STRATEGIES ADOPTED TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE OF THE TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION IN KENYA

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DECLARATION

I, Peninah Macharia declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented for examination to any other University.

Signature……………………………..   **Date………..…………………..**

PENINAH N. MACHARIA

D61/77288/2015

This Research Project has been submitted with my authority as university supervisor.

Signature…………………………………. Date...

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my loving mother, husband and son who have always celebrated my academic achievements; and indeed to my extended family, for the encouragement and support that they gave me.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BSC   Balanced Score Card

EFA   Education for All

PMS   Performance Management Strategy

RBV   Resource-Based View

SAGA   Semi-Autonomous Government Agency

TSC   Teachers Service Commission

UPE   Universal Primary Education

TMIS   Teacher Management Information System

ABSTRACT

In Kenya, the public sector have realized the significance of policy formulation and developing detailed plans that act as a guide in assisting these institutions to realize their strategic goals such as provision of quality and efficient services. This study was set out to determine the strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya. The study adopted a case study research design. A case study research design allows the researcher to carry out an in-depth investigation of the object that is under investigation. An interview guide was used for collecting data. Primary data was collated by interviewing five departmental heads who were: the Director of ICT, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resource and Development, Director Teacher Management and Senior Deputy Director Policy Planning Research and Innovation. The study used content analysis. This method of analysis focused on discrete themes that described a wide range of meanings of a phenomenon rather than the statistical relevance of specific concepts. The study concluded that the popular strategies adopted by TSC were use of ICT. service delivery reengineering, customer and employee satisfaction surveys, adoption of ISO: 2008 quality management system, implementation of performance contract, strategic talent management programs, and decentralization of services to the county level. The study further concluded that the adoption of strategies contributed towards improved efficiency in service delivery, reduction of communication and supervision costs and information sharing which led to improved performance. The study recommends that TSC should increase its budgetary allocation to invest in information communication technology infrastructure. This will increase sharing of information and communication in the organisation that will result into reduced communication costs and efficiency in decision making processes and procedures. The study was limited to a case study research design which uses open-ended questions only. This kind of a research design cannot be utilized to establish the relationship that exists between strategies and performance which is essential for hypothesis testing and making comparisons with empirical studies and theories. Future researchers should consider carrying out a replica of the same study in the public sector for instance, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. This will enable the researchers to establish the strategies used by the ministry and to choose the most effective ones. This would form a basis for comparison of findings upon which a more reliable conclusion can be drawn. A comparative study should be carried out using both primary and secondary sources of data so that the researchers can establish existing relationship between strategies and performance and to find out the most appropriate measures of performance using financial measures such as Return on Assets, Sales growth and Return on Equity.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The business environment keeps on evolving. This means Technology and the ever-changing needs of the customers have forced firms in both the public and the private sector to formulate strategies to meet customer needs in an efficient and cost effective manner. This is essential in ensuring the firm's survival and improved performance in a competitive market environment. Performance involves accomplishment of an organisation's set goals and objectives. By identifying their core competencies firms can be able to focus on areas that give them an advantage over their rivals (Pearce and Robinson, 2005).

This study will be guided by three theories namely open-systems theory, dynamic capability theory and resource dependence theory. In open-systems theory the control of the firm externally is based on the idea that the behaviour choices and actions of an organization are examined by scanning the environment in which the organization operates. Dynamic capability theory put more emphasis on the need for the firm to build its capabilities to match organisational needs. A firm gains capability by aligning its resources towards achieving success. Resource dependency theory posits that for organizational success to be achieved, resources are essential and that their access and control is a basis of power (Lamb and Boyden, 2011).

Teachers Service Commission (TSC) is an independent institution that deals in matters of teachers' profession from primary school to tertiary level. This institution seeks to improve the quality of education and protecting the rights of the Kenyan child within the learning environment. The institution therefore, seeks to adopt strategies that are aimed at effective performance regulation and teachers' conduct. To

realize this goal, TSC has set out a Strategic Plan (2015-2019) which is meant to enhance efficiency of the TSC systems and processes, aimed at improving the teaching service in Kenya. This is a key element in Vision 2030 that entails provision of effective teaching services through a digital platform (TSC Handbook, 2015).

1.1.1 Concept of Strategy

According to Mintzberg (2008) strategy is an important plan that is intended to achieve one or more goals under uncertain conditions. Strategy can also be defined as the action plan of the firm aimed at developing competitive abilities for a long term. This plan involves achieving the objectives of economic, social, and environmental performance; in essence this assists in bridging the gap between the long-term vision and short-term decisions. According to Carpenter and Sanders (2007) strategy is a pattern of action and resource allocation designed to accomplish the expected goals of an organisation. Strategy can be defined as the manner in which the organisation differentiates itself from its rivals using relative strengths to meet its customer needs.

Strategy is critical since the resources available to organisations to realize such goals are normally limited. It also entails setting of goals, determining of actions on how to achieve them, and assembling resources required to execute these actions. A strategy describes how these goals can be achieved by use of these resources. Strategy can develop through a pattern of activity when the firm adapts to the environment. Activities such as strategic planning and strategic thinking are involved. Formulation and implementation are two key processes involved in strategy. Formulation entails analysing the environment or a situation, making a diagnosis then coming up with guiding principles. This includes activities such as strategic planning and strategic

thinking. A strategy is adopted to guide the direction of the overall organization, it is long term; it is normally evaluated in terms of years (Prahalad and Hamel, 2010).

