

**THE APPLICATION OF THE MCKINSEY 7 S FRAMEWORK OF
STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF
KENYA**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is my original work and has not been submitted in any other University or College for examination or academic purposes

Signature.....Date.....

FARHIA HASSAN

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the university supervisor

Signature.....Date.....

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my mum, Fatuma J. Farah and to my siblings for their support, prayer and encouragement throughout my journey to finish my MBA and to my cousin Amal Yusuf who has been my rock and friend all around. God bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

This study was meant to determine the application of the McKinsey 7S framework of strategy implementation at technical university of Kenya. The McKinsey 7S framework posits that for proper implantation of strategy it is necessary for certain fundamentals to be in place. This framework provides guidelines on the conditions that have to be fulfilled for strategy implementation to be effective. The research design was an in-depth case study that involves an investigation of an individual institution. The primary aim of a case study was to understand factors that have resulted in the behaviour under study. The study sought an in-depth understanding of the strategy implementation practices at the Technical University of Kenya. Primary data was collected from respondents. The major advantage of primary data is that the information is specific and up-to-date. Qualitative data collected was analysed using content analysis. Content analysis helps researchers to sift large volumes of data in a systematic manner, and is useful in the sense that it enables one to draw corroborated inferences. The values of the institution include excellence, integrity and impartiality, commitment to transparency and accountability by all the employees, and the institutions corporate endeavours includes honesty, fairness, justice as well as trust. Thus the operational principles are well grounded, and provide a sound framework for the institution to hold its own in the highly competitive environment in Kenya. The institutional structure reveals lack of fit with strategy implementation design presented by decision makers, and that has been the main challenge preventing the institution from executing the McKinney process. McKinsey 7S Framework of strategy implementation. The McKinsey 7S Framework requires that once the strategy is formulated managers needed to focus on six components that include organizational structure, systems, shared values (culture), skills, style and staff in the strategy implementation process, which was hardly the case at the Kenya Polytechnic University. The nature of strategy implementation is that challenges are bound to arise considering the complexities of organizations. However, in most instances it is failure on the part of the implementers to adhere to the best practices and understanding of the theoretical basis of the strategic plan that they have developed. This study recommends that it is imperative for any organization that seeks to achieve success in its strategy plan must invest requisite and adequate resources in the strategy implementation process.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In an organization setting, strategy implementation is one of the key elements of strategic planning. Empirical studies show that strategy implementation is a challenge to many organizations, and it has been found to affect even the performance of organizations (Hill and Jones, 2008), and furthermore it is also considered as an important aspect of organizational performance as well (Sproull and Hofmeister, 2001). Studies also show that strategy implementation when done in an ineffective manner affects the function of an organization, and is therefore a critical factor in business success (Noble, 2011). For an organization to have a significant competitive edge, it must ensure that strategy implementation is done in the right way (Noble, 1999).

Organizations use various approach, which they think provide them the competitive edge in strategy implementation, however the Mckinsey 7S framework has been considered by many organizations in strategy implementation. The Mckinsey 7S an approach that requires given set of conditions to be fulfilled to ensure the success of strategy implementation, and the process includes seven steps that include systems skills, strategy, values shared, staff and style.

In recent years, higher education institutions are increasingly finding it hard to meet the accountability requirements for quality, and value for money in terms of service delivery of not only their teaching staff, but also the learning process that is being

delivered. Subsequently there are increased calls for universities to be management in an efficient and effective manner. Strategic management provide the clearest path for universities to achieve this end. Universities that have developed strategic plans need to ensure that the formulated strategies are properly implemented because well implemented strategies lead to sustainable competitive advantage, in addition to that, economic growth is also enhanced when appropriate methods are followed in strategy implementation, which also can only come about when the quality of human resource is commensurate (Mintzberg, et al., 1998). The technical University of Kenya is among the public universities in Kenya, a status the university was elevated not long ago.

1.1.1 Concept of Strategy

Strategy according to ancient Greeks, was known as *strategia* a term that signified the art of how an army is led (Porter, 1980). And it was generally considered as the approach adopted by a general in the battle field, in which the objective was to defeat an enemy army. The general was therefore supposed to use the available resources at his disposal in the best way that could lead his troupes to success.

