

**THE CHALLENGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT THE
MINISTRY OF EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS, COMMERCE AND
TOURISM: STATE DEPARTMENT OF EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS
IN KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and it has never been presented for award of any degree in any other institution of higher learning.

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

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DEDICATION

To my husband Danis, who made my further education become a reality life. To my daughter (Lynette) and son (Desmond) for their perseverance to stay at home most of the time without their mother during the time of my pursuit for further education.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CP & MU	:	Central Planning & Monitoring Unit
CS	:	Cabinet Secretary
EAC	:	East African Community
F/Y	:	Financial Year
IS	:	Integration Secretary
ISO	:	International Standards Operating
KESSP	:	Kenya South Sudan Support Programme
MTP	:	Medium Term Plan
PS	:	Principal Secretary
SADC	:	South African Development Community
SDEAA	:	State Department of East African Affairs
SWOT	:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TPM	:	Total Productive Maintenance

ABSTRACT

Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism: State Department of East African Affairs has strategic plans in place which cover a period of 5 years each. The strategic plan focused on in this study is the one for the period 2008 – 2012. Organisations that have strategies in place face challenges both from within and others from the outside environment. SDEAA as an institution has not been exempted from those challenges and some of these challenges have been encountered in the course of service delivery to the public. This research sought to identify and document the challenges that SDEAA has faced in implementation of its strategies during the period 2008 – 2012 and to determine the measures that can be put in place to ensure that the challenges faced are addressed. Data to enable realisation of the objective of this study was collected using an interview guide and the research method adopted was case study. Judgmental method was used in identification of who to be interviewed. Top management which comprises heads of departments were interviewed to get data for completion of this research. Analysis of collected data was done by content data analysis. Interviews carried out revealed that strategic management practices are found in SDEAA and strategic management processes do exist as there is setting of objectives and targets, formulating strategies, implementing the strategies and they have a control and monitoring unit which supervises the whole process of strategic management. The findings of this study confirmed that actually there exist challenges during the implementation process at SDEAA. Among the challenges include financial constraints, frequent changes in the structure, inadequate staff, policies and procedures and decision making procedures at the EAC Secretariat which take long for a consensus to be reached, political environment and non-cooperativeness of some partner states. In conclusion, this study recommends the need for further studies in the strategic management process so that studies can be done which touch on all the stages of the strategic management process from formulation to monitoring and evaluation so that the findings are consolidated together instead of focusing on only one aspect of the whole process. However, there are implications that this study imposes on policy, theory and practice in strategic management. Policy makers who are the government officials should ensure that policy making process includes all staff in their departments/ministries. In practice all stakeholders should be involved in the strategic management process.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Pearce and Robinson (2005) looks at organisations as open systems that impact and are impacted upon by external conditions which are beyond their control. Organisations depend on the environment for survival by attracting resources; and eventually giving back to the environment (Ansoff and McDonnell, 1990). According to Thompson and Strickland (2007) an organisation can fit in its environment by setting up strategic plans that balance its internal strengths and weaknesses with its external opportunities and threats by identification and execution of the organisation's vision, mission and objectives while matching its capabilities with the demands of its environment. Strategic management process includes analysis of the environment prior to formulation, implementation and control of the strategy. Strategic plans however, only work well when they are properly implemented. During strategy implementation broad plans are converted into concrete, incremental actions and results of specific units and individuals. This process however, seems to be the most difficult one in strategic management process and thus faces challenges that hamper its success.

Strategic management has many theories that guide it. This particular study was directed by the McKinsey 7s Framework Theory and the Institutional Theory. The McKinsey's (1982) 7s model is a diagnostic management tool which is used to test the strength of the strategic degree of fit between a firm's current and proposed strategies. It is a management tool designed to facilitate the process of strategy implementation within the context of organisational change.

Institutional Theory on the other hand looks at the growing evidence that institutional considerations are likely to be particularly relevant and stresses that institutions are the rules of the game in a society or more formally are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social or economical. Institutional change shapes the way societies evolve through time and hence is the key to understanding change (North, 1991).

The Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism: State Department of East African Affairs' (SDEAA's) mandate and core functions are derived from the Presidential Circular No. 1 of May 2008 which charges the department with formulation of policy on East African Community (EAC); coordination of government participation in the EAC meetings and institution; coordination of the implementation of the EAC regional programmes; implementation of the East African Treaty; and promotion and fast track East African Integration.

For SDEAA to achieve its mandate it has strategies in place and like any other organisation it faces challenges that hinder it to effectively implement its strategies. Some of the challenges that hinder strategy implementation at SDEAA are lack of sufficient resources, political interferences and organisational structure among others.

1.1.1 Concept of Strategy Implementation

In a world of stiffening competition, business strategy is more crucial than ever, yet most organisations struggle in this area; not with formulating strategy but with executing it, or putting their strategy into action. Owing to execution failures, companies realize just a fraction of the financial performance promised in their strategic plans (Kaplan and Norton, 2008). The two authors describe strategy implementation as a multistage system that enables organisations gain measurable benefits from their carefully formulated business strategy by developing an effective strategy with tools such as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, vision formulation, and strategic change agendas; plan execution of the strategy through portfolios of strategic initiatives linked to strategy maps and balanced scorecards; put strategy into action by integrating operational tools such as process dashboards, rolling forecasts, and activity-based costing; and test and update strategy using carefully designed management meetings to review operational and strategic data.

Strategy is as an integrated and coordinated set of commitments and actions designed to exploit core competencies and gain a competitive advantage (Michael, Ireland and Robert, 2013). When choosing a strategy, firms make choices among competing alternatives as the pathway for deciding how they will pursue strategic competitiveness. Therefore, the chosen strategy indicates what the firm will do as well as what the firm will not do. A firm has a competitive advantage when it implements a strategy that creates superior value for customers and that its competitors are unable to duplicate or find too costly to imitate.

1.1.2 Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism

Following the re-organisation of the Government in 2013; former Ministries of Trade, East African Community and Tourism were put together to form the Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism, which was split into two departments; department of East African Affairs and department of Commerce and Tourism.

The Ministry derives its mandate from the Executive Order No. 2/2013 of May 2013 on the organisation of Government of the Republic of Kenya. It is mandated to: co-ordinate and implement regional integration initiatives; coordinate implementation of the EAC regional programmes and projects; implementation of the Treaty for the establishment for the EAC; Kenya South Sudan Support Programme (KESSP); National Trade Policy Development; Fair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection; Promotion of Retail and Wholesale Trade and Markets; Business Premises Dispute Resolution mechanism; promotion of small medium enterprises and other interest group through training, counseling, consultancy and research; promotion of experts; tourism policy management; tourism development and tourism promotion.

1.1.3 State Department of East African Affairs in Kenya

The current State Department of East African Affairs (SDEAA) has been in existence for more than a century known by different names, under different Ministries as a department and also as a standalone Ministry.

SDEAA's mandate and core functions are derived from the Presidential Circular No. 1 of May 2008 which charges the department with formulation of policy on East African Community (EAC); coordination of government participation in the EAC meetings and institution; coordination of the implementation of the EAC regional programmes; implementation of the East African Treaty; and promotion and fast track East African Integration. For SDEAA to achieve its mandate it has put strategies in place and like any other organisation it faces challenges that hinder their implementation.

Ministries/Departments play a vital role in any given government and are assigned specific areas of scope to deal with. In this regard the then, SDEAA formulated its first Strategic Plan (2007 – 2012) which guided the department's functions in 2007-2008 before review and alignment to the Kenya's Vision 2030 Medium Term Plan (MTP) to allow for the assessment of the essential planning inputs and take them into consideration during strategy formulation.

The strategies of the department focus on the core mandate of coordinating the Integration Process for the Partner States within the East African region. Assessment was conducted with regard to the appropriate fundamental statements, after which a strategic direction was adopted. This study endeavoured to carry out an in-depth analysis of MEAC's Strategic Plan 2008-2012 to determine whether the set out objectives and goals were achieved and if not what in particular hindered the effective implementation of the formulated strategies.

