

Influence of Strategic Leadership on Implementation of Environment and Natural Resources Strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya

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Abstract

The general objective of the study was to examine the influence of strategic leadership on implementation of environment and natural resources strategy in Nakuru County, Kenya. Specifically, the study examined the influence of strategic communication on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya; Explore the influence of strategic direction on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya; Assess the influence of strategic intent on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya; Determine effect of strategic alignment on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya The study was based on the Institutional Theory, Resource Based t Theory, Contingency Theory and Systems Theory . A descriptive design was adopted for the study. The unit of analysis was the county government of Nakuru and unit of observation was the 80 implementers of the strategy to be drawn from various departments in the Nakuru county government. The study used a questionnaire to collect primary data. On the other hand, secondary data was obtained from published documents such as journals, periodicals, magazines and reports to supplement the primary data. A pilot study was conducted to pretest the validity and reliability of instruments for data collection. The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. Quantitative method involved descriptive analysis such as frequencies; percentages were used to present quantitative data in form of tables and graphs. Data from questionnaire was coded, entered and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).The study further adopted regression analysis to determine the relationship among the variables at 5% level of significance. The study established that the four independent variables (strategic intent, strategic communication, strategic direction and strategic alignment) had a strong

positive and significant relationship with the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategy. This implies that these variables are very significant therefore need to be considered in any effort to enhance implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study recommends that the county need to have a vision and mission on how to implement environment and natural resources. The county government should develop specific milestones and set up of objectives to create feasible strategic options. The study recommends that there is need to have good communication systems in the county to enhance implementation of environment and natural resources. There is need to have communication plan acted as opportunities to formulate and implement strategies. The study recommends that the county government should have a strategy execution manual/ practical guide to enhance direction for strategy implementation. The county government should enhance policies and procedures for strategic intent execution. The study recommends that the county government should have a strategic alignment on the work processes to improve strategy implementation. There is need to have a strong formalized process of planning which can be translated into actionable deliverables. There is need the county to constantly provide organizational learning to review work process and programs to meet strategic goals pertaining implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Keywords: Strategic Implementation, Strategy, Strategic Communication, Strategic Direction, Strategic Intent, Strategic Leadership

Introduction

Kenya's economy is highly dependent on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, water, fisheries, forestry and energy. Approximately, 80% of Kenya's population is directly and indirectly dependent on rain-fed agriculture for basic livelihoods. The interactions between climate change and land degradation are likely to affect a range of different social and ecosystem functions they deliver, with consequent impacts on food production, livelihoods and human well-being. The areas most affected by these impacts also happen to be the most productive in Kenya. Unless these challenges are seriously addressed, achieving the full potential of Kenya's natural land resources could prove difficult. According to Van Oosten, Uzamukunda and Runhaar (2018) the process of preventing or reducing land degradation and rehabilitating degraded lands is essentially a long-term development that requires the enactment of appropriate policies and supporting institutions as well as enabling environment that ensures participation of all stakeholders and land users. This has led to both the national and county governments to develop environment and natural resources strategies. However, implementation of these strategies has been a challenge due to strategic leadership related issues (Ongugo et al., 2014).

In response to these challenges the Nakuru County government, through the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MENR) developed the Environment and Natural Resources Strategy (2015) for sustainable land management (SLM) to guide in addressing land management issues through effective multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaboration. The Environment and Natural Resources Strategy is a tool to foster a programmatic approach to scaling up SLM practices across all relevant sectors and its implementation is envisaged to lead to a systematic change to upscale policy, institutional, governance and financial responses to the scaling up of SLM, by adopting a cross-sectoral integrated development approach to SLM. However, five years since its inception, the implementation of the strategy has faced several issues related to leadership. According to

Kenya National Environment Policy (2013) some of the strategies for environment and natural resources management are being affected due to poor strategic leadership related to integration of environmental concerns in all policy, planning and development processes, clarifying roles and responsibilities, environmental compliance, human resources development and capacity building, partnerships and stakeholder involvement, funding mechanisms, regional and international cooperation, institutional arrangements.

According to Omoro and Monayo (2016) strategic leadership is one of the key pillars of effective implementation of strategy in the public sector in Kenya. Thompson et al. (2017) emphasizes that there is no doubt that effective organizational leadership and the existence of adequate resources are two central elements in allowing fruitful implementation of organizational strategies and objectives. According to Wanjiku, Mwangi and Mwangi (2018) weak leadership can wreck the soundest strategy; forceful execution of even a poor plan can often bring victory. It is on this premise this study intends to establish the influence of strategic leadership on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya

Global Perspective on Strategy Implementation

Several studies have shown failure in strategy implementation worldwide. Some studies suggest that as high as 90% of developed strategies are not implemented, yet strategy implementation is the most important stage and it's also the most complicated and time-consuming part of strategic management (Mwanje, 2016; Kagumo, 2018). Strategy implementation is critical for organizations to achieve the desired goals and realize the envisioned future. Most studies on strategic management have been carried out on strategy formulation but less attention has been given to strategy implementation (Raps, 2004; Amrule, 2013; Okwach, 2014). Where available, most studies have focused on strategy implementation in the Western developed Countries and less in the developing and least developing countries such as Kenya.

