enterprises should implement competitive strategies to survive in the changing business environment.

### **5.2.1 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation**

The study established that majority of the respondents agreed that quite a number of challenges were experienced during strategy implementation process and were from the internal and external environment. It was also evident that employee skills contributed to effective strategy implementation among the micro and small women enterprises.

The study established that leadership skills were key to successful strategy implementation. It was also established that structure of the organization facilitated effective strategy implementation due to quick decision making. It was also established that the system used by micro and small women enterprises resulted to effective strategy implementation. Further, financial capability was one of the key aspects that respondents indicated contributed to effective strategy implementation. It was finally established that lack of proper trainings among the micro and small women enterprises was a major challenge to effective strategy implementation.

### **5.2.2 Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

The study established that quite a number of challenges contributed to poor strategy implementation among the micro and small women enterprises. Some of the challenges range from the internal and external environments and include; political like insecurity, social-cultural factors like consumer preferences on products and services, lifestyles, education, religion, beliefs, norms and income level of the population, economic trends like recession, inflation and economic booms were trends that influenced the performance of micro and small women enterprises.

Ecological factors influenced strategy implementation among their businesses. Environmental regulation and production of green products were major constraints to micro and small women enterprises in Kenya. It was established that financial resources, inadequate training, competition, poor leadership, management styles and poor communication were key constraints to effective strategy implementation among women enterprise.

### **5.2.3 Measures Taken to Mitigate Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

It was established that analyzing legal policies like registration requirements of micro businesses and operational conditions before formulation and implementation of strategy would overcome challenges experienced during the implementation process. It was also established that appropriate leadership styles by managers will minimize resistance to change from employees' hence effective strategy implementation.

The study found out that employing competent and qualified staff will minimize strategy implementation challenges. In addition financial support from micro finance institutions would contribute to effective strategy implementation. The study established that attending entrepreneurial trainings by women entrepreneurs will equip women entrepreneurs with necessary skills to analyze the internal and external environments to mitigate challenges of strategy implementation.

It was also established that attending ICT trainings by women entrepreneurs would give them a chance to market their products and services through online hence globalization. It was also evident that assessing competition in the industry was one approach that would mitigate strategy implementation challenge. Finally, the study identified that looking for new markets locally and internationally was another way of achieving their strategies despite the dynamic business environment. Also forming strategic partnerships with Government export agencies was a method of promoting micro and small women enterprises locally and internationally. It was established that analyzing the political environment like security was another factor that influenced strategy implementation.

### **5.3 Conclusions of the Study**

The findings indicate that women entrepreneurs in Kenya endeavor to achieve some competitive advantage over their competitors in such a stormy environment by striving to implements strategies formulated. It was concluded that for the success of women entrepreneurs in the turbulent and competitive business environment, proper training to employees, adequate financial support, ICT integration in the system, and democratic style of management was key to effective strategy implementation for both small and large organizations locally and internationally.

Despite the challenges from the internal and external environments, organizations need to scan the environment, formulate strategies, implement and evaluate in order to survive. For the best practices in the small and medium enterprises, organizations need to benchmark their best practices with global firms for strategic advantages locally and internationally.

Review of the vision and mission of the firm, competitor analysis surveys, and benchmarks with global Micro and small businesses, environmental scanning are aspects that need to be understood by competitive women enterprise in Kenya. Understanding the political, economic, social and technological factors that influenced customer services are among the areas micro and small women enterprises need to identify opportunities and threats for effective positioning.

Also internal and external factors that hinder effective strategy implementation should be identified by the management and appropriate measures developed to minimize resistance to changes thus promote creativity and innovation among workers.

It can be concluded that micro and small women enterprises would only realize competitive edge in the dynamic business environment if they embrace Total Quality Management practices. Total Quality Management (TQM) theory holds that “performance is enhanced by aligning organizational goals with the changing business environment through the vision, mission and objectives and strategies. Organizations should respond strategically to external pressures proactively rather than reactively.

#### **5.4 Recommendations from the Study**

The study established that micro and small women enterprises did not put more emphasize on training employees for effective strategy implementation. Therefore, the study recommends that managers should be accountable to organizational development. Periodical trainings should be carried out to enable employees execute their roles effectively. Managers should make delegation a culture and engage workers in key decision making to minimize resistance during strategy implementation.

It was established that top managers did not commit adequate resource to support activities of strategy implementation due to lack of financial management information. Therefore, the study recommends that managers to expand financial budgets to marketing activities, training of employees, diversification into new areas of operation and investing in marketing research of their products in the market by seeking funds from microfinance institutions and commercial banks.

It was established that information communication technology was not embraced by the women enterprises due to lack of information on with benefits associated. Therefore, the study recommends that since high costs of automating the system and training workers

were associated, manager of enterprises should form strategic partnerships with key ICT organization to enhance their service delivery to customers through the Government supported initiatives. Training all employees on ICT skills should be mandatory to everybody in the women SME's sector thus minimal resistance to new changes. It is through ICT the women SME's would penetrate global markets.

The study also recommends that the Government should intervene in the SME's sector to empower entrepreneurs with necessary ICT skills through vocational training centres established country wide. The Government should regulate commercial banks based on interest rates charges to encourage investment of SME's. Further it should invest in research and development by marketing SME's products and services in the global market.

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

Getting accurate information from the respondents was one of the major challenges since some of the workers were threatened that the information may be used against them by the management in the terms of performance hence insecurity of their jobs. The challenge was minimized by assuring the respondents of confidentiality of the information they gave. Most of the respondents were unwilling to give the information due to negative perception of the study. The challenge was minimized by giving incentives to respondents in order to get positive response and accurate information. The staffs of the women enterprises were usually very busy and therefore they required a lot of time in order to fill in the questionnaires. The challenge was overcome by giving the respondents the questionnaires at the right time for appropriate responses. Inadequate financial

resources were a major challenge of the study due to travelling and accommodation expenses by the researcher.