Porter (1980) aver that lack of consensus on what the meaning of strategy is and the manner in which it should be formulated as created a lot of confusion in the manner in which strategy is understood and practiced. However, scholars (Gooderham, 2013) argue that strategy, as a concept does not provide a body of knowledge that can therefore lead one to assume the existence of a particular right way to implement strategy. Hence strategy is considered as a process that can be executed in different

ways, and that there is no right way of undertaking the process, and multiple paths can as well prove beneficial to different organizations. According to Whittington and Scholes (2006), strategy is about decision making and is a process in which goals and objectives are developed, and requires that the strategic position of an organization is understood as well as its strategic choices put into perspective as far as the future direction of the organization is concerned, and ultimately turning the strategy into action.

Ansoff (1987) views strategy as an abstract concept, which is hardly capable of being defined in terms of a body of knowledge. Henderson (1989) argues that strategy involves the application of imagination and logic in the competitive context, and contend that in the strategy making process the essence of time cannot be downplayed. Other scholars view strategy as a pattern that is adopted by an organization as a means to end through formulation of plans, important policies, goals, objectives, in the context of the business that an organization is in.

1.1.2 Strategy Implementation

According to (Mintzberg,2004; Hiede et al., 2002; Mintzberg and Water, 1985), the pattern of decisions and actions that an organization takes over time, which constitutes its purpose, goals, objectives,its plans and policies to achieve its intended ends constitutes the strategy. And that strategy can be explicit or implicit, a deliberate or emergent process, and (Wheelen and Hunger, 2004) strategy can also be considered as the aggregate activities and choices required to execute a strategic plan.

A strategic implementation effort that takes appropriate measures to control factors such as entrenched culture of doing things within an organization has a better chance of succeeding because this enables new behaviours that are supportive of the strategic implementation process to become embedded within the organization, which then provides the foundation over which the strategic plan can take root (Pellegrinelli and Bowman, 1994). Strategy implementation requires that an organization sets aside right mix of resources to service the planned activities that have been designed in it (Shultz et al., 1987). In many occasions, strategy implementation plans fail to meet the deadlines that have been prescribed (Schultz et al., 1987) this is because the planning was not adequately done to ensure that the necessary resources, which include personnel, funds, materials and time are factored accordingly.

According to Noble and Mokwa (1999) strategy implementation process can be successful if the implementation effort takes into account the problem of resources adequacy. Strategy implementation process includes a chain of activities, which if managed effectively, ultimately enables an organization to achieve the intended goals and objectives that had been set, and it is argued (Jouste et al., 2009) that the key component of a strategic plan is not necessarily the formulation process, but the implementation process.

1.1.3 Technical University of Kenya

The Technical University of Kenya is an institution of higher learning that was established in 1958. It was founded as the Kenya Polytechnic and later transformed into a university in 2005 through a sessional paper of the Kenyan Government, whereby a new policy direction had been decided for training research and education in Kenya under the Universities Act 2012.

The Kenya Polytechnic, as an institution of higher learning, seeks to provide technological education and training and also to contribute towards the advancement of society through research and innovation. The institution supports a number of degree programs that are geared towards acquisition of technology and engineering skills. The institution also purposes to create an enabling environment in which scholarship and innovation can thrive and support the national social economic growth. The university, as a public entity, the institution depends on the government for financial support, which comes from the Ministry of Education. Student normally are supposed to join the university after completing secondary education and scoring the relevant grades.

At independence the establishment of a university was based on an act of parliament, but the enactment of the Universities Act 2012 ushered in a new era in which the decision to now establish a university was firmly the prerogative of the Ministry of Education. There are now more than 50 universities in Kenya.

1.2 Research Problem

In the framework of strategy plan, strategy implementation provides a critical link between strategy formulation process and the outcome in the form of organizational performance (Shi, 2009; Rouleau and Balogun, 2011; Rees et al, 2013). In many a times, strategies fail to achieve the intended purpose due to lack of appropriately established mechanisms in the strategy implementation process (Nutt, 1997). The reasons that have been advanced for such failures in strategy implementation include a disconnect between the formulation and implementation process (Kaplan, 1995). In most organizations' the organizational structure in most instance does not show any

adaptation to the strategies that have been formulated, and organizations also face resistance to change from employees, which affects strategic plan implementation process. Thus implementation has become an enduring challenge for most organizations (Noble, 1999).

