

**STRATEGY EVALUATION AND CONTROL PRACTICES AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has never been presented in any other University/ College for the award on any degree.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Muiruri, for their love, care and guidance all the time.

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I am grateful to God for the gift of life, the strength and ability to undertake this course.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- CUE** - Commission for University Education
- CIPL** - Centre for International Programmes and Links
- LIA** - Letter of Interim Authority.
- UoN** - University of Nairobi.
- ISO** - International Organization for Standardization
- OBE** - Outcome-based Evaluation
- BSC** - Balanced Scorecard
- BPS** - Board of Postgraduate Studies
- SWOT** - Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats
- KEBS** - Kenya Bureau of Standards
- SMIS** - Students Management Information System

ABSTRACT

The process of strategy management will only be complete after the evaluation and control takes place. The general purpose of this study was to find out the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. This study was also undertaken to find out the importance of strategy evaluation and control practices as well the challenges if any, which may have been encountered in implementing the evaluation and control practices. The primary data was collected through the use of the interview guide. Through content analysis, it was established that the performance appraisal and ISO audits were the most common practices used by departments. The findings of the study were that evaluation and control was carried out regularly. Some departments had this practice on a quarterly basis while others undertook the practice twice a year. Evaluation has enabled the University of Nairobi monitor the performance of its various activities against the set targets of the strategic plan. The evaluation ensured that the institution was on the right path towards achieving the objectives of the strategic plan and also through control, the management was able to avoid any deviations from the goals or objectives. Through this process there has been accountability to all the stakeholders in the university. Performance appraisals were able to determine the best performing departments. The recommendations made from the study concluded that more resources needed to be invested in training of staff so that they can gain from the benefits of this evaluation and control process.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The current business environment is dynamic, turbulent and unpredictable. As a result, there is need for an innovative approach to strategic management. Research reveals that unsuccessful implementation of strategies and lack of strategy evaluation mechanisms leads to underperformance of companies globally (Kariuki, 2008). Lamb (1984) states that strategic management is an ongoing process that evaluates and controls the business and the industries in which the company is involved; assesses its competitors and sets goals and strategies to meet all existing and potential competitors and then reassesses each strategy annually or quarterly to determine how it has been implemented and whether it has succeeded or needs replacement by a new strategy to meet changed circumstances, such as new technology, competitors, economic environment, social, financial or political environment.

Strategy evaluation and control is anchored on several theories which have been advocated by various scholars. The theory of goal setting informs us that people who have more difficult but attainable goals perform better than those who have less difficult goals (Locke & Latham, 2006). Goal setting involves the conscious process of establishing levels of performance in order to obtain desirable outcomes. Contingency theory argues that appropriate management actions depend on the situation prevailing at the time and there are no ready-made universal answers to management rather the decision that a manager will make will depend on the situation. Fayol's administrative

theory suggests that management has five principle roles: to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to co-ordinate and to control.

The contemporary environment in University of Nairobi's governance requires a prudent and more business-like approach in executing strategy evaluation and control of the university in order to seize the emerging opportunities. Strategy evaluation and control is increasingly gaining attention and popularity among companies and organizations around the world (Atkinson, 2006). University of Nairobi, by its history and position is the leading institution of higher learning in Kenya. The external environment under which the institution operates is becoming complex and has continued to change over time. As a result, new opportunities and challenges have surfaced. In light of this complexity and change in circumstances, it is therefore necessary to undertake strategy evaluation and control based on the University's strategic plan.

1.1.1 Strategy Evaluation and Control

Strategy evaluation occurs as the final step in the strategic management cycle. Henry (2008) defines strategy evaluation as the process of monitoring firm's activities and performance results so that actual results can be compared with the desired performances. It is vital for organizations to be able to identify and keep under check the negative effects of certain strategic decisions and even reverse them if identified in the early stages and this can only be done through timely, correct and objective evaluation.

Without strategy evaluation, a business has no way to gauge whether or not strategies and plans are fulfilling business objectives (Wheelen & Hunger, 2006). There are four types of evaluation. The strategy evaluation can be process based in that it provides us with the tools to monitor quality (Hurteau, Houle & Mongiat, 2009). It also provides the information needed to make adjustments to strategy implementation in order to strengthen effectiveness. An outcome-based evaluation (OBE) is a systematic way to assess the extent to which a program has achieved its intended results (Atkinson, 2006). Past focus has been on what staff does, commonly called outputs. OBE focuses on what staff causes to happen for their target population. Formative evaluation is also useful in analyzing learning materials, student learning and achievements, and teacher effectiveness. Formative evaluation is primarily a building process which accumulates a series of components of new materials, skills and problems into an ultimate meaningful whole (Guyot, 1978). A summative evaluation (sometimes referred to as external) is a method of judging the worth of a program at the end of the program activities (summation). The focus is on the outcome. All assessments can be summative, have the potential to serve a summative function, but only some have the additional capability of serving formative functions (Hurteau et al., 2009).

Along with planning, organizing, staffing and directing, controlling is one of the core functions of business management. Controlling is the measurement and correction of organizational resources to ensure that all is going according to the plan (Coulter, 2005). Controls require a proper organizational structure and may be implemented either in strategic, management or operational level (Dutta, 2010). The strategic control process of

evaluating strategy is practiced both after the strategy is formulated and after it is implemented. Strategic control has been defined as the process by which managers monitor the ongoing activities of an organization and its members to evaluate whether activities are being performed efficiently and effectively and if not, to take corrective action to improve performance (Hill & Jones, 2012).

The management control focuses on accomplishment of the objectives of the various sub strategies comprising the master strategy and the accomplishment of the objectives of the intermediate plans (Pearson & Robinson, 2007). The operational control is concerned with individual and group performance as compared with the individual and group role prescriptions required by organizational plans. The process of control has three major steps namely establishment of standards, measurement of performance and correction of deviations (Hurteau et al., 2009).

Strategy control measures may be categorized as concerning either external effectiveness or internal efficiency (Reeve & Peerbhoy, 2007). There are three types of controls namely behavior, output and input controls. Behavior controls are appropriate when the performance results are not very clear for targets such as those in ISO, policies, rules and directives. Output controls will be implemented when the output is clear but the relationship between result and activity is not clear (Hill & Jones, 2012). This is for instance in customer satisfaction survey and production targets. Input controls will be necessary when the output is difficult to measure and the relationship between activity and result is not clear (Pearson & Robinson, 2007). This is applicable in University teaching resources, knowledge, skills and values.

Strategy control processes allow managers to evaluate a company's program from a critical long-term perspective, involves a detailed and objective analysis of a company's organization and its ability to maximize its strengths and market opportunities (Pearson & Robinson, 2007). Every department in the University has control mechanisms in place. For example, the Finance Department has the internal audit which places checks and balances to ensure that errors and fraud do not take place. This department reports to the University's Audit Committee. This is a form of internal control.

