

**INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP ON STRATEGY  
IMPLEMENTATION IN CHARTERED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Master of Business Administration Degree of Egerton University**


**EGERTON UNIVERSITY**

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## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Declaration

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in this or any other institution.


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### Recommendations

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my mother Ms. Margaret Wangari Mwaria who gave me drive, prayers and moral support throughout my study. Lastly to my daughter Natasha Wangechi for her encouragement and moral support.

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I would like to acknowledge God for his protection, provision, good health and guidance in my academic endeavors. I am grateful to Egerton University, for having given this opportunity to pursue this master's degree. My sincere gratitude and special thanks goes to my supervisor, Dr. Henry K. Kombo for his invaluable counsel, commitment and encouragement throughout the process of developing this project. I am also grateful to the academic staff and colleagues in the Department of Business Administration for the dedication and encouragement given to me. My sincere gratitude goes to my family members for their moral support.

God bless you all.

## **ABSTRACT**

Past studies suggest that strategic leadership is important in determining organizational outcomes. However, few studies have empirically examined the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation. This study sought to examine the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in Universities in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategy implementation, determine the influence of transactional leadership on strategy implementation, and establish the combined influence of transformational and transactional leadership on strategy implementation. The study was guided by the transformational leadership theory and the Upper Echelon Theory. The study adopted explanatory and cross-section research designs. The target population comprised 49 public and private chartered Universities in Kenya, and all the Universities were studied. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. To summarize the data, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used. To test the research hypotheses, simple and multiple regression analysis were used. The findings of the study demonstrated that transformational leadership positively affects strategy implementation and transactional leadership positively affects strategy implementation. The findings further demonstrated that transformational and transactional leadership jointly positively affect strategy implementation. The study concludes that strategic leadership has positive and significant effect on strategy implementation. The study recommends that the senior management teams of public and private Universities in Kenya should adopt transformational and transactional leadership style to enhance strategy implementation. The researcher recommends replication of the study in different sectors to enhance understanding of the relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>COPYRIGHT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.1.1 Strategic Leadership .....	2
1.1.2 Strategy Implementation.....	4
1.1.3 University Sector in Kenya.....	7
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	7
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	8
1.4 Research Hypotheses .....	9
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	9
1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study .....	9
1.6.1 Scope of the study.....	10
1.6.2 Limitations of the Study .....	10
1.7 Assumptions of the Study .....	10
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms.....	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 Theoretical Background.....	12
2.2.1 Transformational Leadership Theory .....	12
2.2.2 Upper Echelons Theory .....	13
2.3 Strategic Leadership.....	15
2.4 Strategy Implementation.....	23
2.5 Strategic Leadership and Strategy Implementation .....	29
2.5.1 Transformational Leadership and Strategy Implementation .....	32

2.5.2 Transactional Leadership and Strategy Implementation .....	32
2.6 Conceptual Framework .....	33
<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	35
3.2 Research Design.....	35
3.3 Target Population.....	35
3.4 Data Collection .....	35
3.5 Measurement of Variables .....	36
3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments .....	36
3.6.1 Validity .....	36
3.6.2 Reliability .....	36
3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation .....	37
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>39</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	39
4.2 Response Rate.....	39
4.2.1 Profile of Respondents.....	39
4.2.2 Profile of Organizations.....	40
4.2.3 Strategy Implementation.....	40
4.2.4 Strategic Leadership .....	41
4.3 Hypothesis Testing.....	44
4.3.1 Transformational Leadership and Strategy Implementation .....	44
4.3.2 Transactional Leadership and Strategy Implementation .....	46
4.4.3 Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership and Strategy Implementation.....	47
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>49</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	49
5.2 Summary of the Findings.....	49
5.3 Conclusions.....	49
5.4 Recommendations of the Study .....	50
5.4.1 Recommendations for Management, Policy and Practice .....	50
5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research .....	50

<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Appendix I: Questionnaire.....	60
Appendix II: List of Public and Private Universities in Kenya .....	63
Appendix III: Research Authorization Letter .....	65
Appendix IV: Research Permit .....	66
Appendix V: Research Publication.....	67

