

Effect of Strategy Implementation Practices on Employee Performance in Trans Nzoia County Government, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of strategy implementation on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government. The analysis was focused on the selected department employees of Trans Nzoia County Government as the target population of the study. The study was guided by the following research objectives: - To examine the effect of human resource practices on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government, to analyze the effect of institutional practices on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government and to examine the effect of environmental factors on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government. The study was guided by the Systems Theory; Resource based view theory; Environmental dependency theory; Dynamic capabilities theory; Contingency theory and the Institutional theory. A descriptive research design was employed with a structured questionnaire that covered both qualitative and quantitative data, being administered to the target population by the researcher for data collection. The survey targeted selected departmental employees in Trans Nzoia County government by employing census method since the target population was less than one hundred respondents, which is the maximum acceptable number for census method to be used. The data collected was then sorted and analyzed by both the regression tools and ANOVA using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The researcher used a multiple correlation coefficient and regression analysis together with the ANOVA test to establish, make conclusions and recommendations on the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable from the findings. The findings, through the F calculated ($F = 22.755$), which was $> 5\%$ level of significance, revealed a statistically significant regression effect between the research predictors and the predicted variable. They further showed that the overall model was significant with Human Resource Practices predicting 18% of the employee performance, Institutional Practices, 21.7% of the employee performance, and Environmental Factors explaining 43.8% of the employee performance in Trans Nzoia County government. From the findings, Environmental Factors was the most significant predictor of employee performance at 43.8% with ($t = 3.177$). The results are to contribute to the existing body of knowledge for the researchers and organizational management in their way of human resource management. The research is also expected to form a basis for scholars who may want to study issues related to the performance of non-teaching employees. From the findings, conclusions were made and recommendations as well as suggestions for further studies deduced to enable further understanding of employee performance on strategy implementation on devolved government service delivery.

Keywords: Strategy implementation, Strategic Management, Strategic Plan, institutions, organizational internal elements.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive business environment, adoption of strategic planning is imperative to a firm's success in its business. This is because firms exist in an open system and hence affect and are affected by external conditions that are largely beyond their control (Pearce and Robinson, 1997). Various authors have looked at the dilemma of planning, specifically as it relates to strategy with Pfeffer (1996), noting that implementation is one of the more difficult business challenges facing today's managers, he added that a strategy is as good as its implementation. Ungerer et al. (2007) suggested a cycle that must be followed to enable the implementation of strategic plans. The stages involved include an evaluation of current position and an understanding of potential futures, the development of various options and choices, formulation of a robust strategy architecture and then implementation. One management tool that has been acclaimed internationally as effective in improving the performance of public entities is the use of strategic planning. Strategic planning is important to any organizational work performance because it determines the organization's success or failure (Bryson, 1998).

Strategic Management is a concept that concerns making decisions and taking corrective actions to achieve long-term targets and goals of an organization (Bakar et al, 2011). It is a set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve a company's objectives (Pearce and Robinson, 2005). Strategic management practices therefore include strategic planning; strategy implementation and strategy evaluation and control, which have in the past studies been seen to influence the competitive positioning of a firm in the industry, thus determining the performance (Johnson, 2009).

Generally, strategic management practices can improve efficiency in various organizations (Bakar et al, 2011). Strategic

management practice consists of four basic elements, strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation and control (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008). It is within these four elements that strategic management practices are manifested and is also described as the strategic management process. Strategy formulation is the development of long-range plans for the effective management of environmental opportunities and threats, in light of corporate strengths and weaknesses (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008). It includes defining the corporate mission, specifying achievable objectives, developing strategies and setting policy guidelines.

Strategy implementation is the process through which strategies are put into action throughout the organization by deriving short-term objectives from the long-term objectives and further deriving the functional tactics from the business strategy. This process assists management in identifying the specific immediate actions that must be taken in the key functional areas to implement the business strategy (Pearce & Robinson, 2008). Strategy evaluation and control is the process of comparing the actual performance against the desired performance. Strategy evaluation involves setting control processes to continuously review, evaluate and provide feedback concerning the implemented strategies to determine if the desired results are being accomplished such that corrective measures may be taken if warranted (Hill and Jones, 2001; Steiner, 1997).