1.1.2 The Higher Education Sector in Kenya

Education is historically among the most important sectors of the government of Kenya. The first higher educational institution in Kenya was The Royal Technical College of East Africa, opened in Nairobi in 1956. University education in Kenya began in 1963 with just 571 students enrolled in Nairobi University College (Weidman, 1995).

Since then, the system has undergone considerable expansion and it is estimated that the country has a total student population of 251,000 of which approximately 80 percent are in public universities. Kenya also has a number of public middle level colleges that offer diplomas in certain fields including engineering, education and computer science. A number of these institutions were among those recently elevated to university college status.

1.1.3 Universities in Kenya

The University education in Kenya has witnessed tremendous growth recently in terms of the student enrollment, the number of universities, and wide variety of courses being offered by these universities as well as in terms of network expansion both locally and regionally. Over 72,000 candidates who sat last year's national examination have been selected to join various public universities and colleges in the 2014/2015 academic year (Oduor, 2014, p.1).

There are 22 public chartered universities, 9 public university constituent colleges, 17 private chartered universities, 5 private university constituent colleges, 13 institutions with Letter of Interim Authority (LIA) and 1 registered private institution, which had been accredited as at 12th June 2014. These universities are established through institutional Acts of Parliament under the Universities Act, 2012 which provides for the development of university education, the establishment, accreditation and governance of universities (Status of Universities, 2014).

The University of Nairobi became the first fully fledged university public university in Kenya in 1970. Those that later became universities are Kenyatta University College and Egerton University College, in 1985 and 1987 respectively. There are 39 universities in Kenya. A liberalized regulatory framework has also brought about stiff competition within the higher education sector. The main concern facing this sector in Kenya include the growth of both private and public universities, including expansion of their curricula has continued to wipe out some vocational schools, teacher training colleges and

government training institutes, reducing options for secondary level graduates who may not be qualified for or financially able to join or attend universities.

1.1.4 University of Nairobi

The University of Nairobi, a body corporate constituted under the University of Nairobi Charter 2013, is the pioneer institution of University education in Kenya and the region. There are over 70,000 students currently enrolled for various courses and over 2,052 academic staff (University of Nairobi Factfile, 2014). As the only institution of higher learning in Kenya for a long time, the University of Nairobi responded to the national, regional and Africa's high level manpower training needs by developing and evolving strong, diversified academic programmes and specializations in sciences, applied sciences, technology, humanities, social sciences and the arts.

The inception of the University of Nairobi is traced back to 1956, with the establishment of the Royal Technical College which admitted its first lot of A-level graduates for technical courses in April the same year. The Royal Technical College was transformed into the second University College in East Africa on 25th June, 1961 under the name Royal College Nairobi. On 20th May 1964, the Royal College Nairobi was renamed University College Nairobi as a constituent college of inter-territorial, Federal University of East Africa, and henceforth the enrolled students were to study for degrees of the University of East Africa and not London as was the case before. In 1970, the University College Nairobi transformed into the first national university in Kenya and was renamed the University of Nairobi (History, 2014).

Today the University of Nairobi has the largest concentration of scholars in the country. The University has been, and continues to be a center for intellectual life, a locus of research activity extending the boundaries of knowledge, a resource for professional development, and a key player in the growing global network of scholarship. The University has a great variety of disciplines within its wide array of academic programmes. The diversity encourages shared ideas across disciplines and promotes multidisciplinary endeavours. The programmes are offered through six colleges, thirty faculties, institutes, centers and over three hundred programmes.

The University of Nairobi 2008-2013 strategic plan is currently being implemented closely by those involved in the implementation of the operational plans. Various management organs such as Faculties, Schools, Institutes, College Academic Boards, University Management Board, Senate and the Council monitor the progress of the implementation process through quarterly reports tabled during meetings of their respective governance organs. The quarterly reports from the various units are consolidated at the various levels until there is a university-wide performance review report. The University of Nairobi, which has been on annual performance contract with the government since 2005/2006, has seen its composite score improve from 2.1209 in year 2005/2006 to 1.9244 in year 2012/2013. The agreed performance indicators and targets at all levels are used as bench marks for strategy evaluation and control.

1.2 Research Problem

Strategy evaluation and control is an integral part of strategic management process and is increasingly gaining attention and popularity among many organizations and scholars as well. The best formulated and implemented strategies tend to become obsolete as a firm's external and internal environmental change. It is essential that strategists also invest in systematic review, evaluation and control of strategy execution which involves examining the underlying bases of a firm's strategy, comparing expected results with actual results and taking corrective actions to ensure that performance conforms to plans. Strategic evaluation and control is not a discipline that has been developed by practicing professionals over thousands of years, and therefore there is no concrete literature that will walk us through any evaluation step by step.

The University of Nairobi, like other organizations has crafted a strategic plan that outlines various tasks and objectives to be attained within a specified period of time. The first formal strategic plan was done in the year 2005/2006. Faced with challenges posed by both the internal and external environment, the institution has continuously undertaken strategy evaluation and control practices so as to evaluate the strategic plans and monitor organizational performance so that necessary corrective actions can be undertaken.

Several studies have been carried out on strategy evaluation and control. These include strategy evaluation and control practices at the National Social Security Fund (Chelimo, 2010), strategy evaluation and control in churches in Nairobi (Otieno, 2012), strategy evaluation practices adopted by insurance firms in Nairobi, Kenya (Kinuthia, 2012), strategy evaluation and control by pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors in

Kenya (Nandama, 2010) and strategy evaluation and its challenges at the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (Nguni, 2010). Even though all the studies have focused on strategic evaluation and control practices, all were contextually varied and none focused on answering the research question, what are the strategy evaluation and control practices at University of Nairobi?

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objectives of the study will be:

- 1) To establish the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi.
- 2) To determine the challenges of strategy evaluation and control at the University of Nairobi.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study was of value to various stakeholders in the University of Nairobi. The institution operates on open systems and has put in place various ways of monitoring its strategy evaluation and control processes. The study at the University of Nairobi provided strong empirical evidence on the ongoing debates on the strategy evaluation and control practices in a quest to attaining the desired strategic objectives. By confirming existing theories and reconciling prior knowledge in the wider field of strategy evaluation and control, the study's results have contributed to enhancement of knowledge in the both fields of strategy evaluation and strategy control. The findings of the study were of great significance to the management practice, policy makers, and the government and industry

players. On the management, the results of the study have pointed out some of the popular ways which strategy evaluation and control was carried out. The significance of the processes was highlighted with the hope that the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Principals and Heads of Departments will continue to encourage the processes. The challenges of the strategy evaluation and control were highlighted in the study and will be addressed so as to effectively perform the evaluation and control practices.

