Strategic Management Practices in the Government of Kenya Ministries and Their Role on Change Implementation

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Abstract: **The aim behind this study was to determine role of strategic management practices on change implementation guided by three objectives; the influence of leadership styles, communication styles and employee skills on change implementation in the government of Kenya Ministries. The study used descriptive research design where 95 respondents were the representative of the entire population from 18 ministries. Questionnaires were used as the instrument of data collection. The data collected was analysed using SPSS and regression analysis method used to establish the hypothetical relationship between variables. The study established that leadership styles, communication styles and employee training were not common strategic management practices to influence change implementation in the ministries. The study concluded that the ministries should recruit managers who can analyse the business environment, formulate, implement and evaluate strategies. Ministries should adopt structures that are flexible to changes and encourage employee training to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, the study recommended that ministries should introduce changes by developing a plan that will outline how change will be implemented gradually with minimal systemic and individual resistance.**

Keywords: **Strategic Management Practices, Change implementation among ministries.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Without strategic management practices, change implementation among firms operating in the 21st century will be an uphill task for both private and public organizations (Wheelen & Hunger, 2004). According to Schultz et al., (2011) strategic management is a process carried out at the top of the organization, which provides guidance, direction and boundaries for management. It is the formal process used to determine the strategies for the organization (Thompson et al., 2012). Just like private enterprises, public sector organizations also engage in strategic management as reflected in a variety of policy making and administrative activities (McKernian, 2006). Structural factors, employee skills, technology in use, leadership styles, strategies and employees are internal factors that influence change implementation in an organization (Pearce & Robinson, 2007). The goal of change implementation is to achieve sustainable results, growth and organizational transformation. Then, a substantial investment in people must be central to the overall implementation strategy (Thomson, Strickland & Gamble, 2007).

The overarching purpose of successful change management is to accelerate the speed at which people move successfully through the change process (Schippmann, 1999). When employees learn new skills, meet performance targets and contribute to organization growth, they improve service quality to the organization (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2008). Change implementation among ministries in Kenya has remained a challenge due to inappropriate strategic management practices adopted. Inability of them to adopt strategic management practices, internal and external forces are some of the aspects that has contributed to lack of change implementation (GoK, 2014). Despite the effort to introduce

change among ministries in Kenya, internal and external challenges like; structure, resource commitment, management support, communication, employee skills and leadership styles are experienced (Machuki, 2011).

1.1 Problem Statement:

From the organizational context, it can be observed that people do not resist change but they resist to be changed (Northouse, 2004). A study by Mbogo (2003) established that 78% of the state corporations experiences challenges during change implementation. According to the Government of Kenya Sessional Paper (2014) on the reforms and operational efficiency of the Ministries, it established that low adoption of strategic management practices among ministries in Kenya has led to failure to realize effective change implementation. Related studies that have been carried out locally by; Machuki 2005; Obonyo 2012 and Onyango 2012 identified that most organizations cannot implement change due to systemic and individual challenges. Further Nduko (2008) and Muthuiya (2004) established that organizations were challenged to implement change due to lack of effective planning. It is evident from the previous empirical studies that role of strategic management practices on effective change implementation in the Kenyan ministries is an understudied areas. Majority of the studies carried out focused on different variables but did not focus on change implementation. Further some were conducted in different countries and reflected different sectors but did not focus on government ministries. Therefore, it was for this reason that this study sought to establish the role of strategic management practices on effective change implementation among Government of Kenya ministries.

1.2 Research Objectives:

1.2.1 General Objective:

To establish the role of strategic management practices on effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya

1.2.2 Specific Research Objectives:

i.   To determine the influence of strategic leadership on effective change implementation in the ministries of the government of Kenya

ii. To establish the influence of communication style on effective change implementation in the ministries of the government of Kenya

iii. To find out the influence of employee training on effective change implementation in the ministries of the government of Kenya

1.3 Justification of the Study:

This study would increase the existing body of knowledge in the area of strategic change implementation. In addition, it will benefit the government of Kenya through the establishment of effective ways of implementing strategic changes. Future scholars could also use this study to enrich on their literature review. The study would be of importance to future scholars in the field of strategic management that is currently changing organizational practices a across industries.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Two models Ricky Griffin's and Lewin's change management models formed the basis under which the concept of this study was based. The other supportive theory is McKinsey 7S Theory.