From a global perspective, Rajasekar (2014) examined the factors affecting effective strategy implementation in a service industry in Oman. The study found that successful strategy implementation is crucial for any organization to survive in the competitive environment. Organizations cannot sustain their competitive advantage despite robust strategy formulation because of they lack the processes in implementing the strategy. Brinkschröder (2014) noted that strategy is the main direction of an organization which is set at the top and is very important for organizational survival. Managers spend a lot of time in planning but the most important part about strategy is the implementation phase.

The high disappointment rate of implementation endeavors' is well evidenced, and numerous obstructions for strategy implementation still exist (Chepkurui, 2017). One is deficiency of leadership prominently strategic leadership at the uppermost level of the firm has been also recognized in literature as key obstacles towards efficient strategy implementation (Bolman & Deal, 2014). Clearly, strategic leadership is deemed as key driver for effective implementation (Donate & de Pablo, 2015). The fact can be undertaken wherever in several organizations; less than half of the strategies are implemented. In a study it was found that 57% of organizations were ineffective at implementing strategic efforts in examination of 276 prominent operational directors (Kagumu, 2018). In another study of Chinese Corporations in 2006, it was discovered that 83 % of the surveyed companies fail to execute strategies and only 17% opined about having reliable process of implementation (Bolman & Deal, 2014). Similarly, another study in which strategic leadership's role on strategy implementation was

conducted in South African organizations' it was found that strategic leadership significantly contributes towards effective strategy execution (Donate & de Pablo, 2015). Therefore, this relationship should be studied further from literature in order to get insights of its nature.

Regional Perspective on Strategy Implementation

In comparison to developed countries, Aldehayyat, (2011) suggests that little is known about strategy implementation challenges in the developing countries. Bossidy, Charan and Burck (2011) assert that other disciplines have no shortage of accumulated knowledge and literature unlike strategy execution. Amrule (2013) in a study of the role of strategic planning on the performance of small and micro-enterprises in Kenya asserts the need for in-depth studies in this area. Chiuri (2015) makes similar observations about the need to carry further research on challenges of strategy implementation in different sectors in developing countries. According to Jooste and Fourie (2015) in South Africa the failure rate of strategy implementation efforts is well documented, and many barriers to effective strategy implementation exist. A lack of leadership, and specifically strategic leadership, at the top of the organization has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation. Babatunde and Adebisi (2012) on the strategic environmental scanning and organizational performance in a competitive business environment in Nestle Nigeria revealed that there's a significant relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation.

Akpan and Waribugu (2016) stated that strategy implementation among telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The centralized structure on strategic leadership organizations leads to slow pace of strategy implementation while specialization structure enhances strategy implementation of the telecommunication firms. Assefa (2015) conducted a study on instilling strategy management culture at the Ethiopian sugar corporation. The study noted that strategic leadership affects organizational structure; human resources, information systems and technology are the most common factors for the successful implementation of strategies in service sector.

County Government Environment and Natural Resources Strategies in Kenya

In natural resources management, decentralization in Kenya is justified on several grounds. It enables local people to identify and prioritize their environmental problems accurately; ensure efficient resource allocation; promote greater respect for decisions made with local inputs such as rules for resource use; allow for easier monitoring of resource use and gives marginalized groups greater influence on local policy (Kariuki, 2018). This is especially so, where decentralization adopts democratic forms rather than administrative ones. Democratic decentralization requires representative and downwardly accountable local authorities, who hold a secure and autonomous domain of powers to make and implement meaningful decisions (Muigua, 2018).

Devolved governments will heavily rely on the environmental resources in order to promote development in the counties. Also important is the constitutional provision that one of the principles of devolved government is that County governments must have reliable sources of revenue to enable them to govern and deliver services effectively (Muigai, 2018) This is to be achieved through exploitation of the natural resources within their boundaries. However, as it was noted in the *1999 Sessional Paper on Environment and Development*, (Korir, 2013) environmental protection, management, and development should consider broad issues that bind together people, resources, development, and environment (D'aarcy & Cornell,

2016). Indeed, one of the recommendations of the Policy paper was that the Government should encourage the participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation and management; and create incentives for effective conservation of biodiversity by local communities. This was however not effectively implemented through the existing legal framework. If anything, the same was undermined by the often complex and bureaucratic requirements on licences and permits. The framework concentrated on giving communities user rights and not control over the resources thus denying them any voice on how the same should be managed (ibid).

The county government is obligated to implement specific national government strategies on natural resources and environmental conservation including, soil and water conservation and forestry (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). Further, the county governments are also supposed to ensure and coordinate the participation of communities and locations in governance at the local level and assist communities and locations to develop the administrative capacity for the effective exercise of the functions and powers and participation in governance at the local level (Korir, 2013). Within the devolved system, the Senate is expected to play an important role in fostering good governance in the management of natural resources in Kenya. County assemblies are also to play a role in NRM and development of policies and strategies, amongst other roles. The constitutional division notwithstanding, it is the responsibility of both the national and county governments to ensure sustainable exploitation, utilization, management and conservation of the environment and natural resources through effective leadership at the county governments (D'Arcy & Cornell, 2016). It is on this premise the current study seeks to examine the influence of strategic leadership on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya

Statement of the Problem

Good management of the environment and natural resources should be a key priority in any country that wants to develop. Devolution has not only transformed the structure of government but has also essentially altered the way in which different regions of Kenya view the management of environment and natural resources in their Counties. All the counties should have clear governance policies complete with strategic leadership capacity needed to ensure they sustainably exploit their natural resources, conserve and protect the environment.