The findings were a point of reference for the government policy makers in formulating solid, broad and balanced policies that lay foundation for strategy evaluation and control. The policies originating from the study were useful in enhancing global competitiveness of the universities in the country, resilient economy and attainment of essential national goals.

To the stakeholders in the University, the study provides an opening for further research in the area of strategy evaluation and control practices. This study will help this University as well others in Kenya develop policies to manage the strategy evaluation and control practices that will contribute to the successful implementation of the respective strategic plans.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides available literature that has been reviewed for the study. The specific areas covered here are the theoretical underpinnings of the study, the strategy evaluation and control practices and the challenges in evaluation and control. Through this study, the section will endeavour to relate the study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in strategic management, filling the gaps and extending the prior studies.

2.2 Theoretical Underpinnings of the Study

Strategy evaluation and control is premised on theories which have been advocated by various scholars. These theories include contemporary management theories such as goal setting theory, contingency theory and the administrative theory.

The goal setting theory was advocated by Locke and Latham (2006) and they stated that motivation and performance are higher when individuals set specific goal, when accepted goals are difficult, and when there is feedback on performance. The two most important findings of this theory are that setting specific goals generates higher levels of performance than setting vague goals. Goals that are more specific, and thus more challenging and harder to achieve, often have a direct and positive impact on performance. This relies on the notion that the harder the goal, the more a person will strive to work towards it. However, such influences on performance are mediated by two

conditions. First of all, the goal must be accepted and acknowledged and secondly, feedback must be used to develop areas of weakness.

Giving feedback on the strategies that are used to obtain goals is very important, especially for complex work, as challenging goals place emphasis on the final outcome rather than on performance strategies. This allows weaknesses in performance to be overlooked which can be detrimental in the long term. Feedback is crucial to optimize results from setting goals by overcoming weaknesses as well as sustaining motivation and commitment to achieving the target (Locke & Latham, 2002). Good feedback should be given in a positive context, use constructive and positive language, focus on behaviors and strategies, be tailored to the needs of the individual and be a two-way communication process. The effectiveness of goal setting may be limited if team members cannot evaluate and improve upon their performance. It is therefore vital that people are aware of their performance level and if they are on track, to allow them to progress, as well as alter their performance strategies in areas of weakness.

The contingency approach developed by Fred Fiedler, is based on the idea that there is not a single best way to approach management. Also, to be effective, planning, organizing, leading, and controlling must be tailored to the particular circumstances faced by an organization. Environmental factors impacting on the effectiveness of different organizational forms include environmental change and uncertainty, work technology, and the size of a company. According to the contingency perspective, stable environments suggest mechanistic structures that emphasize centralization, formalization, standardization, and specialization to achieve efficiency and consistency. Certainty and

predictability permit the use of policies, rules and procedures to guide decision making for routine tasks and problems. Unstable environments suggest organic structures which emphasize decentralization to achieve flexibility and adaptability. Uncertainty and unpredictability require general problem solving methods for non-routine tasks and problems. Organizational units operating in differing environments develop different internal unit characteristics, and that the greater the internal differences, the greater the need for coordination between units (Gale, 2006).

Henri Fayol's administrative theory suggests that management has five functions; to plan, organize, command, coordinate and control (Wren, Bedeian & Breeze, 2002). Control means that the above activities were performed in accordance with appropriate rules and procedures. Fayol also divided the business activities into technical, commercial, financial, accounting, security and managerial activities. In his principles of management, control is emphasized in division of work, discipline, authority and responsibility, subordination of individual interest to general interest, remuneration, centralisation, order, equity, initiative, esprit de corps, stability of tenure, unity of direction, scalar chain and unity of command

2.3 Strategy Evaluation and Control Practices

Strategy evaluation and control is a systematic, rigorous, and meticulous application of scientific methods to assess the design, implement and improve outcomes of a strategy (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004). It is a resource-intensive process, frequently requiring resources, expertise, labour, time and a sizeable budget and is intended to serve as a

mechanism for keeping the plan closely on track as possible. It is a process in which company activities and performance results are monitored so that actual performance can be compared with desired performance. Performance is the last result of activities. It involves the actual outcomes of the strategic management process (Wheelen & Hunger, 2006).

Strategic management therefore needs to be a continuous process. As performance results or outcomes are realized at any level of the organization, companies must assess the implication and adjust to the strategies needed. In addition, as the company grows and changes, so will the various strategies. Existing strategies will change and new strategies will be developed. This is all part of the continuous process of improving the business through an evaluation and control mechanism in an effort to succeed and reach company's goals (Coulter, 2005).

Strategy evaluation and control involves the three basic activities. It involves examining the underlying bases of a firm's strategy, comparing expected results with actual results and taking corrective actions to ensure that performance conforms to plans (Coulter, 2005). Numerous external and internal factors can prohibit firms from achieving long-term objectives. External factors may include actions by competitors, changes in demand, changes in technology, economic changes, demographic shifts and government actions. Internally, ineffective strategies may have been chosen, or implementation of activities may have been poor. There is need to continually monitor the external opportunities and threats as well as the internal strengths and weaknesses that represent the bases of current strategies to find out whether there are any changes.

The process of evaluation is a five step feedback process. The first step involves determining what to measure (Wheelen & Hunger, 2006). The implementation process and results that need to be monitored, need to be specified and they must be capable of being measured in a reasonably objective and consistent manner. The second step is to establish the standards of performance. Standards are detailed expressions of strategic objectives. These standards are set not only for the final output but also for intermediate stages of output. The third step is to measure the actual performance of predetermined times. The fourth step is to make a comparison between actual and the standard that had been earlier set and the final step is to take corrective action if the actual performance results fall out of the desired tolerance range.

Siro (2009) in his study noted that most of the evaluation and control was in form of budget and budget reallocations. In addition, the study revealed that constructing evaluation and control systems takes time, there will be many twists and turns along the road, but the journey and rewards are worth it. This is because evaluation and controls are a continuous work in progress for many organizations. Otieno (2012) suggests that strategy evaluation and control helps organizations to gain a competitive edge, define the business and enables an organization to steer in the right direction. Nyaguthii (2008) concluded that dairy processing companies need to take different strategic orientation where strategy evaluation and control become a central theme for building competitiveness and improving performance. The various strategy evaluation and control practices that have been employed by the organizations globally are discussed below.

Benchmarking is one of the techniques used in strategy evaluation and control. Boxwell (1994) defines benchmarking as the process of comparing one's business processes and performance metrics to industry bests or best practices from other industries. Dimensions typically measured are quality, time and cost. Improvements from learning mean doing things better, faster and cheaper (Camp, 1989).