2.1 Ricky Griffin's Model:

The variables that influence change implementation according to the model include; leadership, structures, technology, information control system and human resource (Griffin, 2007). Organization objectives are achieved by dedicated team of employees who are influenced by leadership qualities (Arthur, Strickland & Gamble, 2008). Organization structures that are decentralized enhance change implementation while mechanical structures that are centralized hinder effective change implementation of a firm (Andrew &DuBrin 2009). Proper control system which includes financial budgeting, information system, proper rules and procedures will influence organization change implementation (Hendry, 2000). Proper use of technology, job designing can influence organization performance. Recruitment of qualified personnel will

enhance organization performance. The model helps us to conceptualize what factors influence implementation of strategic change leading to performance organizations (Herron, 2002)
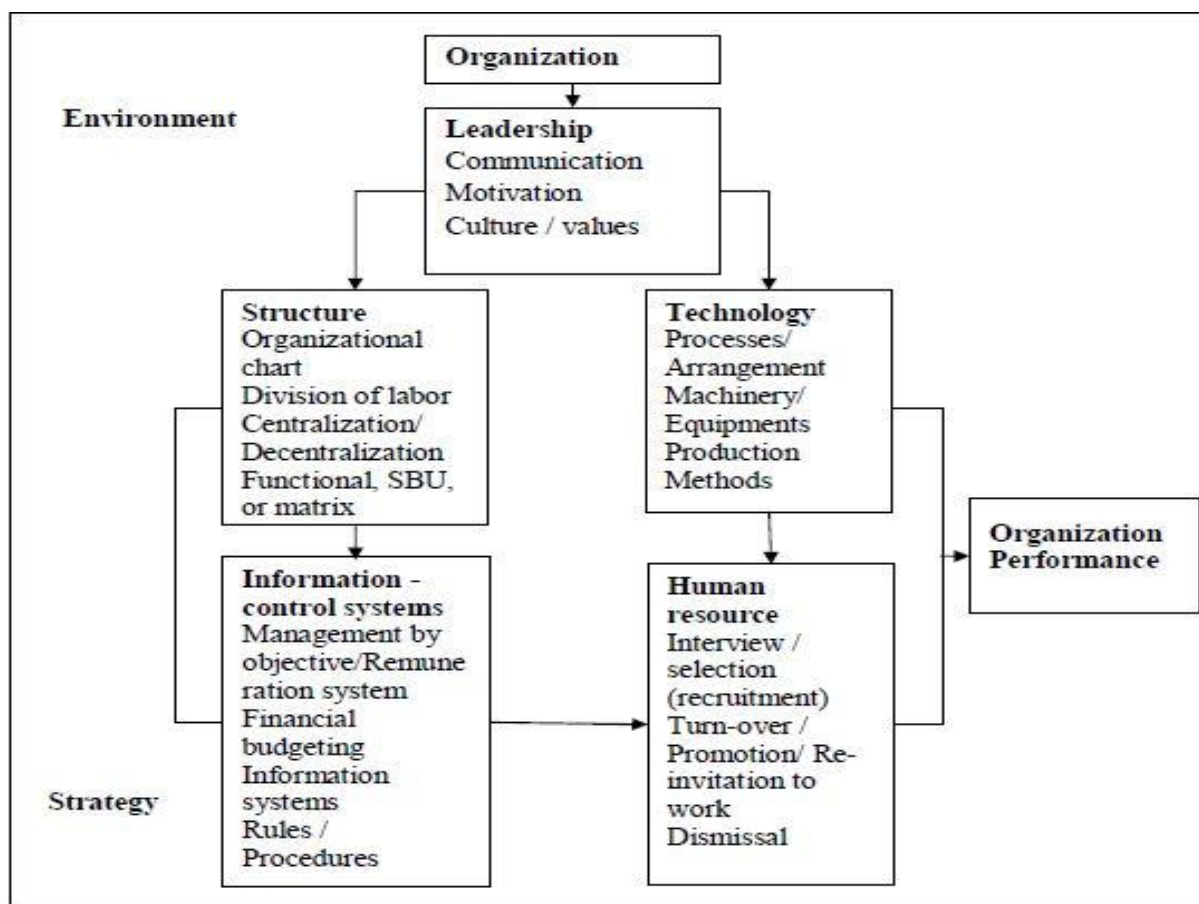