Gichuhi (2015) argue that poor strategic leadership and implementation of strategy has been blamed for a number of strategic failures with lack of top leadership commitment being one of the most mentioned problems. Effective strategic leadership actions enable organizations to successfully use strategic management processes which culminate in realization of above average returns and strategic competitiveness (Don, 2014). There has been insufficient environment and natural resources integration into county policy, planning and budgeting processes, unclear roles between the national and County Government, lack of capacity and insufficient budget allocated to the sector (Kenya National Policy on Environment 2013). There has been laxity among the leadership of counties in Kenya in the implementation of environment and natural resources. Many of these counties may not have put in place enough legislation that allows prudent use of natural resources and protection of the environment. The country has witnessed a gradual but comprehensive transfer of power, responsibilities and resources from the central to local governments, however the County Governments have not invested enough in policies and planning for utilization of the natural resources found within their borders (Kamiri, 2018).

This could be attributed to inadequate funding allocated to the environment and natural resources management sector, poor collaboration between the two levels of Government, insufficient legislation as well as bad governance could also be a factor leading to the human resource and governance challenges facing counties in addressing environment and natural resource management in Kenya. It is on this premise the current study seeks to examine the influence of strategic leadership on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. Examine the influence of strategic intent on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya
- ii. Explore the influence of strategic communication on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- iii. Assess the influence of strategic direction on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- iv. Determine influence of strategic alignment on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. How does strategic communication influence implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya?
- ii. To what extent does strategic communication influence implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya?
- iii. What is the influence of strategic intent on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya?
- iv. How does strategic alignment determine implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya?

Theoretical Review

Institutional Theory

The institutional theory posits that generally organizations functioning under the same institutional norms would adopt similar practices with their competitors out of concern for legitimacy rather than efficiency (Eisenhardt, 1988). In addition, organizations create structures in order to look legitimate to important stakeholders or as part of regulations, procedures, and structures imposed upon them by competitive pressure or as a means of conforming to the normative standards developed by accrediting bodies (Sila, 2007).

The theory also indicates that environmental factors play an important role in creating isomorphic effects which influence the adoption of certain decisions. The isomorphic effects arise due to coercive, mimetic, and normative factors. The coercive pressure originates from formal, external pressure exerted upon organizations by other accrediting bodies, mimetic isomorphism occurs as organizations respond to uncertainty in the business environment, and normative isomorphism stems primarily from professionalism which is concerned with the firm's struggle to establish the legitimacy of its autonomy (Grewal & Dharwadkar, 2002). The institutional theory further explains that there are internal and external institutional factors which help to develop an understanding about an organizational

phenomenon or behavior (Hussain & Hoque, 2002). In this context, therefore, institutional theory would help in explaining organizational performance.

Nair and Prajogo (2009) have indicated that international standards and practices are affected by functionalist and institutional theory. They also state that processes, structures, plans, rules, norms, and routines, establish authoritative guidelines for social behavior which affect organizational performance. Institutional theory has recently been applied in numerous managerial settings to explain the potential differences in managerial environment, strategies, and financial abilities which affect performance (Nair & Prajogo, 2009; Fowler, 2009; Pagellet al., 2013). Furthermore, Sandhu, (2009) asserts that strategic communication is best understood through the institutional perspective theory. Therefore, this theory will give an insight into strategic communication on effective implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Resource Based Theory

Resource-based theory was first introduced in late 1980s and it supports the view that firms compete on the basis of their resources and capabilities (Rousseau, 2017). This theory also assumes that firms within an industry may be heterogeneous with respect to the bundle of resources that they control. Thus, it is important that organization use their resources to outsmart their competitors. Otubanjo (2018) also noted that the application of resources can help firm to deliver sustainable competitive advantage. This is because when resources are managed such that their outcomes cannot be imitated by competitors, the firm is able to achieve high competitive advantage. Companies that have unique, rare and non-imitable resources are able to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the society. Moreover, according to İpek (2018), the resource-based view (RBV) stems from the principle that the source of firms competitive advantage lies in their internal resources including the competence level of their workers and the available resources to use in their operations. The theory also predicts that certain types of resources owned and controlled by firms have the potential and promise to generate competitive advantage and eventually superior firm performance (Ainuddin et al., 2007).

Notably, it is true that County Government are noted to have unique characteristics, such as flexibility and employees from different cultural backgrounds with various competencies. Despite this, it is true that County Government various challenges such as inadequate resources in terms of time, poor management capacity and other technical expertise These special characteristics and circumstances make strategic leadership vital for effective resource allocation in county governments in Kenya. It is on this premise the Resource Based Theory will be adopted to show the relationship between resource allocation and implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Contingency Theory

According to Williams, Ashill and Naumann (2017), contingency theory support the view that there is no one best way to organize and achieve the organization goals. The theory was first coined by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) who argued that the amount of uncertainty and rate of change in an environment impacts the development of internal features in organizations and any one way of organizing and planning organizations activities is not effective. Therefore, it is imperative that organization adopt a number of ways and methods to meet their needs and objectives. Weill and Olson (1989) also noted that contingency theory is guided by the general orienting hypothesis that organizations whose internal features best match the

demands of their environments will achieve the best adaptation through effective strategic direction. This is a clear indication that county governments should use and apply different strategies and procedures in planning their operations, policies and goals with a clear strategic direction (Taylor & Taylor, 2014). When counties are using different plans and strategies, they are in a position to embrace creative ways of achieving their goals and objectives within budget and time through a clear strategic direction. From the above theory, it is evident that the county government has a role in the strategic direction on implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Systems Theory