Carpenter and Sanders (2007) maintain that a well-defined strategy seeks to integrate the firm's major plans, objectives, policies, programmes and commitments. It mobilizes and allocates limited resources in the most appropriate manner. This is defined by analysing the organisations distinctive strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the environment. Strategy considers the best way to deal with potential actions of intelligent opponents. Information Communication Technology is one of the factors that this study will consider as a strategic tool adopted by the organisation to improve organisational performance. Mintzberg (2008) indicates that information communication technology is part of strategy used by organisations to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

1.1.2 Performance Management Strategy

Wall (2007) posits that Performance Management Strategy (PMS) provides the means by which better results can be achieved in the firm. It entails having a shared vision between the top management and the employees. The top management is expected to manage performance in a framework of set goals, standards and competence requirements. PMS entails developing processes aimed at establishing a shared understanding on what needs to be achieved and how to adopt in managing and developing people which enhances the chances that set goals are attained within the short and the long term. A periodical assessment of the employees in the organisation improves their motivation, commitment to develop their capabilities and job satisfaction. A well-designed PMS process motivates the management to develop quality strategic plans, targets, and able to track performance closely which include

the activities that aid the management to realize their strategic objectives together with sustained value creation. In so doing, the management can be able to evaluate the current status of performance, the areas that need improvement and the approach that they should take to shape the direction of the firm to achieve set targets (Wall, 2007).

PMS seeks to establish a process which is continuous and flexible that involves the management together with those that act as acting partners in the organisation. They should strategize on how to influence the employee to work towards desired results. The use of PMS allows the top management to lay more focus on the future performance planning and improvement other than on performance appraisal done retrospectively. This provides a basis for regular communication between the top management and the employees or teams concerning the needs of performance and development (Richard, 2009).

PMS is concerned mainly on performance and development of individuals but it can as well be applied by teams. PMS uses target, standards and performance measures or indicators. But it equally deals with inputs; the knowledge, skills and competencies which are needed to obtain the desired output. It is of importance to note that development needs can be identified by defining the required input and examining how much the anticipated levels of performance have been achieved through effective utilization of skills and competencies (Pearce and Robinson, 2007)

1.1.3 Organisational Performance

According to Richard (2009) organizational performance is the actual output or the results of an organisation when they are measured against its intended goals and objectives. Performance is measured using both financial and also non-financial measures depending on what is being measured.

Financial measures are grouped into three distinct categories which include financial performance (profits, return on assets and return on investment), product market performance (sales, market share) and shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added). Non-financial measures are measures that are not expressed in monetary terms.

This study will measure organisational performance using non-financial measures that include improved efficiency and quality services. The tool commonly used for measuring performance is the Balanced Score Card (BSC) which is used to clarify the organisation's vision and strategy and translated into action (Upadhaya, Munir and Blount, 2014). The BSC utilizes four perspectives to evaluate organisational performance. They include financial, internal business process, the customer, and learning and growth. The objective of the BSC is to keep score of a variety of items aimed at maintaining a balance between short-term and long-term objectives, between financial and non-financial measures, between lagging and leading indicators, and between internal and external performance perspectives. Hudson, Smart, and Bourne (2001) contend that most firms globally apply the BSC as a tool to measure performance, even though performance is quite broad, the organisations tend to focus more on setting targets, goals, performance measurement and feedback. When executing performance measurement, the firms need to pick and categorize the appropriate measures to measure performance. Performance measurement uses measures which are financial and non-financial even though most firms do not make use of a balanced framework for financial and non-financial measures (Richard, 2009). There are no specific measures to measure performance because practitioners, firms and academicians use selected measures of performance in accordance to their areas of interest.

1.1.4 Teachers Service Commission in Kenya

TSC is an independent institution which was established under Article 237 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) to regulate teaching service in Kenya. Before assuming its current status, the Commission operated as a Semi-Autonomous Government Agency (SAGA) under the Ministry of Education since 1967. This was through an Act of parliament referred to as the TSC Cap 212. The Commission manages a force of 298,060 deployed in approximately 28,000 public educational institutions in Kenya. These include 211,809 teachers who are deployed in 20,760 public primary schools and 86,251 teachers who are serving in 7,755 public post primary institutions. The learner population served by the teachers is over 8 million at the primary school and over 2 million at the post primary school levels (Republic of Kenya, 2013). The Commission has 9 Commissioners and a Secretariat that manages the affairs of teachers. From its inception, there were 3 Commissioners and the Secretariat has grown from 100 to over 3000 officers in 2014 and is headed by the Commission Secretary who is its Chief Executive, advisor and executes Commission's policies and decisions.

The Kenyan Constitution mandates the Commission to register teachers who are trained; recruit and employ teachers who are registered; and assign those who are employed to serve in public school or institution. The Commission should promote and transfer teachers, take charge of the disciplinary control over teachers and to terminate their employment. TSC is further mandated to review the standards of education and training of those entering the teaching service, reviewing the demand for teachers and those teachers who are available and advise the national government on issues that concern the teaching profession.

The TSC Act (2012) dictates that the Commission should facilitate career progression and professional development of teachers and to monitor their conduct and performance. TSC plays a major role in supporting the effort of the Government in implementing the policies that relate to the Vision 2030, Universal Primary Education (UPE) and subsequently, Education For All (EFA). The operations of TSC are hence anchored to the continuing reforms in the Education Sector as indicated in the policy framework on Reforming Education and Training Sectors in Kenya (Sessional paper No. 14 of 2012). The main aim for these reforms is to enhance the quality of the teaching service by enhancing the professional capacity and teacher's conduct and providing them with the necessary support to contribute towards improved quality of education in public schools (Public Sector, 2012).

As part of its strategy, TSC Strategic Plan (2015-2019) has been developed within the existing policy and legal framework of the Commission and the entire policy framework of the education sector. The overall goal of the Strategic Plan is to realign the TSC processes and systems as per the provisions of the Constitution, provide an outline of the reform road-map of TSC for the next five years, provide a basis for performance planning, implementation and evaluation, provide a tool for resource mobilization and offer investment options to the Commission to engage its stakeholders and development partners (TSC Handbook, 2015).