Figure 2.1: Ricky Griffin's Model (2007)

Figure 2.1 Ricky Griffin's Model

2.2 Lewin's Change Management Model:

This model was established by Kurt Lewin in 1950s. It proposed three stages for effective implementation of reforms in any organization. First, managers must unfreeze any comfort zone that may tend to support the status quo. Second, managers should ensure that appropriate policies are implemented for the organization to realize transition from old state to the new state. Third, managers should refreeze new behaviours after implementation of reforms (Scholes, 1997). For systemic and individual acceptance of reforms, employees are the key determinants of any successful change (Charles & Gareth, 2007). The fundamental aspects employees should keep in mind when going through any form of an organizational reform process is that they should be flexible to accept new practices and be part of the reform process (Pearce & Robinson, 2011).

2.3. McKinsey 7S Theory:

According to the theory, effective change implementation should be aligned with the seven factors within the organizational context. These include; structure, strategy, systems, skills, style, staff and shared values. Structure of the organization is one of the key determinants of effective change it promotes communication and continuous feedback to key stakeholders (Herron, 2002). Strategy is the plan devised to maintain and build competitive advantage over competition (Grant, 1998). Systems are the daily activities that staffs engage in to get the work done. Shared values are the core values of the company that can be seen in the corporate culture and general work ethic. Style relates to the leadership style adopted. Staff is the employees and their general capabilities. Skills are the competencies of the employees working for the company. The 7S framework can be utilized in situations whereby there is need for

realignment in order to improve company performance and to determine the best way to implement a proposed strategy (Pearce & Robinson, 2009).

2.4 Conceptual Framework:

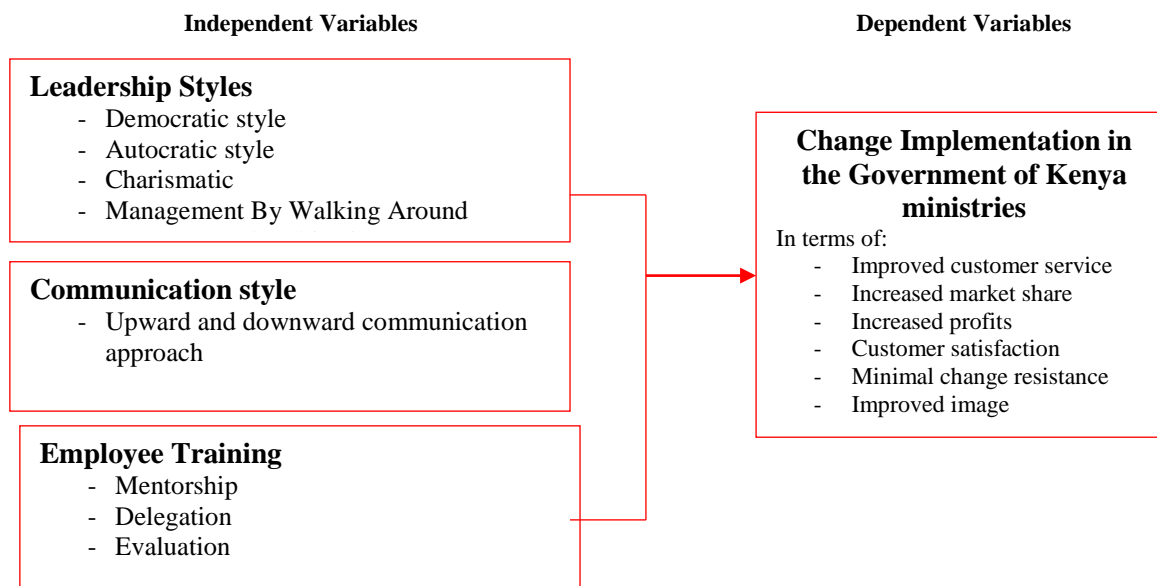Independent Variables   Dependent Variables

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework

As represented in Figure 2.1, the study established that leadership styles adopted by managers of government ministries contributed to effective change implementation with minimal resistance from employees. Communication styles used enhanced the quality of decisions formulated thus led to effective change implementation. Employee trainings like workshops, mentorship programmes, delegation of duties and employee evaluation were strategic aspects that led to change implementation among government ministries.