Mele, Pels and Polese (2010) envisage that a systems theory is a theoretical perspective that analyzes a phenomenon seen as a whole and not as simply the sum of elementary parts. The focus is on the interactions and on the relationships between parts in order to understand an entity's organization, functioning and outcomes. Systems can be found in nature, in science, in society, in an economic context, and within information systems. System theory stresses the effects of external systems on the decisions and behavior of an organization; where external systems include regulations, the law, professional standards, interest organizations and social belief. The ultimate success of a supply chain depends upon various factors among which are customer's expectations, globalization, information technology, government regulations, competition, and the environment (Singh *et al.*, 2015). Singh *et al.* (2015) applied the concept of system dynamics and how and why it has been applied to strategic leadership to various facets of strategy implementation such as resources allocation and top management. The authors proceed to argue that strategic decisions are made under a probabilistic view of the future and that as a result there is a necessity for decision support tools that can help managers to understand costs, benefits, and risks associated with various alternatives. According to Zhu *et al.* (2006) environmental regulations may include domestic environmental regulations, government environmental policies and international agreements. System theory characterizes the effects of external pressure on organizational structure (Chien *et al.*, 2007). Hui *et al.* (2001) envisage that public's increasing environmental consciousness, the statutory requirement due to government policies and regulations, and pressure from organized groups are some of the factors that sway companies towards adopting environmental and natural resource strategy.

Conceptual Model and Hypothesis

According to Chepkwei (2019) when conducting a study, a conceptual framework should be developed to show the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable (implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya). Out of the literature reviewed various variable were suggested, but in this study the variables are strategic intent, strategic communication, strategic direction and strategic alignment. The relationship among the variables is as illustrated in Figure 1.

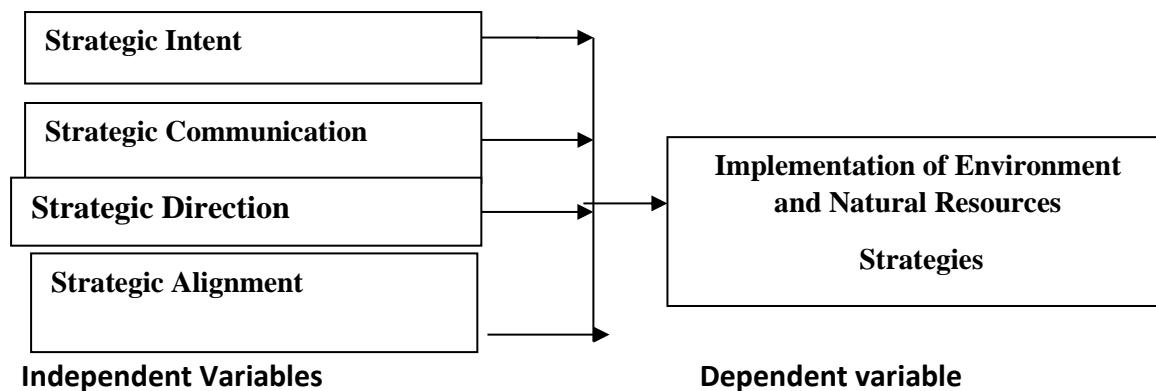


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Makori (2014) study sought to determine how CEOs of organizations listed in Nairobi Security Exchange (NSE) formulate their individual strategic intent. Further, it examined whether the commander's appreciation process as used in the military has any applicability in the formulation of strategic intent by CEOs in the business environment organizations listed in NSE were selected for the study. The findings revealed that CEOs have not adopted any formal models in formulating individual strategic intent, only informal mental diverse processes are utilized. Kabaiku and Karanja (2017) examined the effects of leadership on strategy execution in private dairy firms in Mount Kenya region. Their objective was to determine the effect of the leadership style, leadership support, leadership communication and leadership structure on strategy execution. They found a positive significant relationship between leadership and strategy execution in the firms.

Muraguri (2016) study sought to investigate dimensions of strategic intent execution and performance of universities in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were: assess the effect of organizational leadership, strategic communication and strategy alignment variables on performance of universities in Kenya. The study revealed the existence of a positive relationship between dimensions of strategic intent execution and performance of universities in Kenya in which organizational leadership, strategic communication, and strategy alignment were statistically significant. The study also found a partial mediation effect of process execution on the relationship between organizational strategic intent execution and performance.

Kihara (2016) investigated the influence of strategy implementation on the performance of manufacturing SMEs in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to examine the effect of leadership styles, structure, human resources, technology and strategic direction on the performance of these firms. Of these five drivers of strategy implementation, leadership styles, structure, human resources and technology had a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of these firms. Mwanje, Guyo and Muturi (2016) examined the challenges of strategy implementation in selected sugar companies in Kenya. The main purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of external environment, organizational structure, managerial skills, organizational culture and quality of workforce training on strategy implementation in these firms. He found a positive significant relationship between these variables and strategy implementation.