1.2 Research Problem

A meaningful strategy will not take an organisation anywhere except if it is properly implemented. As a matter of fact, many organisational failures occur due to lack of proper implementation. Hrebiniak (2006) looks at some of the challenges that affect strategy implementation as: implementation takes a longer period of time; planning and execution are interdependent; execution involves many people; and managing change is difficult.

SDEAA has strategies in place which enables it to achieve its mandate. To implement the strategies formulated there are requirements which need to be put in place to enable it execute the strategies successfully. However, despite the fact that all these are in place the department has not been able to implement appropriately the strategies that it intends to implement so as to drive the department towards its alignment to Vision 2030.

Several studies have been carried-out on: strategy implementation; factors affecting effective strategy implementation; and reasons why the formulated strategies are not achieved. Ziqubu (2007) carried out a study of strategy implementation challenges facing the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Jiang and Victoria (2013) studied issues of strategy implementation in internationalisation of higher education and found out that most issues are rooted internally. Kim and Mauborgne (2005), in their study on reasons why strategy implementation fail, found out that failure to overcome organisational hurdles, failure to understand the customer, inability to predict environmental reaction, over-estimation of resource competence, failure to coordinate, failure to obtain senior management commitment, failure to obtain employee

commitment, under-estimation of time requirements, failure to follow the plan, failure to manage change and poor communication leads to failure in strategy implementation. Dlodlo (2011) carried out a study on factors affecting strategy implementation and the role of middle managers in implementation where he found out that middle level managers play a critical role in facilitating the effective implementation of strategy and it also shows that the execution process is fraught with numerous challenges.

On the local scene however, several studies have also been carried-out. Komingoi (2011) carried out a study on the challenges of strategy implementation in the Ministry of Public Works, he concluded that inability to match resources, reward systems and policies and procedures with strategic plan hindered effective achievement of the goals. Agumbi (2013) and Kagori (2010) point out that organisation culture; leadership style; human resource; competition; inadequate monitoring and evaluation; and organisation structures impeded successful strategy implementation.

Mburugu (2010) also studied the challenges of strategy implementation at the Christian Health Association of Kenya. On the basis of the aforementioned, no study has ever been carried out on the subject of strategy implementation and its challenges and thus this study will seek to look at: What are the challenges encountered in the implementation of strategies at SDEAA?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this project were to:-

- i) Establish and document challenges SDEAA has been experiencing during the implementation of its Strategies; and
- ii) Determine the measures to deal with the challenges of Strategy Implementation at SDEAA.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of this study adds value to Mckinsey 7s Model and Institutional theories which were adopted as the guiding principles in the development of this study. The value of the study was in form of addition, subtraction or comments to the variables in the Mckinsey 7s Model by authentication from the findings of this study. Under institutional theory value was be witnessed through measuring institutional variables in other than simplistic and normal categories which are its characteristic.

Policy makers in the Civil Service stand a chance to benefit from the findings of this study by providing insight into the challenges faced during the implementation of formulated strategies, create ease of access to information that they may be required in future and impact in indirect ways, including shaping policy debate and mediating policy makers dialogue with other stakeholders

Consultants in their endeavour for further information and findings in the field of strategic management may use the outcome of this research in designing monitoring and control systems that mitigate challenges in strategy formulation and implementation. Scholars and students in the field of strategic management have an experience of having a subject area for suggestions and further research contributions towards strategic management processes in the public sector and other areas within the economy of Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Effective implementation of any strategy occurs when there exists a good link between the strategies being implemented and the action plans put in place. Strategy implementation is an interactive process of working on strategies, policies, programs and action plans that allows a firm to utilise its resources to take advantage of opportunities in the competitive environment (Harrington, 2006). This chapter will review literature in context with the study being undertaken by looking at theoretical foundation; strategy implementation process; challenges of strategy implementation; and measures to deal with challenges in strategy implementation.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

According to Pearce & Robinson (2005) strategy implementation is one of the components of strategic management. Strategic management refers to a set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of the long-term plans designed to achieve organisational objectives. It intends to achieve a transition from strategic planning to strategic management by incorporating adopted strategies throughout relevant systems which are affected by both external and internal environment. This requires a strategic fit between the organisation and the environmental variables. In light of the above, two theories were applicable in this study; Mckinsey 7s Model and Institutional theories.

Mckinsey 7s Model is a brain child of Peter and Waterman (1982). This model suggests that after the strategy has been designed, the managers should focus on six variables to ensure effective execution. These variables include: structure, systems, strategy, skills, style and staff which form a synergy (shared values). This model is good for a thorough discussion around an organisation's activities, infrastructure and interactions. The Mckinsey 7s model is categorized into structure and process elements. Structure defines the configuration of a company showing relationships that exist between the various parts of an organisation. On the other hand, process elements include leadership, culture, resources and other administrative procedures. According to Pearce & Robinson (2005), organisational elements provide fundamental long-term means for the strategy to be successfully implemented. These elements are structures, leadership, culture and rewards. These elements ensure that strategy allows the organisation's day-to-day life and thereby leads to successful implementation.

Successful strategy implementation depends largely on the firm's organisational structure. Organisational structure plays a critical role in defining how people relate to each other and in influencing the momentum of change. It is through structure that strategists attempt to position the firm so that execution of strategy is done in a manner that balances internal efficiency and overall effectiveness (Galbraith and Nathanson, 1978). Structure of a company should be compatible with the chosen strategy. If they are incompatible, adjustments will be necessary either for the structure or the strategy itself. Chandler (1962) pointed out this important relationship by arguing that structure follows strategy.

Development of systems and procedures is also an integral part of the problem of coordinating efforts to achieve key strategic purposes (Reed and Buckley, 1988). The integrating potential of computer systems provides opportunities for managing chains of activities more effectively and coping with linkage problems (Saunders, 1994). Organisational culture often unstated is a set of important assumptions shared within the organisation. Culture not only affects the way managers behave within an organisation but also the decisions they make about the organisation's relationships with its environment and its strategy (Lorsch, MacCarthy, Minichiello and Curran, 1988).

Aosa (1992) stated that it is important that the culture of a company be compatible with the strategy being implemented. Despande and Parasuraman (1986) argued that companies can run into trouble when they fail to take into account their corporate cultures as they make changes into their strategy. Managerial behaviour arising out of corporate culture can either facilitate or obstruct the smooth implementation of strategy.

A major role of the leadership within an organisation is to create an appropriate strategy-culture fit (Kazmi, 2002). The role of appropriate leadership in strategic success is highly significant. It has been observed that leadership plays a critical role in the success and failure of an enterprise (Kazmi, 2002). Leadership has been considered to be one of the most important elements affecting organisational performance. For the manager, leadership is the focus of activity through which the goals and objectives of the organisations are accomplished.

Oliver (1997) and Scott (2001) noted that much of the emphasis in the institutional theory; literature has been on institutional construction and on convergent change processes. Oliver (1997) identified three major sources of pressure on institutionalised norms or practices: functional, political, and social sources. Functional pressures for deinstitutionalisation are those that arise from perceived problems in performance levels or the perceived utility associated with institutionalised practices. These pressures may be tied to broad environmental changes, such as intensified competition for resources. Oliver (1997) argued that normative rationality may constrain organisational adaptation and the acquisition of resources. Broad environmental changes, including institutional change, create unique challenges for the maintenance of organisational integrity.

Lounsbury (2002), in his work highlights a related shift in institutional logics driven by environmental change in the United States finance industry. Deregulation fundamentally altered the prevailing regulatory logic in this industry and, this led to an increasing emphasis on a market logic that provided new opportunities for finance professionals to promote their interests.

2.3 Concept of Strategy

Michael, Duane and Robert (2013) describe a strategy as an integrated and coordinated set of commitments and actions designed to exploit core competencies and gain a competitive advantage. When choosing a strategy, firms make choices among competing alternatives as the pathway for deciding how they will pursue strategic competitiveness. Therefore, the chosen strategy indicates what the firm will do as well as what the firm will not do.