1.2 Research Problem

Organisations have realized the worth of adopting strategies to accommodate the ever changing needs of the customers. They are motivated by the need of meeting customer needs and organisational expectations. Porter (2008) notes that the strategies adopted should conform to the needs of the organisations and aligned to meet the

mission and the vision of the organisation. Information technology is one of the strategies that have received growing attention especially in the public sector. It is perceived as an essential component in achieving enhancing efficiency of service delivery and overall performance (Mintzberg, 2008).

In Kenya, the public sector have realized the significance of policy formulation and developing detailed plans that act as a guide in assisting these institutions to realize their strategic goals such as provision of quality and efficient services. TSC is one of those institutions in the public sector that are considering to adopt Information Communication Technology Integration as a strategy to improve its automation level in compliance with e-government guidelines and impact positively on service delivery (TSC Handbook, 2015).

Strategy has been a subject for conceptual discussion and empirical examination overtime. Studies related to competitive strategies have been done in the service sector, both internationally and nationally. Hall (2012) investigated competitive strategies adopted by 64 American service firms, the results showed that the adoption of competitive strategies impacted positively on efficiency and performance. Chan (2013) studied the adoption of competitive strategies by Asian banks. The study found that banks that adopted competitive strategies recorded a high reduction in costs. Crannies (2014) found that system integration was a strategy used by the public sector to boost performance in the public sector in UK. In their study, Stern and Stalk, (2011) concluded that strategy was utilized as a competitive tool to achieve efficiency by service firms in Massachusetts.

Kimaita (2010) found that resistance to change and organizational culture were the main challenges that hindered implementation of strategic change management practices at TSC. This study did not address how information technology and other strategic change management practices impacted on organizational performance. Njuguna (2012) studied the competitive strategies adopted by the Safaricom Kenya Limited. The study revealed that the differentiation, cost leadership strategy, focus strategy were the most popular strategies. Mwangi (2013) found that information technology was one of the strategies used by Commercial banks to enhance efficiency, cost reduction and improved performance. Wanja (2014) found that inadequate financing in information technology and poor leadership hindered the way the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development performed. Meru (2015) found that the adoption of competitive strategies led to improved performance at Safaricom Limited. These studies have focused on the service industries: commercial banks and telecommunication firms. Limited focus has been given to the public sector especially, Teachers Service Commission in Kenya. This study therefore sought to determine: what are the strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya?

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of this study was to determine the strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

The policy industry, Government of Kenya might use the findings of this study to formulate policies that will ensure that the public sector adopt strategies to boost their efficiency, minimize cost and improve organizational performance.

TSC will understand the role of strategy and its contribution towards enhancing efficiency. The study will also shed more light on the challenges faced by TSC while implementing strategies. The results will be useful to the private sector by identifying the most appropriate strategies to enhance their performance. They will also widen their knowledge on the best measures to use in measuring organizational performance.

Researchers and academicians will learn and understand the theories that support this study, their relevance and how they relate to their study variables (strategy and organizational performance). The study findings that will be obtained in this study may be used as a basis for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive coverage of the literature review for the study which has been discussed in line with the objective for the study. It consists of the theoretical foundation and the strategies adopted to enhance organisational performance.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

This section consists of those theories that support the relationship between strategy adoption and organizational performance. These theories include Open Systems Theory, Resource Dependency Theory and Resource-based Theory.

2.2.1 Open Systems Theory

Boje and Gephert (1997) contend that an open system interfaces and interacts with the environment, through receiving inputs from it and giving output to the outside. This same system has a permeable boundary which allows interaction across it resulting to new ideas being readily absorbed. This allows integration and dissemination of useful ideas and hence makes it easier to cope with changes in the external environment under which they operate. Galbraith and Jay (2006) posit that the system is influenced by the environment, the environment is also influenced by the system and this allows the open system to sustain growth and to serve as its parent environment and thus probability for survival is therefore strengthened.

The environment consists of four influences which come from the geographic area in which the organization operates. These include cultural values which influence views about ethics and determine the relative importance of different issues. Economic

conditions include economic upswings, recessions, regional unemployment, and other regional factors that affect the ability of the organization to grow and prosper. Economic factors may control the contribution of the organization on the economy. Pfeffer (1997) posits that the legal or political environment assists the firm in allocating power in the society and to enforce laws. An open system operates within the legal and political systems which play an essential role in determining their stability in the long-term and future of the organization is secured.

Hatch (1997) posit that open systems are responsible for creating an enabling business environment and ensuring that all the regulations such as taxation and other important needs of the larger community are addressed. In line with this study, the public sector is a case of an open system that get inputs from the environment for example information communication technology which is meant to cope with the environmental changes that can guarantee citizens quality services to meet their evolving needs and to improve the quality of their lives.

2.2.2 Resource Dependency Theory

Pfeffer and Salami (2003) posit that resource dependency theory holds that actors without necessary resources strive to create relationships with other actors aimed at getting resources. This theory is significant to this study because it demonstrates the extent to which the firm can go to acquire resources to execute its plans in order to achieve its goals. Organizations try to change their dependence relationships by reducing their own dependence or through increasing the other organizations dependence on them. Organizations are seen as coalitions aligning their structure and behaviour patterns to obtain and maintain the required resource externally. When an organization acquires the external resources it reduces the level of dependence of the

organization on others which in turn increases the level of dependency by others. This means that the organization is able to gain a core competence over its competitors since its less dependency on others while other firms depend on it this leads to competitive advantage (Lamb and Boyden, 2011). This theory is built on assumptions that organizations are taken to comprise of internal and external coalitions that emanate from social exchanges that are created to influence and control behaviour. The environment is assumed to have limited and valued resources which are necessary for the organization to survive. There is uncertainty in the acquisition of resource in the environment (Stern and Stalk, 2011).