Kabetu and Iravo (2018) study sought to analyze the effect strategic leadership on performance of UN-Habitat. Specifically, the study sought to investigate the effect of staff competence, firm resource capacity, management support, value orientation and social

responsibility on performance of UN-Habitat. The target population therefore comprised of 197 top level management, mid-level management and lower level management of UN Habitat. A sample population of 130 was arrived at by calculating the target population of 197 with a 95% confidence level and an error of 0.05. The correlation and multiple regression analysis was used to establish the relations between the independent and dependent variables. The study concluded that organizational flexibility had the greatest effect on Performance of UN-Habitat in Kenya in Kenya followed by developing human capital then communicating the strategic direction then sustaining effective corporate culture, then communicating the strategic direction while adoption of core competencies had the least effect on the Performance of UN-Habitat in Kenya in Kenya.

Njeri (2017) sought to establish the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in the Kenyan motor vehicle industry. The study was carried out using descriptive research design. The target population for this study was 13 major motor vehicles retailers in Kenya as listed in the KMI website. The sampling frame of this study was the various management levels of the 13 major motor vehicles retailers in Kenya as listed on the KMI association website. Stratified random sampling was used. The study findings revealed that a positive and significant relationship between strategic leadership as represented by leadership competence, leadership communication, personnel involvement, as well as monitoring and evaluation and strategy implementation has been established.

Olaka, Lewa and Kiriri (2017) objective of the study was to investigate the influence of strategic leadership on the implementation of strategy in the commercial banks in Kenya. The seven critical components of strategic leadership studied were strategic direction, core competencies, human capital, social capital, corporate culture, ethical practices and strategic controls. More specifically, the study investigated the influence of these components on the implementation of strategy in the commercial banks in Kenya. The study adopted a quantitative research design whose target population was the top management team in the commercial banks in Kenya. The study finds that there is a positive statistically significant relationship between effective implementation of strategy with only two of the strategic leadership actions which are 'determining strategic direction' and 'establishing balanced organization controls'

Chepkurui (2012) objective of the study was to investigate the role played by strategic leadership in strategy implementation at the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC). The study was conducted through a case study in which data was gathered from primary sources through interviews. The respondents were drawn from two key departments; the Finance and Technical (Strategy Implementation & Planning) divisions which are very instrumental in strategy implementation at the corporation. The data collected was analyzed and evaluated for usefulness, consistency, credibility and adequacy through content analysis. The findings obtained from the study showed that strategic leadership plays a very critical role in the effective implementation of strategy at the corporation.

Research Methodology

Kothari (2013) observed that research design is a blue print which facilitates the smooth sailing of the various research operations, thereby making research as efficient as possible hence yielding maximum information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. The study adopted a descriptive research design. This design refers to a set of methods and procedures that describe variables. It involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data. Descriptive studies portray the variables

by answering who, what, and how questions (Anderson, 2011). The study was descriptive in nature as it is deemed appropriate because it will involve use of written questionnaires to be administered to respondents. Yin (2017) recommends descriptive design as it allows the researcher to describe, record, analyze and report conditions that exist or existed. Since the study sought to establish the relationship between strategic leadership and implementation of environment and natural resources strategy in Nakuru County, Kenya a descriptive research design could be the best design. This had the advantage of providing an in-depth investigation of the problem under study

The target population in this study was 80 staff and study targeted each department that was involved in the strategy implementation at the County Government of Nakuru. The study population was drawn from the categories classified as Human resource & Administration, Finance & Control, Legal, Audit, Environment & Natural Resources Departments. This is as illustrated in Table.1.

Table 1

Target Population

Division	Population	Percentage
Human resource & Administration,	15	18.75
Finance & control	30	37.50
Legal	11	13.75
Audit	14	17.50
Environment & Natural Resources	10	12.50
Total	80	100

Source: Nakuru County (2019)

The actual population in this study was made up of the 80 respondents. Since the population was relatively small, a census was used implying that all the 80 staff drawn from the different units were studied. According to Abbott and McKinney (2013) a census yields more reliable results than a sample, and whenever it is possible it should be undertaken. Since major strategic management matters were carried out by the targeted population, they were seen as most appropriate to give out the required information for the purpose of this study and therefore they were targeted as respondents for the study. The census approach was justified since according to Orodho (2009), data gathered using census contributes towards gathering of unbiased data representing all individuals' opinions on a study problem (Field, 2006). Census provides a true measure of the population since there is no sampling error and more detailed information about the study problem within the population is likely to be gathered (Anderson, 2011).

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis

Strategic Intent

The study sought to assess the influence of strategic intent on implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. This section presents findings to statements posed in this regard with responses given on a five-point Likert scale (where 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5= Strongly Agree). Table 2 presents the findings. The scores of 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' have been taken to represent a statement not agreed upon, equivalent to mean score of 0 to 2.5. The score of 'Neutral' has been taken to represent a statement equivalent to a mean score of 2.6 to 3.4. The score of 'agree' and 'strongly agree' have been taken to represent a statement highly agreed upon equivalent to a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0.