A strategy is a plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose. It is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organizations, what it does and how it does it with a focus on the future. It ensures both short term and long-term sense of direction relative to its internal and external environments both of which are dynamic. Changes in societal needs, political trends, inter-governmental relations, fiscal conditions, and citizen

expectations are likely to change the mix of program responsibilities and resource requirements facing governments. Anticipating changes and adapting to them appropriately requires a strong strategic implementation capability. Just like in the private sector, strategic planning should be practiced in public sector organizations in order to ensure that strategic plans are implemented, continually monitored, evaluated and controlled for their relevance at any one time.

Hrebbinak (2005) defines strategy implementation as a line of approaches concerning organizational structures, human resource activities and control systems designed to control performance to expected goals and objectives of the strategic plan. Although many individuals and organizations believe that formulating a unique strategy is critical and by itself effective and efficient to direct a firm to achievement of its goals and mission, ensuring that such a strategy works is equally as important. According to Rajasekar (2014) successful strategy implementation is a key for any organization's survival. Many organizations could not sustain their competitive advantages, despite having a robust strategy formulation process such as the devolved governments, because they lack the processes in implementing the strategies. Considering the higher failure rates in implementation of strategies, more attention should be given by professionals to implementing the strategy (Rajasekar, 2014).

According to Njiru (2008), the Government of Kenya has adopted various reform strategies in order to improve service delivery and accountability. Such strategies include: Rapid Results Approach, Performance Contracting and Citizen Service Delivery Charters. Strategic implementation is mandatory for all government agencies to achieve the set goals and objectives. Strategic planning is however, a relatively new concept in the public service. Good strategic plans are

bound to fail unless they are effectively implemented. Thus, government organizations not only need to ensure they come up with good strategic plans but that such plans are effectively implemented, for them to deliver on their mandates.

Bell et al., (2010) consider strategy implementation as commonly the most intricate and time-consuming activity of strategic management, while strategy formulation is primarily an intellectual and creative act involving examination and synthesis of the subject matter. Hence, it is important to study the properties of successful strategy implementation in devolved governments. According to Cater and Pucko (2010), the implementation of strategies was a key driver of the emergence of strategic management in late 20th century because of the expected results. According to Zaribaf and Bayrami (2010), most organizations had problems with strategy implementation. The literature supports the view that unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation cannot be achieved by top management alone; it requires the collaboration of everyone inside the organization and, on many occasions, parties outside the organization. While formulating a strategy is normally a top-down endeavor, implementing it requires simultaneous top-down, bottom-up, and across efforts.

Strategic planning is defined as the process of diagnosing an organization's external and internal environments, deciding on a vision and mission, developing overall goals, creating and selecting general strategies to be pursued, and allocating resources to achieve the organization's goals (Raps, 2005). The objective of strategic planning is to align an organization's activities with its environment, thereby providing for its continuing survival and effectiveness. It requires an organization to monitor its internal and external environments constantly for changes that may require modifying existing strategic and tactical plans or developing different ones

altogether. Central to strategic planning is the determination of long-term goals and objectives of an organization serving as a framework within which choices are made concerning the nature and direction of the organization (David, 2009). This framework helps in the allocation of resources in order to enhance financial and strategic performance (Dincer et al, 2006). By “nature “ and “direction” implies that decisions are of fundamental importance to the organization as opposed to less important, operational decisions.

1.1.1 Global strategic implementation practices on management

Strategy implementation involves both operationalization and institutionalization of strategy. Operationalization is concerned with turning strategic intent into operational reality. Boggis and Trafford (2014) argue that there is often more to operationalizing strategy than making structural changes, redesigning processes and training staff. They assert that for strategies to be truly successful, leaders need to create the conditions that enable the organization to pull itself into an improved future, A future that not only reflects the strategic intent, but also becomes operational reality. For this to happen, institutionalization must occur.