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Position .....	39
Table 4.2: General Information.....	40
Table 4.3: Mean and Standard Deviation for measures of Strategy Implementation .....	41
Table 4.4: Mean and standard Deviation for measures of Strategic Leadership .....	42
Table 4.5: Simple Regression Results for Effect of Transformational Leadership on Strategy Implementation .....	45
Table 4.6: Simple Regression Results for Effect of Transactional Leadership on Strategy Implementation .....	46
Table 4.7 Multiple Regression results for effect of Transformational and Transactional leadership on Strategy Implementation. ....	47

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model of Relationship between Strategic Leadership, Contextual Factors and Strategy Implementation.....	34
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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ADC</b>	Agricultural Development Corporation
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CUE</b>	Commission for University Education
<b>DVC</b>	Deputy Vice Chancellor
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>TMT</b>	Top Management Teams
<b>UET</b>	Upper Echelons Theory
<b>UMB</b>	University Management Board
<b>VC</b>	Vice-Chancellor

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Pearce and Robinson (2007) view strategic management as “the set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation, implementation, and control of plans designed to achieve an organization’s vision, mission, and strategic objectives”. Although strategy formulation comes before implementation, strategy implementation is a very important part of the process of strategic management (Wheelan & Hunger, 2008). Daft (2010) states that even the most creative strategies have no value if they cannot be translated into action.

Strategic leadership has been identified as one of the possible determinants to the effective implementation of strategy. Subsequently, strategic leadership is also widely regarded as one of the key drivers of strategy implementation (Barend, 2016). As postulated by Hadiyah *et al.* (2015) effective strategic leadership is the foundation of success in a strategic management process. Herminia (2006) noted that although formulating a consistent strategy is a difficult task for any management team, making that strategy work by implementing it throughout the organization is even more difficult. Therefore, strategies frequently fail not because of inadequate strategy formulation, but because of insufficient implementation. Martin (2010) also noted that the best-formulated strategies may fail to produce superior performance for the firm if they are not successfully implemented.

Strategic leadership helps to create a strategic vision for a firm by thinking of the future, it also energizes the human resources of the firm and achieve positive outcomes. Strategic leadership is able to create visions and set of goals by moving organizations to the “edge of chaos” and aid in organizational learning and adaptation by influencing the tags that produce the structure of interactions. Strategic leaders also play a central role in the organization's capacity to learn from its past, adapt to its present, and create its future (Hit *et al.*, 2010).

There is evidence that university education is vital to a country’s efforts in increasing social capital and in promoting its social cohesion, which is an important determinant of economic growth and development (Uthoff *et al.*, 2013). The social pillar in the vision 2030 singles out education and training as the vehicles that are expected to drive Kenya into becoming a middle-income economy as the education sector is responsible for co-ordination of education, training, research, education policy formulation and implementation (Ministry of Education,

2012). For a university to be globally competitive and respond to challenges of the 21st century, programs offered should be aligned to dictates of the market to ensure quality and relevance. The Kenya Vision 2030 economic blueprint emphasizes the need to address issues related to access, equity, quality, relevance, service delivery, curriculum, teacher development, and management of education in Kenyan universities (Makhana, 2016).

Universities globally are facing several challenges externally and internally, including changing government policy, ongoing student growth and stakeholder demand for quality, international developments, changes in leadership, renewed institutional strategy, and financial sustainability (Shah & Nair, 2014). These challenges compel universities to rethink their attitude towards strategy implementation. Authors focusing on factors influencing successful strategic plan implementation of Kenyan universities posit that factors influencing strategy implementation include manager skills, institutional policies, strategic expansion, resource allocation, rewards and incentives, leadership styles, organizational structure and culture (Gachupin & Raguei, 2013; Kinyanjui & Jumma, 2014; Ogata & Waynoka, 2015). There are major structural and market differences between public and private universities. While public universities are largely government-funded, private universities source funds from endowments and related fees (Zeal & Goodwin, 2012). Private universities survive and depend on successful student enrollments and subsequent retention of those students (Ferreira & Hill, 2007). Private and public universities therefore have a distinct niche in the market, even though there exists some overlap (Breneman *et al.*, 2006).

Universities in Kenya are experiencing changes in the form of expansion of the sector, diversification of provision, more heterogeneous student bodies, new funding arrangements, increasing focus on accountability and performance, global networking, mobility and collaboration that must be factored in during their strategy implementation. More than ever before, management need to revise and specify institutional mission statements, assess impact of new sources of funding, meet requirements for accountability, consider participation in globalization, international competition and requirements for national, regional international integration (Chepkech, 2014).