International Organization for Standardization ISO 9001:2008 certification has become the latest important tool for strategy evaluation and control. ISO defines itself as a non-governmental organization, with the ability to set standards that often become law, either through treaties or national standards (Della-Piana et al, 2005). ISO certification is earned only after an intensive audit by third party registrars following an assessment called gap analysis, by a qualified consultant and the preparation of documentation outlining new quality system procedures by that consultant. This assures stakeholders that a common quality level is present and that it will meet or exceed their own internal quality assurance programs. ISO certification provides an edge so often needed in today's competitive market place. The certification is a commitment to excellence, at the quality management or environmental management system level. The formal and published documentation that outlines methods and practices naturally leads to better consistency in production (Naveh & Marcus, 2004).

An important part of business strategy is concerned with ensuring that these resources and competencies are evaluated and controlled in a process referred as a strategy audit. A strategy audit involves assessing the actual direction of a business and comparing that course to the direction required to succeed in a changing environment (Della-Piana et al,

2005). It provides a checklist of questions, by area or issue, which enables a systematic analysis of various organizational functions or activities. Audit is an extremely useful diagnostic tool to pinpoint the problem areas and highlights organizational strengths and weaknesses for corporate planning. However, the main objective of strategy audit is to develop benchmarks. Strategy audit helps to evaluate current performance result, review corporate governance, scan and assess the external environment, scan and assess the internal environment, analyze strategic factors using SWOT, generate and evaluate strategic alternatives and implement strategies.

Performance appraisal is a method by which the strategy of an organization is evaluated generally in terms of quality, quantity, cost and time. It also helps to identify and overcome the problems faced by the employees (Mackey & Johnson, 2000). It is a part of guiding and managing strategic plan. It is the process of obtaining, analyzing and recording information about the relative worth of plan being implemented by the organization. Performance appraisal is an analysis of a strategic plans recent successes and failures. According to Kravchuk and Schack (1996), to evaluate and control performance, managers need to determine what the strategy is supposed to accomplish. Managers should then formulate a clear and coherent mission, objectives and strategy. Based on this information the manager should then choose how to measure those activities. Evaluation and control process consists of two variables which are organizational performance data and a benchmark that creates framework for analyzing the data (Bannister & Balkin, 1990).

In many organizations, rather than evaluate themselves using a few financial measures, Kaplan and Norton (1992) advocate for the balanced scorecard (BSC), including non-financial as well as financial measures. BSC evaluates strategies from four perspectives. These are financial performance on how the organization appears to the shareholders, customer knowledge, internal business perspective informing on what the company must excel at and finally innovation and learning. Innovation and learning will direct the organization on whether it can continue to improve and create value. Atkinson (2006) suggests that the balanced scorecard (BSC) can be used in facilitating effective strategy evaluation and control and it could address the key evaluation and control problems.

Monitoring is a fundamental component of all programs. It involves collecting key data related to program objectives and operations and analyzing the data to guide policy, programs and practices. Strategy monitoring collects data at a number of points during program implementation to ensure that the program is running smoothly and achieving its objectives according to plan (Naveh & Marcus, 2004). By tracking changes in performance, managers can fine-tune program operations to reach desired outcomes most efficiently and effectively. The purpose of monitoring is often to determine the degree to which changes are seen as a result of program activities. This practice typically includes measures both at the beginning and the end of a program and when possible, include a control and comparison group to help determine whether changes in outcomes result from program activities themselves and not from other influences outside the program (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1980).

2.4 Challenges in Strategy Evaluation and Control

The process of strategy evaluation and control experiences some challenges just like any other processes. Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2005) identified four challenges associated with strategy evaluation and control. The first challenge is the need for a clear fit between strategy and structure no matter which comes first as long as there is congruence in the operating environment. There is the need for management style to be appropriate to the strategy being implemented. The third is pragmatic goal-setting and controls, with need for heightened control as uncertainty and change provide a volatile environment and lastly, the difficulty in identifying coordinated targets at various levels in the organization.

Rumelt (1980) further acknowledges that the main challenges of strategy evaluation and control can be discussed in three distinct points. First, each business strategy is unique, thus the strategy adopted will depend entirely on the context of the business. Therefore there cannot be a “one best way” of evaluating and monitoring strategy. Rather, strategy evaluation must focus on the logic that is flexible, adaptable and is concerned with careful assessment of extent of a company’s adherence to set goals and objectives as well as an assessment to establish the extent to which goals have been achieved, most people including seasoned managers would rather set goals than try to evaluate them because the former is easier. Finally, evaluation and control systems could appear appealing in principle but they potentially can create conflicts and there are some managers who have come to view strategy evaluation and control as a springboard for adopting “management by much more than results” (Thompson et al., 2005).

Rumelt (1980), pointed out that however it is accomplished, the process of business strategy evaluation and control seeks to answer questions as to whether the objectives of the business are appropriate, whether the major policies and plans are appropriate and whether the results obtained confirm or refute critical assumption on which the strategies rest. Obtaining answers to these questions requires a reasonable store of situation based knowledge and more than the usual degree of insight. Nguni (2010) observes that organizations face challenges such as incomplete quarterly and annual reports, lateness in reporting to work, government interference, high staff turnover, lack of motivation, changing priorities, lack of finances, bureaucracies and lack of smart objectives in some strategies. Otieno (2012) carried out a study on strategy evaluation and control in churches in Nairobi. The study revealed that most of the churches in Nairobi have put strategies in place although most of the strategies are rudimentary. The key challenges that churches face include inadequate skills, poor leadership and an unsupportive culture in churches.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology that the researcher employed in the study. The methodology included the research design, data collection methods and the techniques for data analysis that were used.

3.2 Research Design

The study used a case study design in determining the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. Kothari (2004) describes a case study as a form of qualitative analysis that involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit. He further describes a social unit as a person, family or institution. The researcher adopted a case study because of its contribution to the knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social and political phenomena.

The case study has been a common research strategy in business and organizational planning. The starting point for selecting the appropriate research method is the research problem and the best methodological fit but will also depend on external constraints such as cost and time (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2002). The distinct need for case studies arises out of the desire of the researcher to understand the complex social phenomena. The case study method also allowed the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of the real life events such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes.

3.3 Data Collection

The interview guide was used in the collection of data. Interviewing is a way to collect data as well as to gain knowledge from individuals. Kvale (2008) regarded interviews as an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social impact of research data.

The interview guide (Appendix III) was considered appropriate for this study since there was need to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi and this could only be achieved by conducting interviews. The guide contained questions on strategy evaluation and control practices and the challenges faced in strategy evaluation and control at the University of Nairobi. The researcher personally conducted the data collection exercise through face to face interviews with the respondents. The respondents were senior accountants, assistant registrars and registrars who are involved in strategy evaluation and control at the University of Nairobi.

3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher collected qualitative data and content analysis was used to analyze the data. Kothari (2004) explains content analysis as the analysis of the contents of documentary and verbal material and describes it as a qualitative analysis concerning the general importance of the message of the existing documents and measure pervasiveness. Before embarking on content analysis, the researcher assessed the written material's

quality to ensure that the available material accurately represented what was written or said.