The Technical University of Kenya faces a lot of competition from other players in the education sector in Kenya and abroad alike. Initially, the university had established a niche as the foremost institution in the provisioning of technical skills in Kenya, but the transition to a fully-fledged university meant that the institution had to refocus its product offerings to other perceived skills that were at the time being offered by already established institutions like Kenyatta University, University of Nairobi, Moi University and many others. This has meant that the university was now to find appropriate methods of getting a slice of the market in provisioning of higher education. The institution has also been compelled to restructure its management practices to fit with the requirements of the changed status.

Thus the Technical University of Kenya has over the years developing a strategic plan, however, the outcomes have not been satisfactory. The organization would like to improve its performance and Strategy implementation practices is a significant factor in organizational performance. It is therefore important to see if the problems that negate the realization of the benefits of strategic plans that the institution has been formulating over the years is as a result of poor strategy implementation regime followed by the institution.

Many local and international studies have been conducted in relation to general aspects of strategy in learning institutions (Mbithi, 2014; Ongeti,2015; Waithaka, 2014). All the studies conclude that strategic plans are situated within the national, regional and global trends in the social economic and political environment that impact higher education institutions, most strategic plans formulated are never implemented an assertion supported by many authors (Okumus, 2001). This study seeks to understand strategy implementation at the Technical University of Kenya by answering the following research question: how is the McKinsey framework implemented at the Technical University of Kenya?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

- i. Establish the application of McKinsey 7S framework of strategy implementation at the Technical University of Kenya
- ii. Determine the factors affecting strategy implementation Technical University of Kenya

1.4 Value of the Study

The study makes an important contribution about strategy implementation in an institution of higher learning in the context of Kenya, in particular the study will generate knowledge that can assist the Technical University of Kenya overcome challenges that it has been facing in strategy implementation. This study will also present an opportunity for other universities to learn about strategy implementation beacons identified from a similar institution.

The study also helps in the development of an integrative framework for strategy implementation which can be adapted to both public and private sector. additionally, the study reaffirms the importance of effective strategy implementation in the achievement of organizational objectives in higher education institutions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical underpinnings and empirical studies related to strategy implementation in an institution of higher learning. The theoretical considerations include first of all a definition of strategy and a review of strategy implementation frameworks. The review then focuses on challenges and success factors of strategy implementation as well as strategy implementation in institutions of higher learning.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

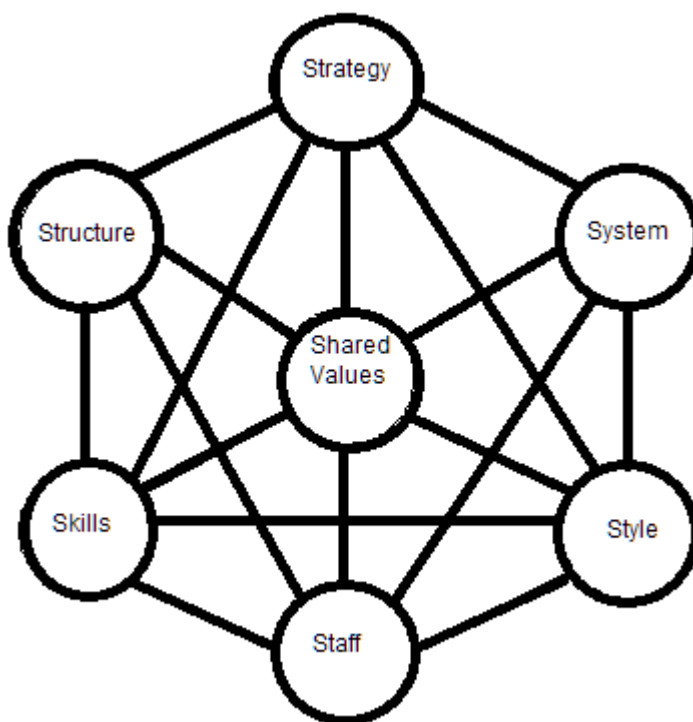
This Study is based on the McKinsey 7S framework of strategy implementation, and is focused on understanding how the McKinsey 7S framework is implemented in an institution of higher learning. Subsequently the study aims to establish the application of Mckinsey 7S framework of strategy implementation, and to determine the factors affecting implementation of the framework. Subsequently, the McKinsey 7S framework is the most appropriate model reviewed.