### **1.1.1 Strategic Leadership**

Strategic leadership can be defined as a person's ability to participate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically and work with others to initiate changes that will create a viable future for the organization (Achua & Lussier, 2007). Strategic leadership drives the

organization towards coping with change by guiding the organization to deal with change or by providing the management skill to cope with the ramifications of constant change (Pearce & Robinson, 2011). Strategic leadership when effective helps develop organization goals and then drives performance to ensure that the goals are achieved. Strategic leadership is widely described as one of the key drivers of effective strategy implementation (Herminia, 2005; Pearce & Robinson, 2007;). Strategic leadership focuses on how top leadership makes decisions in the short term that guarantees the long term viability of the organization (Sterkfontein, 2010).

Top management refers to senior-level leaders including presidents, owners, and other high-ranking executives, and senior-level managers. Several researchers have emphasized the effect of top management on strategy implementation (Herminia & Snow, 1982; Schaap, 2006; Schmidt & Brauer, 2006; Smith & Kofron, 1996). Most of them point out the important figurehead role of top management in the process of strategy implementation. Schmidt and Brauer (2006), for example, take the board as one of the key subjects of strategy implementation and discuss how to assess board effectiveness in guiding strategy execution. Herminia and Snow (1982) find that the process of interaction and participation among the top management team typically leads to greater commitment to the firm's goals and strategies. This, in turn, serves to ensure the successful implementation of the firm's chosen strategy (Dess & Priem, 1995).

However, a lack of strategic leadership by the top management of the organization has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). According to Wendy (2012) strategic leadership influences others to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance the long-term viability of the organization, while at the same time maintaining its short-term financial stability. To be successful in the tasks and role of strategic leadership, Leaders need to have the ability to think strategically and to be emotionally intelligent.

Strategic leaders can have noticeable effect on organizational performance through understanding the job and environmental conditions and establishing interaction with employees (Poursadegh *et al.*, 2012). They align employee's actions with determining strategic direction, facilitate gaining goals and doing jobs through developing core competencies, with developing people as the source of competitive advantages. Other

leadership strategies include devising more efficient ways to present change to employees; apply their technical, human and conceptual skills (Svetlik, 2005).

Bass (1985, 1998) strategic leadership has transactional and transformational dimensions, a leader can be transactional, transformational, both or neither. Transactional leadership motivates individuals primarily through contingent reward exchanges and active management by exception (Avolio *et al.*, 1999). Transactional leaders set goals, articulate explicit agreements regarding what the leader expects from organization members and how they will be rewarded for their efforts and commitment, and provide constructive feedback to keep everybody on task (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Operating within an existing system, transactional leaders seek to strengthen an organization's culture, strategy and structure.

Transformational leadership is charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating and individually considerate (Avolio *et al.*, 1999). Leaders exhibiting transformational leadership help individuals transcend their self-interest for the sake of the larger vision of the firm. They inspire others with their vision, create excitement through their enthusiasm, and puncture time-worn assumptions through their resolve to reframe the future, question the tried and true, and have everybody to do the same (Bass & Avolio 1990).

Past studies by scholars like Jones *et al.* (2006) proposes that organizations require top executives who are both transformational and transactional as they play different roles in process of strategic change initiation and implementation.

### **1.1.2 Strategy Implementation**

Once the strategic path has been projected, the top management's priorities swing to converting the chosen strategic plan into actions and desirable results (Thompson *et al.*, 2008). A very critical stage of the process of strategic management is ensuring that the strategies are put into effect and getting the organization to move in the strategy accomplishment direction. Strategy implementation is defined as a process by which policies and strategies are actionable through provision of budgets, development of procedures and programs. The process is referred to, most of the times, as operational planning and mostly involves day-to-day decisions-making in resource allocation (Wheelan & Hunger, 2008). Thompson *et al.* (2008) concur with this view that strategy implementation is an operations-oriented; make-things-happen activity aimed at performing core business activities in a strategy supportive manner. Daft (2012), states that strategy gives a company a competitive

edge only if it is skillfully executed through the decisions and actions of front line managers and employees.