According to Thomson & Strikland (2007) strategy is the pattern of moves and managerial approaches used to achieve organisational objectives and mission. Johnson et. al. (2008) comprehensively defined strategy as the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations. A firm is said to have a sustained advantage when it is implementing a value creating strategy not simultaneously being implemented by any current or potential competitors and when other firms are unable to duplicate the benefits of the strategy (Barney and Hesterly, 2008).

Mintzberg et. al. (1985) however, looks at strategy as a plan, ploy, pattern, position and perspective. They stated that a plan provides a roadmap by which the firm intends to achieve its goals. A ploy refers to how a firm will manoeuvre its resources to attain its objectives and patters referring to decisions and actions that drive the firm forward over time towards its goal. The position a firm occupies gives it advantage in the access to the markets, clients and services and lastly a perspective which refers to the future of the firm and the understanding of its internal strengths and weaknesses to be able to steer towards the intended future state. With regard to the above concepts about strategy it can be concluded that strategy is about manipulation of the resources and competencies that an organisation has within its reach so as to compete advantageously in the business environment which is so competitive for its sustainability.

2.4 Strategy Implementation Process

Great strategies are worth nothing if they cannot be implemented (Okumus and Roper, 1999). It can by extension be said that, it is better to implement effectively a second grade strategy than to ruin a first class strategy by ineffective implementation. The performance of a firm is a function of how effective it is in converting a plan into action and executing it. Thus implementation is the key to performance, given an appropriate strategy. Hambrick and Cannella (1989) stated that without successful implementation, a strategy is but a fantasy. In many companies the main focus in regard to strategy is put on the formulation of a new strategy. However, a good formulated strategy does not automatically mean that the company achieves the objectives as set in the strategy. To ensure achievement of organisational objectives, the formulated strategy needs to be implemented at all the organisation levels.

According to Steiner (1997), the implementation process covers the entire managerial activities including such matters as motivation, compensation, management appraisal and control processes. Pearce & Robinson (2008) says, to effectively direct and control the use of the firm's resources; mechanisms such as organisational structure, information systems, leadership styles, assignment of key managers, budgeting, rewards and control systems which are essential strategy implementation ingredients must be considered. Ansoff & Macdonell (1990) asserts strategy is a very powerful tool for coping with the conditions of change that surrounds firms today and thus strategies are not valuable, if they are developed and not implemented properly.

Higgins (2005) pointed out that almost all the management functions: planning, controlling, organising, motivating, leading, directing, integrating, communicating and innovation are at some degree applied in the implementation process. In his opinion much of strategy execution revolves around aligning key organisational functions/factors with the chosen strategy.

Implementing a strategy means putting the strategy to action (Hill and Jones, 2009). Different researchers have in the past decades identified the need for more research in the area of strategy implementation (Higgins, 2005; Beer and Eisenstat, 2000; Al-Ghamdi, 1998; Hambrick et al, 1989). Even though most executives understand that careful implementation of strategy is crucial for success, many companies still fail to successfully implement the formulated strategy. Different articles on strategy implementation therefore, focus on the activities and factors that should make strategy execution successful (Neilson, Martine and Powers, 2008; Reed and Buckley, 1988; Alexander, 1985) or to warn for the common reasons for failure of the implementation (Beer et al, 2000; Al-Ghamdi, 1998).

It has been proven that strategy implementation is the critical link between formulation of strategies and superior organisational performance. Nutt (1999) studies on strategic decisions in organisations located in the USA and Canada failed to attain their initial objectives mainly because of the problems during strategy implementation process. Even though the stream of research which deals with strategic decision making is well developed, there are only a few empirical studies on strategy implementation.

According to Thomson and Strickland (2001), the main tasks of strategy implementation are building a capable organisation, allocating ample resources to strategy critical activities, establishing supportive policies and procedures and instituting best practises and mechanisms for continuous improvement and must above all rely on middle and lower level managers to get things done. In strategy implementation process strategies and policies are put into action through the development of programs, budgets and procedures. This process might involve changes within the overall culture, structure and management system of the entire organisation.

Many a times, strategy implementation is carried out by middle and lower level managers with top management's review. Sometimes it is referred to as operational planning as it involves day-to-day decisions in resource allocation. Implementation of strategy is a job for the whole management team such as the chief executive officer, heads of major organisational units and also top management has to orchestrate major implementation initiatives. The administrative tasks of implementing and executing the strategy involves a process of moving incrementally and deliberately to create a variety of fits that bring an organisations conduct or its internal operations into good alignment with strategy (internet, August 2014).

McKinsey (1982) felt that frequently occurring changes in the business environment, means that strategies should be reshaped more often as compared to the past, making the alignment process a bigger challenge. Executives must therefore align the cross functional organisational factors; structure, system and processes, leadership style, staff, resources and shared values with the new strategy so that the strategy opted can succeed.

2.5 Challenges of Strategy Implementation

Good strategies fail and when that happens, it is often harder to pinpoint the reasons. Yet despite the obvious importance of good planning and execution, relatively few management thinkers have focused on what kinds of processes and leadership are best for turning a strategy into results.

Strategy implementation problems can arise because of the shift in responsibility, especially if strategy formulation decisions come as a surprise to middle and lower-level managers. Therefore, it is essential to involve divisional and functional managers in strategy (David, 2011). When strategy fails to achieve its expected results, it is often because the strategy execution was flawed. The failure to execute is a major concern of the executives because it limits organisational growth, adaptability and competitiveness. Executives are not judged by the brilliance of their strategy, but by their ability to implement it. Without coherent, aligned implementation even the most superior strategy is useless (Pryor, tombs and Humphrey, 2007).

The formal strategic planning started in 1950's in the USA. The early pioneers of formal strategic management were Drucker (1954) and Chandler (1962) who looked into the relationship between structure and strategy. Changes in strategy often require changes in the way an organisation is structured because structure largely dictates how objectives and policies will be established and structure dictates how resources will be allocated. Structure should be designed to facilitate the strategic pursuit of a firm and, therefore, follow strategy.

When a firm changes its strategy, the existing organisational structure may become ineffective. For example, new strategies to reduce payroll costs may require a change in span of control (David, 2011).

Waweru (2011) in his study identified resistance to change and high rate of change in the business environment as stumbling blocks for effective strategy implementation. The responsibility of managing strategic change is bestowed upon managers and the mechanisms they use in their organisation to re-design and re-engineer day to day routines, cultural aspects of the organisation and overcoming political blockages to change. Kaplan & Norton (2008) indicate that change should be mobilized through the executive leadership of an organisation in order to effectively implement strategies. Many at times, there can be sound reasons for resistance. Sometimes a strategy might make sense at the highest level, but its full impact on the whole organisation has not been fully considered.

Cooke (2000) adds that another significant contributor for failure of strategy implementation program is the organisation's inability to obviate resistance to change. Resistance to change takes a number of forms this may include: reluctance of individuals to change roles, inability to create dissatisfaction with the present situation and inability to change organisational roles and culture.

Bamber et al (1999), conducted a study aimed at discovering the factors affecting the successful implementation of Total Productive Maintenance (TPM). He outlined the various reasons for failure as lack of commitment of top management, deployment of inexperienced consultants, lack of structure, failure to implement change on the shop floor, lack of education and training for employees, lack of employee involvement, and poor structure to support the TPM initiatives.

On the other hand, a firm having incentives based on achieving quantitative targets has the ability to focus the implementers on measurable objectives. The awareness that the implementers will be rewarded based on the achievement of the set quantitative targets becomes a key motivator and hence, helps in the achievement of the intended strategy. This explains why this variable is also a predictor of the level of implementation achieved (Waweru, 2011).

According to Kottolli (2006) cultural factors do hinder execution of strategies, companies sometimes try to apply a tried-and-true strategy without realizing that they are operating in markets that require a different approach. Even such a world-beater at execution as Wal-Mart, for instance, sometimes in its business life made some missteps because of culture. One example is when Wal-Mart first moved in to Brazil, it tried to lay down terms with suppliers in the same way it does in the United States where it carried huge weight in the market. Suppliers simply refused to play, and the company was forced to reevaluate its strategy.