Strategy does not become either acceptable or effective by virtue of being well designed and clearly announced, the successful implementation of strategy requires that the strategists promote and defend the strategies. This is the process that constitutes institutionalization of strategy in an organization. The strategists must present the strategy to the members of the organization in a way that appeals to them and gains their support. This instills a sense of strategy ownership rather than imposition of strategy. This then creates commitment that is essential for making strategy implementation successful. Alexander (1985) notes that implementation has attracted less attention than strategy formulation or planning. It is traditionally

believed that strategy implementation is less glamorous than strategy formulation, and that anyone can implement and execute a well formulated strategy. Strategic implementation is where most strategic management process failures happen. It is not unusual for strategic plans to be drawn every year, and to have no impact on the organization as a whole. The best - formulated strategies by most organizations fail to produce superior performance for the firm due to poor implementation

1.1.2 Regional strategic implementation practices on management

According to Muchiri (2010), today, most universities are collaborating with other institutions and industries to enhance performance. The partnerships have involved linkages between local Kenyan universities and their foreign counterparts. The linkages are typically a one way stream in which Kenyan universities receive books, equipment, training opportunities and even grants support for their development. In return, foreign academics have an opportunity to spend time in the local universities as visiting lecturers or researchers where they collaborate with the Kenyan counterparts. To coordinate and manage these linkages, all state universities have established International liaison offices under the headship of a senior academic, thus calling for clear and effective strategic plans to ensure that performance is promoted and the institutions benefit from the collaborations. (Muchiri, 2010). This research study focused on the University of Nairobi, which implements strategic plans to enhance its performance. Today there are over 36,000 students enrolled in the University of Nairobi. Of this enrolment, 16,000 are Government sponsored while another 20,000 are privately sponsored. The University of Nairobi has the largest concentration of scholars in the country. It has been, and continues to be a centre for intellectual life, a locus of research activity extending the boundaries of knowledge, a resource for professional development, and

a key player in the growing global network of scholarship (UoN Strategic Plan, 2014). The University has a great variety of disciplines within its wide array of academic programs. These disciplines include: humanities and social sciences; natural and mathematical sciences; engineering and the built environment; arts and design; computing and informatics; law and business studies; medicine and health sciences; agriculture and food sciences; veterinary and animal sciences; and education. The programmes in these disciplines are backed up by an ever expanding open learning facility. The diversity encourages shared ideas across disciplines and promotes multidisciplinary endeavors (UoN Strategic Plan, 2014).

The university's international network of knowledge and exchange is increasing opportunities within and across disciplines, and creating new partnerships and collaborations, resulting in remarkable improvements in higher education worldwide and strengthening the quality of life. There is no doubt that higher education is facing escalating expectations and demands while at the same time experiencing serious economic shortfalls. Thus strategic Plans must therefore take recognition of these challenges and respond to them adequately. The University is therefore compelled to chart a new strategic direction guided by a shared vision, strategic thinking and agility, while at the same time being increasingly aware of the importance of its position in a worldwide context. This is the major driving force for the university's strategic plan. Through its strategic plan, the University intends to marshal its acknowledged strengths around identified opportunities, in order to address its weaknesses and minimize associated threats to its development, transformation and contribution to the national agenda and the society in general. This Institutional Strategic Plan assumes that the need for change is a genuine concern to all stakeholders, that the concerned parties will seek appropriate solutions, and that they are

capable of working together for the common good (UoN Strategic Plan, 2014). This study has gone beyond the observation of some research that questioned the existence of direct casual relationships between the use of strategic planning and improved performance.

1.1.3 Strategy implementation practices on management in Kenya

Also in order for the employees to participate fully in the strategic planning the organization should encourage bottom upward communication whereby the employees will feel that the organization consider them as part of the success in the strategic planning of the organization. In Kenya, Vision 2030 is the country's development blueprint covering the period 2008 to 2030 (NESC, 2009). Its objective is to make Kenya medium industrialized country with a medium income providing high quality life for all its citizens by the year 2030 (GoK, 2009). The Vision has been developed through an all-inclusive stakeholder consultative process, involving Kenyans from all parts of the country. The vision is based on three pillars namely: the economic pillar, the social pillar and the political pillar (NESC, 2009). This vision's program plan comes after the successful implementation of the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (2009). The economic pillar aims at providing prosperity to all Kenyans through an economic development program aimed at achieving an average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 10 % per annum the next 25 years (GoK, 2009). The social pillar seeks to build a just and cohesive society with social equity. The political pillar aims at realizing a democratic system founded on issue-based politics that respects the rule of law, and protects the rights and freedoms of every individual in the Kenyan society (NESC, 2009). There is a need to establish priorities because of dwindling resources for sectoral services. As could be inferred from the National and Regional Development Plans and Annual