Going by this study, the needs of customers keeps on changing it is therefore, important for the public sector to devise strategies that can specifically address the changing needs of the citizens through provision of quality and efficient services. An example includes investing in modern technologies such as information communication technology to enhance integration, accessibility, flexibility and transparency of public services to the citizens. This creates positive image of the public making it more dependable by the citizens and other players including the private sector who might need its services. In view of this, the public sector can effectively be able to offer better services at a reduced cost and impact positively on performance.

2.2.3 Dynamic Capability Theory

Grant (2001) this theory insists on the need for a firm to continuously build its capabilities to effectively execute its functions. A firm gains dynamic capabilities having the right resources and integrating them into strategic goals this allows the firm to make maximum use of its resources and competencies towards achieving set

goals. Examples of these resources include information technology and human capital assets. Resources of the firm may be both tangible and intangible; these resources play an important role in strengthening the capabilities of the firm. Examples of tangible resources include information communication technology, gifted managers and competent staff. Intangible resources include corporate image, goodwill, patents and loyalties. Ray and Barney (2004) defined capabilities in contrast to resources, as the capacity of the firm to use resources. These resources are based on information, processes which are tangible or intangible that are specific to firms and developed through complex interactions among the firm's resources over time .

According to Hamel and Prahalad, (2004) dynamic capabilities constitute the ability of the firm to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to deal with the environment which keeps changing rapidly. Grant (2001) defines organizational capability as, the ability of the firm to repeatedly perform a productive task which has a relationship either directly or indirectly with the capacity of a firm to creating value by means of the transformation of inputs to outputs. Kirchoff (2011) stressed the value of organizational learning. They contend that capabilities and organisational learning are by all means a part of any strategy in a firm. Lee and Lee (2001) argue that being able to learn and create new knowledge is necessary in enabling the firm to consolidate its efforts in working towards set goals and targets.

Building the firm's capability is said to be one of the most challenging tasks that face the firm however, firms work harder to gain distinctive ability that enable them to exploit their full potential. Developing dynamic capabilities requires the firm to formulate strategies which will create an enabling environment for the firm to exploit its core competencies. Strategy defines the actions that the firm should take to achieve goals that are set and put the resources together to execute them. A strategy describes

how the set goals are achieved through utilizing resources that are available. The proponents of this theory, Amit and Shoemaker (2003) suggested that capabilities contribute to sustained competitive advantage for a firm, but not its resources. Haas and Hansen (2005) note that a firm that has developed capabilities is able to offer superior products and services that add value to customers hence enhance customer satisfaction.

2.3 Strategies Adopted to Enhance Organisational Performance

Goto and Odagiri (2012) posit that product innovation is a strategy used by firms to achieve and to improve value addition by guiding firms in investment decisions and resource allocation. Product innovation and the developments that emanate from it allow organisations to differentiate themselves in the marketplace. It leads to an increase in brand equity, faster technology adoption rates, increased returns and an environment conducive for further innovation. This strategy gives direction for the business's new product development efforts. This provides necessary link between efforts and business strategy. In this strategy, more emphasis is put on coming up with attack plans and deciding on the resource commitment required to deploy innovation strategy with success.

When carrying out a product or a service innovation the organisation should design a service that takes care of the specific needs of the customers. Such a service should target those unmet needs of the customers while enabling the firm to exploit its core competencies through improved service delivery for example efficient and transparent services. This allows the organisation to serve more customers at a reduced cost and hence contribute to improved organisational performance. Through product innovation, the firm can improve the quality of its services by making those services

unique and integrated to customer changing needs. This might create a platform to attract new customers while retaining existing customers to enjoy unique services that add value (Goto et al., 2012).

Von Hippel (2012) argue that organisations adopt ICT as a strategy to address the user demand for sophisticated, high quality and reliable ICT. This is aimed at promoting a customer focus culture in all ICT structures and identifying a long-term, sustainable and accessible solution which helps address the increase in demand for storage and the integration of information communication technology systems. This builds capacity for the organisation to meet the demands of increasing network while improving reliability of network connectivity; this enhances productivity of the organisation. Adoption of modern technologies enables the organisation to create additional business efficiencies at the same time improving service quality through centralisation of core ICT provision, duplication is reduced and the complexity of multiple systems and services where these exist at local level. Thus, the organisation can offer value adding services that can effectively meet the needs of its customers. ICT allows integration and information sharing in processes and procedures which enhances efficient cooperation and coordination of activities in an organisation. It minimizes communication and supervision costs while promoting transparency and process reliability in the organisation. This creates an enabling environment for the employees to boost their productivity. ICT has improved provision of information security through confidentiality, reliability and availability of information communication systems and the information processed by those systems while minimizing the possibility that data could be lost hence improved organisational reliability of executing its tasks (Geroski, 2012)

Research and development is also a strategy commonly used by firms to enhance their performance. Organisations set aside huge resources for research and development in order to understand the needs of their end-users. Globally, many organisations allocate a huge budget for research and developing to effectively understand the market trends, customer needs and the external environment. This provides a platform for innovation, product or service development since the organisations can offer services or a product whose attributes is aimed at serving particular needs in the market that are currently underserved or not taken care of completely. It is worth noting that it is not all innovations that succeed some fail, and a lot of money and resources is lost, this might lead to predetermined goals, lack of research and development and competition (Tidd, Bessant and Pavitt, 2011).

Training program assists employees to acquire specific knowledge and skills aimed at improving performance in their apparent roles. Development is more extensive and emphasis is on the growth of the employee and future performance, instead of an immediate job role. Stavrou, Brewster and Charalambous (2011) indicates that training and development programmes are part of the strategy commonly used by firms to improve the employees' skills and knowledge to boost efficiency and professionalism in their work. The purpose of training and development programmes is to assist employees learn specialized knowledge and skills aimed at improving performance in their current roles. Training and development programmes help the organisation to retain the right employees and grow profit.