The researcher then listed and summarized the major issues contained in the interview guide responses. This enabled the researcher to structure the data in a way that made it possible to analyze and interpret it. Analysis on content was based on the meanings and implications stemming from respondents information and documented data on strategy evaluation and control (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The study was conducted to determine the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. The interview guide discussed issues pertaining to awareness of the strategic plan contents, the roles played by departments in the evaluation and control process and the practices employed in the strategy evaluation and control process. The data was also collected through discussions and was analyzed critically to help in drawing conclusions. The interview guide was used to collect the primary data various departments within the University. Those involved include the Deputy Registrars, Deputy Finance Officers, Assistant Registrars and Principals. This is because most of these members of staff have been in University for many years and have thorough knowledge of the day-to-day operations. The primary data was analyzed using content analysis.

4.2 Strategic Planning at the University of Nairobi

Strategic planning is an essential first step in the development of a results-based accountability system. Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. By virtue of being the oldest university in Kenya,

the University of Nairobi finds itself providing leadership in the domain of higher education in Kenya.

A strategic plan is a set of processes undertaken in order to develop a range of strategies that will contribute to achieving the organizational direction. The strategic plan was made by the top management of the University in consultation with the University Management Board and the Senate. This calls for the formulation of a coherent document which will guide the efforts of the management in outlining where the University is, who it will work with, where the University wants to be and how it will get there in the process of achieving its organizational goals. The plan must be: simple, written, clear, based on the real current situation, and have enough time allowed to give it a time to settle.

The strategic plan 2008-2013, was developed after a review of various policy and strategy documents of the University and Government of Kenya. The process was guided by government sector specific standards documents and sector performance standards that streamlined approach to performance contracting for public sector institutions. The pertinent documents include the Kenya Vision 2030, the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the Universities Act 2012 and the University of Nairobi Charter. It was presented and discussed at the University Management Board and Academic Boards and then cascaded down to the departments. The plan has five sections, namely the introduction, background information, strategic issues, objectives and strategies and lastly, the implementation framework. The strategic plan was available on the University's website for all. In this regard, the University was constantly evaluating its practices as well as putting up controls after receiving feedback. The document was accessible to all the

stakeholders in the educational sector. Evaluating strategy in light of financial performance, overall operational performance and the expected change in external environment are some of the other tasks undertaken to a great extent in strategy evaluation.

4.3 Strategy Evaluation and Control Practices at the University of Nairobi

The University of Nairobi envisions being a world-class University committed to scholarly excellence. It was established that the University of Nairobi monitors its performance internally as well as externally through various ways. During the interview, the Assistant Registrar noted that, “the strategic plan was formulated and then cascaded down to the departments. From data collected, the strategic plans were communicated to staff through meetings, memos on email and also through hard copy documents”. According to one Registrar, the characteristics of the evaluation and control practices in the University of Nairobi were that they provide an accurate picture of events and are meaningful to everyone.

Given the diverse nature of institutional structures and functions, there is never going to be a completely perfect approach to benchmarking. This was used to compare the University’s performance to other internal functions of other institutions. Policies were compared with those of other local and international Universities before being fully adopted. Corporate social responsibility was highlighted by a respondent. He gave the scenario where the University was involved in helping the community by offering

scholarships to many needy students. This University offered the highest number of scholarships in the year 2012 when compared to other public Universities. The Senior Administrative Assistant from Kikuyu Campus said, “The College has been able to set up extra-mural centers all over the country in response to benchmarking with other colleges in the country”.

Most of the lecturers in the University of Nairobi have attended training, workshops and seminars in other countries. This is to achieve the goal of graduating high quality students who are able to serve with country. The coordinator of Centre for International Programmes and Links (CIPL), was of the view that, “The partnerships between other the University and other Universities in the world have been developed. This has enabled the University set up courses that would normally require citizens to travel far to get knowledge”. An example is the Confucius Institute set up in 2005 to teach the culture and language of the People’s Republic of China. Through the Confucius Institute, University of Nairobi and Tianjin Normal University, the two partners, have established a collaborative link which includes the exchange of students and lecturers; Chinese lecturers teaching the Chinese language at the University of Nairobi while one of university lecturers teaching Kiswahili language at Tianjin Normal University. The partnerships and strategic alliances have been a response from benchmarking.

The process of ISO 9001:2000 certification has enabled the University of Nairobi to evaluate its strategies through quality management systems. ISO certification has become a widespread practice as organizations increasingly work to conform to the international standards and was introduced at the University in February 2007. ISO ensures quality

service delivery to all our clients and the stakeholders. This certification has enabled the University staff know what standards were expected in order to better serve clients in line with the strategic plan. The University undergoes review regularly so that it can gain re-certification by the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS). All members of staff were trained on the expectations relating to ISO. There are internal auditors who ensure that all procedures are followed and corrections made where necessary. Most Colleges have been able to integrate the ISO certification with the aims of the strategic plan. There are statements in most offices showing their mission, vision and the quality objectives. An auditor in Chiromo Campus said, “The standards place strong emphasis on process control and continuous improvement which are some of the characteristics that an organization must possess to be a leader in the educational sector”.

The other important tool used by the University was the performance appraisal. This was in line with the performance contracting objectives. Performance appraisal enables the departments to evaluate the performance against the set targets. It was carried out in all departments and concerns student enrollment, increase in revenue from fees and other income generating units, provision of accommodation for students and even maintenance of equipment. Performance is the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy and completeness. The study also revealed that the University of Nairobi was ranked first in performance contracting among the public corporations in Kenya. The University of Nairobi was ranked the top University locally according to the web-o-metric ranking of universities. This shows that there was a department which was able to achieve this set target.

The targets were given to all the heads of departments and then cascaded down to all the employees. Each employee has to fully perform his part so as to achieve the set departmental goals. From the interviews conducted, departments carried out evaluations once or twice a year. Some departments also did quarterly evaluations especially where revenue projections and budget reallocations were concerned. The departments were later ranked in order of best performing to the most improved. The best performing departments had staff with high morale, were aware of the purpose and value of the targets set. They were later recognized and appreciated for work performed. The departments also got feedback from clients through the customer feedback forms. This was done twice a month and is part of the performance contracting objective. The information collected enabled the management to make corrective decisions. For performance management and eventually appraisal of work, there has to be planning, communication of targets, evaluation and feedback given. The Administrator at the Academic Revenue was positive that with strict timelines given through work plans, most of the targets would be met, thus making this the best University in Africa.

