

**STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND ITS CHALLENGES: A  
CASE OF KENYA SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND**

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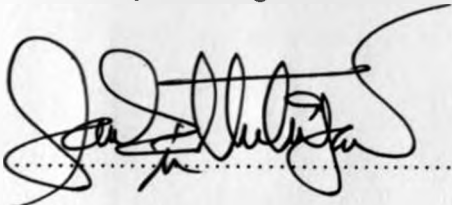
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## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I declare that this project is my original work and has never been submitted for a degree in any other university or college for examination/academic purposes.

Signature:  Date: 09/11/2011

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### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

This research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as the student Supervisor.

Signature:  Date: 11/11/11

**DR. WAHOME GAKURU**

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family and all those who supported me in the completion of this project.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Now that this research project has been completed I realize that it has been a real struggle. For that reason, I would like to extend my appreciation to all those without whose support it would not have been a success.

I extend my sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Dr. Wahome Gakuru, Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, University of Nairobi for his tireless guidance, selfless dedication and encouragements in making this project a reality. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the rest of university of Nairobi fraternity especially the library staff, MBA coordination office and the moderator to the success of this project.

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## ABSTRACT

Strategic plan implementation is an important process in strategic management. Many companies begin major new strategic initiatives but are often than not little impact to the organization. The integral reason for this is that strategic plans are not translated into measures that managers and employees can understand and use in their daily work. Strategy implementation task is the most complicated and time consuming part of strategic management cutting across vertically all facets of management and must be initiated from many points inside the organization.

The purpose of the study was to study determine the challenges faced by KSB in strategy implementation. The research was conducted through a case study. This study used primary data collected through interview guides and a questionnaire. The data collected was qualitative and was analyzed using content analysis method.

The study concludes that responsibilities of managers affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. The study revealed that the main aspects of management practices that affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind included allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions, acting as a role model, encouraging creativeness, providing support for employees and creating and sharing an organizational goal.

The main aspects of level of commitment of top management affected strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind and these included lack of top management backing as the main inhibiting factor, lack of manager's commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes, the managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective, the top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor and the top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Strategy which is a fundamental management tool in any organization is a multi dimensional concept that various authors have defined in different ways. It is the match between an organization's resources and skills and the environmental opportunities as well as the risks it faces and the purposes it wishes to accomplish (Thompson, 1993). Strategy is the heart of strategic management for it helps an organization to plan, formulate and implement various tasks in its attempts to prosper. Strategy can help the firm establish long term direction in its development and behavior (Grant, 2002). It is meant to provide guidance and direction for the activities of the organization.

Since strategic decisions influence the way organizations respond to their environment, it is very important for a firm to make strategic decisions and define strategy in terms of its function to the environment. The purpose of strategy is to provide directional cues to the organization that permit it to achieve its objectives while responding to the opportunities and threats in the environment (Piercy, 2002). Equally important, a strategy serves as a vehicle for achieving consistent decision making across different departments and individuals. Hamel (1989) views organizations as composed of many individuals all of whom are engaged in making decisions that must be coordinated.

For strategy to provide such coordination, it requires that the strategy process acts as a communication mechanism within the firm. Such a role is increasingly recognized in the strategic implementation processes of large companies (Brockman and Anthony, 2002). A fundamental concern is what the firm (either an individual or the organization more generally) aims to be in the future. Such a view is often made explicit in a statement of company vision. The purpose of such goal setting is not just to establish a direction to guide the formulation of strategy, but also to set aspirations for the company that can create the motivation for outstanding performance. Hamel (1991), argue that a critical ingredient in the strategies of outstandingly successful companies is what they term as "strategic intent" an obsession with achieving leadership within the field of endeavor.



Strategic implementation therefore is a management tool used to turn organizational dreams into reality.

### **1.1.1 Concept of Strategy Implementation**

According to Mintzberg (1996), implementation means carrying out the predetermined plans. Some strategies are planned and some others just emerge from actions and decisions of organizational members. Strategy implementation is concerned with the translation of strategy into organizational action through appropriate structure and design, resource planning and the management of strategic change (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). When considering implementation, questions relating to who should be responsible for carrying out the predetermined strategic plans, what are the structures in place and what changes are necessary must be addressed.

Strategic implementation is thus putting strategy into action. The way in which the strategy is implemented can have a significant impact on whether it will be successful or not. In most cases, different people from those who formulated it do implementation of the strategy. For this reason, care must be taken to communicate the strategy and the reasoning behind it. Otherwise, the implementation might not succeed if the strategy is misunderstood or if the affected parties resist its implementation because they do not understand why the particular strategy was selected (Thomson, 1993).

According to Mintzberg (1996), a strategy has little effect on an organization's performance until it is implemented and as Hendry and Kiel, (2004) claims; a strategic plan unimplemented but kept in a cabinet is a great source of employee negativity. Thus, putting the strategy into effect and getting the organization moving in the direction of strategy accomplishment calls for a fundamentally difference set of managerial tasks and skills. Whereas crafting strategy is largely an entrepreneurial activity, implementing strategy is primarily an internal administrative activity. Whereas strategy formulation entailed heavy doses of visions, analysis, and entrepreneurial judgment, successful strategy implementation depends upon the skills of working through others, motivating, culture-building and creating strong fits between strategies and how organization does things, ingrained behavior does not change just because a new strategy has been announced. Implementing strategy poses the tougher, more time-consuming management

challenge. Strategy implementation has attracted much less attention in strategic and organizational research than strategy formulation or strategic planning. Alexander (1991) suggests several reasons for this: strategy implementation is less glamorous than strategy formulation, people overlook it because of a belief that anyone can do it, people are not exactly sure what it includes and where it begins and ends.

### **1.1.2 Process and Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

Kaplan and Norton (2008) identified six strategy execution processes in companies which include, translating the strategy, managing strategic initiatives, aligning organisational units with the strategy; formulating the strategy, reviewing the strategy and updating the strategy. Strategic decisions determine the organizational relations to its external environment, encompass the entire organization, depend on input from all of functional areas in the organization, have a direct influence on the administrative and operational activities, and are vitally important to long-term health of an organization. According to Schermerhorn (1999), strategies must be well formulated and implemented in order to attain organizational objectives. Schermerhorn (1999) determined that the strategy implementation process included the many components of management and had to be successfully acted upon to achieve the desired results. Here, the critical point is that effective and successful strategy implementation depends on the achievement of good fits between the strategies and their means of implementation.

Robbins and Coulter (1996) have taken into consideration that no matter how effectively a company has planned its strategies, it could not succeed if the strategies were not implemented properly as well. Harrison (1996) also clarified that the more ineffective the top management decisions are, the more ineffective are the choices made at lower levels of management. Similarly, if top management's strategic choices are successful, this also reflects favorably the choices made in other parts of the organization. Beer and Eisenstat (2000) emphasized that the strategy implementation could be more difficult than thinking up a good strategy. Harrison (1996) explained that the real value of a decision surfaced only after the implementation of the decision. In other words, it will not be enough to

select a good decision but effective results will only be attained if the decision is also adequately implemented.

Organizations seem to have difficulties in implementing their strategies. Researchers have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation: e.g. weak management roles in implementation, a lack of communication, lacking a commitment to the strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, unaligned organizational systems and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities, and uncontrollable environmental factors (Grant, 2002, Lares-Mankki, 1994; Beer and Eisenstat, 2000). However, in recognition of the major strategic challenges currently faced by institutions the most problematic phase is recognised to be the implementation stage.

Wessel (1993) clearly stated that most of the individual barriers to strategy implementation that have been encountered fit into one of the following interrelated categories: too many and conflicting priorities, the top team does not function well; a top down management style; inter-functional conflicts; poor vertical communication, and inadequate management development. These categories can be translated into the following problems: competing activities distracted attention from implementing this decision, changes in responsibilities of key employees were not clearly defined, key formulators of the strategic decision did not play an active role in implementation and problems requiring top management involvement were not communicated early enough (Harrison 1996). Other challenges may arise from structural and economic barriers inherent in the industry. The real challenge in implementation of a strategy is in recognizing all support activities and putting them in place correctly. With regard to strategy implementation, there is evidence of some recurring themes, including communication and coordination which are essential to ensure that people across the organization know what to do and to ensure that they stay focused on the key targets everyday. In addition, strategic control systems provide a mechanism for keeping today's actions in congruence with tomorrow's goals and their importance to strategy implementation.

Qua-Enoo, Schendel and Quinn (2006) identified political support, the capacity of the implementing organization, supporting policies, strong linkages between policy actors and effective monitoring programs as key issues in the successful implementation of sustainable development policy mechanisms.

### **1.1.3 Kenya Society for the Blind**

The Kenya Society for the Blind (KSB) is a leading national organisation in the fight against blindness and promotion of the education and rehabilitation of the irreversibly blind. Established in 1956 by an Act of Parliament, KSB works in partnership with the Government, International and Local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the community to execute its mandate. The mandate of KSB is outlined by the Act as follows: To promote the welfare, education, training and employment of the blind and assist in the prevention and alleviation of blindness. KSB is a key partner in the sector implementing a number of projects that cut across eye care, education of visually impaired children, and rehabilitation of the visually impaired and empowering them to be socially and economically independent as well as in advocating for policies that improve the welfare of the visually impaired persons.

Kenya Society for the Blind (KSB) today operates in an environment that is constantly changing. The strategic plan identified a number of changes affecting the society. The changes, which are occurring both on the local and global level, have affected the way the non-profit sector carry on their business. These changes, to mention a few, include: Increased focus on the client perspectives; Programme shift from service to action research and advocacy; Advances in Information Communication Technology; Donors' increasing demand for value for money; Increased actors in the eye sector; Changing role of government; democratization; desire for firms to embrace corporate social responsibility; conforming to legislations and international conventions, for example: Vision 2020 and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and an emphasis on sector wide approach. These changes are radical and KSB strategy is to strategically position itself, make strategic choices and tap the new opportunities that these external changes present. Successful strategy implementation is very important for KSB not only do meet its mission, but also to survive.