Janis Foreman and Paul Argenti (2005) observed that at other times, plans fail simply because they are not communicated to all the persons involved. Managers who are supposed to be delivering performance to meet the strategic goals of the company do not have a clear idea of what the strategy is all about. They do not realize what needs to be done to fulfil the strategic plan. They are unaware of their role in the strategic game plan. They cannot describe the company's strategy in one simple sentence, which means that the strategy is not understood by the people responsible for acting on it.

Muthuiya (2004) argues that communication in most organisations is largely in written form and is usually top-down. Communication should be two way so that it can provide information to improve understanding of responsibilities and also motivate staff. It should not be a one off event announcing the launch of the strategy.

Hewlett (1999) suggests that most strategic plans are hurdled by financial constraints during the time of their implementation. It is important particularly at the business level to integrate non-financial measures such as market share or market growth in the budget, so that one can better assess the extent to which improved competitive strength is being achieved as well as the extent to which deviations are due to changes in the business attractiveness. According to Sterling (2003), unanticipated market changes affect strategy implementation. Strategies often fail because the market conditions they were intended to exploit change before the strategy takes hold. Products life cycles are shorter; disruptive technologies emerge with greater frequency, and financial markets can be fickle; and many markets are experiencing rapid discontinuous change.

Karanja (2004) looked at decision making in the public sector and concluded that it is a political process because the sector is constituted politically. The political wave of the day determines how the strategies will be implemented depending on the interests they have towards the strategies to be implemented.

2.6 Measures to deal with challenges in Strategy Implementation

As a first step in ensuring the successful implementation of the firm's strategy, firm leaders must take early and aggressive initiatives to institutionalise the strategy within the firm. The top management and other key leaders must demonstrate visible ownership of the firm's strategy, communicating clearly with stakeholders about the details, value and importance of the strategy to the firm. Members of management should also seek input and support from key opinion leaders and request their help in championing the strategy to other partners within the firm. Over time, such actions will assist in generating buy-in among partners, leading to greater overall support for the strategies and the changes inherent in its execution.

According to Hildebrandt (2009), to facilitate more effective execution, firm leaders should take the following critical actions:- To effectively support the implementation process, an organisation's leaders should ensure that they have the right leadership, governance and operational structure required to support effective implementation; existence of the right personnel serving in the right places; very often, firm leaders demonstrate the behaviour of dynamic and influential visionaries.

However, such leaders may lack an attention to detail and the organisational skills required to effectively drive day to day action. By assessing whether the firm has the right people in the right places, a firm can better ensure that visionary firm leaders are appropriately supported by individuals who can get the daily actions of implementation done.

Martin Corboy and Diarmid Corrbui (2007) asserts that a fundamental and critical step in moving forward with strategy execution involves planning. Implementation planning entails developing a detailed outline of the specific actions and sub-actions, responsibilities, deadlines, measurement tools, and follow-ups required to achieve each of the firm's identified strategies. Implementation plans often take the form of detailed charts which map the course of action for firm leaders over a period of time. Achieving a level of detail in these plans provides for a tangible and measurable guide by which both the firm and its leaders can assess progress in implementation over time.

Successful implementation of a firm's strategy also requires alignment of the firm's compensation system, performance management approach, and other related practice group and client team management structures and processes with the firm's chosen strategy. The most common (and perhaps critical) example of a structure necessitating alignment is that of compensation. Very often firms adopt strategic plans which require collaboration and teamwork in order to achieve success, yet they fail to modify the compensation system to reward such activities (Trevor, 2008).

Majed Al-Mashari and Mohamed Zairi (1999) in their study recognised that failure to align management processes and structures with a newly adopted strategy frequently results in a stall of implementation efforts, as members of the firm. Direct individual behaviours fail to align with the firm's historic rewards system, and not the newly stated strategy. So management processes and structures should be aligned to enable smooth strategy implementation.

According to Hrebiniak (2006), a key component of success in implementation involves holding firm leaders and partners accountable for actively driving and supporting execution. Whether individuals are assigned discrete implementation activities or asked to participate in ongoing efforts to support strategic initiatives, measurement and follow up is required. What actions have been taken to expand work for existing clients, and how much new business has been generated from these efforts? By following up and assessing progress in implementation at regular intervals, firms can more effectively determine whether current implementation activities and assignments are working, or whether a different approach is needed. Such assessments are crucial in ensuring that action is taken and progress is made on strategy execution.

As an evolving and recurring process, effective strategy creation and implementation necessitates ongoing review of the firm's chosen direction. The strategic planning process entails periodically evaluating the firm's strategy in light of internal and external changes and incorporating lessons learned into the implementation plan. This key component of strategy implementation ensures that the firm's strategy remains dynamic and drives ongoing competitiveness in the market

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter looked at the research design, data collection and data analysis aspects which enabled completion of the study. It proposed the best research design to be employed, the tools and techniques to be used in data collection and finally, how the collected data was analysed to generate a report and present the findings.

3.2 Research Design

Research design adopted in this study was case study. According to (Kothari 2004) case study is an intensive investigation of the particular unit under consideration; it provides in-depth collection of data/information. This design supports the use of content analysis that has more material details with systematic characteristics leading to trends being achieved; and is specific to understanding of situations/phenomenon and not generalisation of ideas. This helped in bringing out the challenges of strategy implementation at SDEAA in a clear perspective. Babbie (2001) says content analysis can be defined as the study of recorded human communications. It is essentially a coding operation, with coding being the process of transforming raw data into a standardised form. This was applicable as the data collected from interaction with the respondents being guided by the questions in the interview guide were able to give answers; their answers were coded into a standardised form and conclusions drawn from it.

According to Yin (2003), the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena because this case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as organisational and managerial processes. Case studies seem to be the preferred strategy when “how or why” questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life content. This was applicable in this study since the study endeavored to find out the challenges affecting strategy implementation, how these challenges came about and why the challenges in implementation when the strategies were properly formulated.

3.3 Data Collection

Yin (2003) suggests that there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interview, direct observation participant observation and physical artefacts. Data collection for this study was done by both primary and secondary data collection methods. Secondary data collection through thorough scrutiny of the previous strategic plan which is an archival evidence to verify whether the earlier strategies were met and if not met, what were the impeding factors? Primary data information was collected by means of an interview guide where senior officers were interviewed to enable collection of qualitative data. The interview guide consisted of structured open-ended questions. Top management officers in SDEAA were subjected to the same questions by face-to-face and telephone approach where further clarifications were sought. Cooper and Schindler (2003) say that structured interviews provides for the benefit of being able to observe and record non-verbal behaviour.

The key informants interviewed comprised of seven (7) senior officers in SDEAA who form part of the policy makers, formulators and implementers in the strategic management process. These senior officers were personnel in Job Groups 'Q' to 'S' who fall under the leadership cadre. The mode of selection of those to be interviewed was judgemental as it based on a few individuals who participate in strategic management process.

3.4 Data Analysis

According to Hartley (2004) data collection and analysis are developed together in an iterative process, which is a strength as it allows for theory development which is grounded in empirical evidence. The data collected for this study is organised around key central questions and it was examined to see how it fits or fails to fit the expected categories which were in the interview guide.

Yin (2003) maintains that data analysis consists of examining and categorising, both qualitative and quantitative evidence to address the initial propositions of the study. This was applicable to this study in order to achieve the objective of this study and answer to the research question. This research combined both qualitative and quantitative evidence by analysing the answers given by the respondents and comparing them.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to collect data, analyse and interpret it so as to address the research objectives. The research objectives to be addressed were to: establish and document strategy implementation challenges and determine measures to deal with the established challenges in strategy implementation at SDEAA.

4.2 General Overview

The method of data collection for this research was by aid of an interview guide where the respondents were interviewed on a personal basis to collect relevant details and sometimes through telephone through use of structured open-ended questions. The interviewee engaged senior officers in SDEAA who fall under the top management category and on most occasions considered as the ones who have the brains to come up with objectives, goals, strategies and even how to accomplish those strategies by cascading information to the junior officers who are the actual implementers of the strategies.