Table 2 presents the findings as tabulated, a majority of respondents were found to disagree with the statement posed in regard to influence of strategic intent on implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study established respondents disagreed that the county had a vision on how to implement environment and natural resources (Mean= 2.332; Std= .854). The study findings indicated that majority of the respondents disagreed that there was a clear mission on how implement environment and natural resources (Mean= 2.132; Std= .752). The respondents disagreed that the county had a clear set up of objectives to implement environment and natural resources (Mean= 1.987; Std= .219). The respondents disagreed that the county government had developed specific milestones on implement environment and natural resources (Mean= 2.134; Std= .221). The respondents disagreed that the county had vision and mission have

been set up to create feasible strategic options (Mean= 2.876; Std= .098). The overall mean was 2.292. The study results imply that strategic intent was not well adopted to improve implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study results are in tandem with the findings by Makori (2014) study sought to determine how CEOs of organizations listed in Nairobi Security Exchange (NSE) formulate their individual strategic intent. Further, it examined whether the commander's appreciation process as used in the military has any applicability in the formulation of strategic intent by CEOs in the business environment organizations listed in NSE were selected for the study. The findings revealed that CEOs have not adopted any formal models in formulating individual strategic intent, only informal mental diverse processes are utilized. Kabaiku and Karanja (2017) examined the effects of strategic intent on strategy execution in private dairy firms in Mount Kenya region. The study results findings indicated that strategic intent played a key role on strategy implementation.

Table 2

Influence of Strategic Intent on Strategy Implementation

Strategic Intent	Mean	Std. Dev
We have vision on how to implement environment and natural resources	2.332	.854
There is a clear mission on how implement environment and natural resources	2.132	.732
The county has a clear set up of objectives to implement environment and natural resources	1.987	.219
The county government has developed specific milestones on implement environment and natural resources	2.134	.221
The county has vision and mission have been set up to create feasible strategic options	2.876	.098
Average Mean	2.292	

Strategic Communication

Table 3 presents the findings as tabulated, a majority of respondents were found to disagree with the statement posed in regard to influence of strategic communication on implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study established respondents disagreed that they had good communication systems in their county to enhance implementation of environment and natural resources (Mean= 2.165; Std= .654). The study findings indicated that majority of the respondents disagreed that the communication was the driving force towards implementation of environment and natural resources (Mean= 2.338; Std= .321). The respondents disagreed that communication plans acted as opportunities to formulate and implement strategies (Mean=2.165; Std= .328). The respondents disagreed that there was a continuous sharing of information between the top management and the other employees (Mean= 2.116; Std= .543). The respondents agreed that the Informed employees were able to influence strategy execution (Mean=4.321; Std= .218). The overall mean was 2.621. The study results imply that strategic communication was not well adopted to improve implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study results are in tandem with the findings by Kabetu and Iravo (2018) study sought to analyze the effect strategic communication on strategy implementation. The study established that strategic communication enhanced that

organizational flexibility had the greatest effect on strategy implementation then sustaining effective corporate culture, then communicating the strategic direction

Table 3

Influence of Strategic Communication on Strategy Implementation

Strategic Communication	Mean	Std. Dev
We have good communication systems in our county to enhance implementation of environment and natural resources	2.165	.654
Communication is the driving force towards implementation of environment and natural resources.	2.338	.321
Communication plans acts as opportunities to formulate and implement strategies	2.165	.328
There is continuous sharing of information between the top management and the other employees	2.116	.543
Informed employees are able to influence strategy execution	4.321	.218
Average Mean	2.621	

Strategic Direction

Table 4 presents the findings as tabulated, a majority of respondents were found to disagree with the statement posed in regard to influence of strategic direction on implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study established respondents disagreed that the county government had a strategy execution manual/ practical guide (Mean= 2.123; Std= .087). The study findings indicated that majority of the respondents disagreed that the county had a committee that monitored the execution process of the strategy (Mean= 2.178; Std= .111). The respondents disagreed that the county had in place clear indicators of success and/or failure of the strategic intent execution (Mean= 2.432; Std= .218). The respondents disagreed that the county had enhanced policies and procedures for strategic intent execution (Mean= 2.341; Std= .212). The respondents agreed that the county environment policy pressured them to deliver their strategic priorities (Mean=2.024; Std= .543). The overall mean was 2.220. The study results imply that strategic direction was not well enhanced to improve implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study findings are consistent with the findings by Kihara (2016) investigated the influence of strategic direction on the strategy implementation of manufacturing SMEs in Kenya. The study findings indicated that strategic direction has an influence on the strategy implementation in manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. Further, Mwanje, Guyo and Muturi (2016) examined the challenges of strategy implementation in selected sugar companies in Kenya. The study established that found strategic direction had a role on strategy implementation

Table 4

Influence of Strategic Direction on Strategy Implementation

Strategic Direction	Mean	Std. Dev
The county government has a strategy execution manual/ practical guide	2.123	.087
There is a committee that monitors the execution process of the strategy.	2.178	.111
The county has in place clear indicators of success and/or failure of the strategic intent execution	2.432	.218
The county has enhanced policies and procedures for strategic intent execution	2.341	.212
The county environment policy pressures us to deliver our strategic priorities	2.024	.543
Average Mean	2.220	

Strategic Alignment

Table 5 presents the findings as tabulated, a majority of respondents were found to disagree with the statement posed in regard to influence of strategic alignment on implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study established respondents disagreed that the county strategic intent was aligned to the county government work processes (Mean= 2.331; Std= .656). The study findings indicated that majority of the respondents disagreed that there existed a strong formalized process of planning their strategic direction (Mean= 2.118; Std= .342). The respondents disagreed that the strategic goal alignment was translated into actionable deliverables (Mean= 2.009; Std= .121). The respondents disagreed that the county constantly provided organizational learning to review work process and programs to meet our strategic goals (Mean= 2.543; Std= .009). The respondents agreed that technology adoption helps in sustaining high achievement and success in strategic execution (Mean= 4.024; Std= .208). The overall mean was 2.605. The study results imply that strategic alignment was not carried out to improve implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Table 5