One of the key strategic objectives and focus of the plan is to contribute to the attainment of Vision 2010: The Right to Sight, which is a global goal by key development organisations working in the blindness sector. The aim is to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year by increasing awareness of blindness as a major public health issue and campaigning for the right to sight for all people. Increasing awareness among policy makers, donor agencies, and government health functionaries to allocate more resources to eliminate avoidable and treatable blindness, implementing and monitoring specific programmes to control and treat the major causes of blindness, particularly in the developing regions of the world, creating infrastructure for eye care service delivery, disseminating appropriate and accessible technology and integrating eye care into general health care services.

Blindness has a huge negative effect on world economies with the State of the World's Sight Vision 2020 report stating that, based on available global data, 75% of blindness and visual impairment was avoidable and according to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, 314 million people worldwide live with low vision and blindness. Of these, 45 million people are blind, 269 million have low vision and over 50% of these are due to uncorrected refractive errors (near-sightedness, farsightedness or astigmatism). In most cases, normal vision could be restored with eyeglasses. A total of 90% of blind people live in low-income countries.

Restoration of sight and blindness prevention strategies is among the most cost-effective interventions in health care. Infectious causes of blindness are decreasing as a result of public health interventions and socioeconomic development. Blinding trachoma, one of the leading eye diseases in Africa, now affects fewer than 80 million people, compared with 360 million in 1985, WHO (2005). Ageing populations and lifestyle changes mean that chronic blinding conditions such as diabetic retinopathy are projected to rise exponentially. A successful implementation of vision 2020 initiative would decrease blindness to only 24 million by 2020 and lead to 429 million blind person years avoided. A conservative estimate of the economic gain is US\$ 102 billion, Frick & Foster, (2002). Similar studies in Australia have also demonstrated that vision disorders cost Australia AUD 9.85 billion (Taylor Pezzullo and Keeffe, 2006).

With such research results, a successful implementation of the KSB five year strategic plan that covers the years 2007 to 2011 will be a great contribution to Vision 2020 and for Kenya in particular. However, KSB continues to make considerable progress in positioning itself to cope with the changing demands of the environment; it still faces many problems to achieving total success as envisioned in the strategic plan. This research will help to identify the challenges that prevent KSB from achieving full benefits of its current strategic plan which is also currently under review. It will also help the researcher and other persons supporting KSB and other similar civil societies, to have a better understanding of the challenges faced by similar societies and possible solutions that can be used to achieve greater success while implementing strategic plans.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Strategic management has many challenges. Implementation of strategies is one of the biggest challenges in modern day strategic management. Johnson et al (2005) noted that it requires managers to develop appropriate strategies to specific circumstances of an organization. However, these circumstances change over time and it requires some clarity on the issues that are more important and critical than others and an ability to reconcile the conflicting pressures from the business environment, an organization's strategic capability and the expectations of stakeholders. However, few researches have been done on strategy implementation as compared to other areas such as strategy formulation. Okumus and Roper (1998) note that despite the importance of the strategy execution process, far more research has been carried out into strategy formulation while very few have been done into strategy implementation, while Alexander observes that literature is dominated by a focus on long range planning and strategy content rather than the actual implementation of strategies, on which little is written or researched (Alexander, 1991). The apathy to strategy implementation can be ascribed to several reasons, among them: greater likelihood of failures in implementing strategies; higher complexity in the process of strategy implementation: strategy implementation being considered to be less glamorous than formulation; and practical difficulties in research involving middle-level managers for instance (Alexander, 1991).

Shah (1996) carried out a study on the factors contributing to the successful implementation of strategies. The study used data collected from 96 managers of a cross section of organizations. According to the researcher, the following are the factors which cause the Strategic Implementation process to fail: the organization and their managers not paying as much attention to planning the implementation of their strategies as they give to formulating them, lack of top management commitment to the strategy implementation process, lack of effective leadership to drive the implementation process, lack of employee commitment to the strategy process, absence of rewards and incentives to encourage employees to contribute their best to the implementation process. The overall results of the study indicate that the factors listed above are of critical importance in the implementation of strategies.

Kiptarus (2003) carried out a study on strategy implementation and its challenges in the public corporation. The researcher did a case study on Telkom Kenya Limited. Telkom Kenya Limited like other public corporations operates in a complex environment, which is more unpredictable and less stable. The results showed the company's objectives are more ambiguous and less distinguishable and fluctuate in their order of priority depending on the government's ever changing political agenda. Management does not have the freedom to optimize its own performance in executing developed strategies. The researcher found the following as the challenges of strategy implementation: the company not referring to its master plan whenever they embark on development programmes, the company being controlled by the government, lack of funds, poor leadership style, limited IT technology and poor corporate culture.

Teang (2004) carried out a study to investigate common barriers to strategy implementation at different levels of an organization within Air New Zealand. The researcher sought to investigate whether implementation variables could potentially be barriers to implementation. The following barriers to strategy implementation were outlined: strategy formulation, environmental uncertainty, organizational structure, organizational culture, operational planning, communication, resource allocation, people, strategic control and strategic outcome.

Mbago (2004) carried out a study on assessment of factors affecting strategy implementation at Kenya Railways Corporation. The author assessed structure, leadership and culture as the factors affecting strategy implementation. The analysis revealed that the organization structure at the corporation, the leadership style, poor communication, weak change management and absence of team spirit contributed to strategy implementation challenges.

Awino (2000) studied the effectiveness and problems of strategy implementation of financing higher education in Kenya while Mumbua (2003), studied factors influencing strategy implementation by international NGO's operating in Kenya and Olali (2006), focused on challenges in the strategic plan implementation in the Cooperative Bank of Kenya Ltd. Juma (2008) studied strategy implementation and its challenges using a case of African Braille Centre. Even with the local context remaining the same in these local studies, organizational internal environment greatly differs and so are sectoral and managerial differences among organizations. As such strategy implementation challenges gained from the above studies would not be assumed to explain strategic implementation challenges in another organization unless empirical study suggests so.

The studies outlined above have not dealt with challenges and strategy implementation in KSB and can not also be assumed to be exhaustive of the challenges of implementation of strategy. KSB operates in a unique sectors including: eye care providers, disability and education. KSB faces some unique challenges. Khan (2010) observed that one key challenge facing eye care providers programme include aligning national eye health strategies with health system strengthening informed through health systems research. Resources are also becoming fewer with greater demand for accountability by the few donors still funding organisations and KSB is no exception.

The researcher has not come across any research on challenges and strategy implementation by KSB and therefore, this study seeks to bridge the existing academic gap by investigating challenges faced by Kenya Society for the Blind in the process of implementing its strategies. This will provide additional information onto the existing literature on the same topic as well as give conclusions and possible recommendations for successful strategy implementation in KSB and other similar organization. Specifically,



the study is seeking answers to the following question: What are the challenges that KSB has faced in implementing its strategies?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study was to determine the challenges faced by KSB in strategy implementation.

### **1.4 Importance of the Study**

The study is important not only to Kenya Society for the Blind managers but also other managers in other organizations and industries. It would help them understand the strategy implementation and its challenges and how to overcome them, it helps different firms achieve success better than others.

The government ministries and policy makers will also gain knowledge of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and organizations that exist to serve them and use the knowledge to develop policies that enhance positive participation of such organizations. The study will aim to bridge the gap in knowledge of strategy implementation among societies and the non-profit organization in Kenya especially those serving persons with disabilities.

The study would be a source of reference material for future researchers on other related topics; it will also help other academicians who undertake the same topic in their studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the information from other researchers who have carried out their research in the same field of study. The specific areas covered here are strategy and strategy implementation and factors that determine strategy implementation such as commitment of top management in strategy implementation, communication process in strategy implementation, managers' responsibilities in strategy implementation, organizational culture and structure in strategy implementation, challenges of strategy implementation and empirical review.

### **2.2 Strategy and Strategy implementation**

Strategy is a unifying theme that gives coherence and direction to the actions of an organization. Walker, et al (2006) says strategy is a fundamental pattern of present and planned objectives, resources deployment, and interactions of an organization with markets, competitors, and other environmental factors. Taylor et al (2006) defines strategy in the corporate context as the pattern of decisions in a company that determines and reveals its objectives, purpose or goals, produces the principles, policies and plans for achieving these goals and define the range of business the company is to pursue, the kind of economic and human organization it is or intends to be, the nature of the economic and human organization it intends to make to its shareholders, employees, customers, and communities. Ansoff (1999) argues that theories advanced to explain strategic behavior often differed because they are based on observations of organizations in different settings.

Strategic implementation is about working together and sharing information with each other. The value of any strategy and its potential contributions include increasing productivity, reducing costs, growing profits, and improving service or product quality. The implementation process involves the collective wisdom, knowledge, and even subconscious minds of the collaborators. Implementing strategies successfully is about matching the planned and the realizing strategies, which together aim at reaching the organizational vision. The components of strategy implementation – communication, interpretation, adoption and action are not necessarily successive and they cannot be

detached from one another. Okumus and Roper (1998) observe that despite the importance of the strategic execution process, far more research has been carried out into strategy formulation rather than into strategy implementation, while Alexander concludes that literature is dominated by a focus on long range planning and strategy content rather than the actual implementation of strategies, on which little is written or researched (Alexander, 1991).

More “practical” problems associated with the process of strategy implementation, meanwhile, include communication difficulties and “low” middle management skill levels (Otley, 2001). It is not surprising therefore that strategy implementation is a topic of great interest to both managers and strategy researchers. Indeed, Noble and Mokwa (1999) affirm that an integrative view encompassing both structural and interpersonal views can enhance our understanding of the factors leading to implementation success. Thus the recent interest in strategy implementation research, there is a significant need for more detailed and comprehensive models related to strategy implementation (Noble, 1999). What tends to be absent from these programs is attention to any higher order competencies which enable managers to use these educational or technical abilities to make a difference to the organization (Harrison, 1996).