The balanced scorecard is not widely used within the University. However, to be in line with the innovation and learning objective, the University has been able to set up the Research, Production and Extension office. This was due to feedback received from various stakeholders who are primarily research oriented including the government. On financial performance, the University of Nairobi has been able to sustain its operations through the various income generating activities such as the Module II program. An interviewee noted that the revenue collected has been able to put up state of the art

facilities such as the Examination Centre at Chiromo Campus and the Library at the Kikuyu Campus. The other ways of assessing financial performance were analyses of debtors and also the inventory. The customer feedback forms placed in various offices have been able to give positive and negative feedback. This has also reduced chances of corruption as the staff was all aware that feedback will be given and analyzed by the management.

Monitoring is done regularly especially in the finance department where budgeting was concerned. The office had to ensure that the expenses were within the budgets prepared at the beginning of the financial year. The revenue was monitored every month, and was compared to other years' revenue figures. From the monitoring of the revenue and expenses, the University was able to project any surplus especially from the Module II programme. The interviewees from that department suggested that monitoring led to achievement of the goals of the performance contract. The managers provided leadership in the implementation of the strategic plan. One registrar reiterated that the management examines the basis of the department's strategy which then leads to comparing the expected results with the actual results and taking corrective action where necessary. He added that they also had to keep checking on the operation so as to capture any weaknesses or threats that may crop up during the period of review. Through monitoring, the University has been able to compare performance in terms of student enrollment and facilities available with other Universities.

The Assistant Registrar in the Administration Department said "through monitoring they are able to know which staff needed training and what kind of training was required to

enhance skills necessary for the achievement of the goals of the strategic plan”. It emerged that most of the staff were positive about the process of evaluation and embraced any corrective actions that were set up for them.

Through strategic audits, the University was able to review the academic programs to ensure their relevance and applicability in the 21st Century. It was realized that some of the courses had been there since the country’s independence and hence had to be rebranded. This was explained using the example of the School of Business which was the Bachelor of Commerce and the School of the Built Environment which was the Faculty of Architecture. After rebranding the courses, the University was able to attract more students who eventually graduated and even got scholarships for further studies abroad. New courses have been introduced to cope with the demand for better education. These include Master of Science in Finance and the Master of Science in Entrepreneurship and Innovations. The academic programs were now comparable to those of other countries in the world. In the Department of Geology, there was a new course, Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Geoscience, introduced to keep up with the trends in business.

The study found out that the Academic Revenue had formally embraced the management by objectives approach of strategy evaluation. The objectives of the strategic plan had been cascaded down to the employees in the department. There were continuous periodic reviews carried out and an observation made was that staff performance was used as a base to pay the bonus at the end of the financial year. The reviews enabled controls to be

implemented early enough and this enhanced the overall performance of the department in the achievement of the set targets.

Improved use of technology and use of computer systems especially in the areas of recruitment, finance and procurement have made the process of implementing control systems easier. The use of technology has enabled the University Management to know at a glance how many students are enrolled in various courses and how much revenue the income generating units have made at a given period. The Head of SMIS department said, “The heavy investment in technology had enabled the University to automate the receipting of student fees. This was a control measure which the department set up to collect fees efficiently and to also curb cases of fraud from students”.

Majority of the respondents in this study were in agreement that evaluation and control is important in the overall achievement of the objectives of the strategic plan. The results of the evaluation process were communicated to the heads of departments and also the University Management Board. Strategy evaluation is important as it enabled the University to plan for the future and also accommodate new goals in the next strategic plan. Strategy evaluation and control provided direction. They enabled the management to ensure that the organisation was headed in the right direction and that corrective action was taken whenever necessary. Another importance is that evaluation and control provided guidance to everyone. The management and the other staff got to learn what was happening within the organisation as well as share ideas on improving services. They learnt how their performance compared to what was expected. Strategy evaluation and control inspired confidence. Information about good performance inspired confidence in

everybody. Those within the organisation were likely to be more motivated to maintain and achieve better performance in order to keep up their track record. Those outside, customers, government authorities, shareholders were likely to be impressed with the good performance.

From the study, the importance of strategy evaluation and control was highlighted in improved operational performance as the University continues to tackle competition from other Universities. Prudent financial decisions made are as a result of evaluating the needs of the University. For example, the University decided to construct a building which will improve the services offered. The fee collected was used to put up the structure and this was possible because of the controls used to prevent fraudulent activities. The module II program continued to develop because the University saw the need to have another source of income to supplement the government grant.

The training of staff in this evaluation and control process during ISO has enabled the University to have a knowledgeable human resource who can use the skills gained to better themselves in future through consultancies. The skills have also improved how services are rendered in the university. The Assistant Registrar, Examinations Office is of the view that, students got their examination marks through the student management portal after a certain number of weeks in the semester. This was because there were deadlines that were adhered to as compared to many years back when students were not certain when their results would be released. The staff had been sensitised on quality objectives, the mission and vision of the university so that they could improve the level of the services in line with the objectives of the university's strategic plan.

The current evaluation and control practices supported the strategic plan adequately. The management of the university was able to allow its top academic staff to work in their universities especially the new ones in order to pass on the knowledge gained in the overall process of developing a world class University.

4.4 Challenges in Strategy Evaluation and Control at the University of Nairobi

In strategy evaluation and control, there were some challenges which the respondents gave that slightly hindered the process. The major challenge noted was inadequate skills in the area of evaluation which meant that some of the processes were not well aligned with the goals of the strategic plan. Some employees viewed the appraisal process with suspicion and felt that it was meant to malign them. There were interviewees who did not find the evaluation and control practice as being very important and felt it was biased to favor the management. This also brought out the aspect of inadequate controls in some departments.

One respondent was of the opinion that the evaluation and control practices were not well coordinated. This was because of the changes in the environment in which the University operates. The discussion suggested that some of the plans cascaded down to the staff became obsolete during the period in review. What was important in 2011 may not be as important in the year 2014. The management was encouraged to stimulate the creativity in generating new ways of implementing controls. It was difficult to predict the future with accuracy.

A discussion held indicated that the culture and working environment of the University has been a challenge in the process of evaluation and strategy. Culture impacts on most aspects of organizational life, such as how decisions were made, who makes them, how rewards are distributed, who is promoted, how people were treated and how organization responds to environmental changes. There has been resistance by some when corrective action was taken concerning issues relating to indiscipline in the workplace. This has led to slow pace in realizing the objectives of the strategic plan. Some employees were of the opinion that evaluation and control measures undertaken were meant to frustrate them. When missions are redefined, the demand for employee skills is redefined as well. Realizing the full benefit of the evaluation and control efforts is impossible without a detailed knowledge of skills assets across the enterprise.

One of the respondents in this study hinted that there was disconnect between those who formulated the strategic plan and the staff who were supposed to implement it. This led to uncertainty when it came to evaluating the process of implementation. There was also the concern raised on poor co-ordination strategy evaluation and control process. This led to poor reporting in some cases of the results of the evaluation process. The huge difference between the strategy, administrative and operational evaluations was not noted in many cases.