Investment Programs, there are many competing concerns which need government attention and support. There is therefore a need to prioritize programs and projects. Priority listing can be achieved by formulating a set of quantified criteria reached through consensus. Programs and projects can then be prioritized thereby assuring the rational allocation of scarce resources. While the knowledge explosion and the emergence of new technologies brought about by advances in science and information and communication technology blur our vision and make us less able to visualize the future, the nullifying effect of the inundation of new knowledge and technology for efforts in strategic planning underscores the need for planning. Strategic planning means a more realistic forecasting of events, as if always involves some view of the future. Therefore the purpose of study is to evaluate the effects of strategy implementation practices on the performance of Trans Nzoia county government.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Strategy implementation is a linking component between strategy formulation, control and evaluation. Herbiniak (2006) asserts that while strategy formulation is difficult, making strategy work and executing it is even more difficult. Similarly, Cater and Pucko (2010) concluded that while 80% of firms have the right strategies, only 14% have managed to implement them well. In the scenario of devolved county governments in Kenya, they have been able to formulate strategic plans that are considered to be efficient and effective in achieving the needs of its citizens. But realizing the goals and objectives set in the plans has never been comprehensively fruitful. For effective strategy implementation, it requires leadership skills, meticulousness planning, organizing of adequate resources and activities as well as ensuring personnel commitment to the formulated strategy, Whereas the latter needs innovativeness and

being considerate of the environment and assessing the opportunities and the firm's strengths. A successful strategy implementation drive begins in the planning stage and a failure to find that link between strategy planning and strategy implementation is a sign toward strategy failure.

Researchers such as Mwendwa (2008) noted that a wide range of environmental factors and competitive pressures affect the organizations strategies and performance. Due to liberalization of the industry, strategic planning has become important for organizations due to increased competition and exposure to more environmental challenges. Strategic planning is essential for the Trans Nzoia County Government to achieve its objective of providing services to its population. Strategies have been developed to provide a blueprint for what needs to be achieved both in the short run and long run. There is need to determine the factors that can hinder strategy implementation so as to achieve the expected results in different plans of devolved governments. Since the devolved governments are in early stages of operation, they stand to face many challenges in terms of strategy implementation because they lack experience and adequate knowledge of challenges facing strategy implementation in devolved governments.

Many organizations are able to generate innovative strategic plans, but few are able to successfully implement these plans. Some researchers note that organizations fail to implement up to 70% of their strategic initiatives (Miller, 2002). The transition from idea to reality or stated differently, the link between strategy and implementation is complex. Pateman (2008), identifies six hurdles to strategy implementation as persistent pressure from stakeholders for greater profitability, increased complexity of organizations, difficult challenge faced by executives, low levels of participation of a large number of managers across all functions at an early

stage of executing strategy, difficulty of securing the required resources to execute the strategy and executives know more about strategy formulation than strategy implementation (Hrebiniak, 2008).

In Kenya a number of studies have been carried out on strategic implementation among them Arumonyang (2009), who did a survey of strategy implementation challenges facing regional development authorities in Kenya, Patrick (2009) on challenges of strategy implementation at Kenya Wildlife Service, Martha (2010) challenges of strategy implementation at the Ministry of Roads and Public Works in Kenya. Awino (2009) also did a survey on challenges facing implementation of Differentiation strategy in Mumias Sugar Company. For any entity or organization to succeed in its objectives it has to come up with plans to achieve their ultimate goal to meet the needs of their customers in market. These plans should be implemented in the right manner to achieve the desired goals. Challenges are always present in every situation and this is why it has to be minimized or alleviated. To successfully apply and benefit from strategic planning, it is imperative that a clear understanding of the factors affecting strategy implementation are examined which is important for newly devolved Governments in Kenya and especially Trans Nzoia County. The county governments in Kenya normally have well prepared strategic plans in various ministries but after being implemented the desired goals are normally not appreciated by the citizens of the counties while others are appreciated. That is the knowledge gap that the study will seek to fill by looking at the factors affecting strategy implementation in Trans Nzoia County Government.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of Strategy Implementation Practices on Employee Performance in Trans Nzoia County Government, Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives: -

- i. To examine the effect of human resource practices on Employee Performance in Trans-Nzoia County Government
- ii. To analyze the effect of institutional practices on Employee Performance in Trans-Nzoia County Government.
- iii. To examine the effect of environmental factors on Employee Performance in Trans-Nzoia County Government.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

This research was guided by the following hypotheses:-

H₀₁: Human resource practices have no significant effect on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government.