## **2.3 Factors that Determine Strategy Implementation**

Implementing strategy often involves change. Managing strategy then must involve managing change. This will include understanding how the context of an organisation should influence the approach to change: the different type of roles for people in managing change. It also includes understanding the styles that can be adopted for managing change and in particular the levers by which change can be affected.

### **2.3.1 Competence of Top Management in Strategy Implementation**

The most important factor when implementing a strategy is the top level management’s commitment to the strategic direction itself. This is undoubtedly a prerequisite for strategy implementation. Therefore, top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process. This demonstrable commitment becomes, at the same time, a positive signal for all the affected organizational members

(Harrison, 2005). To successfully improve the overall probability that the strategy is implemented as intended, senior executives must abandon the notion that lower-level managers have the same perceptions of the strategy and its implementation, of its underlying rationale, and its urgency. They must not spare any effort not directing the employees of their ideas (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005). Overall though, it is increasingly acknowledged that the traditionally recognized problems of inappropriate organizational structure and lack of top management backing are the main inhibiting factors to effective strategy implementation (Aaltonen and Ikävalko, 2002).

Aaltonen and Ikävalko (2002) recognise the role of middle managers, arguing they are the “key actors” “who have a pivotal role in strategic communication”. Meanwhile, Bartlett and Goshal (1996) talk about middle managers as threatened silent resisters whose role needs to change more towards that of a “coach”, building capabilities, providing support and guidance through the encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes. So, if they are not committed to performing their roles the lower ranks employees will not be provided support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes.

In addition to the above, another inhibitor to successful strategy implementation that has been receiving a considerable amount of attention is the impact of an organization’s existing management controls (Harrison, 1997) and particularly its budgeting systems (Aaltonen and Ikävalko, 2002).

Johnson and Scholes (2002) suggest that education and training policies depend on a firm’s management culture and forms of management-led organizational change. While such policies are affected by a firm’s market, production technologies and strategic goals, managers have the discretion to pursue varied strategies regarding three issues: entry-level education and training, employee development, and company-school relations. The author’s survey of 406 firms in 1991 indicated that there are two management characteristics; innovation commitment and resistance to change. Two forms of management-led organizational change; firm downsizing and work redesign, shape education and training strategies. He also finds that training; development and school relations are a focal point for redesigning management, while downsizing focuses on entry-level training.

Harrison (1993) conducted a study among 3,044 white-collar employees of the Western Australian Public Service to study the correlation of employee attitudes towards functional flexibility. It was hypothesized that employees would favor functional flexibility if they have lower levels of perceived job characteristics, perceived reward equity, organizational commitment and affective wellbeing as well as a higher degree of educational attainment. In contrast, negative attitude towards functional flexibility is expected among older and long-tenured employees. Standard multiple linear regression analysis shows that age was the most predictive variable for functional flexibility whereas commitment, equity, extrinsic job satisfaction and aspiration were only modestly predictive.

### **2.3.2 Communication Process in Strategy Implementation**

Communication aspects should be emphasized in the implementation process. Even though studies point out that communication is a key success factor within strategy implementation (Harrison, 1996), communicating with employees concerning issues related to the strategy implementation is frequently delayed until the changes have already crystallized. In this context, many organizations are faced with the challenge of lack of institution of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy. In addition to inability to solicit questions and feedback, lack of communication causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees, and, furthermore, cover the reason behind changed circumstances (Alexander, 1985). It is essential both during and after an organizational change to communicate information about organizational developments to all levels in a timely fashion.

The way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it. To deal with this critical situation, an integrated communications plan must be developed. Such a plan is an effective vehicle for focusing the employees' attention on the value of the selected strategy to be implemented (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005). Lares-Mankki (1994) examined effects of top management's practices on employee commitment, job satisfaction, and role uncertainty by surveying 862 insurance

company workers. Five management practices were analysed: creating and sharing an organizational goal, acting as a role model, encouraging creativeness, providing support for employees, and allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions. The results indicated that there was a strong relationship between top management's actions and employees' attitudes and perceptions.

### **2.3.3 Managers Responsibilities in Strategy Implementation**

One of the reasons why strategy implementation processes frequently result in difficult and complex problems – or even fail in total – is the vagueness of the assignment of responsibilities. In addition, these responsibilities are diffused through numerous organizational units (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005) resulting in unclear individual responsibilities in the process. Cross-functional relations are representative of an implementation effort. This is indeed a challenge, because as already mentioned before organizational members tend to think only in their “own” department structures and lack of shared strategy in the organisation. This may be worsened by over-bureaucracy and can thus end up in a disaster for the whole implementation (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005). To avoid power struggles between departments and within hierarchies, one should create a plan with clear assignments of responsibilities regarding detailed implementation activities. This is a preventive way of preceding which results in clear responsibilities and therefore avoid potential problems (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005). Kaplan & David (2008) Strategy Implementation Maps (SIMs) is one sure way of detailing implementation activities.

Top management is essential to the effective implementation of strategic change. Top management provides a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables, their relationship to the organization, and the appropriateness of the organization's response to these variables. They (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005) also shape the perceived relationships among organization components (Noble, 1999). Top management is largely responsible for the determination of organization structure (e.g., information flow, decision-making processes, and job assignments). Management must also recognize the existing culture and learn to work within or change its parameters

(Otley, 2001). Top management is also responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems.

Finally, top management are involved in the design of information systems for the organization. In this role, managers influence the environmental variables most likely to receive attention in the organization (Sandelands, 1994). They must also make certain, that information concerning these key variables is available to affected managers. Top-level managers must also provide accurate and timely feedback concerning the organization's performance and the performance of individual business units within the organization. Organization members need information to maintain a realistic view of their performance, the performance of the organization, and the organization's relationship to the environment.

Managers cannot create coordination mechanisms or integrate strategic and short-term operating objectives if job responsibilities and accountability are unclear. Clarifying responsibility and accountability is vital to making strategy work. The problem is that job-related responsibilities are not always clear, and even authority is not always unambiguous (Parsa, 1999). Responsibility and accountability are often blurred when people from different divisions, functions, or hierarchical levels come together to solve a problem. Matrix-like structures in global settings marked by lateral, hierarchical, and country influences often suffer from a cloudy picture of responsibility, accountability, and authority. To execute strategy, responsibility and accountability must be clear. Without clarification of roles and responsibilities for critical tasks, decisions, and outcomes, making strategy work is difficult, at best.

#### **2.3.4 Organizational Culture and Structure in Strategy Implementation**

An organization does not exist within a cultural vacuum. Its operations are affected by what Johnson and Scholes, (2002) term as "interacting spheres of culture". A vast range of culture studies have shown that culture matters and, more important, the right organizational culture can lead to improved organizational performance. Writers such as Hofstede (2001) and Tayeb (1996) stressed the implications of culture for organisations employing a multi-cultural workforce. Miller (1999, 2002) and Schneiderman (1999) also

highlighted the importance of an effective culture to organizational success. Through culture, an organization can deliver sustained superior performance gaining competitive advantage and corporate success (Miller, 2002). The culture of the organization should support strategy being implemented. Sanderlands (1994, 1998) argues that learning occurs at individual, work group and organizational levels' and that creation of a learning culture promote performance and competitiveness.

Organizational culture refers to the leadership style of managers – how they spend their time, what they focus attention on, what questions they ask of employees, how they make decisions; also the organizational culture (the dominant values and beliefs, the norms, the conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, executive dining rooms, informal meetings with employees). In Collaborative Model of strategy implementation, organisations have both a strong culture and deep-rooted traditions. The distinction between “thinkers” and “doers” begins to blur but does not totally disappear.

Structure is the division of tasks for efficiency and clarity of purpose, and coordination between interdependent parts of the organization to ensure organizational effectiveness. Structure of the firm should be consisted with the strategy being implemented. If activities, responsibilities and interrelationships are not organized in a manner that is consistent with strategy chosen, the structure is left to evolve on its own (Pearce and Robinson 1997). According to Robins and Coulter (2002), organization structure influences the type of strategy used by an organization. Bowman (1987) while comparing power structures of firms and those of the not-for-profit organisations (NFPs) argued that the later display a wide variety of power structures. NFPs evoke a strong ideological or normative commitment from their members. Mintzberg (1996) identified that strong ideology will lead to strong resistance to change and freedom of action is severely constrained.

### **2.3.5 Firms Resources in Strategy Implementation**

Hofstede (2001) argues that, in developing countries, factors such as political instability and inflation and market conditions are more important to strategic planning practices



than national or organisational culture. Implementation of strategies can be faced by certain challenges, which may hinder the effectiveness of firms in utilization of strategies identified and employed. Three types of strategic challenges have been identified that may hamper a firm's ability to grasp new opportunities: they require massive amounts of resources, and the regulatory issues imposed by the government and the ability of company owners and managers. According to Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2009) the most important managerial tasks needed to drive the implementation of strategic initiatives forward are building a capable organization, marshaling the needed resources and steering them to strategy critical operating units, establishing policies and procedures that facilitate good strategy execution, adopting best practices and pushing for continuous improvement in how value chain activities are performed, creating internal operating systems that enable better execution, employing motivational practices and compensation incentives that gain wholehearted employee commitment to the strategy execution process, creating a strategy-supportive corporate culture and exerting the internal leadership. Also fitting the organization internal practices to what is needed for strategic success helps unite the organization behind the accomplishment of a strategy (Taylor et al. 2006).

Honing in on a successful method of strategy implementation, of course, can be a difficult and often overwhelming task. Even Human Resources professionals at the forefront of their field can find themselves well out of their depth when it comes to actually putting the vehicle of strategy into gear. The majority of management teams do a swell job of dovetailing their business processes with the newly-established strategy, and the benefits of cutting-edge technology typically fall into place – but the marriage of social system and strategy is far too often a rocky one (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). The human resource is fickle and complex, difficult to understand and, as a consequence, difficult to successfully manage. By working to improve human interactions, Human Resource will, by extension, be working to improve the actual execution and use of the more straightforward technology and business processes. Social issues, when left to fester, can grow to the unfortunate point of overshadowing otherwise superior efforts by the remaining two fields. Put simply: the best technology money can buy and that paragon of a business plan are meaningless without the right people to operate them

(Johnson and Scholes, 2002). HR professionals therefore become indispensable in their roles of mediating social issues and building up a support force to help drive the strategy implementation.