4.5 Discussion

The study sought to find out the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. The process of strategic management must have the process of

formulation, implementation and finally there was need to evaluate the process and administer controls as required (Wood & Wood, 2002). The process of strategy evaluation consisted of fixing a benchmark of performance, measurement of performance, analysing the variance and taking the corrective action.

For the objectives of the strategic plan formulated to be achieved, the principles of management had to be adhered to. The principles of management include division of labour, unity of direction and authority. There must be order, unity of command where staff in one unit take orders from one supervisor and that there should be team work and unity. The team building theory approach emphasized on continuous improvement which was also spelt out when performance appraisal was done. As the institution continued toward the common goal of being a world class university, the importance of team work and also having systems that functioned without external interference was one of the key points in the study of evaluation and control practices in the University of Nairobi. The systems that were important here included the human resources. The University continued to empower its staff by allowing them to study for degrees which were relevant for the duties performed daily. On-the-job training was also instrumental in the evaluation process. The university has invested in staff, physical structures as well as technology.

During the study, it was established that all the departments in the university had their own strategy objectives which were displayed in service charters. They used work plans to track what had been achieved at a glance at any given date. The heads of departments collected views from some employees in the formulation of this document. The service

charters formed part of the collective objective of the strategic plan of the University of Nairobi. The feedback given during strategy formulation was used to obtain the goals of the strategic plan.

Some of the methods of control that a respondent brought out were correct deviations and changing the standards set. By correcting deviations, improvement would be used to the set objectives of the strategic plan, motivating employees and training them more. By changing standards, the management would make the goals more appropriate, achievable and realistic. The findings of the study support the view that evaluation activities must be economical (Cardy & Leonard, 2011). This is because too much information could be as bad as too little information. Strategy evaluation should be designed to provide a true picture of what is happening. The process of evaluation and control must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

The heads of department must be able to exercise proper control over the strategic management process; that is, they must know how well the strategic plans were formulated and implemented, and where necessary, what corrective action can be taken to improve performance. Finding out what is going on is what evaluation is all about. It means collecting information about how well the strategic plan is progressing. Once we have the evaluation results, then we must decide on the appropriate action. If, according to the evaluation, everything was going well, then there will be no problem; all that will be needed is to continue doing what we were doing (or try to do better). However, if our evaluation showed that some things were not going well, then the managers would have to take care of these trouble spots and eliminate them. By asking questions such as were

our goals, objectives and (or) implementation plans so ambitious that they cannot be achieved? Then perhaps they should be more realistic and bring them down to earth. Were our people not prepared well enough to follow the implementation process? Then we may have to prepare job aids or give training. Evaluation is really just a part of the overall control process, but it is a very important part. Without it, managers may end up making the wrong decisions. Because of this close relationship between evaluation and control, it is common to talk of them as though they were one and the same thing.

Otieno (2012) observed there was need to take strategy evaluation and control more seriously and all evaluations needed to be backed by evidence in terms of facts and figures. He studied strategy evaluation and control in churches in Nairobi. A study on the insurance companies showed that they had adopted both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluations strengthen or improve the strategy being evaluated. They help form it by examining the delivery of the strategy, the quality of its implementation, and the assessment of the organizational context, personnel, procedures, inputs, and so on. Summative evaluations, in contrast, examine the effects or outcomes of strategy. The companies also evaluated strategy in light of both financial and operational performance of the organization. These were findings by Kinuthia (2012) in his research on the strategy evaluation practices adopted by insurance firms in Kenya.

According to Nandama (2010), in order to ensure realization of organisational goals and objectives of most pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors in Kenya, there was need to evaluate and control implementation of strategies. Results of the study indicate that even though players in the industry evaluate and control strategy implementation,

many firms do so mainly by monitoring and evaluating financial performance. The study found out that few firms make budgetary provision for strategy evaluation and control activities. This implies that there is inadequate planning for strategy evaluation and control which could lead to failure of proper strategy implementation. Players in the industry also need to build internal capacity for strategy evaluation and control by investing in the training of staff to enable them acquire relevant knowledge and skills.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The research was undertaken with the aim of determining the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. Firstly, the study was to determine the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. The second aim of the study was to identify the challenges of strategy evaluation and control at the University of Nairobi. This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The aim of the study was to find out the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that evaluation and control practices have enabled the university to improve its services to the public. These practices gave this institution a competitive edge over other public Universities. Most of the departments carried out evaluation mainly by use of performance appraisal of employees who already had targets cascaded down to them. The heads of departments did evaluations and implemented controls continuously.

The departments which undertook continuous evaluation did so through the use of monitoring and benchmarking. They kept in touch with the developments in the educational sector and ensured that they tried to integrate new things with the objectives

that they had been given. The main ways of evaluation that were used within the University were performance appraisal, monitoring, ISO, benchmarking and use of customer feedback forms. There were formal and some informal ways of evaluating whether the goals of the strategic plan were being achieved. The respondents were of the view that strategy evaluation and control practices would enable the University of Nairobi be among the top not only in Africa but also in the world in the next few years.

The University has been budgeting for the evaluation process as well as the controls necessary. The budgets were utilized in the form of training which also served as a control process so as to enable human resource aware of what is expected in the various departments. Monitoring of financial performance in the field of reducing errors and frauds was the commonly used method of evaluation and control. Comparing the budgeted figures with the actual expenditure, reducing the aging debt and also reducing recurrent expenses in the latest austerity measures were of critical importance.

The University of Nairobi has been able to review its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in various areas. The issue of competitive advantage is the most important as the first objective of the strategic plan was to review academic programs to ensure relevance and applicability. There was a huge investment in technology to assist in control measures set up in various departments. The finance expenditure office has accounting systems that process payment of salaries and other expenses. The Income Revenue generating office uses the SMIS system to capture all the fees received by students as well as show how much each student owes at any given time. This has become one of the strengths in investing in technology.

Customer satisfaction survey was carried in a few of the departments in the University of Nairobi. The results of the evaluation were discussed in departmental meetings and any unfavorable feedback sorted out as quickly as possible. Many of the departments however did not see the negative feedback given as a way of improving their services. The customer satisfaction survey was conducted formally in some departments in the form of feedback forms supplied at their offices while some departments just collected the feedback verbally.

5.3 Conclusion

There were great strides taken in evaluation and control in the last 10 years. There were formal ways of evaluation which had been used by the university to gauge whether it was on the right path towards the achievement of the goals of its strategic plan. These include performance appraisal, use of ISO, monitoring, customer feedback and strategic audits. Some of the informal ways of evaluating the performance of the strategic plan were whether there had been an increase in assets, student enrollment and revenue from income generating units.