During strategy implementation, the strategy must be made operational or ready for action thus making it ready for eventual implementation. Operationalization of strategy involves breaking long-term corporate objectives to operational short-term objectives and developing specific functional, unit or departmental strategies and drawing action plans to achieve the objectives (Pearce & Robinson, 1996). Policies to guide decision making must also be established, programs developed and procedures on how things will be done determined. In addition, responsibility should be assigned to specific people, human resource aligned to strategy and strategy supportive budgets established. The implementation phase also requires institutionalization of strategy that is, developing organizational capability to a point where it is fully supportive of the new strategy. The reality of strategy resides in its strategic actions rather than its strategic statements (Burgelman & Grove, 2006). This involves action-oriented activities such as communicating strategic intentions throughout the organization, matching strategy with organizational structure, matching strategy with culture, selecting effective leadership and designing effective reward systems. These two phases of strategy implementation are geared towards improving organizational performance.

Top management plays a key role in the implementation of strategy within an organization (Mollahosein & Ahmadkhan, 2012) and the lack of leadership, especially the strategic leadership of senior management, has been cited as one of the main barriers to effective implementation of strategy (Nyamwanza, 2013). According to Schaap (2012), the implementation of the strategy is a practical operation and an activity of human behavior oriented to action that requires executive leadership and key managerial skills. The findings of Shah (2005) showed that insufficient management skills and leadership and direction provided by departmental managers, together with poor understanding of roles, can affect the quality of strategy implementation. The survey revealed that individual managers perceive issues such as inadequate management skills, poorly defined key implementation tasks as the main barriers to implementing the strategy. On the other hand, the findings of Kiprop and Kanyiri (2012) and also Buluma *et al.* (2013) cited the lack of relevant skills and leadership qualities as main barriers to the implementation of the strategy

Farsight Leadership Organization (2007) discovered that 80% of organizations have the right strategies, but unfortunately, only 14% implement them effectively. Presently, empirical

findings on effective strategy execution are therefore far from encouraging (Cater & Pucko, 2010). In many cases this is not because of poor strategy and the idea behind them. According to Gekonge (2009) implementing strategies successfully is very important for any private or public organization. In the absence of implementation, even the most superior strategy is useless. Many valuable strategies are faced with problem at the failure in the implementation stage. Basically, the main challenges in the strategic management lie in the implementing of the strategies rather than in developing stage. Studies by Herminia (2008) and Gekonge (2009) confirm that successful strategy execution piloted by strategic leaders and innovation ability of an organization has a momentous impact on the organizational performance. Strategy implementation involves allocation and management of sufficient resources, establishing a chain of command or some alternative structure and assigning responsibility of specific tasks or processes to specific individuals or groups.

Abdulwahid *et al.* (2013) explored the factors which cause the failure of strategy plan implementation in public health sectors. In their study, they argue that leadership role is important in formulation and strategic plan implementation and if the strategic leader is not involved in strategy implementation, leadership is not able to create a vivid vision for any strategic program. Implementing strategies successfully is vital for any organization public or private. Lack of strategic leadership by the top management of the organization has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

The success of the implementation of the strategy can be measured using the Balanced Scorecard which includes financial measures that indicate the results of the actions already carried out that are complemented with operational measures of customer satisfaction, internal processes and innovation activities and improvement of the organization and these operational measures are the drivers of future financial performance (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). The Balanced Scorecard allows managers to observe a business from four perspectives: financial (concern about profitability, growth and shareholder value), customer (concern about how the company's products or services contribute to creating value for the client), internal business processes (related to the priorities of the various processes that create customer and shareholder satisfaction), and learning and growth (related to the creation of a climate that supports change, innovation and the growth of the company).

### **1.1.3 University Sector in Kenya**

Public University operates as a state corporation under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology while the private Universities operate as private entities but under the Ministry of Education as well. The Commission for University Education (CUE) was established by an Act of Parliament, Universities Act, No. 42, 2012 as the successor to the Commission for Higher Education which was established under Universities Act Cap 210 B of 1985. This was to address the need to regulate, coordinate and assure quality of University education as a result of growth and expansion of the University sector in Kenya. The University Management Board (UMB) is responsible for implementation of policies and provides the Vice-Chancellor with decision-making support. It deliberates reviews and/or proposes recommended policies and priorities which contribute to the University's advancement toward accomplishing strategic initiatives as outlined in the Universities Act, No. 42, 2012 and charter. The top Management teams in the Universities comprises of; Vice-Chancellor, Deputy- Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Finance Officers, Human Resource Managers and other senior officers as defined by University Charter.