Use of secondary data was also applied to support the facts given by the respondents. The secondary tool for collecting data was SDEAA Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012 and other policy documents that were within the reach of the researcher. The data collected was organised around the key central questions and data was examined and categorised according to the questions in the interview guide as illustrated in the discussion session.

During data analysis it was evident that all the respondents were able to tell what the concept of strategy implementation is in their own words and terms but they actually meant the same thing. They were aware of SDEAA mission and vision and they able to describe their roles in the strategy implementation process. All the interviewed officers had other officers working under them whom the strategic implementation process activities were delegated to in accomplishing of the set objectives and targets.

The interviewees acknowledged that there were specific strategy implementation practices that SDEAA carries out to enable success in strategy implementation. Most of the respondents acknowledged that strategies at SDEAA are reviewed on quarterly basis and when need arises which warrants review to be done.

Strategy formulation process was not a new terminology to the respondents as they were the team that comes up with strategies which are later adopted by the entire department. All of them were fully involved in strategy formulation process when it is a time to do so and they were very much familiar with the process. They were of the opinion that although they were the ones who formulated strategies they still were not able to fully implement the strategies they came up with and thus they accepted that their exist challenges during the implementation process which were beyond their control and the circumstances forces them to adhere to the impeters or learn to deal with them.

Communication and feedback to the respondents was well done in SDEAA through formal means of communication and that at times non-conformities do occur and whenever they occur they are sorted out through reviewing and further consultations. They acknowledged existence of feedback mechanism and accepted that strategy implementation generally was a success except for a few challenges that affect it. Even though this study was not about the whole process of strategic management, the respondents still went further in mentioning on what should be done in monitoring and evaluation of the implemented strategies.

4.3 Strategy Implementation Practices at SDEAA

For any organisation to implement its set strategies there must be strategy implementation practices in place. Strategic practices enable an organisation together with its employees to accomplish strategic management process. Since SDEAA has a strategic plan which covers the period 2008 - 2012 in place it is evident that there exist strategy implementation practices in place. For the strategy implementation process to be accomplished strategy implementation practices must be in existence. For this objective to be achieved, the researcher studied the strategy implementation practices that exist at SDEAA to enable accomplishment of this study. From the data collected it indicates that SDEAA has a vision and mission which spearheads its mandate of formulating of policy on EAC; coordination of government participation in the EAC meetings and institutions; coordination of the implementation of EAC regional programmes; and promotion and fast tracking of East African Integration process.

According to the Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012 the following strategic objectives exist: to strengthen SDEAA's participation in the full implementation of the East African Customs Union by 2010; to strengthen participation in the establishment of the EA Common Market by 2012; to strengthen participation in laying the foundation for the EA Monetary Union by 2010; to strengthen participation in laying the foundation for the EA Political Federation by 2012; to strengthen participation in the EA Cooperation on political federation, defence and security matters over the planned period; to strengthen participation in cross-cutting EA and regional integration measures over the planned period.

In addition to the above the Strategic Plan (2008 – 2012) also has strategically objected to strengthen participation in sectoral EA integration measures over the planned period; to promote the facilitation, positioning and monitoring of EAC organs and institutions over the planned period; to promote the facilitation, positioning and monitoring of EAC organs and institutions; to strengthen the institutional capacity; and to promote the beneficial participation of Kenyans in the EAC milestones.

The fact that SDEAA has strategic objectives it attributes to a conclusion that strategy implementation practises are available and some of them are mentioned in the objectives above. All interviewees felt that there is sufficient communication between the partner states and the secretariat on how to implement the objectives set to enable their enactment and there are qualified staff to carry out the implementation process though their numbers are demanding.

All interviewees were aware of the existence of development of performance contracts/targets annually and they all sign performance contracts which enable them the work under their guidance to see whether they are able to meet the targets set in the contracts. Central Planning and Project Monitoring Unit (CPPMU) in SDEAA supervises the performance contracting activities. The set targets and signed contracts enable the officers to work harder to achieve the set objectives. A larger percent of respondents acknowledges that the targets, objectives are reviewed every quarter and when need arises to ensure that where the set targets are not being met they can be re-examined to suit the current situations as at then.

At SDEAA their exist departmental committees which have been tasked to deal with specific issues so as to spearhead implementation of the department's targets this is done so that departments deal with activities which fall within their specialisation jurisdiction to avoid duplication of activities. Through holding of consultative meetings, ensuring that financial resources are availed, having qualified staff to represent SDEAA in partner states meetings is a practice of strategy which confirms that SDEAA has strategic practices in place. By establishment of regional integration processes SDEAA has to come up with strategies to accomplish this process and in this regard fulfilling the strategic practices for the entire institution to enable accomplishment of the strategy implementation process.

The way communication strategy has been laid out, existence of International Standard Operating (ISO) procedures and code of regulations which are used on a daily basis enables the department to meet its objectives and goals of its existence and in line with government structures. This is a true measure of strategy implementation practices at SDEAA.

4.4 Challenges of Strategy Implementation at SDEAA

Implementation of strategies is more difficult than formulating it as witnessed from the literature review carried out. This is because during the implementation a number of factors have to be dealt with and it may not be easy to predict or have control over them. It is not also possible to identify all the factors that may adversely affect the implementation of strategies because organisations are different and what may seem to be a problem in one organisation may not be a problem in another.

A comparison on the challenges in the guiding theories in the study reveals that most of the challenges are the same in organisations but in this case there are some additions of the challenges that hinder strategy implementation. This research sought to establish strategy implementation challenges experienced by SDEAA personnel. Most respondents were of the opinion that the following are the impeters of strategy implementation.

4.4.1 Political Interference

The respondents felt that politics or rather government of the day influences the way things are done in government departments and institutions. Any sitting government has its priorities to fulfil and to accomplish those priorities they will have to strategise on how to achieve them.

However, if it happens that another government comes in before the earlier one had not completed its projects, then the projects of the earlier government will be stalled and the new government embarks on its mission which may not necessarily be the same as the previous government's one. This means that the strategies which were being pursued will cease and new ones are adopted.

Top management in government institutions are appointees of the government and thus governance at a particular time must come up with objectives and goals that suit the priorities of the sitting government if not then their survival is not sustained. This affects strategy implementation especially long term strategies.

Decision making in the public sector is a political process because the sector is constituted politically. The political wave of the day determines how the strategies will be formulated and implemented depending on the interests they have towards the strategies.

4.4.2 Financial Constraints

All government ministries/departments are funded by the exchequer. SDEAA budget has been solely funded from the exchequer and there are no alternative sources of funding. The department's expenditure has been recurrent and thus SDEAA has been experiencing shortages of funds for development. In its strategies to develop focal points for integration purposes in Namanga, Busia and Isebania have been challenged due to inadequate funds.

Allocation of government resources are not done at ago even though they are budgeted, sometimes funds are allocated at a time when the institution is not able to utilise them for instance in the Financial Year (F/Y) 2007/2008, funds for the National Consultative Process of the East African Political Federation were released in the fourth quarter thereby occasioning low absorption of the funding by the end of the financial year. In the same year austerity measures requested by Treasury to cushion the country after the 2008 post election violence necessitated a budget cut by Kshs.60m, this affected the expenditure of the department. Austerity measures have affected most government institutions when eventualities happen whose magnitude is far beyond what the government can contain.

With regard to the above therefore it is important to integrate non-financial measures such as market share or market growth in the budget, so that one can better assess the extent to which improved competitive strength is being achieved as well as the extent to which deviations are due to changes in the business attractiveness.

4.4.3 Human Resource

The current organisational structure and staffing levels of the department is illustrated in appendix III. A rapid analysis reflects 8% approved posts against a 6% in-post provision for the directorate of EAC. This is in total disregard of the directorate being the technical unit tasked with handling of EAC affairs. The directorate handles technical matters of the EAC and this directorate supposedly is required to have the largest number of personnel so that it is possible for the mandate to be fulfilled.