As the current and future challenges of the business are met, training and development assumes a variety of learning actions, which range from the employees being trained for their present tasks and more specifically, sharing of knowledge aimed at improving the business horizon and the service to customers. It also focuses on their

career development, which lead to expanding individual as well as group and organizational effectiveness. A comprehensive training and development program helps in dealing with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to meet organizational goals and also in creation of a competitive advantage. The choice of the right type of training ensures that the employees have the appropriate skills and knowledge in the performance of their duties and to exploit their maximum potential. This should be a continuous process to ensure that they update their skills to suit the needs of the market (Aycan, 2011).

Lawler (2009) observes that talent management is a strategy used by organisations to attract and retain competent personnel that can contribute effectively towards the realization of corporate goals. This strategy entails identification of employees, developing, engaging; retaining and deploying those who can add value to the organisation by promising a high potential for the organisation's future and meeting the operational roles for the organisation. Organisations are recruiting and selecting talented employees who have a potential for high performance.

Organisations are using this approach in an effort to attract, develop and retain people who have the capability of meeting the immediate and future needs of the organisation. Organisations are adopting strategic talent management to create a path, design a reward plan for the top performing employees. This is intended to ensure that the organisations hire the best professionals who can effectively contribute towards improved organisational performance. Strategic talent management ensure that the organisation had the right employees with the right skills and knowledge. Talent management entails a complete set of process for recognizing, managing people to ensure successful business strategy that is integrated with the organisation's vision and mission (Davis, 2007).

The management of most organisations is focusing on retaining talented employees to ensure optimal levels of success. Firms consider aligning their talent to organisational strategy to enhance improved performance. Organisations implement the best talent management processes aimed at competing in the global market and grasp new opportunities before the rest of the market; this is not achievable without a competent team of employees (Kahinde, 2012).

Lawler (2009) indicates that strategic talent management is part of the plan that is aligned closely with the organisation's strategic plan and the entire needs of the business. When employees are aligned to organisational goals, it creates a sense of ownership and success and this makes employees to be more committed to achieve a higher level of performance. The top management however, must clearly communicate the strategic business objectives across the organisation and provide clear directions on how goals ought to be achieved.

Product differentiation is that process which distinguishes a product or a service from the rest so that it is more attractive to a particular target market. Under this strategy, the organization provides differentiated goods or services which aim at satisfying customer needs in a more competitive manner, this allow organizations to focus more in creation of value that will generate a comparatively higher price and a high margin leading to improved organizational productivity. The organization that differentiates its product or services incurs additional costs in creating competitive advantage which leads to organizational performance. The costs must be recovered through an increase in revenue generated from sales. There is a risk that competitors could copy the differentiation hence the incentive by organizations to always innovate and improve continuously. In the corporate sector a strategy that is used widely in provision of special customer needs is to target smaller market segments. This encompasses

identification of the needs of the customers in the market and designing products that can meet their needs. Porter (2008) contended that, the generic strategy of focus rests on the choice of a narrow competitive scope within an industry. The focuser chooses a segment or more segments in the industry and comes up with specific strategy to serve them while excluding the others. In using cost focus strategy, a firm tries to achieve a cost advantage in its target segment to enhance organizational performance.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covered the research methodology that was used to address the research problem. The chapter discussed the following sub-topics, the research design, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a case study research design. A case study research design allows the researcher to carry out an in-depth investigation of the object that is under investigation. Maxwell (2007) posits that a case study is focused on a single unit of analysis for example a case study, this kind of design seeks information from top management team that are directly involved in matters under investigation. The use of this design enables the researcher to get first-hand information that is accurate and reliable.

A case study presented data that was collected using various approaches that included but not limited to interviews, observations, audio and video data. The main purpose of data collection using various means is to enhance the theory generating capabilities of the case and ensuing validity to assertions made by the interviews in the case study.

3.3 Data Collection

An interview guide was used for collecting data. Primary data was collated by interviewing five departmental heads who were: the Director of ICT, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resource and Development, Director Teacher Management and Senior Deputy Director Policy Planning Research and Innovation.

The chosen interviewees were believed to be highly involved and well versed in matters of strategies and performance at Teachers Service Commission in Kenya.

The interview guide was guided by the study objective which was to determine strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya. The interview guide consisted of two sections; section A obtained information on the general profile of the organisation and the interviewees. Section B sought information on the influence of strategies on performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya.

A face-to-face interview was conducted with heads of department. Prior arrangements were made to ensure that the interview sessions were done at the convenient time of the Heads of Departments or their representatives. This ensured that adequate time was created for the interview sessions to allow the interviewees to respond to all the questions from the interviewer without rushing. Secondary data was used for purposes of historical information, policies, trends and reference purposes. The data was obtained from the records of TSC, regular bulleting and archives.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data was analysed using content analysis which was a systematic qualitative description of the composition of objects. According to Neundorf (2009) this analysis is an approach used to summarize any form of content through counting different aspects of the content. This resulted to a more accurate and objective evaluation unlike comparison of content based on the impressions of the listener. The method allowed the researcher to get detailed information about an organisation that is more reliable concerning the study variables.

The significance of content analysis was that it focused on distinct themes. The study used content analysis. This method of analysis focused on discrete themes that described a wide range of meanings of a phenomenon rather than the statistical relevance of specific concepts. This made this approach more appropriate in providing details of the firm especially on the variables that were under investigation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains data analysis that was guided by the objective of the study which was to determine the strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya. The study used a case study research design and data was analysed using content analysis. The chapter covers the following sub-headings: Introduction, Response Rate, Demographics, strategies adopted to enhance organisational performance and Discussion and Findings.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher targeted to interview five departmental heads who were Director of ICT, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resource and Development, Director Teacher Management and Senior Deputy Director Policy Planning Research and Innovation and all of them availed themselves for the interview process. Having been able to interview all the interviewees enabled the researcher to get more detailed and accurate information for quality findings.