H₀₂: Institutional practices have no significant effect on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government.

H₀₃: Environmental factors have no significant effect on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County Government.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss most of the relevant past work that has been done by other researchers in the field of strategy evaluation practices, related concepts and organizational performance. It will highlight the variables that have been found out. This will therefore set the foundation for research as it will clarify and put in perspective the variables to the study and how they will be measured.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.2 Resource based view theory

Krippendorf (2014) posits that resource-based view (RBV) has since become one of the dominant contemporary approaches to the analysis of sustained competitive advantage. A central premise of the resource-based view is that firms compete on the basis of their resources and capabilities. Srivastava, Franklin, and

Martinette (2013), found out that most resource-based view researchers choose to “look within the enterprise and down to the factor market conditions that the enterprise must contend with, to search for some possible causes of sustainable competitive advantages” holding constant all external environmental factors.

Galvin, Rice, & Liao (2014), posits that a firm’s resource must, in addition, be valuable, rare, and imperfectly imitable and substitutable in order to be a source of a sustained competitive advantage. Rašković, Brenčić, Fransoo, and Mörec (2012) postulates that each firm is characterized by its own unique collection of resources of core competencies. Kirchoff (2011) argues that the source of competitive advantage is the creation and exploitation of distinctive capabilities that are difficult to build and maintain, codify and make into recipes, copy and emulate, and can’t simply be bought off the shelf. Kozlenkova, Samaha and Palmatier (2013), asserts that there are three basic distinctive capabilities; (a) corporate architecture (b) innovation (c) Reputation. From this analysis, Rašković et al, (2012) identifies the following propositions, (a) Arm’s length relationships, which are associated with low asset specificity and low supplier competencies that can easily be bought off the shelf as there are many potential suppliers,(b) internal contracts, which is an in-house provision associated with high asset specificity and core competencies, (c) partnership relationships, which applies to assets of medium specificity and ascend in steps according to the distance of the complementary competencies provided by external suppliers from the core competencies of a particular firm. Karjalainea and Moxham (2013) posits that the issue of firm performance has been central in strategy research for decades and encompasses most other questions that have been raised in the field, as for instance, why firms differ, how they behave, how they choose strategies and how they are managed. Hart & Dowell (2010) asserts that

in the 1990s, with the rise of the resource-based approach, strategy researchers’ focus regarding the sources of sustainable competitive advantage shifted from industry to firm specific effects

2.3 Conceptual Framework

A Conceptual Framework figuratively depicts the relationship between the Independent Variables (Human resource practices, Institutional practices, Environmental factors and optional practices) and the Dependent Variable (Employee Performance).

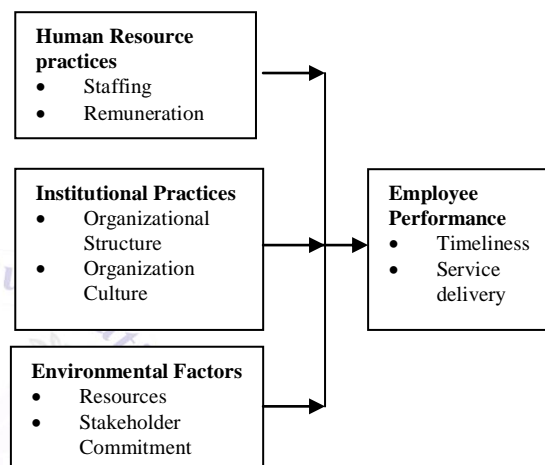


Figure 2.1: The conceptual frame work

2.1.1 Institutional practices

Strategy implementation is not a top-down-approach but a partnership of all stakeholders involved. Consequently, the success of any strategy depends on the level of involvement of actors. To generate the required acceptance for the implementation as a whole, the affected middle managers’ knowledge (which is often underestimated) must already be accounted for in the planning of the strategy. Then, by making sure that these managers are a part of the strategy process, their motivation towards the project will increase and they will see themselves as an important part in the process (Rapa and Kauffman, 2005). Research studies indicate that less than 5% of a typical workforce understands their organization’s strategy (Kaplan and Norton, 2001). Without understanding the general course of strategy, employees cannot effectively contribute to a strategy

implementation. To involve employees is an important milestone to make strategy everyone's everyday job.