The process of evaluation and control should be demystified through proper training and also including during the formulation of the strategic plan. There is need to create awareness in all levels of the implementation of the strategic plan. Effective evaluation and use of control processes will enable the UoN to compete at a higher level with many top Universities in the world. The process of evaluation and control will ensure that all goals in the strategic plan were achieved. In the long run, the implementation of the

results of most evaluations that have been conducted will elevate the status of the University of Nairobi. Evaluation and control will build competitiveness and improving overall performance within the higher education sector.

5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The university needs to allocate more resources for the training of staff in the area of evaluation and control. The training could be internal or external, where staff would be trained in workshops by experts such as KEBS. This would reduce the negative way in which some viewed this process. There should be clear and laid out ways of carrying out evaluation and also what control processes should be implemented where needed. Procedures should be spelt out to all the stakeholders to make this whole process flawless. The University management should involve staff from all the departments in the strategy planning process. This will naturally translate to better ways of evaluation and control as staff was charged with the day to day implementation of the plan.

Any negative issues arising from the evaluation should be documented and the evidence filed. This will serve in handling and improving the process of evaluation and the subsequent controls. Those charged with the task of implementing evaluation and control should interact freely with those who are evaluated as this will allow feedback to flow both ways.

The University of Nairobi management should also interact with other Universities especially in the developed countries concerning the process of evaluation and control. There was so much to be addressed and also learnt so that there could be improvement in

all areas of service in the University of Nairobi, towards becoming a world-class university committed to scholarly excellence. The process of control was not automatic. It must be tailored to meet the requirements and uniqueness of the organization. Whether controls were developed to facilitate innovation or for other purposes, managers must continually assess them to ensure they were achieving the intended results. Reliable and effective control systems have certain characteristics in common. The relative importance of these characteristics varies with circumstances, but most control systems were strengthened by their presence.

Finally evaluation always needs to be kept in perspective. When is enough evaluation enough? Planning, doing and evaluating are inextricably linked. Evaluation should be primarily for improvement, and if the staff believed otherwise, then administrators needed to seek reasons for this belief (Miller, Finley & Vancko, 2000). Evaluation for performance improvement is important for all the stakeholders at the University of Nairobi.

The University management and the general academic fraternity may use this study as a focal point given its contribution to knowledge on strategy evaluation and control practices. These findings may be compared with any other studies that had been carried out in other industries. The University Management Board should consider setting up a permanent evaluation and control office or department to mainly provide guidance on this very important process. This department should comprise of professionals with technical knowledge in the area of strategic management. It is necessary for the evaluation and control practices to be standardized so as to make the process fair.

This study is of great importance to the government as it provides the basic information on the evaluation and control practices that could be used in the higher education sector. The government should create a regulatory framework which will guide and inform the universities on how to manage their evaluation and control practices. The process of evaluation and control must be undertaken in an effective and efficient manner, to ensure that the institution achieved its strategic plan and also to be able to compete with other universities in the country as well as in Africa. To ensure the success of evaluation and control processes, there must be full co-operation between all stakeholders. The study found out that it was very important for the university management to engage all staff in its evaluation process to reduce the negative way in which they viewed the process. Finally, it should be noted that managing the evaluation and control practices is a continuous process whose rewards are worth it.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of this study was getting the respondents to answer the questions posed to them confidently and without suspicion. Some potential respondents did not want to get involved in this study or were too busy in meetings. Some thought that they would be blamed if the information leaked to other public institutions. One respondent said that he could not participate in the interview as he had sworn the oath of secrecy with the University management.

The other limitation noted was failure to answer some questions by some of the respondents. These respondents did not have a good background on theoretical issues underlying strategy evaluation and control. A small margin of error was expected as the

researcher tried to place some of the answers given by the respondents. There was also the element of time as a limitation of the study.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Further research should be conducted by all the Universities in Kenya. This will widen the horizon and scope of the knowledge gained on the strategy evaluation and control practices in institutions of higher education in Kenya. Research done in other universities should be compared to the findings in this study. Similar studies with a much wider context may yield different findings when a larger population is used.

New institutions of higher learning are developing all the time. With that, the evaluation and control practices will keep changing and new ones introduced. New strategies generated will need new ways of carrying out evaluation and control. Therefore, more studies should be undertaken to improve the strategy evaluation and control practices as this is a continuous process.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Introduction Letter

CATHERINE MUIRURI,

P.O. BOX 30197 – 00100,

NAIROBI.

Dear respondent,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER

I am currently pursuing the Master of Business Administration degree (Strategic Management Option) at the University of Nairobi. I have chosen to research on “Strategy Evaluation and Control Practices at the University of Nairobi”.

I humbly request you to provide answers to the following questions as these will provide data for subsequent analysis, in order to make a conclusion. The information will be used for the purpose of this study only.

Thanking you in advance,

CATHERINE MUIRURI.

D61/67562/2011

APPENDIX II: Letter from the University of Nairobi



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

Telephone: 020-2059162
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 19-8-2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter MUIRURI CATHERINE WANJIKU
Registration No. D61/67562/2011

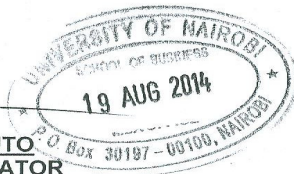
is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

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



APPENDIX III: Interview Guide

This interview guide is designed to collect data that will help in better understanding the strategy evaluation and control practices at the University of Nairobi.

The data provided by this interview guide will be treated in strict confidence.

STRATEGY EVALUATION AND CONTROL PRACTICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

1. Are you aware of the contents of the current strategic plan?
2. How are you involved in the evaluation of the strategic plan?
3. Who is involved in strategy formulation? Is there any input from consultants?
4. What are the broad objectives of the University's strategic plan?
5. What role does your department play in achieving these objectives?
6. What methods are employed in the strategy evaluation and control process?
7. Are enough resources allocated to strategy evaluation and control?
8. Has your department developed a set of key performance indicators to assess the success of strategic plan?
9. How are the strategic plans communicated to the various parties within the University?
10. How does the University go about identifying corrective action when strategic initiatives are failing or could be improved?
11. How does the current organizational structure support the implementation of the current strategic plan?
12. What is the attitude of employees when evaluating the strategies?
13. What is the level of co-ordination between your department and others in evaluating your strategic plans? How easy or hard is it to collaborate in this internally?
14. Does the University benchmark its strategies with those of peers in the education sector?
15. What is the University's effectiveness in evaluating the changes subsequent to initial strategy formulation?
16. Is there any clear fit between strategy and the organization structure?

17. Is there any relationship between strategy and the business environment; does each strategy have to be unique so as to suit a certain business environment?
18. Is there any one best way of evaluating, monitoring and controlling strategy?
19. Do incomplete reports affect the strategy evaluation and control process?
20. Is there any external interference concerning the strategy evaluation and control process?