2.5 Leadership Style:

Democratic style of management enhances team work and minimal resistance to change. Autocratic style of management promotes change resistance among employee and hinders creativity and innovation. Charismatic leaders use their inborn characteristics to influence employee behaviors. Management by Walking Around style tends to be strict and autocratic in nature since employees are not given freedom to decide and make independent decisions. Management by objectives allows the employees to measure their performance based on the accomplished objectives set (Porter, 2003). However, a lack of strategic leadership by the top managemen has been identified as the major barriers to change implementation (Senge, 2008).

Change implementation involves establishing programs to create a series of organizational activities, budgets to allocate funds and procedures to handle the daily details (Pearce & Robinson, 1988). Some of the challenges experienced during change implementation include; leadership, structure, resources, culture and employee skills (Mostovicz et al., 2009). For effective change implementation, the leadership has to constantly monitor progress, anticipate obstacles and take corrective actions in order to ensure that the organization is agile to changing market conditions (Porter, 2003). Strategic leadership requires the ability to accommodate and integrate both the internal and external business environment, to manage and engage in complex information processing (Mcnamara, 2005). Organizational leadership entails providing a long term road map that guides the organization to deal with change and to clarify strategy that builds the organization and shape their culture to fit the opportunities and challenges (Lakein, 2005).

Kandie (2001) on strategic responses by Telkom Kenya Limited in a competitive environment concluded that whereas Telkom Kenya Limited realized the need to change their strategy due to change in the competitive environment, they lacked finances and managerial empowerment to do so. Kathuku (2004) on the strategic responses to changes in the environment by the Co-operative Bank of Kenya established that, more organizations have responded to changing environmental conditions; they did not focus on how changes in management and public sector reforms and

modernization programmes have influenced the strategic management practices.. Mwangi (2006) on performance measurement at the University of Nairobi established change management was a measure of organizational performance of among public universities in Kenya. The ability of employees to adopt new changes contributed to organizational growth in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. However, the study focused on non-financial aspects but did not focus on strategic management practices on change implementation.

2.6 Communication Styles:

For implementing change, the organization structure should be designed according to the needs of the strategy (Leslie & Lloyd, 2009). A Top-down approach to change management implies imposed change as the initiative comes from the top (Johnson & Scholes, 1997). Naturally, people who are forced to adapt to change have the initial reaction to resist (Hillman & Keim, 2001). Johnson and Scholes (1997) the bottom-up approach creates conditions for direct employee participation that top-down change generally does not provide. A problem with both the top-down and bottom-up approaches is that neither adequately provides for middle managers. The Centre-down approach assigns a more active role to these employees as initiators of change in their respective areas of responsibility. Middle managers interpret what the change envisaged by top management means in the context of their areas before identifying and planning the changes that they think are necessary(Konzi, 2012).

Harrison and Freeman, (1999) argue that formal communication is a communication system which is to achieve the organizational objective. But the informal communication is the system to achieve individual objectives in an informal group. Superior to subordinate communication or subordinate to superior is an example of formal communication (Hillman & Keim, 2001). The formal communication is focused to do the tasks or jobs which one has to take. Kavanagh and Ashkenazy (2006) argue that formal communication has a formal and well defined structure. Informal communication takes the informal talks and gathering among the employees (Hax & Masluf, 1996). The individuals in a group make the communication and they can be flexible as they like (Hammon & Stanton, 2001). Kavanagh and Ashkenazy (2006) on management control systems and their strategy formation at middle management levels established that information technology was a critical component of organizational competitiveness. A study by Mbogo (2003) on strategic change management process in Hybrid Private-Public Organizations in Kenya established that operating environment influenced commercial banks from effective change implementation. However, the study focused on awareness but did not focus on information management system on change implementation among government ministries in Kenya.