#### **2.4 Challenges of Strategy Implementation**

The implementation of appropriate strategies remains one of the most difficult areas of management. Researchers have revealed that 1 out of 10 strategies are implemented successfully. Studies that have been done have pointed a number of challenges in strategy implementation, e.g: weak management roles in implementation, a lack of communication, lacking a commitment to the strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, unaligned organization systems and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable environmental factors (Thomson, Strickland and Gamble, 2007, Giles, 1991, Sanderlands, 1994).

Strategy implementation evolves either from a process of winning group commitment through a coalitional form of decision-making, or as a result of complete coalitional involvement of implementation through a strong corporate culture. Implementing strategies successfully is about matching the planned and realizing strategies, which together aim at reaching the organization's vision. With firms evolving in terms of structure it follows that the style of strategy implementation will differ depending on the style of organisation and management that exists in the firm. Different types of leadership styles can play a critical role in overcoming barriers to implementation. Top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is also a challenge in strategy implementation. In some cases top managers may demonstrate unwillingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). This demonstrable lack of commitment becomes, at the same time, a negative signal for all the affected organizational members. Lack of institution's two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy and inability to solicit questions and feedback causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be

performed by the affected employees. In addition, vagueness of the assignment of responsibilities is a major problem in strategy implementation.

Finally, on review of literature on strategy implementation there is evidence of some recurring themes, including coordination which is essential to ensure that people across the organisation understand their roles and ensure that they stay focused on the key targets under the everyday pressures (Miller, 2002). Other include top-down/laissez-faire senior management style; unclear strategic intentions and conflicting priorities; an ineffective senior management team; poor vertical communication; weak co-ordination across functions, businesses or borders; and inadequate down-the-line leadership skills development (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000) and a shared vision and consensus (Beer et al., 1990). Meanwhile, the “deadly sins of strategy implementation” include: a lack of understanding of how the strategy should be implemented; customers and staff not fully appreciating the strategy; unclear individual responsibilities in the change process; difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognised or acted upon; and ignoring the day-to-day business imperatives. Eisenstat (1993) indicates that most companies attempting to develop new organization capacities stumble over these common organizational hurdles: competence, coordination, and commitment. These hurdles can be translated into the following implementation problems: Coordination of implementation activities was not effective enough; Capabilities of employees were insufficient; Training and instruction given to lower level employees were inadequate, and leadership and direction provided by departmental manager were inadequate.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a blueprint of the methodology that will be used by the researcher to find answers to the research question. In this chapter the research methodology was presented in the following order, research design, data collection method, instrument of data collection and finally the data analysis.

### **3.2 Research Design**

This was a case study since the unit of analysis will be one organization. This was a case study aimed at getting detailed information regarding the challenges faced by KSB in strategy implementation. According to Yin (1994) a case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. Kothari, (2004) noted that a case study involves a careful and complete observation of social units. It is a method of study in depth rather than breadth and places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and other interrelations. Primarily data which was collected from such a study is more reliable and up to date.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The target population composed of all the senior staff of the Kenya Society of the Blind. The population of the study included 18 senior staff based at the Head office of the Organization.

### **3.4 Sample**

A representative sample of 10 senior staff was purposely selected for this study. The study used both simple random and purposeful sampling to select the sample. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), random sampling frequently minimizes the sampling error in the population. This in turn increases the precision of any estimation methods used.

### **3.5 Data Collection Method**

The researcher used primary data. Primary data was collected through questionnaires and face to face interview using interview guides.

The interview guides had open-ended questions. The open-ended questions enable the researcher to collect qualitative data. This was used in order to gain a better understanding and enable a better and more insightful interpretation of the results from the study. The interview guides were designed comprising of two sections. The first part included the demographic and operational characteristics designed to determine fundamental issues including the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second part was devoted to the identification of the resource based strategy where the main issues of the study were put into focus.

The questionnaires and interview guides were administered to ten (10) senior staff of KSB. They included the Executive Director, Finance Manager, Education Manager, Eye Care Manager, Programme Managers, Administration Officer, Supervisors among others. The respondents were selected due to the seniority role they play in strategy implementation in KSB. However, the employees needed to have been in continued employment with KSB for the last two years were involved in the study. This is because they must have been involved in the strategy development or reviews for them to give informed information.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Before processing the responses, the completed interview guides were edited for completeness and consistency. Descriptive analysis was employed. The data was presented using tables and graphs. Measures of central tendency including mean and standard deviation were used to present the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and research findings of the study as set out in the research methodology and objectives. The study findings are on strategic management and its challenges, at the Kenya Society for the Blind.

#### 4.1.1 Response Rate

The study targeted 10 senior staff of KSB in collecting data with regard to strategic management and its challenges in Kenya Society for the Blind. From the study, 10 sample respondents filled-in and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 100%. This reasonable response rate was made a reality after the researcher made personal calls and visits to remind the respondent to fill-in and return the questionnaires and confirm interview timings.

### 4.2 Demographic Information

#### 4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

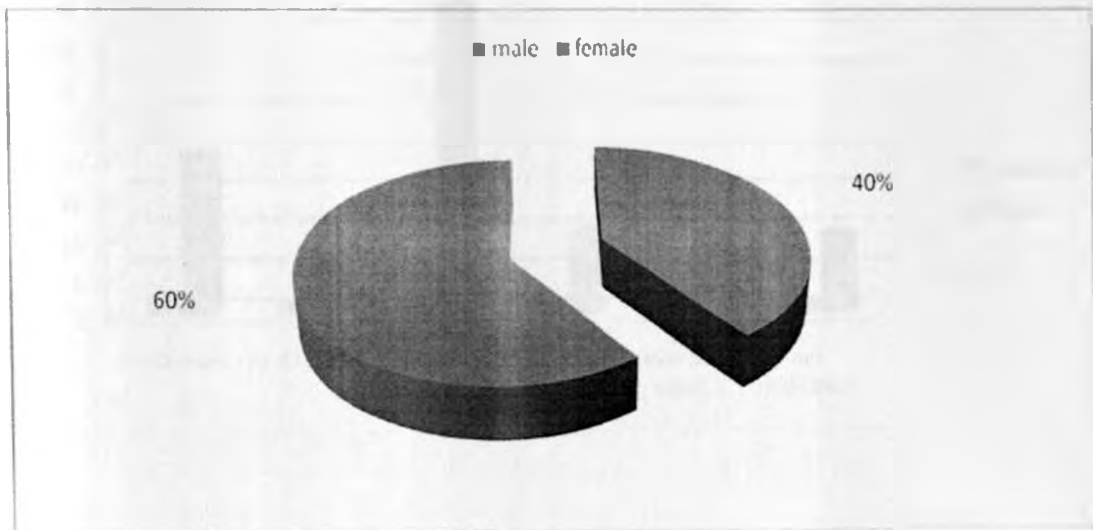
The study sought to establish the gender distribution of the respondents. From the findings, 60% of the respondents were female, 40% were male as shown in table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Gender of the Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	6	60
Male	4	40
<b>Total</b>	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents**



#### **4.2.2 Age of the Respondents**

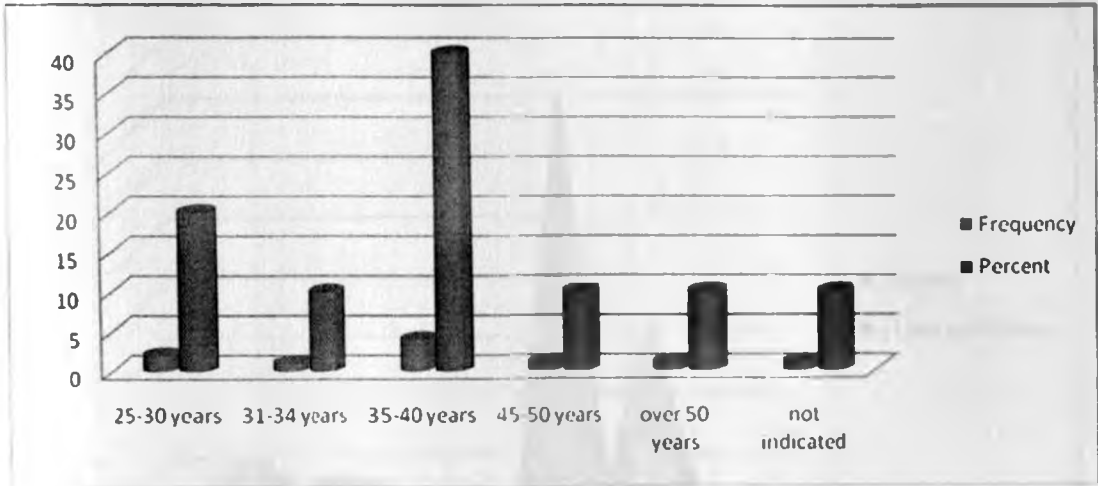
The study sought to establish the age distribution of the respondents. From the analysis, most of the respondents (40%) were aged between 35-40 years followed by those aged between 25-30 years at 20%. The respondents aged between 31-34 years, 45-50 years and over 50 years registered 10% each. Also, those respondents who did not indicate their age bracket represented 10%. These findings are well illustrated in the table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Age of the Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percent
35-40 years	4	40
25-30 years	2	20
31-34 years	1	10
45-50 years	1	10
over 50 years	1	10
not indicated	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research Data, 2011

Figure 4.2: Age of the Respondents



### 4.2.3 Years Worked With KSB

The study sought to establish the duration that the respondents had worked with KSB. From the analysis, most of the respondents (70%) had worked with KSB for a period of between 2-5 years while 30% of the respondents had worked over 11 years with KSB as shown in table 4.3 below.