2.2.1 McKinsey 7S Framework

The McKinsey 7S framework advocates that the success of strategy implementation more likely to be realized when managers of organizations focus on six components that include organizational structure, systems in the organization, the staff skills, style and shared values, then effective implementation of strategy is assured. This contention is based on a study that was undertaken by the McKinsey organization in

the early 80's (Peter and Waterman, 1982) in which the superior performance of an organization was found to be dependent on a set of factors, which include strategy, shared values, structure, skills, systems, staff and style, all of which are the main factors that managers of organizations need to focus on to ensure successful strategy implementation

Figure 2: McKinsey 7S Framework



Source: Peters and Waterman (1982)

2.3 Strategy Implementation Process

Aaltonen and Ikavalko (2002) refer to strategy implementation as the process in which an organization operationalizes the strategies that have been formulated into actions. When strategy is transformed into actions through implementation in a carefully crafted processes, then the chances of achieving success is enhanced, and if

strategy is left to chance, the opposite outcome, which is failure is achieved (Pearce and Robinson (1985). It has been found that strategy implementation provides an important link between the formulation of strategy and the outcome in terms of superior performance (Noble and Mokwa, 1999), a view that is also supported by Schaap (2012) who contend that the transformation of strategic thought through the process of strategy implementation or strategic action is critical factor in successful implementation of strategic plans.

There is overwhelming evidence that strategy implementation is not an easy task, and there is also broad consensus that strategies that are implemented are frequently not successful on account of formulation shortfalls, but as a result of insufficient implementation mechanisms (Okumu, 2003; Alexander, 1985), as such there is increasing awareness that strategy implementation is the Achilles hill in the pursuit of success in strategic plans. The structure of strategy formulation is devoid of much complications, and is more or less based on facts and rational analysis of the prevailing circumstances, on the other hand strategy implementation focuses on people, which there for calls for people management skills within organizations, a task that often presents its own unique challenges (Flood et al, 2000).

The effective implementation of strategy, in a way that leads to superior performance, is a challenge that many scholars have put a lot of effort, and Pearson and Robinson (1985) argue that the drive to achieve organizational objectives and competitive advantage should be easier if organizations place commensurate effort in identifying and addressing the critical success factors unique to strategy implementation in the organization. Strategic management offers a wide array of scholarly application;

however, strategy implementation has recently been identified as the most critical component of a strategic plan and the cause of most failures that organizations experience. Excellent performance in organizations, in the long run, is assured through in-built adaptive mechanisms in strategy implementation (Hill and Hoskisson, 1987).

Strategy implementation generally addresses the critical aspects of strategic management process, and includes taking care of questions such as what, where, when and how of fulfilling the planned program of activities identified in a strategic plan of an organization. The sum total of the program of activities needed to implement a strategic plan to its ultimate conclusion is the essence of strategy implementation, and includes giving life to policies through budgeting for programs and procedure that are critical for a successful strategy implementation (David, 2003).

The key to having the necessary frameworks that can ensure success in strategy implementation is institutionalization of the strategic plan, which is possible if appropriate structures are established and the necessary skill set is developed or acquired from the market as well as shared values are taken into account including establishment of appropriate norms within the organization (Stuart, 1992). The approach that have been considered in strategy implementation, with positive effect, is the breakdown of strategy implementation plans into manageable action units, in this way managers can be able to strike a balance between short term and long term actions and resources needed to effect implementation (Kaplan and Norton, 2008)

Scholars (Olsona, Slater and Hult, 2005) argue that the success of strategy implementation is dependent upon there being the right institutional framework, and having the right institutional frame means getting right the structure on which strategy implementation has to be executed. This ensures that the articulated purpose of the organization followed by an established and well laid approach to accomplish the purpose. Although in certain instances, organizations are compelled to alter their structure not necessarily to achieve strategy implementation concerns (Olsona et al., 2005). Some organizations that have a history of success in strategy implementation focus on putting up complementary strategy implementation methods in case challenges associated with alignment to the environment arise. Such thoughtfulness in an organization are what makes for a successful competitive advantage. The purpose of organizational alignment with the environment is to ensure that there is constant learning, unlearning of skills depending on expediencies of the moment (Hambrick, 1983).

Strategy implementation and the organizational culture have also been found to have some correlation, and the way an organization does business is believed to provide competitive edge, and the metrics of culture is reflected in the manner in which an organization treats both employees and customers as well as its suppliers and partners, all of which if tempered with appropriate management control contribute to the general performance of an organization (Szekely and Knirsch, 2005).Machuki, Aosa and Letting (2012) argue that operationalization of strategic plans includes having in the plans clear actions identification, the setting of timelines, the roles and responsibilities in terms of who, how, when and what in ensuring the delivery of the desired outputs. The success of strategy implementation, according to Fleisher and

Babette (2007) depends on organizational capacity, which in itself is influenced by the structural form of an organization, the skill set that an organization has, and norms and values that are held among the employees.