Organizational culture is an idea in the field of organizational studies management which describes the psychology, attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values (personal and cultural values) of an organization (Schein,2009). It has been defined as the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organization and that control the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organization (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). From organizational values, we can develop organizational norms, guidelines, or expectations that prescribe appropriate kinds of behaviour by employees in particular situations and control the behaviour of organizational members towards one another hence making the organization to have a common status for identification.

Coordination of activities, streamlining of processes, aligning the organizational structure, and keeping employees motivated and committed to strategy implementation are key responsibilities of an organization. Matthias and Sascha (2008) identified the role of the board, which is to ensure consistency among resource allocation, processes, and the firm's intended strategy. Beer and Eisenstat (2000) referred to poor coordination across functions and inadequate down-the-line leadership skills and development as killers of strategy implementation. According to Brenes and Mena (2008), an organizational culture which is supportive of principles and values in the new strategy results in a successful strategy implementation. They also found out that 86% of the most successful companies see culture aligned to strategy as highly significant, against only 55% of less successful companies. Bimani and Longfield-Smith (2007) examined how organizational structure influences strategy implementation and found out that the process of strategy implementation is

structured and formal. They also concluded that during the strategy development process greater emphasis is placed on financial information, but during the implementation phase both financial and non-financial information are emphasized.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

According to Sekaran and Roger (2011), research design is a master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information. Cooper and Schindler (2006) argue that research design constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of the data to achieve fore stated objectives. It's a structure for investigating so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions and for testing hypothesis (Kothari, 2004). The study adopted a descriptive research design. The descriptive research design was deemed appropriate because it allowed the researcher to assess the effect of strategic planning on the management of devolved governments.

3.2 Target Population

Cooper and Schindler (2006), Kothari (2004) and Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define population as the total collection of elements that is the main focus of a scientific query. Target population was comprised of employees from ten (10) departments of the county Government namely; Information Communication and Technology (ICT) department, Human Resource (HR) department, Administration, SAA, Library, Research, Public Relations, Procurement, Finance and the Legal team.

Table 3.1: Sampling frame

Department	Respondents
ICT	4
Human Resource Administration	5
SAA 7 Administration	7
Library	3
Research	3
Public Relations	2
Procurement	4
Finance 5 Legal Team	5
TOTAL	45

3.3 SAMPLING Techniques and Procedures

Cooper and Schindler (2011) say that the sample ought to be carefully selected to represent the population adequately with the researcher ensuring that the subdivisions entailed in the analysis are accurately catered for. A census method was adopted because the target population of forty five (45) respondents was less than one hundred respondents, which is the maximum number below which census method is to be used. Questionnaires were delivered to all the targeted respondents who were employees of selected departments of Trans Nzoia County government for data collection.

3.4 Data Analysis and Reporting

Data analysis refers to separation of data into constituent elements. Upon completion of the data collection exercise, all completed research instruments will be edited to eliminate errors that might have been made by the respondents. All the data from the study will be coded to classify the responses given into categories for ease of analysis. The coded data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, as well as determination of correlation coefficients and regression analysis that accept or reject null hypotheses, with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.

Quantitative data from the field will be transcribed, organized into various relevant themes and reported as they emerge. The analysis of Quantitative data will be undertaken as an activity simultaneous with data collection. The challenge posed by Quantitative data is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns and design a framework for communicating the existence of what the data reveal. In view of this, data obtained through Quantitative methods will be processed and analyzed following three steps. In the first step, the data will be summarized into daily briefs after administration of the instruments

The second step will involve description of the responses to produce interim reports. Areas that require additional information will be identified and requisite data will be sourced. The third step will involve systematic analysis and interpretation of the interim report. These will then be reported in a narrative form. Descriptive and inferential statistics, correlations and regression analysis will also be applied. The study was guided by the following multiple linear regression model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon_i$$

Where;

Y Employee Performance

β_0 Constant

β_j Beta coefficients for $j = 1, 2, 3$ which indicate per unit change in the dependent variable as the independent variable changes by one unit.