4.3 Demographics

The interviewees' managerial positions included acting Director ICT, Ag. Senior Deputy Directors, Human Resource Management and Development; Teacher Management; Policy Planning Research and Innovation and the Assistant Deputy Director Finance. With regard to the number of years that the interviewees had served at TSC, the findings revealed that majority of them had served for more than ten years and hence understood the organisational processes and procedures.

Concerning the number of years served in the current position, the findings revealed that the interviewees served for more than three years which implied that they had attained a relevant work experience in matters of strategy implementation and performance. The interviewees indicated that TSC provided teacher educational centred services which involved management and resource planning services. Through adoption of strategy, TSC needed to improve the quality of educational services offered in schools and ensuring that teachers upheld professionalism in their work.

4.4 Strategies adopted by TSC to enhance Organisational Performance

The findings revealed that TSC adopted the following strategies: information and communications technology (ICT), service delivery reengineering, customer and employee satisfaction surveys, adoption of ISO: 2008 quality management system, implementation of contract performance contract, strategic talent management programs, and decentralization of services to the county level. The interviewees indicated that the organization adopted ISO: 2008 quality management system in order to enhance its overall organizational performance. The key objectives of the strategy were to ensure that there was consistency on the delivery of services by TSC, effectiveness, efficiency, and reduction of waste.

The strategy played a big role in the standardization of services in the organization. The quality of services delivered by the TSC therefore, improved. The quality management system ensured that the organization's day to day activities were streamlined within its plans and objectives.

The adoption of the Quality management standards minimized the levels of complains within the education sector. Complaints arose wherever the clients were unsatisfied with the quality of services as enshrined in the organization's charter of service. Although it was challenging to integrate QMS in the organisational strategies, the top management made tremendous efforts to influence their employees. The TSC was mandated to ensure that teachers in Kenya complied with teaching standards indicated under the Kenyan law.

Kenya's education sector witnessed many challenges which included poor performance of learners, understaffing, misappropriation of funds and teacher's strikes, among others. Stakeholders were blamed for poor quality of education. This led to reengineering of the systems to change the current processes and to improve quality of services.

Through organizational reengineering TSC was been able to maximize its use of available resources to ensure measurable performance. The primary objective of reengineering processes in TSC was to make processes more learner-centered, increase value addition and realize accountability of public resources.

TSC introduced the performance contracts policy to enhance transparency, accountability as well as service delivery in public schools. TSC and the Ministry of Education developed performance management contracts that can be negotiated which was signed by the management alongside teachers. Performance contracts for principals and teachers outlined the duties of all public agencies and teachers service employees. They also provided unique criteria and targets to assess success. Annually, the performance of all teachers was evaluated against the earlier commitments made by them with respect to their performance contracts.

Process reengineering by means of performance contracts between the government and the teachers promoted transparency, accountability and the commitment of all stakeholders. This improved service delivery at TSC and the country benefited from education investments. Teachers received their rightful remuneration for their performance and parents and the government recorded better returns on investments in TSC.

Process Reengineering was being utilized as a change management tool in TSC. The need for change developed the need for alterations in the management of TSC such as the expansion of education, regular curriculum reviews, altering learner profile, pressures to get value for finances, intense competition and the utilization of performance contracts. TSC agency considered integrating process reengineering to continuously address the changing needs of the customers.

TSC Board of Commissioners was involved in the formulation and implementation of strategies while the Commission Secretary assisted by employees participated in the implementation. These strategies were geared towards enhancing organizational performance, though, in some instances, this was unsuccessful. Some strategies were met with strong opposition from the teachers, communities, and at times politicians.

The specific strategies that TSC put in place to improve the quality of its services were automation of services, decentralization, and a four-level Performance Contract (PC) which cascaded from CEO down to the Staff and Performance Appraisal (PA) for Secretariat and teachers.

The strategies helped the organization to achieve overall goals and objectives as planned. For example, The TSC decentralized its services to the county level. Decentralization improved the quality of services while ensured that the organization

reached out to many employees. This improved correspondence between TSC headquarters, TSC county administrators, the teachers and other stakeholders. The proximity to schools enabled the organization to monitor the developments in the regions closely. This enhanced efficiency in the performance of TSC in the whole country.

The decentralization of services to the county level aligned the organization management and operations with that of the country based in counties. TSC had branches in all the counties, and this had an effect in cost reduction with respect to its operations. This was because its officers were based in the county offices, and therefore, they did not have to commute frequently to and from Nairobi. TSC was also closely connected to the education stakeholders in the grass root. This made it easier for TSC to identify issues that affected the education sector in a more direct manner and this improved the remedial action if required. These offices played a big role in the achievement of the set goals and objectives by TSC.

Having their offices in the counties facilitated the organization to monitor the teachers closely. It was able to find out those teachers who are not delivering in classes and the communities could reach out to the organization in case of need. This was a challenge if TSC had no offices in the counties. Decentralization of TSC services to the county level, therefore, improved its efficiency by reducing costs of operations, improved communication, and accuracy in data correction

The strategies influenced TSC capabilities utilization. It was able to identify gaps for development so that it could then build capacity and be able to utilize manpower effectively. It also improved quality and delivery of its services. TSC was also able to approach issues proactively instead of reacting.

The differentiation strategy in TSC enabled it to segment its services effectively. For example, there were teachers employed by TSC and serving under TSC, there were teachers registered by TSC but were employed by private institutions, and they were teachers who were released by TSC to serve in other institutions for specified time. The differentiation alienated them according to the objectives laid out.