Influence of Strategic Alignment on Strategy Implementation

Strategic Alignment	Mean	Std. Dev
The county strategic intent is aligned to the county government work processes	2.331	.656
There exist a strong formalized process of planning our strategic direction	2.118	.111
Strategic goal alignment is translated into actionable deliverables	2.009	.121
The county constantly provides organizational learning to review work process and programs to meet our strategic goals	2.543	.009
Technology adoption helps in sustaining high achievement and success in strategic execution	4.024	.208
Average Mean	2.605	

Strategy Implementation

The respondents were requested to rate stakeholders' satisfaction level with respect to implementation of the environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The results were as presented in Figure 2. According to the results, 47.9% of

respondents specified that stakeholders were moderately satisfied with implementation of implementation of the environmental and natural resources strategies, 23.9% indicated satisfied, 14.5% pointed out very satisfied, 7.7% specified dissatisfied while 6% pointed out very dissatisfied. This implied that most of the stakeholders were moderately satisfied with implementation of the environmental and natural resources strategy in Nakuru County, Kenya.



Figure 2: Stakeholders' Satisfaction Ratings

Further, the respondents were asked to rate the achievement of implementation of the environmental and natural resources strategies objectives. The results were as shown in Figure 3. With respect to achievement of implementation of project objectives, 70.1% of the respondents rated between 41% and 60%, 11.1% specified 61% and 80%, 7.7% pointed out between 81% and 100%, 6% specified below 20% while 5.1% indicated between 21% and 40%. This implied that the efficiency of respondents regarding achievement of implementation of project objectives was not excellent.

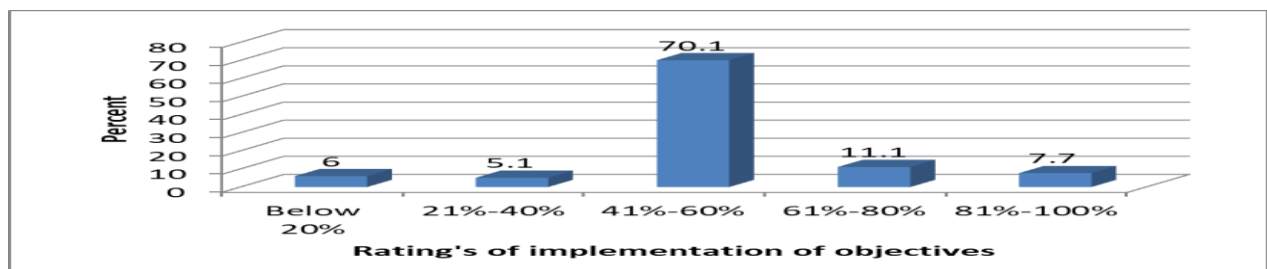


Figure 3: Achievement of Projects Objectives

Multiple Regression Analysis

A correlation coefficient indicate the relationship between variables, it does not imply any causal relationship between variables and hence the need for further statistical analysis such as regression analysis to help establish specific nature of the relationships. In this section, regression analysis for independent variables and the dependent variable will be conducted. According to the model summary Table 6, R is the correlation coefficient which shows the relationship between the independent variables (strategic intent, communication, direction and alignment) and dependent variable (implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya).

The R-Squared is the variance proportion in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable: the larger the R-squared the larger the effect of the independent

variable on the dependent variable. The R Square can range from 0.000 to 1.000, with 1.000 showing a perfect fit that indicates that each point is on the line. It is notable that there exists a strong positive relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable as shown by R value (0.873). The study findings implied that the four independent variables jointly accounted for 86.20% of the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies as represented by the R^2 . This therefore means that other factors not studied in this research contribute 13.80% to the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies. This implies that these variables are very significant therefore need to be considered in any effort to enhance implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Table 6

Model Summary (Overall)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.873a	.862	.792	.071	.218	101.470	4	65	.000

Further, the analysis of variance is used to determine whether the regression model is a good fit for the data. It also gives the F-test statistics; the linear regression's F-test has the null hypothesis that there is no linear relationship between the two variables. The F-critical (4, 65) was 13.876 while the F-calculated was 101.470 as shown in Table 3. This shows that F-calculated was greater than the F-critical and hence there is a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. In addition, the p-value was 0.000, which was less than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, the model can be considered to be a good fit for the data and hence it is appropriate in predicting the influence of the four independent variables on the dependent variable (implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya).

Table 3

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	48.870	4	12.217	101.470	.000
	Residual	7.824	65	.1204		
	Total	56.694	69			

NB: F-critical Value = 13.876;

Further, the study ran the procedure of obtaining the regression coefficients, and the results were as shown on the Table 7. The coefficients or beta weights for each variable allows the researcher to compare the relative importance of each independent variable. In this study the unstandardized coefficients and standardized coefficients are given for the multiple regression equations. However discussions are based on the unstandardized coefficients.

Table 4

Regression Coefficient Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	P-value	
		B	Std. Error	B		
1	(Constant)	11.908	1.634		7.288	.000
	Strategic Intent	0.588	0.276	.456	2.130	.004
	Strategic Comm.	0.799	0.108	.690	7.398	.000
	Strategic Direction	0.706	0.211	.676	3.348	.003
	Strategic Alignment	0.735	0.123	.700	5.976	.001

The Multiple regression model equation would be ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \epsilon$) becomes: $Y = 11.908 + 0.588X_1 + 0.799X_2 + 0.706X_3 + 0.735X_4$. This indicates that implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya = $11.908 + 0.588$ (Strategic Intent) + 0.799 (Strategic Communication) + 0.706 (Strategic Direction) + 0.735 (Strategic Alignment). According to the regression equation established, taking all factors into account (strategic intent, communication, direction and alignment) constant at zero, implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya was 11.908.