A study by Njau (2000) on strategic response by firms facing changed competitive conditions: the Case of East African Breweries Ltd established that change is needed when environmental conditions change. However, the study focused on technology but did not focus on training on change implementation. A study by Njanja (2002) on strategic management practices in the agricultural sector of Kenya found out that the agricultural sector in Kenya did not adopt strategic management practices to achieve organizational performance. Top leadership did not support strategic initiatives like training and strategic information management. However, the study focused on the agricultural sector in Kenya but did not focus on the government ministries in Kenya.

2.7 Employee Training:

Investments in development of employees' skills can make them more effective in their jobs (Hillman & Keim, 2001). When the organization invests in improving the knowledge and skills of its employees, the investment is returned in the form of more productive employees (Hax & Masluf, 1996). Training and development programs may be focused on individual performance or team performance linked to the core business (John & Richard, 2011). This requires that organizations recognize that different employees will have different needs that change over time as these workers continue in their careers (John & Richard, 2011). The emphasis on knowledge sharing is power will reduce the tendency on the employees' side to hoard knowledge (Kaplan & Norton, 2009). Together with the cultural perspective, the top management is responsible to educate its employees on the importance of knowledge management, not only to the bottom-line of the organization, but also to its employees (KIPPRA Report, 2013).

Knowledge management is the storing and sharing the wisdom, understanding expertise accumulated in an organization on techniques and operations (Kaplan and Norton, 2013). Specifically, Strickland (1999) acknowledges that knowledge management facilitates the flow and sharing of information to improve the efficiency of individuals for organizational

development. Njenga (2006) on strategic management practices at the Mater Hospital, Nairobi established that lack of team work; change management agents and adequate resources were obstacles for change management. However, the study focused on research, human resource and systems bust did not focus on training and leadership. Ochanda (2005) on challenges of strategy implementation at Kenya industrial estates Ltd established that the strategies were mainly implemented by consultants in consultation with management. However, the study focused on challenges of strategy implementation but did not focus on training on change implementation.

2.8 Organizational Change Implementation:

John and Richard (2011) argue that implementing a good idea is usually harder than thinking it up in the first place. According to Lakein (2005) managing organizational change is the process of planning and implementing change in such a way as to minimize employee resistance and cost while simultaneously maximizing the effectiveness of the change effort. Dynamic competitive environments prompt leaders to transform their strategies (Mostovicz et al, 2009). This is especially true in organizations where putting in place a new practice requires many peoples' understanding, agreement, and willingness to act (Strickland, 1999). A study carried out by Ngulube and Tafor (2006) on impact of management of records in the public sector in Africa found that structure in countries were significant in effective management of the sector. However, the researchers observed that mechanistic structure in most public sectors in developing countries contributed poor implementation of changes in most public institutions. In a study on the relationship between structure and human capital, (Maria, 2011) it was established that structure depends highly on the skills of the human resource handling the process. A study conducted by World Bank (2000) on formal as the basis for effective service delivery and public accountability in development; it was found that the quality of any structure program was directly related to the quality of the personnel undertaking the planning process. The study established that lack of considering the quality and quantity of staff needed to plan in the civil service often led to ineffective structural changes Ochanda (2005) shows many implementation related variables are important in explaining performance of enterprises.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive research design (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). The target population Krishnaswami (2003), of 190 was obtained from the 18 government ministries selected from top, middle and lower level of management. The population of the study was defined as a complete set of individuals, cases with some common observable characteristics (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The study used stratified sampling technique by taking 50% of the total population to give a sample size of 95 employees (Kothari, 2004).