2.4 Critical Success Factors for Strategy Implementation

Kaplan and Norton (1996) found that strategy implementation leads to superior organizational performance, and that successful implementation of strategic plan depends on four main factors, which include the structure of the organization, the links and relationships that the employees enjoy with the top management of the organization, the types of plans, goals and objectives of the organization and the strategy implementation feedback as well as learning methods adopted in the organization.

Strategy implementation requires a leadership style that optimizes the resources at their disposal in a way that supports the activities identified in the strategic plan. Mackenzie, Wilson and Kider (2001) argue that the role of leadership in strategy implementation is well cut out, and includes ensuring the achievement of the desired goals and objectives of the organization. And the most important role of management is encapsulated in check and balances or controls necessary over employees, and avoidance of conflict between organizational goals and personal goals, to ensure successful strategy implementation.

The successful implementation of strategy has also been thought to be related to appropriate communication within an organization (Aatonen and Ikavalko, 2002). The key to effective strategy implementation is to ensure that all the employees of the

organization assist one another in a coordinated manner, in such a way that the executors of the strategy are well supported by the top management as well as proper communication of the content of the strategy is done in a way that generate optimum contribution of the employees to the strategy implementation activities.

Brenes, Mena and Molina (2007) contend that the main success factors of strategy implementation in an organization include strategy formulation and the procedures followed in not only undertaking internal scanning, but also external scanning of the environment in which the organization is competing in. The top management have also a role to play by facilitating and ensuring that employees are motivated enough to carry out the activities allocated to them effectively, furthermore the top management have also the obligation of ensuring that feedback mechanisms are effective and efficient to provide relevant coordination needs of not only the coordination needs of the strategy implementation, but the organization as a whole (Brenes et al., 2007).

2.5 Empirical Review

Strategic management practices contribute to performance by generating relevant information, creating a better understanding of the environment and reducing uncertainty. (Porter (2004) states that organizational performance is determined by the ability of the firm to find its unique position and strategic management practice is the tool to enable the firm acquire that strategic position. Ofunya (2013) examined the relationship of strategic management practices and firm performance in Post bank in Kenya. The study revealed that the strategies adopted by Post bank so as to cope with the competitive environment included vigorous pursuit of cost reductions, providing outstanding customer service, improving operational efficiency, among other.

Taiwo and Idunnu, (2010) investigated the impact of strategy management practices and performance of firms in the pharmaceutical industry. The study findings revealed that firms that were applying strategic management practices were more willing to innovate prepared to take risks and were more proactive than competitors. Muogbo (2013) investigated the impact of strategy implantation practices on organizational growth and development of selected manufacturing firms in Anambra State. Results from the analysis indicated that strategy implementation practices impacted on future long term performance of manufacturing firms in Anambra State but the adoption of strategy had an immediate and significant effect on competitiveness and influences on manufacturing firms.

The literature reviewed show that strategy implementation is an important process in strategic plans, even more so than strategy formulation. Various schools of thought (Aaltonen and Ikavalko, 2002; Pearce and Robinson, 1985; Noble and Mokwa, 1999) that strategy implementation plays a critical role in organizational performance by elevating the competitive edge of an organization. Although strategy implementation is such an important element in organizations, a lot of failures have been experienced as a result of poor implementation mechanisms. In the last couple of years many universities have been formed, among them the Polytechnic University of Kenya. The literature reviewed show that very little research has been done in the higher education sector to provide useful knowledge, in particular concerning strategy implementation, which can assist new market entrants to compete effectively in the market. This study therefore fills this gap by focusing on investing strategy implementation at the Polytechnic University of Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the method that was used in the study, and in a nutshell, the chapter describes the methodology used to fulfil the proposed research objectives. The chapter underscores research design, data collection and data analysis in the discussion of the best methodological approach to the study.

3.2 Research Design

The research design was an in-depth case study that involves an investigation of an individual institution. The primary aim of a case study was to understand factors that have resulted in the behaviour under study. The study sought an in-depth understanding of the strategy implementation practices at the Technical University of Kenya. The study considered the perspective of the actors, the employees involved in strategy implementation, an aspect that gives voice to the powerless and voiceless.