### **5.6 Areas Suggested for Further Research**

Future studies should explore the reasons behind the Challenges of strategy implementation faced by micro and small women entrepreneurs in Kenya. Factors Affecting the Implementation of Strategy among SME's should be investigated. Researchers should go ahead and establish the reasons behind the failure of strategy implementation hence establish long term solutions. Future studies will minimize the challenges experienced by the women SME's in managing changing customer needs hence competitive edge. Future studies should try to investigate the relationship between strategy implementation and performance of SME's in Kenya.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**  
**MBA PROGRAMME**

Telephone: 020-2059162  
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P.O. Box 30197  
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 2014

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter ... GITAU MARTANN WANJUH

Registration No. DBI/15578/2012

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

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

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

Thank you.

  
**PATRICK NYABUTO**  
**MBA ADMINISTRATOR**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**  




**Part B: Factors influencing Strategy Implementation**

5. To what extent do you manage to implement strategies to boost your business? (Very great extent = 5 points, Great extent = 4, Moderate extent = 3, Small extent = 2, No extent =1)

<b>Factors</b>	<b>[5]</b>	<b>[4]</b>	<b>[3]</b>	<b>[2]</b>	<b>[1]</b>
a) To what extent do you apply strategies in your business?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b) To what extent do you receive trainings to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c) To what extent does your skills help you to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d) To what extent does your leadership skills help you to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e) To what extent does your organizational structure help you to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f) To what extent do employees you use help you to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g) To what extent does the system of your organization help you to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h) To what extent does financial resources help you to implement strategies formulated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]



**PART C: Challenges of strategy implementation**

**6. To what extent do the following challenges influence strategy implementation?**

(Very great extent = 5 points, Great extent = 4, Moderate extent = 3, Small extent = 2, No extent =1)

<b>Factors</b>	<b>[5]</b>	<b>[4]</b>	<b>[3]</b>	<b>[2]</b>	<b>[1]</b>
<b>a)</b> To what extent does the inadequate of financial resources hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>b)</b> To what extent does inadequate training hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>c)</b> To what extent does competitions hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>d)</b> To what extent does poor leadership hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>e)</b> To what extent does management style hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>f)</b> To what extent does poor communication hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>g)</b> To what extent does political factors hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>h)</b> To what extent does Social factors hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>i)</b> To what extent cultural factors hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
<b>j)</b> To what extent does economic factors hinder your strategy implementation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

- k) To what extent does technological factors hinder your strategy implementation?      [ ]      [ ]      [ ]      [ ]      [ ]
- l) To what extent does ecological factors hinder your strategy implementation?      [ ]      [ ]      [ ]      [ ]      [ ]

**PART D: Measures taken to mitigate Challenges of strategy implementation**

7. What are the measures taken by the women entrepreneurs to address the challenges faced during Strategy Implementation process in Nakuru County.

<b>Measures</b>	<b>[5]</b>	<b>[4]</b>	<b>[3]</b>	<b>[2]</b>	<b>[1]</b>
Seeking Financial support from micro finance institutions and banks	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Attending entrepreneurship training on financial literacy	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Attending ICT trainings	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Assessing competition before new product development	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Looking for new markets for their produce	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Forming strategic partnerships with Government export agencies	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Analyzing the political environment before investing in a business	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Analyzing social-cultural aspects that influence consumer behaviours	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Analyzing legal policies that influence business practices	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Adoption of appropriate leadership styles to manage people	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

### APPENDIX III: TARGET AREAS AND POPULATION OF THE STUDY

No.	Towns	No. of Women Enterprises
1	Nakuru	30,148
2	Naivasha	16,290
3	Molo	5,234
4	Gilgil	3,128
5	Njoro	2,982
6	Mai Mahiu	1,422
7	Subukia	1,117
8	Dundori	1,009
9	Salgaa	987
10	Mau Narok	902
11	Bahati	852
12	Rongai	731
13	Olenguruone	690
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>65,492</b>

Source: Nakuru County (2013).

#### APPENDIX IV: SAMPLE POPULATION

No.	Towns	No. of women Enterprises	Proportion	Sample population
1	Nakuru	30,148	$30148/65492*100=46\%$	$46\% * 384=176$
2	Naivasha	16,290	$16,290/65492*100=24\%$	$24\% * 384=91$
3	Molo	5,234	$5,234/65492*100=8\%$	$8\% * 384 =31$
4	Gilgil	3,128	$3,128/65492*100=5\%$	$5\% * 384 =19$
5	Njoro	2,982	$2,982/65492*100=5\%$	$5\% * 384 =19$
6	Mai Mahiu	1,422	$1,422/65492*100=2\%$	$2\% * 384 =8$
7	Subukia	1,117	$1,117/65492*100=2\%$	$2\% * 384 =8$
8	Dundori	1,009	$1,009/65492*100=2\%$	$2\% * 384 =8$
9	Salгаа	987	$987/65492*100=1.5\%$	$1.5\% * 384 =6$
10	Mau Narok	902	$902/65492*100=1.3\%$	$1.3\% * 384 =5$
11	Bahati	852	$852/65492*100=1.2\%$	$1.2\% * 384 =5$
12	Rongai	731	$731/65492*100=1\%$	$1\% * 384 = 4$
13	Olenguruone	690	$690/65492*100=1\%$	$1\% * 384 = 4$
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>65,492</b>		<b>384</b>

Source: Nakuru County (2013).