Table 3.1 Sample size

Position	Population Size	Sample Ratio	Total Sample
Top Level Mangers	46	0.5%	23
Middle Level Mangers	72	0.5%	36
Lower Level Employees	72	0.5%	36
Total	**190**	**100**	**95**

In this study questionnaires were used to collect data from employee of government ministries Kenya (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). Questionnaires assisted in the translation of the research objectives into research hypothesis which motivated the respondents to provide the information being sought (Krishnaswami, 2003). Data collected was converted into numerical codes representing attributes or measurement of variables. Cooper and Schindler (2001) assert that the core function of the coding process was to create codes and scales from the responses, which can then be summarized and analyzed in various ways. The Statistical Package of Social Sciences was used to process and analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages and frequency tables were used to summarize and relate variables which were attained from the administered questionnaires. Regression analysis was conducted at 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$). After conducting regression analysis, it was established that the three variables were significant and as they made the 0.05 threshold of reliability proposed by Kothari (2004).

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate:

Out of the 95 questionnaires administered, 80 questionnaires were returned duly filled representing 84.2. This response rate was adequate for data analysis and conformed to Kothari (2003) threshold that stipulates that a response rate of 30% and above is adequate for analysis and reporting.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics:

The respondents indicated that 47% had worked for over 10 years, 26% for 6-10 years, 21% for 1-5 years and 5% for less than a year in the ministry. Majority of the respondents 47% were undergraduate holders, 26% of them were holders of Masters Degrees, 16% of them were diploma holders and 11% of them were Certificate holders. Diploma holders were at lower level management and performed assistant administrative jobs, while the certificate holders served as clerical officers and joined the ministry long more than 20 years.

4.3 Strategic Management Practices on Change Implementation:

4.3.1 Leadership Styles:

As represented in Table 4.1, majority (88%) of the respondents indicated that their ministries did not set objectives as a strategic approach of implementation change. This implied that ministry had no clear objectives that guided employees towards the new direction. Rigidity of the structures did not encourage participatory decision making and this contributed to change resistanceManagers were not creative and innovative due to systemic and structural challenges. A similar study by Njenga (2006) also established that effective change implementation was an initiative of top leadership in competitive organization. Leaders should adopt a combination of management styles to influence employees behave appropriately. Reinforcing new behaviours through training, delegation, recognition and promotions will enhance change implementation.

Table 4.1: Leadership Styles

Leadership Styles to implement change in the ministry	Mean	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Set objectives that guide employees	3.27	1.29	**88.2**	11.9	0.00	0.00	0.00
Autocratic styles of management	3.41	1.33	**84.4**	15.6	0.00	0.00	0.00
Inborn characteristics of influencing employees	3.38	1.32	**79.2**	20.8	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adopt democratic styles of management	3.58	1.11	**72.1**	27.5	0.00	0.00	0.00
Closely monitor employees by walking around	3.23	1.24	0.00	23.9	0.00	0.00	**66.3**
Notes: N=95 Constructs = 1.5 measured using five-point scale; Construct 5 is measured using percentages; Italized numbers on the diagonals for construct 1-5 are coefficients alpha estimates for internal consistency.							

4.3.2 Communication Styles:

Table 4.2: Communication Styles

Communication Style for change implementation	Mean	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Employee are given timely feedback	3.11	1.77	**70.12**	10.11	5.04	00.4	15.3
Recognizes information obtained from informal sources	3.22	1.73	**66.12**	20.04	14.00	0.00	0.00
The ministry creates maximum awareness before	4.26	1.73	**60.1**	30.2	10.3	0.00	20.00
Managers have interpersonal relations with employees	4.31	1.74	**50.0**	20.0	10.4	20.05	0.03
Employee are given freedom to interact	3.23	1.74	**50.4**	20.1	10.06	10.5	10.0
Recognizes top-down and bottom up approach	3.22	1.71	**50.02**	40.02	10.00	0.00	0.00
Notes: N=95 Constructs = 1.5 measured using five-point scale; Construct 5 is measured using percentages; Italized numbers on the diagonals for construct 1-5 are coefficients alpha estimates for internal consistency.							

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As shown in Table 4.2, majority (70%) of the respondents said that employees were not given timely feedback on the progress of activities by their supervisors. Over 50% of them indicated that their ministries did not have interpersonal culture between managers and lower level employees. Top-down and bottom-up approach of communication was uncommon. Decisions were centralized and communicated from the top to lower level of management. This implied that the ministries had mechanistic structures that did not encourage communication during change implementation in the system. A similar study conducted by Kandie (2001) also concurs with the findings of this study by concluding that creating awareness is the key determinant of change implementation in the system. Without proper awareness, employees will tend to resist change using all mean and ways. Leaders should institutionalize the new vision and mission among employees in order to realize the new change.