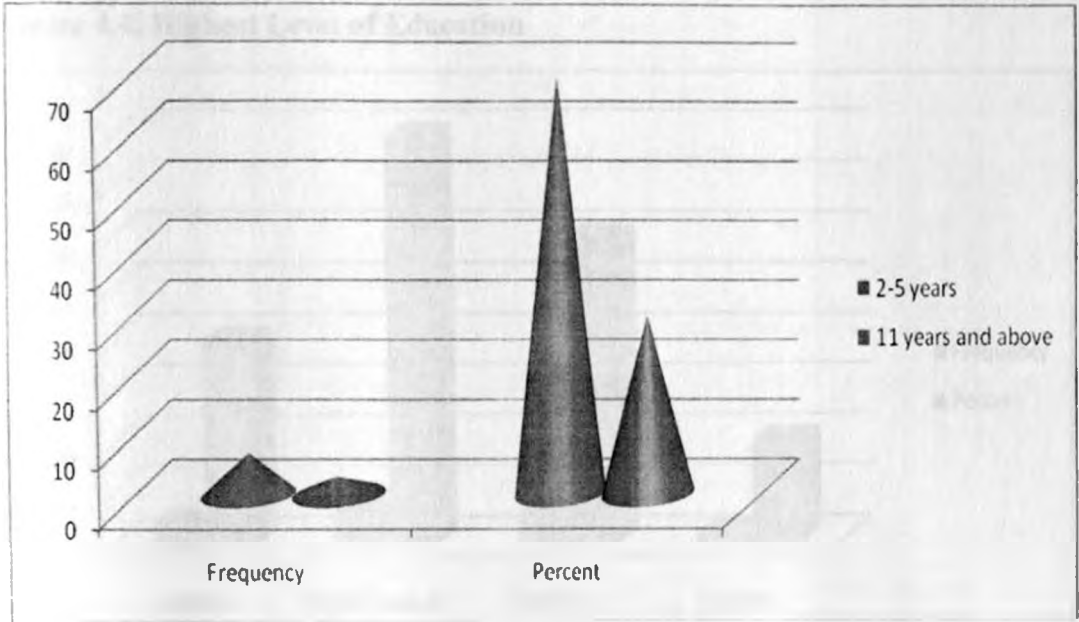
Table 4.3: Years Worked With KSB

Duration	Frequency	Percent
2-5 years	7	70
11 years and above	3	30
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011



**Figure 4.3: Years Worked With KSB**



**4.2.4 Highest Level of Education**

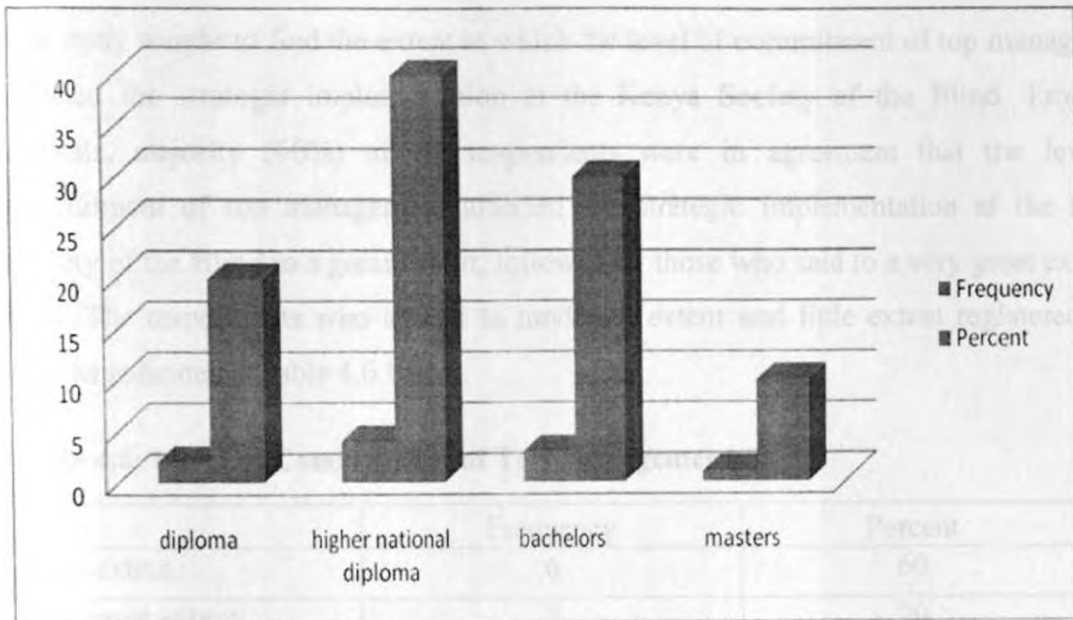
The study sought to establish the respondents' highest level of education. From the findings, 40% of the respondents had higher national diploma, followed by those having bachelor degree at 30%. The respondents who had diploma were represented by 20% while those with masters had 10%. These finding are illustrated in table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: Highest Level of Education**

Education	Frequency	Percent
Higher National Diploma	4	40
Bachelors	3	30
Diploma	2	20
Masters	1	10
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.4: Highest Level of Education**



**4.2.5 Level of Strategy Implementation**

The study further sought to rate the level at which respondents face challenges of strategy implementations in the following levels of strategy implementation in a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 represented to a very great extent and 5 represented to no extent. From the findings, majority of the respondents rated the three level of strategy implementation to a moderate extent as indicated by a mean score of 3.0000 for corporate level, 2.7778 for operation level and 2.6250 for business level. This is shown in table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5: Level of Strategy Implementation**

Level of Strategy Implementation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Corporate level	3.0000	1.00000
Operational level	2.7778	0.83333
Business level	2.6250	0.74402

Source: Research Data, 2011

### 4.3 Strategy Implementation

#### 4.3.1 Level of Commitment of Top Management

The study sought to find the extent at which the level of commitment of top management affected the strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. From the analysis, majority (60%) of the respondents were in agreement that the level of commitment of top management affected the strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind to a great extent, followed by those who said to a very great extent at 20%. The respondents who agreed to moderate extent and little extent registered 10% each as indicated in table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6: Level of Commitment of Top Management**

	Frequency	Percent
great extent	6	60
very great extent	2	20
moderate extent	1	10
little extent	1	10
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

#### 4.3.2 Effect of Level of Commitment of Top Management on the Strategic Implementation

The study also sought to establish the level of agreement with the statements that relate to the effect of level of commitment of top management on the strategic implementation. According to the findings, majority of the respondents agreed that lack of top management backing is the main inhibiting factor as indicated by a mean score of 2, lack of manager's commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes registered a mean score of 2, the managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective as shown by a mean score of 1.9 and the top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor as shown by a mean score of 1.6. The respondents also strongly agreed that the top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and

loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed to a mean score of 1.3.this is well illustrated in table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7: Effect of Level of Commitment of Top Management on the Strategic Implementation**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of top management backing is the main inhibiting factor	2	0.94281
Lack of manager’s commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes.	2	0.94281
The managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective.	1.9	1.1005
The top management’s commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor.	1.6	0.5164
The top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.	1.3	0.48305

Source: Research Data, 2011

#### **4.4 Communication Process in Strategy Implementation**

##### **4.4.1 Communication a Key Success Factor within Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**

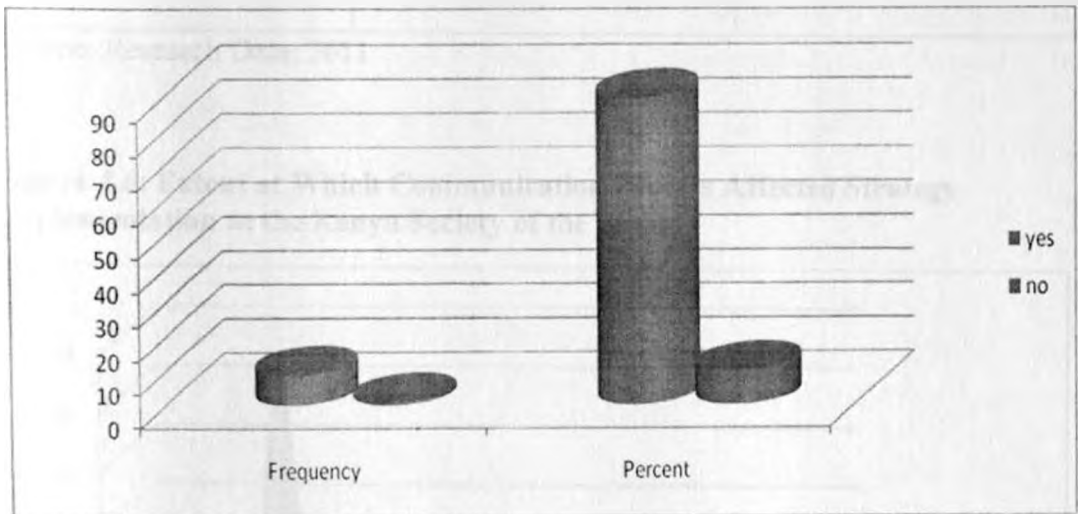
The study sought to establish whether communication was a key success factor within strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. From the findings, 90% of the respondents were in agreement that communication was a key success factor in strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind while 10% felt that communication was not a key success factor in the strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. This is well indicated in table 4.8 below.