3.3 Data Collection

Primary data was collected from respondents. The major advantage of primary data is that the information is specific and up-to-date. The durability of primary data is moderated by the high cost and amount of time associated with its collection (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). Primary data was collected using an interview guide. The interview guide consisted of a set of questions that the interviewer asked when carrying out the interviews. The interview guide assisted in probing the interviewees in order to get in-depth knowledge on their understanding of strategy implementation in an institution. The interviewees consisted mainly of heads of departments. This

group of respondents were considered for the interview because of their positions and the roles they play in strategy implementation in the institution. Strategy

3.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data collected was analysed using content analysis, which is a systematic method of analysis, a replicable technique for compressing words or text formats into fewer contents categories on the basis of explicit rules of coding as prescribed by Krippendorff, (1980) and Weber (1990). Content analysis helps researchers to sift large volumes of data in a systematic manner, and is useful in the sense that it enables one to draw corroborated inferences.

CHAPTER FOUR DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which was to establish the application of McKinsey framework of strategy implementation and to determine the factors affecting strategy implementation at the Technical University of Kenya. Data presented was collected through interviews with respondents drawn from different staff levels within the organization. The chapter includes data collected about demographics of the institution, the strategy implementation practices and the challenges of strategy implementation.

4.2 Respondents General Information

The respondents in the study included senior level management, middle level management and supervisory level staff of the technical University of Kenya, who generally have a role to play in strategy implementation in the institution. In addition, the respondents interviewed were also in a position to provide relevant information concerning strategy implementation practices and challenges of the Technical University of Kenya because of their experience with the institution. Senior level management constituted fifty percent of those interviewed; middle level management made up thirty percent and the supervisory level staff twenty percent. Majority of the respondents had served in their respective position for more than ten years, which, reflects a reasonable appreciation of the institution's activities. The data collected therefore meets the threshold of reliability. The institution was said to have 35 departments spread across different faculties and schools.

4.3 Strategy implementation practices

The institution, according to majority of the respondents had a vision and a mission statement, which was widely advertised within the organization, and the respondents further stated that objectives had also been formulated, and it was the responsibility of every employee to act according to the objectives in their daily operations. The institution decision makers had also formulated certain values, which the employees were expected to follow.

The findings show that the institution's vision is to be a top rated university of technology, while the mission statement is to provide quality and innovative technological education and training. The study also found that the institution had a motto and a set of values, which are, "education and training for the real world," while the values include excellence, integrity and impartiality, and social responsibility. The institution had adopted these set of values and guiding principles with a view to achieve its mission and vision, and to enable creativity and innovation among the employees by generating from them originality, authenticity and imagination.

The core elements of the values included excellence, which read in part as commitment to excellence and the provision of quality services, and respect for both internal and external customers of the institution. Integrity and impartiality as elaborated included the guiding principles and customer focus. The guiding principles included observance of ethical behaviour and promotion of self-discipline and

personal integrity, commitment to transparency and accountability by all the employees to the institutions corporate endeavours; honesty, fairness, justice and trust inclusive. Customer focus required that management and administration operations are structured and geared towards satisfying and exceeding customer expectations.

The values of the institution further espoused social responsibility, which stated responsibility to societal needs and being at the forefront in providing leadership in national agenda, inculcating culture of care for others and proactive dialogue with stakeholders, while promoting social responsibility programs that add value to society, and enhance the public image of the institution, including human rights, labour rights, the environment and community, being responsive to disadvantaged members of the society including physically challenged persons, promoting and defending the freedom of association, having the courage to initiate and adapt to change among others. Social Responsibility espoused also meant to the institution that professionalism will be upheld and safeguarded at all times.

The respondents indicated that strategy implementation in the institution was part of a process that preceded strategic plan formulation at the senior management level, and informed by action plans formulated by respective departmental heads. It was noted that the institution engages members of the teaching staff in strategic planning process, which was also normally informed by benchmarking activities instituted by a panel of teaching staff experienced in the field of strategy.

The respondents indicated that strategy implementation process in the institution involved achieving targets set under the strategic plan. The areas identified as priority areas for strategic focus included finance, asset management and work environment. The respondents indicated that the nature of communication within the institution was a top-down type of communication, although feedback from employees was part of the process of ensuring that communication played the desired role in strategy implementation within the institution. Regular reviews were identified as part of the action plans that the institution had instituted within the departments to ensure success of the strategy implementation.