The adoption of ICT enhanced efficiency at the organization by reducing costs, efficient utilization of manpower, Completeness of transactions accurately, data storage and ease of retrieval of information, and time-saving. TSC employed reforms considered in the public sector by promoting financial as well as human resources management through harnessing ICT. Adoption of ICT at TSC promoted service delivery to teachers through salary processing time, on spot response to customer complaints, transparency, efficient data management as well as the convenience of services led to customer loyalty and a positive image of image of TSC.

TSC had a specialized Division which reported directly to the CEO. The division improved the quality of teachers' services and performance at the TSC by preparing Performance Contracts. It provided technical guidance in the preparation of policy documents among others. During vetting of evidence for performance, the division identified performance gaps and advised on the way forward for remedial action. It also monitored and evaluated the services and performance of teachers.

The training and development programs at TSC enhanced the employees' performance by building capacity on emerging technological trends and challenges for example GOK e-system which was a requirement in all financial transactions.

Therefore, the TSC staff had to be empowered. Refresher courses enhanced performance. Training and development motivated employees, which eventually

contributed to overall performance. The programs facilitated sharing of information and skills through interactions.

Strategic talent management programs had not achieved much in improving employees' performance. This was because there was less emphasis on this area. More needed to be done to exploit the potential of the organization's staff. The various strategies implemented by TSC led to the effective utilization of resources in achieving superior performance. For example, the automation of its process led to cost saving in areas such as workforce; retrieval, accuracy and real-time sharing of information for example TMIS and so forth. Decentralisation brought services closer to teachers, thus creating more time on service. Automation benefited the human resources department positively.

The human resource monitored performance through performance contract and performance appraisal which led to improvement of performance, and took remedial action on any identified gaps. The adoption of strategies minimized public complaints on the services delivered by TSC. This reduced teacher visits and calls to headquarters. This led to satisfaction and motivation by teachers. Additionally, the service time was reduced as information could be accessed faster through automation.

The adoption of ICT as a strategy contributed to reduction of communication costs. This involved reduction of paper work on documents and communication cost through applying the TSC Pydio system, email among others. Additionally, the online registration of teachers and online application for advertised posts contributed to the saving of cost.

The successful implementation of strategies contributed to improved efficiency. This was because it was possible to retrieve information on a real-time basis and improve supervision queries which led to accountability through the use of passwords. Through the performance contracts, staff and teachers were easily monitored. This reduced service time since the staff did not have to visit the headquarters for queries, manpower utilization was also improved. This enhanced staff satisfaction and motivation and this contributed positively towards improved performance.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that TSC improved its performance as a result of strategy adoption. This involved decentralization of its services to the county which has an effect in cost reduction, improved communication through inclusion of all stakeholders at the county and this gave TSC an advantage in its execution of its duties in monitoring performance of teachers. These are consistent to Geroski (2012) who emphasized on the use of ICT as a strategy to enhance information sharing and communication.

The adoption of ISO: 2008 quality management system led to the overall improvement of services in the organization. The QMS ensured that quality services were delivered. The strategic talent management strategy ensured that the Commission identified the right talent early enough and developed it along with its vision for future leadership. The development process involved promotions and involvement in leadership seminars as well as short courses in management. This ensured that there was continuity of leadership in the education system in Kenya. The performance contracts and appraisal played a crucial role in appreciating the staff and teachers who worked hard.

It also assisted in the identification of performance gaps in the education system and the necessary remedial action was implemented. The ICT strategy supported the organization in enhancing its performance. Paper work was reduced and communication improved through the use of staff emails. Teachers' application and registration were done online whereby ICT improved organisational efficiency and minimized supervision costs. Teachers' appraisal was done efficiently through integrated systems that were aligned based on performance measures. Data retrieval was done on real-time basis through improved accountability in the organisation and use of passwords. The employees were highly motivated because of flexibility since they could get services from the decentralised TSC county offices. This led to the utilization of manpower which led to improved organisational performance. These findings coincide with the observations of Kahinde (2012) who maintained that employees needed to be motivated to enhance their productivity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter consists of summarized findings and conclusion that have been drawn from the previous chapter. This was done based on the objective of the study which was to determine the strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya.

5.2 Summary of Findings

With regard to the main objective of the study, the findings revealed that TSC invested largely in ICT as strategy to manage efficiency in provision of its services. The organisation had integrated systems to enhance information sharing and communication within the departments to facilitate coordination of activities. TSC was able to decentralize some of its activities and functions resulting to improved speed in decision making. TSC had a research and development division whose main function was to gather information from the end users of it services. This information was used to improve the quality of services that were offered by identifying unmet needs and addressing the changing needs of the end-users more effectively. These results are in line with the observations of Geroski (2012) who noted that ICT adoption was one of the strategies used by service firms to achieve integration and information sharing.

The organisation organized for continuous training and development programmes to enhance employees' knowledge and skills in their specialized areas. This gave them more exposure to deal with unique problems and improve on their skills in order to increase their productivity in working towards achieving organisational goals.

The top management provided employees with resources and facilities to ensure that they had an easy time and that they enjoyed their work. This motivated them to work extra hard in the implementation of strategies. It also made the working environment friendly for the employees to put more effort towards achieving their set targets. These findings are supported by Aycan (2011) who insisted on the need for training and development programmes in aiding employees to perfect their skills in their work.

The top management aligned rewards and recognition to set goals and targets. Recognition and rewards were accorded to employees who recorded better results. This motivated them to work harder in achieving set goals while encouraging the rest of the employees to work harder in order to gain recognition and rewards. These findings conform to Hall (2012) who pointed out on the importance of rewards and recognition as essential drivers in motivating and encouraging employees to perform.