**Table 4.8: Communication a Key Success Factor within Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9	90
No	1	10
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.5: Communication a Key Success Factor within Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**



**4.4.2 Extent to Which Communication Process Affected Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind.**

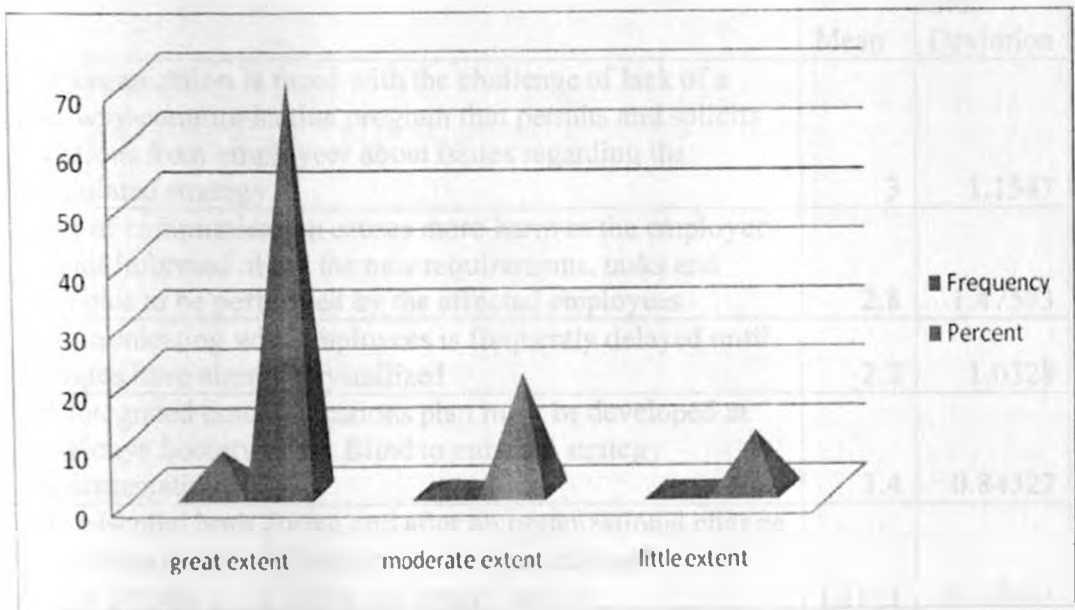
The study further sought to find the extent to which communication process affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. From the analysis, most (70%) of the respondents agreed to a great extent that communication process affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. followed by 20% who said to a moderate extent while 10% agreed to a little extent as shown in table 4.9 below.

**Table 4.9: Extent at Which Communication Process Affected Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**

	Frequency	Percent
great extent	7	70
moderate extent	2	20
little extent	1	10
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.6: Extent at Which Communication Process Affected Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**



#### 4.4.3 Communication in Strategy Implementation

The study sought to establish the extent of agreement with statements that relate to the communication process in strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. According to the study findings, the respondents were neutral that the organization is faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and

solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy and lack of communication causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees as shown by a mean score of 3 and 2.8 respectively. Those who agreed that communicating with employees is frequently delayed until changes have already crystallized registered a mean of 2.2. On whether an integrated communications plan must be developed at the Kenya Society of the Blind to enhance strategy implementation and whether it is essential both during and after an organizational change to communicate information about organizational developments to all levels in a timely fashion, the respondents strongly agreed as shown by a mean score of 1.4 and 1.1111 respectively. This is well illustrated in table 4.10 below.

**Table 4.10: Communication in Strategy Implementation**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization is faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy	3	1.1547
Lack of communication causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees	2.8	1.47573
Communicating with employees is frequently delayed until changes have already crystallized	2.2	1.0328
An integrated communications plan must be developed at the Kenya Society of the Blind to enhance strategy implementation	1.4	0.84327
It is essential both during and after an organizational change to communicate information about organizational developments to all levels in a timely fashion	1.1111	0.33333

Source: Research Data, 2011

**4.5 Responsibilities of Managers**

**4.5.1 Extent at Which Responsibilities of Managers Affected Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**

The respondents were also requested to indicate extent at which responsibilities of managers affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. From the

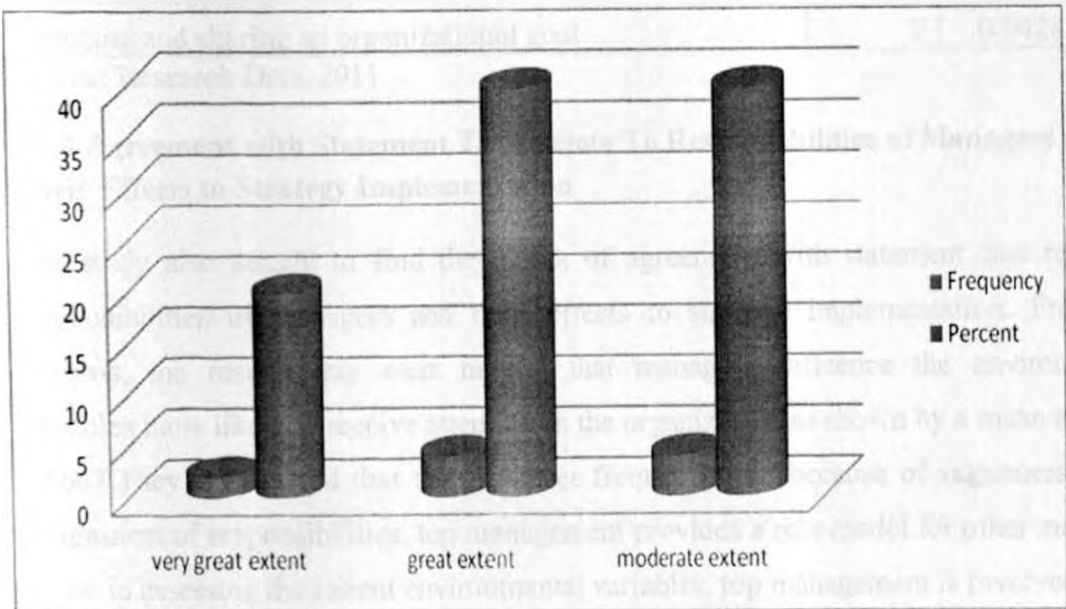
analysis, the respondents who agreed that responsibilities of managers affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind to a great extent and moderate extent recorded 40% each. 20% of the respondents agreed to a very great extent as shown in table 4.11 below.

**Table 4.11: Extent at Which Responsibilities of Managers Affected Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**

	Frequency	Percent
great extent	4	40
moderate extent	4	40
very great extent	2	20
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.7: Extent at Which Responsibilities of Managers Affected Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind**





#### 4.5.2 Management Practices

The study further sought to establish extent at which the following management practices affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. According to the finding, the respondents agreed on allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions, acting as a role model and encouraging creativeness to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.6, 2.5 and 2.5 respectively. On providing support for employees and creating and sharing an organizational goal, the respondents agreed to a great extent as shown by a mean score of 2.4 and 2 respectively. This is indicated in table 4.12 below.

**Table 4.12: Management Practices**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions	2.6	0.96609
Acting as a role model	2.5	0.70711
Encouraging creativeness	2.5	0.84984
Providing support for employees	2.4	0.69921
Creating and sharing an organizational goal	2	0.94281

Source: Research Data, 2011

#### 4.5.3 Agreement with Statement That Relate To Responsibilities of Managers and Their Effects to Strategy Implementation

The study also sought to find the extent of agreement with statement that relate to responsibilities of managers and their effects to strategy implementation. From the analysis, the respondents were neutral that managers influence the environmental variables most likely to receive attention in the organization as shown by a mean score of 2.6667. They also agreed that the processes frequently fail because of vagueness of the assignment of responsibilities, top management provides a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables, top management is involved in the design of information systems for the organization as shown by a mean score of 2.4444, 2.4 and 2 respectively. The respondents further agreed that top management shapes the perceived relationships among organization components, top management is responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems.

and that there is a strong relationship between top management's actions and employees' attitudes and perceptions which recorded a mean score of 1.9, 1.5556 and 1.5 respectively. The respondents strongly agreed that to avoid power struggles between departments and within hierarchies, there should be a plan with clear assignments of responsibilities regarding implementation activities which recorded a mean score of 1.3 as indicated in table 4.13 below.

**Table 4.13: Agreement with Statement That Relate To Responsibilities of Managers and Their Effects to Strategy Implementation**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Managers influence the environmental variables most likely to receive attention in the organization	2.6667	1.32288
The processes frequently fail because of vagueness of the assignment of responsibilities	2.4444	1.23603
Top management provides a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables	2.4	1.26491
Top management is involved in the design of information systems for the organization.	2	1.1547
Top management shapes the perceived relationships among organization components	1.9	0.8756
Top management is responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems.	1.5556	0.72648
There is a strong relationship between top management's actions and employees' attitudes and perceptions.	1.5	0.70711
To avoid power struggles between departments and within hierarchies, there should be a plan with clear assignments of responsibilities regarding implementation activities	1.3	0.67495

Source: Research Data, 2011

## 4.6 Organizational Culture

### 4.6.1 Organizational culture affects strategy implementation

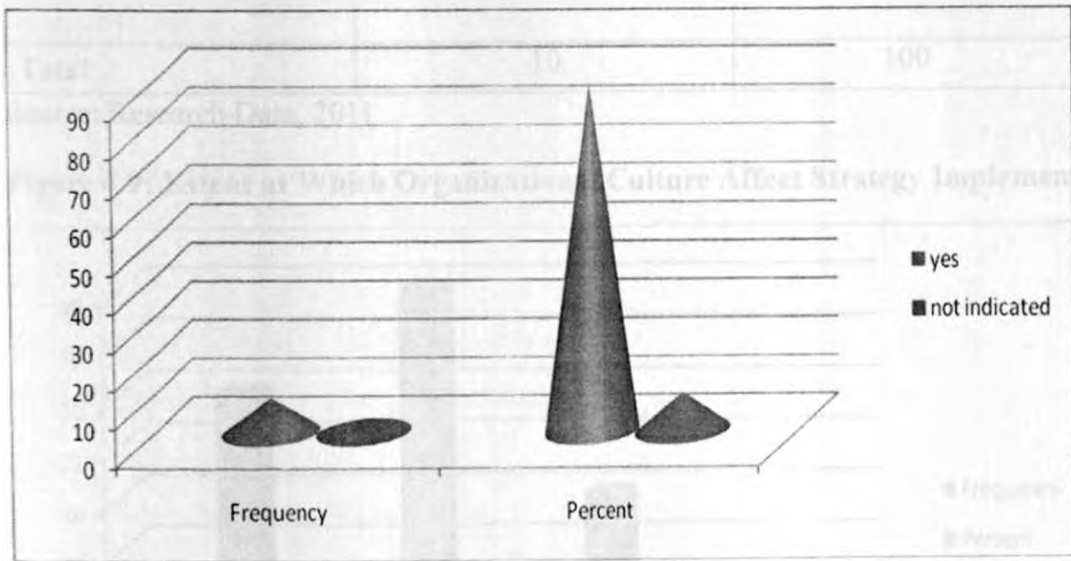
The study sought to establish the respondents' opinion on whether organizational culture affected strategy implementation. From the finding, 90% of the respondents were in agreement that organizational culture affected strategy implementation while 10% failed to indicate their opinion as shown in table 4.14 below.