4.4 Challenges of Strategy Implementation at the Kenya Polytechnic University

The respondents noted that the institution was facing a number of challenges, internal and external, in implementing strategy, and key among them included scarcity of financial resources, which made it hard to meet certain obligations such as payment of dues to employees on time or servicing vendors on time. Thus the ability of the finance department to play its role in the strategy implementation plan is greatly impaired. This state of affairs is not restricted to the finance department, but also in other departments in the institution, such as human resource department, where the institution has a high turnover of lecturers due to poor terms and conditions of service. Here also strategy implementation is not effective, and the end result is increased turnaround time that strategy implementation depends on.

The respondents mentioned that strategy implementation was not carrying on as planned because of lacking commitment from the key implementation personnel. The institutions recruitment policy was critical to strategy implementation. The use of short-term contracts and performance contracts were not generating the desired outcomes and counterproductive to strategy implementation. It was noted that political influence, to some extent, determined the occupants of most of the senior positions in the institution, and therefore control and coordination were not effectively being discharged due to disgruntlement, and divided loyalties as well as poor and unmerited deployment, all of which have a significant impact on strategy implementation.

Although providing higher education is the core mandate of the institution, it was clear that management practices were not supportive of strategy implementation. The institution's organization and administrative structure was basic in scope and the same routinized operations occur year in year out without any desire to seek strategic fit. This made strategy implementation a very challenging undertaking in the institution.

The institution is involved in infrastructure development, which may have strained or destabilized effective resource allocation within the institution, including allocation of the necessary resources to strategy implementation activities. More importantly, timely decisions have not been made or subjected to action due to absence of clear communication channels that take advantage of informal and formal communication processes. Thus the level of disharmony within the institution seem to have affected, to a great extent, strategy implementation, as noted by some of the respondents. Appropriate policies may have guided better the activity of strategy implementation in

the institution if the intentions of top management were to realize the benefits inherent in effective strategy implementation.

4.5 Discussion

The study found that the Kenya Polytechnic University developed a strategic plan, and had vision, mission and values as well as a set of activities that were earmarked for implementation. Overall, the strategic plan was right by the institutions standards, however, the institution lacked an effective strategy implementation plan, and that became a stumbling block in the fulfilment of the desired outcomes for the institution, especially competitiveness.

Although in the strategic planning process of the institution a lot of input had been made from benchmarking activities there was little evidence that it had been emulated in strategy implementation, and that may as well have resulted in diminished prospects for successfully executing the strategy plan. The findings show substantial disregard of the importance of controls and coordination mechanisms in strategy implementation in the institution, and there were no strategy implementation advisory teams constituted to provide the necessary controls or coordination system, resulting as well in poor communication of strategic actions that needed to be executed, and dismal performance of the institute as a whole.

The findings and literature reviewed affirm various attributes to strategy implementation failure, but it is in the interest of any organization that wants strategy implementation to be successful to adhere to certain time tested principles of strategy implementation. And, one of the vital institutional frameworks for strategy

implementation is the right organizational structure, as affirmed by Olsona, Slater and Hult (2005)., and that an organization is both an articulated purpose and an established mechanism for achieving that purpose. Efficient organizations establish mechanisms that complement their strategy implementation, while inefficient organizations struggle with these structural and process mechanisms.

Furthermore, if the institution seeks to actualize value in its strategic plan, it needs to take practical and hands on approach to ensuring that the strategic plan gets actualized. This involves action description, setting timelines, responsibility, definition of who should do what, how by when, and what outputs should be expected, which is done by translating long-term objectives into current targets which are measurable, and ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to actualize those activities, together with appropriate polices to guide integration of functional strategies into actualizing the broad long-term vision of the strategic plan of the institution.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to establish the application of McKinsey framework of strategy implementation at the Technical University of Kenya, and to determine the factors affecting strategy implementation in the institution. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and conclusions, and includes the recommendations as well, and finally the suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The Kenya Polytechnic University is an institution that has a developed strategic plan, and the vision of the institution as advertised is to be a top rated university of technology, while the mission statement is to provide quality and innovative technological education and training. The institution as a motto and a set of values, which are, “education and training for the real world,” while the values include excellence, integrity and impartiality, and social responsibility. The institution had adopted these set of values and guiding principles with a view to achieve its mission and vision, and to enable creativity and innovation among the employees by generating from them originality, authenticity and imagination.

The values of the institution include excellence, integrity and impartiality, commitment to transparency and accountability by all the employees, and the institutions corporate endeavours includes honesty, fairness, justice as well as trust. Thus the operational principles are well grounded, and provide a sound framework for the institution to hold its own in the highly competitive environment in Kenya.