Universities have been found to fail in successful implementation of their set out strategies. Ogata and Kimiti (2014) emphasized that universities in Kenya failed in implementing strategies due to weak strategic leadership. This was also echoed by Omboi and Mucai (2015) who elaborated more on the leadership aspect and narrowed down to the weakness in the human element as the reason leading to the failure rate experienced by universities in the strategy implementation process including the government tertiary institutions.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Literature suggests that strategic leadership play an important role in strategy implementation. For instance, Hit *et al.* (2007) found strategic leadership as one of the key drivers of effective strategy implementation and has a vital role in leading and key-noting the tone, pace, and style of strategy implementation. Effective strategic leadership actions enable organizations to successfully use strategic management processes which culminate in realization of above average returns and strategic competitiveness. According to Pella *et al.* (2013), organizations that formulate and implement their strategies successfully definitely achieve high performance outcomes. Also a study by Njagi and Kombo (2014) found a moderately strong relationship between strategy implementation and organizational performance. Implementing strategy is a time-consuming management challenge and practitioners are emphatic in saying that it is a whole lot easier to develop a sound strategic

plan than it is to ‘make it happen’ (Thompson & Strickland, 1989). Enormous time, energy, and resources go to strategy development, but many organizations have little to show for the effort, largely due to poor implementation. Wheelan and Hunger (2008) argue that poor implementation of strategy has been blamed for a number of strategic failures with lack of top management commitment being one of the mentioned problem.

Past studies have been conducted mainly focusing on leadership in general or on leadership styles affecting strategy implementation and are case studies for instance, Ishaq *et al.* (2018) conducted an investigation into the effect of leadership styles in the implementation of the strategy at the Administration Police Service in Lamu County, Kenya. Koech and Namusunge (2012) conducted a study on the effect of leadership styles on the performance of the organization. Muhoro (2011) investigated the effect of leadership in the implementation of strategic change in Telkom Kenya. Other studies that have been conducted in relation to factors affecting strategy implementation assessed the factors affecting the implementation plans in government tertiary institutions (Lewa *et al.*, 2009). Ng'ang'a and Ombui (2013) conducted a study on the factors that influence the implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Lari district. Chepkirui (2012) examined the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of strategy in the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) in Kenya however, this study focused on one parastatal. Sila and Gichinga (2016) in a case study of JKUAT examined the role of strategic leadership in strategy implementation focusing on three main objectives that included the influence of organizational culture, strategic communication and strategic direction in strategy implementation.

While these studies examined aspects of strategic leadership and strategy implementation, majority were case studies thereby limiting generalization and further they focused on leadership in general without addressing the strategic leadership in relation to strategy implementation. This study therefore sought to examine the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in Universities in Kenya.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this research was to examine the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in Universities in Kenya.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study were to:

- i. Determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategy implementation in the chartered Universities in Kenya.
- ii. Determine the influence of transactional leadership on strategy implementation in the chartered Universities in Kenya.
- iii. Establish the combined influence of transformational and transactional on strategy implementation in the chartered Universities in Kenya.

#### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

The study sought to test the following hypotheses:

H<sub>0</sub>1 Transformational leadership has no significant effect on strategy implementation in the chartered Universities in Kenya

H<sub>0</sub>2 Transactional leadership has no significant effect on strategy implementation in the chartered Universities in Kenya

H<sub>0</sub>3 Transformational and Transactional leadership jointly do not have significant effect on strategy implementation in the chartered Universities in Kenya

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study would be helpful to practitioners and policy makers who include the senior management of the universities in formulating policies aimed successful strategy implementation. Top Management of organizations would replicate the study to find out the extent to which transformational and transactional style of strategic leadership interact to influence the implementation of various adopted policies and strategic plans and therefore enable the success in the performance.

The findings of this study would be beneficial to scholars as it would not only contribute towards the existing body of knowledge in the field of leadership but would also act as a reference point for further research in related topics in strategic management. The study would also enrich existing literature on strategic leadership practice as applied in universities and would invite further research in the field. The results of the study would be used as a basis for further research by other academicians in the field of strategic management.