Findings in Table 7 showed that strategic intent had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_1 = 0.588$ (p-value = 0.004 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Also, the influence of strategic intent is more than the effect attributed to the error, this is indicated by the t-test value = 2.130, thus we conclude that there is a significant relationship between strategic intent and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study findings are in line with the findings by Kabaiku and Karanja (2017) examined the effects of strategic intent on strategy execution in private dairy firms in Mount Kenya region. The study found a positive significant relationship between strategic intent and strategy execution in the firms.

In addition, the findings in Table 7 indicates that that strategic communication had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_2 = 0.799$ (p-value = 0.004 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Also, the influence of strategic communication is more than the effect attributed to the error, this is indicated by the t-test value = 7.398, thus we conclude that there is a significant relationship between strategic communication and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study findings are in line with the findings by Chepkurui (2012) objective of the study was to investigate the role played by strategic communication in strategy implementation at the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC). The findings obtained from the study showed that strategic communication plays a very critical role in the effective implementation of strategy at the corporation.

Further, that strategic direction had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_3 = 0.588$ (p-value = 0.000 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Also, the influence of strategic direction is more than the effect attributed to the error, this is indicated by the t-test value = 3.348, thus we conclude that there is a significant relationship between strategic direction

and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. Kihara (2016) investigated the influence of strategy implementation on the performance of manufacturing SMEs in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to examine the effect of leadership styles, structure, human resources, technology and strategic direction on the performance of these firms. Of these five drivers of strategy implementation, leadership styles, structure, human resources and technology had a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of these firms. The study findings are in agreement with the findings by Mwanje, Guyo and Muturi (2016) examined the challenges of strategy implementation in selected sugar companies in Kenya. The study found out that strategic direction had a positive significant relationship with strategy implementation.

The findings in Table 4 indicates that that strategic alignment had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_4 = 0.588$ (p-value = 0.000 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Also, the influence of strategic alignment is more than the effect attributed to the error, this is indicated by the t-test value = 5.976, thus we conclude that there is a significant relationship between strategic alignment and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study results are in line with the findings by Muraguri (2016) indicated that strategic alignment amongst three hierarchical levels and found a serious misalignment of strategic intent. The results suggested that the success of every organization becomes possible only when organizations become intense in teamwork relationships as a means of exploring organizational performance implying that strategic execution and performance is a matter of focus and alignment of strategy. The study concluded that thriving strategic outcomes are best achieved when persons responsible for execution are also part of the planning or formulation process of the strategy.

Conclusion

This study concludes that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic intent and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The correlation and regression coefficients of the study show that strategic intent had a significant positive influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. This implies that increasing levels of strategic intent would increase the levels of implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. Therefore, it can be concluded that strategic intent had a strong influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

In addition, the study concludes that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic communication and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The correlation and regression coefficients of the study show that strategic communication had a significant positive influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. This implies that increasing levels of strategic communication would increase the levels of implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. Therefore, it can be concluded that strategic communication had a strong influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. Further, the study concludes that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic direction and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The correlation and regression coefficients of the study show that strategic direction had a significant positive influence on the implementation of

environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. This implies that increasing levels of strategic direction would increase the levels of implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. Therefore, it can be concluded that strategic direction had a strong influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Finally, the study concludes that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic alignment and implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The correlation and regression coefficients of the study show that strategic alignment had a significant positive influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. This implies that increasing levels of strategic alignment would increase the levels of implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. Therefore, it can be concluded that strategic alignment had a strong influence on the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Recommendations

The study established that the strategic intent positively and significantly influence implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study recommends that the county need to have a vision and mission on how to implement environment and natural resources. The county government should develop specific milestones and set up of objectives to create feasible strategic options. This will improve implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study recommends that there is need to have good communication systems in the county to enhance implementation of environment and natural resources. The communication should be the driving force towards implementation of environment and natural resources. There is need to have communication plan acted as opportunities to formulate and implement strategies. There should be continuous sharing of information and processing between the top management and the other employees to improve implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study recommends that the county government should have a strategy execution manual/ practical guide to enhance direction for strategy implementation. There is need for the county government to have committee which can monitor the execution process of the strategy. The county government should enhance policies and procedures for strategic intent execution. There is need to have a policy and procedures to deliver their strategic priorities. The study recommends that the county government should have a strategic alignment on the work processes to improve strategy implementation. There is need to have a strong formalized process of planning which can be translated into actionable deliverables. There is need the county to constantly provide organizational learning to review work process and programs to meet strategic goals pertaining implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Implications for Future Research

The area of strategic leadership is an essential area in most sectors both in our country and worldwide and therefore the area requires urgent contribution on the strategy implementation especially on the environmental and natural resources strategies. There are still many more strategic leadership variables and strategy implementation measures that have not been looked into by this study. Therefore, regarding future line of research, effort

should be put at strategic leadership variables like strategic planning, training & development, leadership styles and alignment in relation with the implementation of environmental and natural resources strategies especially in the counties in Kenya.

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