X_1 Human Resource Factors

X_2 Institutional Factors

X_3 Environmental Factors

X_4 Optional Factors

ϵ_i Error term for $i = 1, 2, 3, \dots, n$

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.2.1 Response Rate

Since the target population was within the acceptable limits for census method to be used, less than one hundred respondents, the researcher administered the questionnaires herself and made a follow up on the respondents, Trans Nzoia County government employees, this approached managed to yield a response return rate of 100%

4.2.2 Respondents Profile

The findings regarding the respondents' age and level of education were tabulated where Most of the respondents, aged between 26 years and above 51 years were above 91% of the entire population, this may be due to the nature of the work undertaken by the county employees who were mostly accommodated from the local government employees. The

respondents between 18-25 years constituted 8.89%, 26-40 years 22.22%, 41 - 45 years 24.44%, being the majority, 46 - 50 years 22.22% and above 51 years represented 22.22%. The researcher set out to establish the education levels of the respondents. The results were as follows: KCSE 0.00%, Certificate 4.44%, Diploma 11.11%, bachelor's degree 57.78% and the post graduate employees among the respondents were represented by 26.67%. The findings showed that bachelors' degree holders were majority followed by post graduate employees while the county had no mere form four (KCSE) leavers in the county selected departments for this study. This enabled the researcher to conclude that the county had acquired qualified staff for proper policy/ strategy implementation since these duties require expertise in their execution. This led to a conclusion that the departmental personnel met the basic educational requirements to enable them execute their responsibilities.

4.4.1 Effect of institutional practices on employee performance.

A total of 33.33% of the respondents strongly agreed and 26.67% agreed to the idea that Information is widely shared by the county government so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when its needed while a total of 13.33% strongly disagreed and 17.78% disagreed as to whether Information is widely shared by the county government so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when its needed As to whether employees are committed to strategy implementation, 28.89% agreed and 26.67% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 20.00% disagreed, 13.33% strongly disagreed that Employees are committed to strategy implementation with 11.11% remaining neutral on this issue. On whether there is a shared vision of what the county should be in future, 53.33% of the respondents agreed with 24.44% strongly agreeing that indeed there existed a shared vision of what the county should be in future. 4.44% of the respondents remained neutral, an equivalent

per cent of 8.89% each disagreed and strongly disagreed that there existed a shared vision of what the county should be in future. As regards to whether the county government communicates well about the required concepts for strategy implementation, majority of the respondents, i.e 44.44% and 17.78% agreed and disagreed respectively. 17.78% strongly disagreed while 11.11% disagreed. However, 8.89% of the respondents remained neutral as to whether the county government communicates well about the required concepts for strategy implementation.

Generally the Trans Nzoia county government employees, who were the respondents in this study, had a positive view on institutional practices as the total response on whether Information is widely shared by the county government so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when its needed, both strongly agree and agree were on the higher side as compared to the total response on disagree and strongly disagree for all the variables.

4.9 Relationship between variables

The researcher used the regression equation to test the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable. Research predictions about the collected data were made using the Regression analysis

Table 4.10 ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	44.622	4	11.156	22.755	.000 ^b
	Residual	27.454	56	0.490		
	Total	72.076	60			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Human Resource Practices, Institutional Practices, and Environmental Factors

The ANOVA table provided an F-test for the null hypothesis that none of the explanatory variables are related to performance of employee performance in Trans Nzoia County government. The analysis led to the researcher rejecting the null hypothesis $F = 22.755$, $p < 0.001$ and concluded that at least one of the predictor

variables; Human Resource Practices, Institutional Practices, and Environmental Factors is related to employee performance in Trans Nzoia County government

4.9.1 Regression results from the Analysis

The regression model generated from the regression results was as follows;

$$Y = 0.190 + 0.217 X_1 + 0.180X_2 + 0.438X_3$$

This section reported the results of the relationship between employee performance (dependent variable) and the independent variables (Human Resource Practices, Institutional Practices, and Environmental Factors). Table 4.17 above indicated that the coefficients of the research variables had the expected signs. The effect of human resource practices and Institutional practices were less significant compared to environmental factors