**Table 4.14: Organizational culture affects strategy implementation**

	Frequency	Percent
yes	9	90
not indicated	1	10
<b>Total</b>	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.8: Organizational culture affects strategy implementation**



#### 4.6.2 Extent at Which Organizational Culture Affect Strategy Implementation

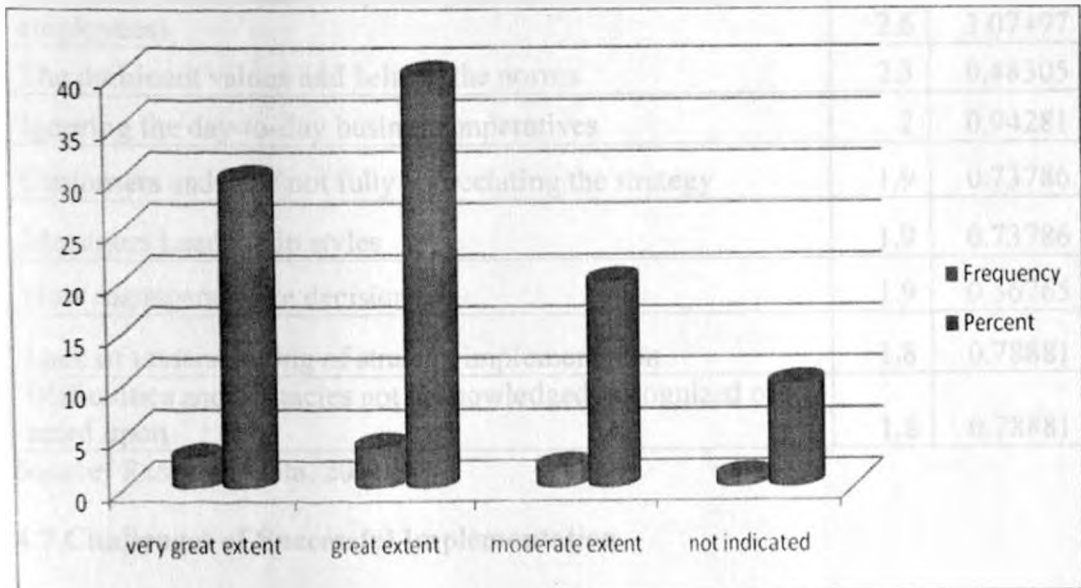
The study further sought to establish the extent at which organizational culture affected strategy implementation. From the analysis, 40% of the respondents that organizational culture affected strategy implementation to a great extent, followed by 30% who agreed to a very great extent. 20% of the respondents said to a moderate extent while 10% failed to indicate their level of extent as indicated in table 4.15 below.

**Table 4.15: Extent at Which Organizational Culture Affect Strategy Implementation**

	Frequency	Percent
great extent	4	40
very great extent	3	30
moderate extent	2	20
not indicated	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.9: Extent at Which Organizational Culture Affect Strategy Implementation**



#### **4.6.3 Extent at Which Facets of Organization Culture Affect Strategy Implementation**

The study also sought to establish the extent at which facets of organization culture affect strategy implementation. According to the findings, the respondents agreed to a moderate extent on the conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, corporate jets, informal meetings with employees) as shown by a mean score of

2.6.the also agreed to great extent on the dominant values and beliefs, the norms to a mean score of 2.3, ignoring the day-to-day business imperatives had a mean score of 2. On customers and staff not fully appreciating the strategy, manager’s leadership styles and how managers make decisions scored a mean of 1.9 each. The respondents agreed on lack of understanding of strategy implementation and difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognized or acted upon with a mean score of 1.8 each. This is well illustrated in table 4.16 below.

**Table 4.16: Extent at Which Facets of Organization Culture Affect Strategy Implementation**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, corporate jets, informal meetings with employees)	2.6	1.07497
The dominant values and beliefs, the norms	2.3	0.48305
Ignoring the day-to-day business imperatives.	2	0.94281
Customers and staff not fully appreciating the strategy	1.9	0.73786
Managers Leadership styles	1.9	0.73786
How managers make decisions	1.9	0.56765
Lack of understanding of strategy implementation	1.8	0.78881
Difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognized or acted upon	1.8	0.78881

Source: Research Data, 2011

#### **4.7 Challenges of Successful Implementation**

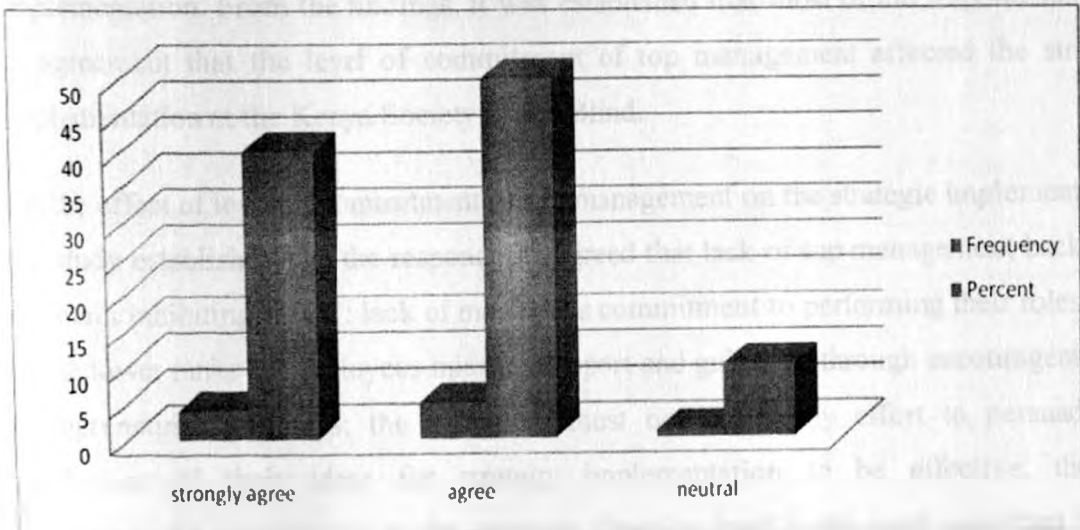
The study sought to establish the level of agreement that the challenges of successful implementation results from lack of cultivation of strong cultural values to meet the changing organizational needs. From the analysis, the respondents who agreed had 50%, followed by those who strongly agreed at 40% while 10% were neutral as shown in table 4.17 below.

**Table 4.17: The Challenges of Successful Implementation**

	Frequency	Percent
agree	5	50
strongly agree	4	40
neutral	1	10
Total	10	100

Source: Research Data, 2011

**Figure 4.10: The Challenges of Successful Implementation**



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

### **5.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents a summary of the data findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendations on strategy implementation and its challenges: a case of Kenya Society for the Blind. The conclusion and recommendations were based on the objectives of the study.

### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

The objective of the study was to determine the challenges faced by KSB in strategy implementation. From the findings, it was established that most of the respondents were in agreement that the level of commitment of top management affected the strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind.

On the effect of level of commitment of top management on the strategic implementation, the study established that the respondents agreed that lack of top management backing is the main inhibiting factor ; lack of manager's commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes; the managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective; the top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor. They also strongly agreed that the top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.

On communication process in strategy implementation, the study deduced that communication was a key success factor within strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind to a great extent. The study further established that most of the respondents were neutral that organization is faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy and lack of communication causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees. On the other hand, they agreed that communicating

with employees is frequently delayed until changes have already crystallized. In addition, they strongly agreed that integrated communications plan must be developed at the Kenya Society of the Blind to enhance strategy implementation and it is essential both during and after an organizational change to communicate information about organizational developments to all levels in a timely fashion.

On responsibilities of managers, the study established that responsibilities of managers affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. The study also revealed that the respondents agreed that management practices affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind which includes allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions, acting as a role model and encouraging creativeness, providing support for employees and creating and sharing an organizational goal.

In addition the study established that the respondents agreed that the processes frequently fail because of vagueness of the assignment of responsibilities, top management provide a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables and top management is involved in the design of information systems for the organization. They further agreed that top management shapes the perceived relationships among organization components, top management is responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems, and that there is a strong relationship between top management's actions and employees' attitudes and perceptions. They also strongly agreed that to avoid power struggles between departments and within hierarchies, there should be a plan with clear assignments of responsibilities regarding implementation activities but were neutral that managers influence the environmental variables most likely to receive attention in the organization.

On organizational culture, the study deduced that organizational culture affected strategy implementation to a great extent. The study further revealed that the respondents agreed that facets of organization culture affected strategy implementation such as conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, corporate jets, and informal meetings with employees), the dominant values and beliefs, the norms, ignoring



the day-to-day business imperatives and customers and staff not fully appreciating the strategy. Furthermore, they agreed that manager' leadership styles, how managers make decisions and lack of understanding of strategy implementation difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognized or acted upon affected strategy implementation. The study also established that the challenges of successful implementation results from lack of cultivation of strong cultural values to meet the changing organizational needs.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the findings the study concludes that the level of commitment of top management affected the strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. The findings revealed that the main aspects of level of commitment of top management that affect strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind included lack of top management backing as the main inhibiting factor, lack of manager's commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes, the managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective, the top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor and the top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.