The institution faces a raft of challenges to strategy implementation in its strategic plan. The key challenges include commitment of staff to strategy implementation, mostly as a result of existing policy framework on staff terms of employment. The institutional structure reveals lack of fit with strategy implementation design presented by decision makers, and that has been the main challenge preventing the institution from executing the McKinsey process. McKinsey 7 s Framework of strategy implementation. The McKinsey 7 s Framework requires that once the strategy is formulated managers needed to focus on six components that include organizational structure, systems, shared values (culture), skills, style and staff in the strategy implementation process, which was hardly the case at the Kenya Polytechnic University.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

The study was about understanding the application of McKinsey 7 s Framework of strategy implementation and the factors affecting strategy implementation in the Technical University of Kenya. The McKinsey 7 s Framework was not reflected in the operations of the institution, and although certain aspects of the framework permeated the strategic plan of the institution, it was not expressly part of strategy implementation design or execution. The McKinsey 7 s Framework could have provided a useful visualization of the key components that the top decision makers at the institution needed to consider to ensure successful strategy implementation.

Although the study found a lot of enthusiasm at formulation of the institution's strategic plan, there was less enthusiasm at strategy implementation. Numerous challenges had been cited by several stakeholders in the institution, which signified poor controls and

coordination of strategy implementation that exposed levels of commitment on the part of the institutions management. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the institution's mission and vision aptly captures the direction it is destined, which requires that managers lay more emphasis on organizational structure, systems and skills that present a fit with strategy implementation plans.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

The study recommends that the infrastructure under which strategy implementation takes place is as important as the planning process itself, and that it is imperative for any organization that seeks to achieve success in its strategy plan must invest requisite and adequate resources in the strategy implementation process.

The nature of strategy implementation is that challenges are bound to arise considering the complexities of organizations. However, in most instances it is failure on the part of the implementers to adhere to the best practices and understanding of the theoretical basis of the strategic plan that they have developed. This study therefore present potent insight to the decision makers of the institution on strategy implementation, and how it can be done successfully.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The investigated the McKinsey framework of strategy implementation, and the factors affecting strategy implementation in the Kenya Polytechnic University. Subsequent studies may consider broadening the scope of the study by sampling sizeable number of Universities in Kenya to provide a higher confidence level for scalability of the findings. Communication is viewed as an important factor in organizational process

execution effectiveness, research can focus on the feedback process in strategy implementation process.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

There are limitations identified in this study, in particular, the findings that are made in this study can hardly provide a basis for generalization in the world of Higher learning institutions, unless more institutions are included in the study otherwise this study may just only be useful to the Kenya Polytechnic University.

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INTERVIEW GUIDE

Section A: Demographic data of Technical University of Kenya

- i. Does your institution have a vision and a mission statement?
- ii. How many departments does your institution have?

Section B: Strategy implementation practices

- i. Does your institute prepare a strategy implementation action plan? If yes, please explain what is included in the action plan.
- ii. Who practices the strategy implementation action plans? Is it documented?
- iii. How is institutionalization of strategy done? What role does communication play in the process?
- iv. Is there an advisory panel in place to assist the strategy implementation team? If there is, what is the role of the panel in implementation of strategy?
- v. When implementing new strategies which organization so you benchmark with and how? Do you have measurable targets as part of the implementation strategy?
- vi. What roles do the following play in strategy implementation in your institution?
 - a) strategy
 - b) staff
 - c) style
 - d) skills
 - e) shared values
 - f) structures and
 - g) systems in your institution

- vii. Is there a strategy implementation model used by the institution?
- viii. What initiatives are taken by the management in ensuring successful strategy implementation?
- ix. How do you ensure that the implemented strategies are aligned to the organization structure and culture?
- x. In general, what is the process of strategy implementation in your institution?

Section C: Challenges of Strategy Implementation

- i. How does scarcity of resources affect the implementation of strategies in your institution?
- ii. Is the top management committed in strategy implementation?
- iii. Sometimes lack of focus can affect the implementation, how is this exhibited in your institution? How is this possible?
- iv. How does the institution structure support the strategy implementation in your institution?
- v. How does the institution ensure proper coordination, monitoring and evaluation in your institution is achieved?
- vi. Staff have different capabilities, how is the realization in your institution?
- vii. What other challenges does your institution face in strategy implementation?