All the staff attached to the EAC directorate are from different cadres who were working at different capacities deployed from other departments. This has proved to be a challenge since, these officers never grew up in International and Diplomacy line to accumulate sufficient experience to enable them work efficiently. Mostly they are either guessing on what to do or they have to consult so much to make decisions and thus consuming a lot of time to take necessary actions (Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012).

In the EAC directorate there are only senior officers from job group 'P' and above; below them there are no junior officers, this forces the senior officers to make use of support staff who are not qualified to do the kind of work they are given. Further more in future there is a threat to succession when the senior officers retire.

The 1% approved posts and 0.5% in-post provision under the public relations section is in total disregard of the people-centred operational principle of the EAC-Treaty. This obvious inadequacy is worsened by the limitation to public relations as the only medium of the department's outreach efforts. Public relations department is mandated to carryout sensitization exercises so as to enlighten the entire nation and even the world about the activities of EAC and how Kenya as a country is likely to benefit from the integration process. This department is overwhelmed by the activities that it is supposed to carryout and hardly do they meet their targets. Conclusively the department's organisational structure and staffing level portray 91% approved posts and 93.5% in-post staff with no direct technical input to the EAC agenda this has hampered implementation of most strategies which require much of a technical aspect (Appendix IV).

Frequent transfers of Principal Secretary's (PS's) who are the owners of the whole process of strategy implementation jeopardises the whole process. It has been proved that PS's do not serve for a long period in one Ministry/Department, and mostly you will find that when one PS comes in they want strategies done their way or they even quash the whole process which was began by their predecessor and the whole process begins again.

Mass transfers of officers from support departments has proved to be a challenge because when officers who know what is supposed to be done are transferred, the ones who come in have to go through a learning process and before they acquaint themselves with how to work efficiently and effectively they face a lot of hurdles which hamper their performance and work continuity.

4.4.4 Communication and Feedback

Communication and feedback is critical in order to check the progress and look for new directions in the implementation process. All respondents affirmed that communication of the strategic objectives at SDEAA is done through circulars which align the department's objectives with the entire government objectives. The respondents noted that there are good channels of communication in place which constitute convening of meetings, internal memos, letters, circulars, policy documents, team building sessions and sensitisation exercises. However, they interviewees felt that sensitisation programmes on all the activities of EAC be intensified so as to enable every Kenyan aware of the EAC and how they can benefit from the community. The respondents also suggested that there should be EAC regional centres in every region so that the citizens may experience the feel and touch of the integration process.

The interviewees felt that feedback is adequate and it is conveyed vide circulars, memos, departmental meetings held when need arises and suggestion boxes. However, the only challenge that arises is that the implementers are not empowered to raise queries and come up with solutions to deal with the challenges when they arise.

4.4.5 Responsibility and Accountability

It was observed that the overall responsibility of implementing the strategic activities initially fall on the PS, who by provisions of the performance contracting guidelines assumes the targets drawn thereof in signing the Performance Contract (PC) with the Cabinet Secretary (CS), Chief of Staff and Head of the Public Service.

This responsibility is shared with the CS who countersigns the PC on account of providing the requisite political and overall leadership of the Ministry. In-house cascading of the PC process recognises the respective heads of departments who signs their respective contracts with the PS and shoulders the responsibility of steering and mobilising resources. Any implementing agency outside SDEAA is coordinated by the responsible departments, under the overall guidance of the PS.

With regard to the above it is evident that the junior officers are not involved in the signing of contracts and formulation of the strategies. Thus they are only utilised during the implementation process which becomes difficult because they are not aware of the genesis of the whole matter.

4.4.6 Decision Making Process at East African Community Secretariat

It is observed from the collected data that East African Community (EAC) Secretariat has influence on the strategy implementation and formulation process in its partner states. Decisions at the EAC Secretariat influence the way strategies are to be made so as to enable the integration process. These decisions are made through sectoral councils held by representatives from all Partner States. The decision making process has to go through various stages which take a lot of time because there must be a consensus from all the partner states for the decisions to be accepted before they are cascaded to relevant authorities in the partner states. This has been a challenge to implementation of strategies because some decisions at SDEAA have to wait for the overall decisions to be made at the Secretariat for concurrence.

4.4.7 Changes in Departmental Structure

Almost all respondents agreed that SDEAA has been in existence but under different Ministries using different names. East African countries have a regional cooperation history that has been in existence for more than a century (Strategic Plan, 2008 – 2012). This included a customs union operated between Kenya and Uganda as 1900, later joined by Tanganyika in 1922. The East African High Commission was in existence between 1948 and 1961. This was followed by the East African Common Services Organization from 1961 – 1967.

The former East African Community was formed in 1967 but collapsed in 1977. Generally the people of East Africa have enjoyed a system of co-operation within the region from the 1900's right into the 1970's before the collapse of the former EAC. As a result, the interests of Partner States were placed under a Permanent Tripartite Commission. The Kenyan interests lay under the custody of Ministry of Planning and National Development, from 1993 to 1997. Thereafter, the functions of the former EAC were transferred to the office of the President, as the department of East African and Regional Co-operation which also handled issues of COMESA until 1998.

In 1998, the government established a Ministry of East African Regional Cooperation mandated with coordinating the affairs of the EAC, COMESA and IGAD. In 1999, the Ministry's functions were transferred to a department within the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry.

Subsequently, in February 2003, East African and Regional Cooperation was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until July, 2004, when the Ministry of East African and Regional Co-operation was re-established (Strategic Plan, 2008 – 2012). In 2006, following an EAC Summit decision, a fully fledged Ministry responsible for East African Community was established. This state of affairs has been enjoyed until March, 2013 when the ministry was merged with the Ministry of Trade and Ministry of Tourism to form Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism (Executive Order, 2013).

It is with regard to the above history that the respondents were concerned that when this department is put under a Ministry enjoined with other departments the structure becomes tall, thus inhibiting effective coordination of operational activities and similarly inhibits responsibility and accountability. The tall structure similarly enhances bureaucracy and this slows the processes and procedures.

SDEAA has been experiencing slow pace in strategy implementation because the three departments of the Ministry depend upon one CS who has to accent and approve everything that has to be done in the entire Ministry; before any proposal reaches the CS it has to go through the PS and the Integration Secretary (IS). The chain is long and before the communication comes back for dispatch it has to go through the same channel which is long and on most occasions it is overtaken by events. This equally affects the strategy implementation process.

There also exist inter-departmental wars and politics this has been evidenced as given by the respondents that during the last financial year the department of Commerce and Tourism who were like the headquarters of the Ministry were so much against any activities being proposed by SDEAA without considering the strategic objectives in place to be accomplished by SDEAA.

4.4.8 Policies and Procedures

Most respondents mentioned policies and procedures as key aspects in strategy implementation. They acknowledged that existing policies and procedures were not supportive to strategy implementation. They indicated that policies and procedures should be supportive of the broader government policies so as to form a synergy since all departments are working towards making the government a success. They felt that policies are empowerment tools that simplify decision making; they guide the decision and action of managers and their subordinates in strategy implementation; and they provide standard operating procedures. The major aspects of policies that pose challenges in strategy implementation were leadership policies since each leader comes with his leadership style without caring where the department is destined to reach.

In line with its mandate, SDEAA is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the EAC Treaty. Under the treaty Partner States plan and direct their policies and resources with a view of creating conditions favourable for the development and achievement of objectives of the community and implementation of the provisions of the Treaty. Partner States are to abstain from any measures likely to jeopardise the achievement of EAC objectives or implementation of the Treaty.

However, some Partner States have been jeopardising the achievement of the objectives or implementation of the Treaty. When this happens it makes the other Partner States to lack behind in the implementation of their strategies towards the achievement of the same, Kenya included.

4.5 Discussion

From the literature review carried out in this research, other scholars looked at the strategic management and strategy implementation concepts/challenges in different organisations and countries. The findings of this study whose main objectives were to establish and document challenges in strategy implementation at SDEAA and determine whether there exist strategy implementation practices at SDEAA also revealed that organisations face more less the same kind of challenges and if there exist differences then it is slight.