4.4 Employee Training:

Table 4.3: Employee Training

Employee Training on change implementation	Mean	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Evaluates the effectiveness of employee	2.02	1.22	**70.1**	10.2	10.4	5.4	5.4
Delegates new tasks to existing workers	2.21	1.31	**60.1**	20.04	10.00	5.00	4.50
Employees are mentored by experienced managers	3.13	1.14	**50.0**	30.1	10.4	0.00	10.03
Employee are given relevant skills	3.13	1.13	**40.1**	30.2	10.3	0.00	10.00
The ministry encourages consultation	2.48	1.14	**40.4**	40.2	10.4	10.2	0.00
Allocate budgets to train workers on emerging issues	2.31	1.27	**30.1**	10.11	25.04	20.4	15.3
Notes: N=95 Constructs = 1.5 measured using five-point scale; Construct 5 is measured using percentages; Italized numbers on the diagonals for construct 1-5 are coefficients alpha estimates for internal consistency.							

As shown in Table 4.3, 70% of the respondents said that their ministries did not effectiveness of employee trainings on change implementation. This implied that the ministries did not allocate resource to support the change process. Supervisors did not take initiatives of giving employees relevant skills to performance their duties due to lack of delegation.40% of them said that employee were not given relevant skills like IT trainings in order to perform effectively. This implied that majority of the employees were not willing to adopt new practices. A similar study by Mwangi (2006) further supports the findings of this study by concluding that, top level managers should empower workers with relevant skills during change implementation. Lack of appropriate skills among workers drags the change process behind for decades. Conducting employee training needs assessment will provide an organization with insights of how to introduce implement and measure reforms in an organization.

4.5 Measure of Change Implementation among Ministries:

Table 4.4: Measure of Change Implementation among Ministries

Performance Indicators to change implementation	Mean	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Minimal resistance to change	4.36	1.33	0.00	0.00	10.3	30.2	**60.1**
Motivated employees to perform	3.31	1.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.1	**80.0**
Improved public service delivery	3.33	1.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	30.2	**70.4**
Team work among workers level employees	3.42	1.27	0.00	0.00	20.3	20.11	**60.2**
Enhances creativity and innovation among workers	3.42	1.31	0.00	0.00	20.00	20.04	**60.2**
Experience improved image	3.13	1.09	0.00	0.00	17.9	22.1	**60.3**
Experiences efficiency and effectiveness in operations	2.79	1.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.0	**50.1**
Notes: N=95 Constructs = 1.5 measured using five-point scale; Construct 5 is measured using percentages; Italized numbers on the diagonals for construct 1-5 are coefficients alpha estimates for internal consistency.							

As shown in Table 4.4, over 60% indicated that if their ministries were to implement change effectively, they would experience minimal resistance to change form employees by 60%, motivated workers to perform by 80%, improved public service delivery by 70%, teamwork, creativity and innovation by 60% and improved image by 60%. Finally, it was established that effective change implementation would lead to efficiency and effectiveness of the ministry in terms of resource utilization and time management.

4.6 Regression Analysis:

In addition, the researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis so as to test relationship among variables (independent) on effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS V 20.0).

Table 4.5: Model Summary

Model	R	Goodness of Fit	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.648	0.884	0.789	0.6273

The three independent factors that were studied, explain only 88.4% of the role of strategic management practices on effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya as goodness of fit. This therefore meant that other factors that were not studied in this research contributed to 12.2% of effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya. Therefore, further research should be conducted to investigate the other factors (12.2%) that influence effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya.