#### **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This section presents the scope and limitation of the study.

### **1.6.1 Scope of the study**

The study focused on the University management or top leadership of 49 Chartered Universities in Kenya as they are the strategic leaders in these institutions. The respondents were the executive officers of the Universities who included the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), DVC's, Registrars, Principals, Deputy Principals, Human Resource Managers and Chief Finance Officers. Data was limited to find out the influence of strategic leadership in strategy implementation in Universities in Kenya. The study was conducted in the months of July to October 2019.

### **1.6.2 Limitations of the Study**

Though leadership is a wide area of study, the researcher was limited to transformational and transactional leadership. To overcome this limitation, the researcher recommended further research into other types of leadership. The researcher foresaw a challenge in terms of limited time available to complete the study as the targeted respondents were spread across a wide geographical area. To overcome this challenge, the researcher involved research assistants to help in data collection. The study was also faced with the problem of concealment of material information by the respondents. However, the researcher explained to the respondents that the study was meant for academic purposes and were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

Some respondents lacked interest in filling in questionnaires and some respondents were not available due to a busy work schedule. However, the researcher booked appointments in advance and where possible emailed a soft copy of the questionnaire for the respondents to fill in at their convenience. Follow up via email and telephones were done to ensure high response rate.

### **1.7 Assumptions of the Study**

The study was carried out with the assumptions that the respondents would honestly provide the requested information and that the Universities in Kenya had adopted strategic leadership and strategy implementation in management of their entities.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Strategic leadership:** Is a person's ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically and work with others to initiate changes that will create a viable future for the organization.

- Strategy implementation:** Is referred to as the translation of chosen strategy into organizational action so as to achieve strategic goals and objectives.
- Transactional leadership:** Refers to a task-orientated leadership dimension, relating to reward-based performance initiatives.
- Transformational leadership:** Refers to a people-oriented leadership dimension that encourages subordinates to excel beyond normal performance levels for the sake of the organization.
- Strategy operationalization:** This refers to making the strategy ready for eventual implementation. It involves breaking long-term corporate objectives to operational short-term objectives and developing specific functional strategies and drawing action plans to achieve the objectives.
- Strategy institutionalization:** Refers to developing organizational capability to a point where it is fully supportive of the new strategy. This involves other types of action-oriented activities e.g. matching strategy with organizational structure, selecting leadership and matching strategy with culture.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical perspectives of the study. It reviews the concept of strategic leadership and examines the past research relevant to the study. It discusses the nature of interrelationships among variables, focusing on how strategic leadership affects strategy implementation. The section also presents a conceptual framework based on study objectives.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Background**

This study was guided by two theories, transformational leadership theory and the upper echelons theory.

##### **2.2.1 Transformational Leadership Theory**

Transformational leadership theory was proposed by McGregor Burns in 1978. He distinguished between ordinary (transactional) leaders, who exchanged tangible rewards for the work and loyalty of followers, and extraordinary (transformational) leaders who engaged with followers, focused on higher order intrinsic needs, and raised consciousness about the significance of specific outcomes and new ways in which those outcomes might be achieved. Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Transformational leaders build subordinates' respect and trust by behaving in a fair manner and doing what is right rather than what is expedient; by increasing followers' awareness of the mission or vision toward which they are working and raising followers' expectations of what they can achieve, thereby motivating them to pursue the group's goals; by encouraging their followers to look at old problems from new and differing perspectives, giving rise to followers' creative thinking and innovation; and, lastly by granting individualized attention to their followers, considering their needs and abilities, playing an especially important role in the followers' growth and development (Zacharatos *et al.*, 2000).

Transformational leadership has four components which include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These characteristics have an impact on the culture, structure and strategy implementation of an

organization. Transformational leaders facilitate collaboration through the use of the dimension of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration to develop relationships in organizations (Bass, 1985). The theory was relevant in the study in postulating the relationship between the study variables. These relationships are key in strategy implementation as they help in obtaining buy ins from other members of the organization and breaking resistance to strategic changes.

### **2.2.2 Upper Echelons Theory**

Elenkov *et al.* (2005) indicate that in the 1970s and 1980s there was considerable divergence of opinion on the impact of leadership on performance with sceptics on one hand contending that leadership behaviors influenced organizational performance less than environmental or organizational factors), while proponents maintained that leaders' attitudes had a significant impact on organization performance (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). It is in response to this skepticism that Hambrick and Mason (1984) came up with the Upper Echelons Theory, the precursor to Strategic Leadership Theory.