This study was elaborately guided by two theories: the McKinsey 7s Framework Theory and the Institutional Theory. The McKinsey's (1982) 7s model is a diagnostic management tool which is used to test the strength of the strategic degree of fit between a firm's current and proposed strategies. It is a management tool designed to facilitate the process of strategy implementation within the context of organisational change. This theory suggests that after the strategy has been designed, the managers should focus on six variables to ensure effective execution.

These variables include: structure, systems, strategy, skills, style and staff which form a synergy (shared values). In establishment of the challenges that affect strategy implementation the variable in Mckinsey theory came out clearly as the factors that affect strategy implementation at SDEAA this included: political interference, financial constraints, human resource, responsibility and accountability, changes in departmental structure policies and procedures.

According to North (1991) Institutional theory looks at the growing evidence that institutional considerations are likely to be particularly relevant and stresses that institutions are the rules of the game in a society or more formally are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. This study has proved that actually institutions experience humanly devised constraints that shape interaction. The findings reveal that communication and feedback were seen to pose a challenge to strategy implementation if they do not exist.

When strategies and other processes are not communicated and feedback is not sought then any organisation cannot move forward. When the lower cadre staff are not involved in the process of strategy formulation and they find themselves only engaged in the implementation process it becomes difficult for them to comprehend what to do. In any institution like SDEAA it is comprised of people who form the department and thus institutional theory is applicable because it brings people together and this people form an organisation which finally creates interaction for growth and fulfilling its mission and vision (Muthuiya, 2004)

According to this study, political interference was found to be one of the major challenges experienced during strategy implementation. Karanja (2004) in his study revealed that decision making in the public sector is a political process. This is because the sector is constituted politically and it is run political. The sitting government of the day determines how the strategies will be implemented depending on the interests they have towards certain strategies and the areas of priorities.

Changes in the structure of SDEAA emerged to be another challenge during strategy implementation process. David (2011) observed that when a firm changes its strategy, the existing organisational structure may become ineffective, for example, new strategies to reduce payroll costs may require a change in the span of control. SDEAA has experienced so many structural changes because after every period of five (5) years when elections are held and a new government is formed and depending on the government itself, SDEAA has found itself under different ministries for a long time. Each time it is placed under a different ministry each ministry desires to achieve its goals and objectives and so it has been forcing SDEAA to adapt to the changes all the time and thus interrupting with its activities.

Generally all organisations pass through so many challenges which are related and the way they deal with them may not be the same and so the most important thing is for every organisation to understand its challenges and come up with ways of dealing with those challenges to enable it cope in the world of its operations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This is the last chapter of this research and it presents summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5.2 Summary

The respondents who were interviewed were aware of the concept of strategy implementation as a process of putting into action whatever strategies that have been formulated to enable the department survive as an entity and serve its purpose for existence. Strategic management practices presence were present at SDEAA as there exists a strategic plan; a mission and vision; development of performance contracts; breaking down of long term plans into departmental activities and communication of the same to the concerned parties.

Findings of this study revealed that there exists challenges in strategy implementation at SDEAA and among the cited challenges include: financial constraints; political influence; policies and procedures; responsibility and accountability; changes in departmental structure; decision making at the East African Community Secretariat and human resources.

The top management who are involved in the formulation and implementation of the strategies were of the opinion that all officers in the department should be involved in strategic management activities so that the lower cadre officers who are the implementers are able to understand the whole process from formulation to implementation rather than depending on explanations from the senior officers who sometimes are even unable to explain fully to the implementers. The low cadre staff are supposed to be involved in the formulation and implementation of any strategies in any given organisation.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

The objectives of this study were to establish and document challenges experienced in strategy implementation and determine the measures to deal with the challenges established. Through the data collection and its analysis this study found that there exist key findings which need to be addressed to enable strategy implementation process achieve the formulated strategies. Among the key findings that were found include political interference, decision making process at East African Community Secretariat and frequent changes in the structure of the department.

From the findings of this study it is evident that strategy implementation is the most difficult aspect of strategic management process and many strategies fail at the implementation stage. At SDEAA political interference affected strategy implementation in the sense that priorities and interests of different leaderships differ and this forces the incumbent government to come up with its own policies which totally affects the earlier priorities, objectives and any other strategies that were in place. The cycle of implementation on most occasions is cut short before it achieves its objectives.

Structural movements of SDEAA has been changed so much that even sometimes tracing its roots becomes difficult. Structural changes was seen in the key findings as one of the challenges that affect the strategy implementation at SDEAA. It would be better for SDEAA to awarded fully fledged status as a ministry that would never be interfered with in future because of its peculiar characteristics. This would enable perpetuity without interferences with the structure which hinders growth and accomplishment of its objectives and goals.

Decision making process at EAC Secretariat influences the way strategies in partner states are implemented. The decisions are made by convention of sectoral councils which require that all partner states be represented. The decision making process has to go through so many stages for it to be finalised. Since the hierarchy is long; before the completion of the whole cycle some issues will have lost their intended purpose and other issues have risen.

Partner states should rethink and come up with an easier way of dealing with issues without depending so much on the EAC decisions. The Secretariat should only be contacted for information and permission to deal with certain issues that do not jeopardise the spirit of EAC.

Leadership and management of any organisation should consult widely before coming up with strategies to minimise the challenges experienced during the implementation of the formed strategies. The strategic management process should be all inclusive to avoid scenario where strategies are forced on the other staff at SDEAA who struggle to implement strategies which they were not part of during implementation. Capacity building at SDEAA has to be enhanced through training programmes based on training needs assessment to equip the directorate with all the skills required to enable them work efficiently and effectively.

5.4 Recommendations

From the key findings of the study where strategy implementation has been affected the recommendations may well be based on each key finding. Political interference mostly affects the way policies are made because policies are made politically. The policy makers should endeavour to liaise with the government of the day to find out the direction the government of the day intends to position itself and then base their policies on the priorities and interests of the sitting government rather than coming up with policies which may be quashed because they are not in addendum within the parameters of the government of the day.

Decision making process at the EAC Secretariat which requires long procedures for the decisions to be settled on should be reviewed because all partner states depend on the decisions made at the Secretariat. In carrying out its mandate SDEAA has to practice what the Secretariat would like to be done.

The activities that are carried out as SDEAA are pegged on the decisions of the Secretariat, this makes the whole process of decision making to be owned by all partner states including those ones which are not affected by the decisions made. By following this protocol it makes it impossible for partner states to have solutions for their own problems and they are not able to wholly heartedly to own them.

The Secretariat should come up with ways and means of dealing with this issue so that partner states that are not affected by some decisions should be left out of the deliberations on the issues that do not concern them. Those who are concerned should also be given a lee way to deliberate amicably without going into lengthy discussions. The Secretariat should only be the overseer without interfering so much with the internal matters of the partner states.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Research on strategy implementation has not been fully exploited. This was a limitation on literature review on strategy implementation. Literature review based on strategy implementation was scattered and research had difficult time in accessing a large of literature to the success of this study.

The respondents were limited to the top management in the department. This was a hindrance to full exploitation of the challenges that are being experienced at different levels by different stakeholders involved in the implementation process. Views of other stakeholders are important in any process because their contribution during formulation will enable ease of implementation since they are the ones who are on the ground.

Time and scope of the research was limited. Scope of the study was limited to strategy implementation and strategic management practices at SDEAA. It would have been prudent if the research was involving to include all the stages in strategic management process so that the research flows from one stage to another.

This study was also limited by the availability of the officers to be interviewed. All the officers are at senior management level and most of the time they are out of the country to attend to Secretariat meetings or they are busy with consultative meetings locally or they were assigned other duties by the PS.

Data collection was restricted to one instrument of data collection. It would have been better for the researcher to be allowed to make use of other instruments like the questionnaire together with the interview guide so as to exhaustively accumulate a lot of information on challenges of strategy implementation.