The study also concludes that responsibilities of managers affected strategy implementation at the Kenya society of the blind. The study revealed that the main aspects of management practices that affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind includes allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions, acting as a role model, encouraging creativeness, providing support for employees and creating and sharing an organizational goal.

On whether organizational culture affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind, the study concluded that the facets of organization culture that affected strategy implementation are conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, corporate jets, informal meetings with employees), the dominant values, norms and beliefs, ignoring the day-to-day business imperatives, customers and

staff not fully appreciating the strategy, managers leadership styles and how managers make decisions lack of understanding of strategy implementation difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognized or acted upon.

#### **5.4 Policy Recommendations**

The study recommends that the level of commitment of top management is very vital at the Kenya Society of the Blind since it affects strategy implementation. Therefore, the study recommends that the top management's commitment to the strategic direction is the most important factor and the top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed. In addition managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective. Also, there is need for top management backing and manager's commitment to performing their roles for successful strategy implementation.

The study found out that communication was a key success factor within strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind. Therefore, the study recommends that communicating with employees should be timely whenever there are changes in the organization and there should be a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy. It further recommends more communication with the employees about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees and it is essential both during and after an organizational change to communicate information about organizational developments to all levels in a timely fashion. Finally, an integrated communications plan must be developed at the Kenya Society of the Blind to enhance strategy implementation.

The study also found out that responsibilities of managers and management practices affected strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind and therefore recommends that managers should encourage creating and sharing an organizational goal, act as a role model and encourage creativeness. The managers should also provide support for employees and allow employee participation in making job-related decisions. On responsibilities of managers, the study recommends the following: a strong

relationship between top management's actions and employees' attitudes and perceptions, a plan with clear assignments of responsibilities regarding implementation activities to avoid power struggles between departments and within hierarchies, top management to provide a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables, top management to shape the perceived relationships among organization components, top management to be responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems, top management to be involved in the design of information systems for the organization and finally managers to influence the environmental variables in order to receive attention in the organization.

The study revealed the facets of organization that affected strategy implementation and recommends a clear understanding of strategy implementation, customers and staff to fully appreciate the strategy, difficulties and obstacles should be acknowledged, recognized and acted upon. day-to-day business imperatives should not be ignored. Also, managers leadership styles , how managers make decisions, the dominant values and beliefs, the norms and conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, corporate jets, informal meetings with employees) should be ensure successful implementation of the strategy.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

The study suggests that another study be carried out on the organization to determine how these challenges identified in this study were dealt with in the next strategic planning period. This study should look at the effects of improved communication and staff involvement in the strategic planning process to minimize resistance during implementation. The study should also examine the commitment of management in the strategy implementation process.

Another study should be carried out covering the wider Disability NGO sector to enable generalization of the findings.

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## **Appendix I: Letter of Introduction**

7th September 2011

The Executive Director

Kenya Society for the Blind

P.O. Box 46656-00100

Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Madam,

### **Re: Request for a Research Study at Kenva Society for the Blind**

Please allow me to introduce myself to you and your esteemed colleagues. I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi, School of Business. I am conducting a management research project in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Strategic Management. The topic of my research is "Strategy Implementation and its Challenges" and I have picked your organisation for analysis in order to develop a case study.

I am interested in your organisation because KSB undertook its strategic plan for the period 2007 – 2011 and is currently conducting a review of the same. The research will entail personal interviews with senior staff who are involved in strategy implementation.

I am thus requesting for your kind approval to conduct this research in your organization. Since this is for academic purposes, the information obtained from your organisation will not be made public or shared with any other partner institutions or be used for any other purpose other than for research unless KSB chooses to do so. A copy of the final report will be shared with your organization upon request.

Yours Sincerely,

James M. Mutuku

MBA Student, University of Nairobi

School of Business

Dr. Wahome Gakuru

Supervisor, University of Nairobi.

School of Business

## **Appendix II: Interview Guide**

### **STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND ITS CHALLENGES: A CASE OF KENYA SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND**

#### **PART A: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

1. What is the most important factor when implementing the strategies at the Kenya Society for the Blind?
2. Who are involved in strategy implementation process in your organisation?
3. What is the effect of early involvement of firm members in the strategy process on successful strategy implementation?
4. What initiatives are taken by management in creating and sustaining a climate within the firm that motivates employees in their implementation role?
5. In your opinion what is the importance of management ability, or competence, in achieving successful strategy implementation
6. How does the level of commitment of top management affect the strategic implementation at the Kenya Society for the Blind?
7. How does communication process affect strategy implementation at Kenya Society for the Blind?
8. What causes delay in communicating with employees concerning issues related to the strategy implementation?
9. What are the challenges in the strategy implementation caused by underdevelopment of integrated communications plan at the Kenya Society for the Blind?
10. How does the responsibility of managers affect strategy implementation at the Kenya Society for the Blind?
11. What are the management practices that affect strategy implementation at the Kenya Society for the Blind?
12. What are the policies in place that ensure co-ordination of activities across functions at the Kenya Society for the Blind?

13. In your own view, how does organizational culture affect strategy implementation?
14. Which aspects of organization culture affect strategy implementation?
15. What role does communication play in the process of strategy implementation at your organization?

## **SECTION B: CHALLENGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Do you face the challenge of strategy implementation?
2. What are some of the challenges that surface during strategy implementation that had not been anticipated?
3. What other factors in the external environment had an adverse impact in strategy implementation at the Kenya Society for the Blind?
4. What are some of competing activities that cause distractions inhibiting strategy implementation?
5. What is the impact of poor communication and diminished feelings of ownership and commitment by employees to strategy implementation?
6. What are the challenges caused by ineffective coordination and poor sharing of responsibilities of strategy implementation activities?
7. How does shortage of resources affect the implementation of strategies in the organization?
8. What are the other challenges you face in strategy implementation at the organization?
9. What are the possible solutions to the challenges of strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

### Appendix III: Questionnaire

#### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Gender: Male  Female

2. Your age bracket (Tick whichever appropriate)

18 – 24 Years

25 - 30 Years

31 - 34 years

35 – 40 years

41 – 44 years

45 – 50 years

Over 51 years

3. For how long have you served in the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Less than 2 years	
2 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 years and more	

4. What is your highest level of education?

Certificate	
Diploma	
Higher National Diploma	
Bachelors	
Masters	
PhD	

6. Rate the level to which you face challenges of strategy implementations in the following levels of strategy implementation. Use a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is to a very great extent and 5 is to no extent.

Level of strategy implementation	1	2	3	4	5
Corporate level					
Business level					
Operational level					

## SECTION B: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

### LEVEL OF COMMITMENT OF TOP MANAGEMENT

1) To what extent does the level of commitment of top management affect the strategic implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Very great extent [ ]

Great extent [ ]

Moderate extent [ ]

Little extent [ ]

Not at all [ ]

2) What is your level of agreement with the following statements that relate to the effect of level of commitment of top management on the strategic implementation? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1= strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree.

Effect of level of commitment of top management on the strategic implementation	1	2	3	4	5
The top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor.					
The top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.					

The managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective.					
Lack of top management backing is the main inhibiting factor					
Lack of manager's commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance through encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes.					

### COMMUNICATION PROCESS IN STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

3) Is communication a key success factor within strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Yes

No

4) If yes, to what extent does communication process affect strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Very great extent

Great extent

Moderate extent

Little extent

Not at all

5) To what extent do you agree with the following statements that relate to communication process in strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Use a scale of 1-5 where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree.

Communication in strategy implementation	1	2	3	4	5
Communicating with employees is frequently delayed until changes have already crystallized					

The organization is faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy					
Lack of communication causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees					
It is essential both during and after an organizational change to communicate information about organizational developments to all levels in a timely fashion					
An integrated communications plan must be developed at the Kenya Society of the Blind to enhance strategy implementation					

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGERS

6) To what extent do responsibilities of managers affect strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Very great extent [ ]

Great extent [ ]

Moderate extent [ ]

Little extent [ ]

Not at all [ ]

7) To what extent do the following management practices affect strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind?

Management practices	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Little extent	Not at all
Creating and sharing an organizational goal					
Acting as a role model					



Encouraging creativeness					
Providing support for employees					
Allowing employee participation in making job-related decisions					

8) To what extent do you agree with the following statements that relate to responsibilities of managers and their effects to strategy implementation? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1= strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree.

Responsibilities of Managers	1	2	3	4	5
There is a strong relationship between top management's actions and employees' attitudes and perceptions.					
The processes frequently fail because of vagueness of the assignment of responsibilities					
To avoid power struggles between departments and within hierarchies, there should be a plan with clear assignments of responsibilities regarding implementation activities					
Top management provides a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables					
Top management shapes the perceived relationships among organization components					
Top management is responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems.					
Top management is involved in the design of information systems for the organization.					
Managers influence the environmental variables most likely to receive attention in the organization					

## ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

9) In your opinion, does organizational culture affect strategy implementation?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

10) If yes, to what extent does organizational culture affect strategy implementation?

Very great extent [ ]

Great extent [ ]

Moderate extent [ ]

Little extent [ ]

Not at all [ ]

11) To what extent do the following facets of organization culture affect strategy implementation?

Organizational Culture	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Little extent	Not at all
Lack of understanding of strategy implementation					
Customers and staff not fully appreciating the strategy					
Difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognised or acted upon					
Ignoring the day-to-day business imperatives.					
Managers Leadership styles					
How managers make decisions					

The dominant values and beliefs, the norms					
Conscious and unconscious symbolic acts taken by leaders (job titles, dress codes, corporate jets, informal meetings with employees)					

12) "The challenges of successful implementation results from lack of cultivation of strong cultural values to meet the changing organizational needs" to what extent do you agree with the statement?

Strongly agree [ ]

Agree [ ]

Neutral [ ]

Disagree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]

**THANK YOU!**