Human resource practices predicted 21.7% of employee performance, this demonstrated clearly that Human resource practices like staffing and remuneration of employees contributed to employee performance. This was interpreted to mean that, *ceteris Paribas*, a unit change in Human resource practices results in a 0.217 change in employee performance. There was a significant relationship between institutional practices and employee performance. It predicted 43.8% of the employee performance with a positive coefficient of 0.438; similarly the set of standardized beta coefficients suggested that adjusting for the effect of other explanatory variables, institutional practices had the strongest effect on employee performance thereby contributing 43.8%. The study results concluded that employee performance in Trans Nzoia County government depend on the three predictor variables

4.10 Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing is the use of statistical approach to prove whether a given hypothesis is true (Wekesa, 2016). Using hypotheses testing, the regression results generated from the model were tested by the researcher. This was intended to test whether there was a significant effect between the independent variables and the

dependent variable. The p value in Table 4.18 above, for the independent variables, is statistically significant at ($p < 0.01$) and hence supported the hypotheses H_{01} , H_{02} , and H_{03} respectively.

H_{02} : Institutional practices have no significant effect on employee performance in Trans Nzoia County government.

The second hypothesis, Institutional practices have no significant effect on employee performance in Trans Nzoia county government, as reflected by the results in table 4.18 above. The institutional practices coefficient of ($\beta = 0.217$, $t = 1.733$) had a positive effect to employees performance. The researcher therefore concluded that the statistical result of ($\beta = 0.217$, $t = 1.733$) (at $P > 0.05$) from the regression output for institutional practices had a significant relationship on employees performance; the second null hypothesis (H_{02}) was therefore rejected.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher made the following recommendations from the research results; that according to the research findings and conclusion above, the Trans Nzoia county government management should strive to better the working environment further and that the county strategic plan implementation should be designed and communicated to the implementing personnel in a way that is well understood and motivates them to carry on with their responsibilities towards successful implementation. The county employees should be encouraged to be positive and committed towards the successful strategy implementation through the top level management show and prove of commitment towards the strategy implementation. All variables that significantly influenced employee performance at the county should be encouraged by the county management in order to improve the performance of county employees.

The county should also strive to grand training opportunities to the employees for enhanced performance especially in the strategy Implementation skills among other necessary required skills for proper employee productivity. The county management should motivate employees more through improved terms of employment on the basis of merit. If these recommendations are put in to consideration, there is a high possibility of strategy implementation improvement when employee performance improves greatly. This may also lead to other county governments in the country using Trans Nzoia County as a model county as far as strategy implementation and employee performance is concerned.

Recommendations for further study

Employee performance as regards strategy implementation is a wide topic that cannot just be conclusively discussed by a study. The researcher suggested that quite a number of additional areas needed further research by other scholars in order to aid organizations since employee performance is as important to the organizations as their major objective of profitability. Variables that affect employee performance like continuous employee training, the impact of rewarding employees handsomely to the organization profitability or overall performance towards the realization of its major objectives and other areas like the effect of teamwork in organizations on overall performance should be researched further.

CONCLUSION

The research analysis results of the study established that there is employee performance in Trans Nzoia county government as indicated by 46.67% of the respondents who agreed and 33.33% of the respondents strongly agreed that work environment was conducive for anyone to work. It was also evident from the research that human resource practices greatly influenced performance at the county government. Majority of the respondents

appreciated that human resource practices enhanced performance where a total of more than 82.22% agreed that human resource practices encouraged them to implement the county strategy well and with motivation. Over 69.89% appreciated that the county train employees in ensuring that they are well equipped with relevant Skills, 75.4% agreed that employee performance had a shared vision of what the county should be like in future

Good employee performance at Trans Nzoia County could be attributed to environmental factors. 46.67% agreed and 33.33% strongly agreed that work environment was conducive for anyone to work as per Table 4.10. Employee performance at the county was as a result of motivation from the realization that there was top management commitment towards strategy implementation. 62.22% of the respondents agreed while 28.89% strongly agreed that there was top management commitment to strategy implementation.

The responses however had some negative side as regards to whether the county government communicates well about the required concepts for strategy implementation, where majority of the respondents, i.e. 44.44% and 17.78% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively which implied that there are gaps in the way the county management communicates strategy concepts to the employees. This may greatly affect the strategy implementation since employees can only implement a strategy they understand and believe in.

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