On whether adoption of strategies improved performance of TSC, the findings revealed that there was increased efficiency in service delivery, reduction of communication and supervision costs, sharing of information, coordination of activities, speed in decision making and processes. These findings are consistent to Von Hippel (2012) who contended that adoption of strategies contributed positively to improved efficiency and minimization of costs which eventually led to improved performance.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that the popular strategies adopted by TSC were use of ICT, service delivery reengineering, customer and employee satisfaction surveys, adoption of ISO: 2008 quality management system, decentralization of services to the county level and implementation of performance contract and appraisal for staff and teachers. The study further concluded that the adoption of strategies contributed towards improved efficiency in service delivery, reduction of communication and supervision costs and information sharing which led to improved performance.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that TSC should increase its budgetary allocation to invest in information communication technology infrastructure. This will increase sharing of information and communication in the organisation that will result into reduced communication costs and efficiency in decision making processes and procedures.

TSC should institutionalize training and development programmes to empower its employees by gaining more knowledge and skills in execution of their roles and duties. This will assist them to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in their work which will result into improved performance.

Top management should offer support to the employees by providing them with the necessary resources and facilities that will provide an environment where the employees can exploit their skills and capabilities in working towards the realization of set goals and objectives.

The government of Kenya should set policies that support public institutions to adopt strategies that can continuously improve the quality of their services and meet the changing needs of the customers thus contributing towards improved quality services.

TSC should endeavour to always involve all its stakeholders in all its strategic plans to ensure that all their interests are represented. This enhances unity of purpose and shared goals which will propel the organisation in working towards the same direction and realize set goals and objectives.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Due to time and cost constraints, the study was limited to the Teachers Service Commission. Therefore, the results obtained in this study are specifically unique to TSC and cannot be utilized for direct application in the public sector.

The study was limited to a case study research design which uses open-ended questions only. This kind of a research design cannot be utilized to establish the relationship that exists between strategies and performance which is essential for hypothesis testing and making comparisons with empirical studies and theories.

The other limitation faced by the researcher was that a few of the top managers were too busy and thus delegated the interviews to their deputies. These deputies might not have the same experience as compared to their seniors who are directly involved in decision making in matters that concern strategy implementation and performance.

The study was limited to an interview guide that is used to collect data from a small group of people mostly those that are deemed to have knowledge about the subject under investigation. A questionnaire could have allowed the researcher to collect much more data using a wider population within a short period of time.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Future researchers should consider carrying out a replica of the same study in the public sector for instance, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. This will enable the researchers to establish the strategies used by the ministry and to choose the most effective ones. This would form a basis for comparison of findings upon which more a more reliable conclusion can be drawn.

A comparative study should be carried out using both primary and secondary sources of data so that the researchers can establish existing relationship between strategies and performance and to find out the most appropriate measures of performance using financial measures such as Return on Assets, Sales growth and Return on Equity.

Similar study could also be conducted in the private sector, such as commercial banks or manufacturing firms out of interest. Researchers will learn and understand how firms exploit strategies to contribute towards improved performance.

Future researchers should consider using a longitudinal research design in combination of panel data to find out the 'cause and effect' on the link between strategies adopted to manage performance by TSC in long-term, for example 20 years, to achieve sustainability.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Telephone: 020-2059162	P.O. Box 30197
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi	Nairobi, Kenya
Telex: 22095 Varsity	

DATE 23.9.16

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter .... PENINAH N. MACHARIA

Registration No...... D.61 77288 2015

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

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

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

Thank you.

PATRICK NYABUTO
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

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APPENDIX II: AUTHORITY LETTER

TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION

Telephone: Nairobi
2892000
Email: info@tsc.go.ke
Web: **www.tsc.go.ke**
When replying please quote

REF. TSC/R.A/MEMO/VOL.02/50/164

TSC HOUSE
KILIMANJARO ROAD
UPPER HILL
PRIVATE BAG -00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
29TH **SEPTEMBER 2016**

Peninah Macharia
P. O. Box 30197
University of Nairobi
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION

Your request to collect data to inform your academic study titled "**Strategies adopted to manage performance of the Teachers Service Commission, Kenya**" has been granted.

You are advised to proceed to Human Resource Management and Development, ICT, Finance and Administration Directorate to assist in providing information as required.

On completion of the exercise, you are expected to submit **two hard copies** and **one soft copy in pdf** of the research report to our office.

E. A. WANYANGA
FOR SECRETARY/ CHIEF EXECUTIVE

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE

The goal of the interview is to determine the strategies adopted to enhance performance by the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya.

Section A: Background Information

i. Interviewee's managerial position_____

ii. The number of years served at TSC_____

iii. The number of years in the current position_____

iv. What services does TSC offer? _____

 v. What need do you think that TSC should address through strategy adoption?

_____

Section B: Strategies Adopted by TSC to Enhance Organizational Performance

 i.   Has TSC adopted any formal strategies to enhance the quality of its services?

 ii.   Who formulates and implements strategies at TSC?

iii.   Do you think such strategies are geared towards enhancing organizational performance?

iv.   What specific strategies has TSC put in place to improve the quality of its services?

 v.   How has strategies contributed towards enhancing efficiency?

vi.   How do strategies influence the organization's capabilities utilization?

vii.   How does differentiation strategy enable TSC to segment its services? Please explain

viii.   How has the adoption of ICT as a strategy enhanced efficiency at TSC?

ix.   Do you have a research and development department? Yes or No

x.   If yes, what contribution has this department made in improving the quality of teachers' services and performance at TSC?

xi.   What influence does training and development programmes have on enhancing employees' performance at TSC?

xii.   What contribution has strategic talent management programmes made in enhancing employees' performance?

xiii.   Do the strategies implemented by TSC ensure effective utilization of resources in achieving superior performance?

xiv.   Has the adoption of strategies minimized public complaints on the services delivered by TSC?

xv.   Has the adoption of ICT as a strategy contributed to reduction of communication costs?

xvi.   Has the adoption of ICT as a strategy minimized supervision cost?

xvii.   How has successful implementation of strategies contributed to improved efficiency?