Time also posed a challenge to this study as the time was only limited to one semester which is not enough to carry out a qualitative and quantitative research. Time for such research should be extended so that it covers at least a period of two semesters.

5.6 Suggestions for further Studies

This study was carried out on strategic management practices and strategy implementation challenges at the SDEAA. SDEAA represents just a fraction of the government departments, further research should be carried out at all ministries/departments of the government so that a comparison of the same can be done to find out if the departments/ministries face the same challenges or there are diversified challenges affecting the institutions. Further in depth research should also be carried out on every strategic management practice and each strategy implementation challenge individually to establish their effect on the implementation process.

The scope of study was limited to top management in SDEAA who are the policy makers and they cascade the same information to the lower cadre. That should not be the case, further studies should be done to cover all the staff in the government departments and ministries so that it is well understood where the challenges of strategy implementation arise from.

This research did not cover the monitoring and evaluation process so as to acknowledge inputs and activities, outputs and then outcomes for efficiency and effectiveness. The evaluation should be done before, during and after implementation to test its feasibility and the likelihood of its ability to produce the desired results. This will be on account of relevance, cost effectiveness, efficiency sustainability, evolution of internal strategies and impact criteria. In this respect, efficiency will assess the extent to which optimal use is made of resources, whereas effectiveness will measure the extent to which the intended outputs are attained relative to annually generated targets.

Sustainability will address whether there exists capacity at follow-up implementation of the strategies. Evolution of strategies will deal with the strategies as formulated; translate into others for continuous benefits and growth. Finally, impact assessment will confirm whether the outcomes have been fully realised.

5.7 Implications of the Study on Policy, Theory and Practice

Findings and conclusions have led to several implications in terms of policy, theory and practice. The government in its policy and desire to speedy and quality service delivery to the public tends to neglect the lower cadre officers during formulation who are the implementers of the strategies. The policy here should be to include all officers in SDEAA to enable smooth implementation process. The government should in practice try to involve all the stakeholders from within and out of its institutions in establishment of strategic plans as this would enable all those who are involved to have their stake and ease the implementation process as they will be aware of what the objectives and goals; mission and vision; strategies in place; and how the strategies were developed. Through its mid-term review of strategic plans the SDEAA should present forums in which shortcomings and challenges faced by implementers are addressed to give practicable solutions.

Scholarly articles on the strategic management process could use the findings of this study to observe the strategy issues concerning challenges in strategy implementation at SDEAA through thorough study of Mckinsey 7s framework and Institutional Theory. This is through field finding that showed various challenges that hinder strategy implementation at SDEAA.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview Guide

1. How do you define the concept of strategy implementation in your own words?
2. Does SDEAA have a mission and vision? How do you understand the mission and vision of SDEAA?
3. Describe your own role in the process of strategy implementation.
4. How do you participate in the strategy implementation process?
5. How many personnel are employed by your department?
6. Does SDEAA have a Strategic Plan? If yes! What time frame does it cover?
7. How often does SDEAA carry out environmental scanning?
8. Are there specific strategy implementation practices that SDEAA has adapted? If yes, identify them and explain how the institution benefits from such practices.
9. Does SDEAA have strategies in place? If yes! What are the strategies?
10. How often are the strategies reviewed?
11. Who is involved in the strategy formulation process?
12. How familiar are you with the strategy formulation process?.
13. What challenges do you encounter in strategy implementation?
14. Does the organization structure match the strategy?
15. How are the policies pertaining to strategy implementation communicated within the different levels of the organisation?
16. How often is feedback sought and communicated?
17. Are there any non-conformities in strategy implementation?
18. How are the non-conformities handled?
19. Do you have a feedback mechanism in place?
20. State briefly whether strategy implementation at SDEAA has been successful. If Not! Explain why

Appendix II: Authority to Collect Data



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

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P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 04/09/2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter EMMILY SETI ASHIDYA


Registration No. BG164689/2013

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



Source: University of Nairobi, School of Business

Appendix III: Data Collection Confirmation letter



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS, COMMERCE AND TOURISM

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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When replying please quote

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HRM.2/40/Vol. V (128)


7th October, 2014

The MBA Co-ordinator
School of Business
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

EMMILY SETI ASHIOYA: D61/64689/2013

Reference is made to your letter dated 4th September, 2014 on the above who is a bonafide student of your institution.

The purpose of this letter is to confirm that the student carried out data collection exercise in the State Department of East African Affairs using an interview guide effective 9th - 30th September, 2014. A total of seven (7) senior officers were interviewed on voluntary basis and their views do not reflect any government policy. It is our expectation that the collected data will strictly be used for academic purposes.


FREDRICK MAINDA
FOR PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
DEPARTMENT OF EAST
AFRICAN AFFAIRS



Vision:
Deepen and widen East African Integration for Sustainable Development and improved livelihoods of all Kenyans



Source: State Department of East African Affairs

Appendix IV: Staffing Levels at SDEAA

STRATEGIC PLAN

2008-2012

Designation	Job Group	Approved Posts	In Post	Variance
Procurement Services				
Chief Procurement Officer	M	1	0	-1
Senior Procurement Officer	L	1	1	0
Procurement Officer I	K	1	0	-1
Procurement Officer II	J	1	0	-1
Procurement Assistant	H	2	2	0
Storekeeper I/II/Senior Storekeeper	E/F/G	3	0	-3
Finance Section				
Chief Finance Officer	R	1	0	-1
Senior Principal Finance Officer	P	1	0	-1
Finance Officer III/II/I	J/K/L	2	1	-1
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Section				
Principal Information and Communication Technology Officer	N	0	1	+1
Information Communication Technology Officer II/I	J/K	2	6	+4
Information Communication Technology Officer III	H	3	0	-3
Public Communications Section				
Deputy Director of Public Communication	R	0	1	+1
Chief Communication Officer	M	1	0	-1
Information Officer I	K	1	0	-1
Legal Section				
Senior State Counsel	SL3	1	1	0
State Counsel II/I	SLI/II	2	0	-2
Directorate of East African Community				
Chief Economist	R	1	1	0
Deputy Chief Economist	Q	2	1	-1
Principal Economist	P	2	1	-1
Senior Economist I	N	2	0	-2
Senior Economist II/Chief Agric Officer	M	2	1	-1
Economist II/I	K/L	2	4	-2

NB: The Principal Economist is on secondment to the EAC Secretariat

Appendix IV: Staffing Levels at SDEAA

STRATEGIC PLA

Designation	Job Group	Approved Posts	In Post	Variance
Central Planning and Monitoring Unit (CP& MU)				
Chief Economist	R	0	0	0
Deputy Chief Economist	Q	1	1	0
Principal Economist	P	1	0	-1
Senior Economist I	N	1	0	-1
Senior Economist II	M	0	0	0
Economist II/I	K/L	4	2	-2
Administrative Support Services (General)				
Senior Executive Secretary	N	1	0	-1
Executive Secretary	M	2	1	-1
Senior Personal Secretary	L	2	1	-1
Personal Secretary III/II/I	H/I/K	16	13	-3
Senior Records Management Officer	L	0	1	+1
Records Management Officer II	J	1	1	0
Records Management Officer III	H	2	4	+2
Secretarial Assistants II/I Senior	G/H/I	8	4	-4
Clerical Officer II/I/Senior/Chief	F/G/H/I	12	14	+2
Drivers III/II/I Senior Driver II/I	D/E/F/G/H	16	15	-1
Librarian II/I	J/K	1	0	-1
Library Assistant	G/H/I/K	1	1	0
Receptionist III/II/I	E/F/G	4	0	-4
Support Staff III/II/I Senior Support Staff	A/B/C/D	14	14	0
Telephone Supervisor	H	0	1	+1
Telephone Operator II/I Senior Telephone Operator	E/F/G/H	3	5	+2
Senior Security Warden	G/H/I	0	1	+1
Security Warden	D/E/F	5	0	-5
Total No.		171	123	-69; +21

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Source: SDEAA Strategic Plan 2008 -2012