4.7 Relationship between Independent and Dependent Variables:

Table 4.6: Coefficient of Determination

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.103	1.2435		1.411	0.0123
	Leadership Style	0. 847	0.1332	0.121	4.232	0.0122
	Communication Style	0. 842	0.3325	0.123	3.432	0.0124
	Employee Training	0.833	0.2378	0.122	3.220	0.0121

Coefficient of determination explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable (effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya) that was explained by all the three independent variables (strategic leadership, communication styles and employee training). After conducting regression analysis, using the regression equation ($Y= \beta o+\beta 1X1 +\beta 2X2 +\beta 3X3+\varepsilon$), the findings obtained were Y= 1.103+ 0.847+ 0.842+ 0.833. It was established that at 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence, leadership style had 0.0122; communication styles showed 0.0124 and employee training showed a 0.0121 level of significance. It can be concluded that there was a significant relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. These findings are supported from literature by Kathuku (2004) who argue that there is a direct relationship between strategic management practices and reforms implementation in an organization.

Therefore, it was concluded that taking all three independent variables at zero, a unit increase in leadership styles will lead to a 0.847 effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya.; a unit increase in communication process will lead to a 0.842 effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya and a unit increase in employee training will lead to a 0.833 effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The study established that leadership styles adopted by the Kenyan ministries did not support effective change implementation. A similar study by Mwangi (2006) established that management styles adopted by leaders were determinants of effective change implementation. Machuki (2005) also established that organizations were unable to implement changes due to poor leadership practices. A combination of leadership styles among managers was the most successful strategy of change implementation. Further, Nduko (2008) found out that change implementation was an uphill task among organization if leaders did not plan effectively.

The study established that communications styles adopted did not support change implementation activities of the ministries. A similar study by Njau (2000) found out that communication enhanced coordination of activities during change implementation. Lack of awareness about new changes will lead to gossips and fear among workers thus decreased productivity. Muthuiya (2004) and Onyango (2012) established lack of awareness among employees concerning the new changes resulted to poor change implementation. Chances of change resistance were high if the organization did not adopt appropriate approached. Both systemic and individual factors were obstacles of effective change implementation. The study also established that employee training among ministries were uncommon and associated by high costs by top level management. Related studies conducted by Kandie (2001) and Kathuku (2004) established that training and education were key drivers of strategic change among firms in the business environment. Further the studies established that employees were likely to resist change if not prepared in advance. Therefore appropriate models should be adopted to enhance effective change implementation

6. CONCLUSION

The study sought to establish the role of strategic management practices on effective change implementation among Government ministries in Kenya. Therefore, it can be concluded that, democratic style of leadership should be adopted by Government ministries to achieve competitiveness and minimize employee resistance to change.

Top down and bottom up communication styles should be the culture among Government ministries to enhance strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation and control. The Government should invest employee trainings to enhance the knowledge; skills and experience of workers in managing change thus creativity and innovativeness among Government workers. Therefore, it was concluded that there was a significant hypothetical relationship between strategic management practices and effective change implementation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study established that leadership styles adopted by the government of Kenya ministries did not support effective change implementation by an average mean of 3.21. Therefore, this study recommends that the National government should recruit competent and skilled managers who can analyze the environment, formulate, implement and evaluate strategies. Aligning strategies with the changing business environment should be an initiative of top managers. Leaders should use a combination of management styles to influence change implementation activities in the ministries. Employees should be involved in key decision making process in order to minimize resistance to change.

The study established that communications styles adopted did not support change implementation activities of the ministries with an average mean of 2.88. Therefore, the study recommends that ministries to restructure and adopt organic structures that are flexible to changes and enhance coordination, communication and transparency. Both top-down and bottom up management approached should be supported by the ministries. Formal and informal communications also should be enhanced to promote change implementation.

The study also established that employee training among government ministries were uncommon and associated by high costs by top level management with a mean of 2.56. Therefore, this study recommends that top level managers should allocate enough money in annual budgets in order to empower workers with ICT skills to enhance efficiency and effectiveness among ministries. Appropriate trainings among workers should be provided based on the Employee Needs Assessment. To improve on customer service delivery and organizational performance, training is the strategic management approach that will enhance change implementation.

Suggestions for Further Research:

Future studies should explore the reasons behind the strategic management practices and change implementation among state corporations. Future studies should seek to establish ways of minimize the challenges experienced by the ministries during implementing new changes. Researchers should also focus on establishing change implementation and performance of government ministries.

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