The Upper Echelons Theory is attributed to a seminal paper presented by Hambrick and Mason in 1984 which states that strategic choices and business performance are dependent on the characteristics of dominant actors within an organization and in particular the top management team. The background characteristics are broadly classified as psychological (cognitive base, values) and observable characteristics (age, education, functional tracks, other career experiences etc.) (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). The theory suggests that organizations are reflections of the top management team's cognition and values and organizational outcomes – strategic choices and performance levels are partially predicted by managerial background characteristics i.e. reflection of the values and cognitive bases of powerful actors in the organization. The theory argues that individual psychological factors and observable experiences affect strategic choices, which in turn, affect performance (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1990).

The amounts of discretion enjoyed by the top management team will moderate the relationship between strategic choices and organizational outcomes, where the more discretion, the greater the impact of choice on the outcomes (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000). The Upper echelons research has recognized that the extent to which top managers matter to organizational outcomes depend on how much discretion (latitude of action) is availed. Discretion refers to absence of constraints to decision making amidst many plausible

alternative courses of strategic action, where managers with more discretion are more likely to realize their original intentions and vice versa (Elenkov *et al.*, 2005; Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1990).

Upper echelons theory suggests that the specific knowledge, experience, values, and performance of top managers influence their assessment of the environment and thus the strategic choices they make (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000). The later expansion of the Upper Echelons Theory into Finkelstein and Hambrick's (1996) Strategic Leadership Theory examines the psychological make-up of the top manager and how this influences information processing and strategic decision making.

The upper echelons research has also recognized that sometimes top managers matter to a significant extent to organizational outcomes, at one extreme, sometimes not at all, at the other extreme, and often are somewhere in between, depending on the level of discretion or latitude of action, is afforded to them (Elenkov *et al.*, 2005). Discretion is defined as the absence of constraints to decision making and when there are many plausible alternative courses of strategic action. The more the discretion, the more likely it is that top managers are likely to realize their original intentions and vice versa.

Most studies on upper echelons theory have been conducted in western, developed (predominantly the United States) economies and it is thus unknown and relatively unexplored just how strategic leadership behaviors vary throughout the rest of the world. The upper echelons perspective has provided good theoretical and some empirical arguments for the central role of strategic leadership but our understanding is still lacking in significant ways (Elenkov *et al.*, 2005). In essence, the upper echelons theory underscores the notion that it is the experiences, values, and personalities of the dominant actors (leaders) that influence their leadership styles.

The top management team forms the unit of analysis as this dominant coalition acts as a decision making unit for the organization (Elenkov *et al.*, 2005). In this study, the unit of analysis is all the top level management members who are regarded as the strategic leaders and the ones directly involved in the implementation of strategy in the Universities in Kenya. Their leadership actions will be influenced by their experiences, values and unique personalities.

This study adopted upper echelons theory since the theory suggests that top managers' actions, behaviors, experience and strategic choices determine the success in strategy implementation and performance of their organizations.

### **2.3 Strategic Leadership**

Since 1970's the study of strategic leadership has experienced rejuvenation and metamorphosis evolving from the upper echelon theory developed by Hambrick & Mason (1984). Nevertheless, the concept of leadership remains important because introducing significant changes needs often a champion able to demonstrate unusual commitment to implement the organizational vision. Strategic leadership is defined as the ability to influence others to voluntarily make day to day decision that leads to organization long-term growth and survival (Rowe, 2009). Strategic leadership provides strategic thinking mindset for the organization to raise followers' consciousness to transformational leadership to bring about organizational success and to improve an institution's overall performance (Montgomery, 2008).

Strategic leadership formulates and articulates clear visions to filter strategic choices in the organizations (Ireland & Hit, 1999). A study by Shanley and Peteraf (2006) demonstrated that effective strategic leadership seeks the involvement of subordinates for commitment and providing them with a clear vision statement of intent as a basis for achieving an organizational competitive advantage. Senior management plays a key role in the implementation of strategy within an organization (Mollahosein & Ahmadkhan, 2012). Lack of leadership especially strategic leadership by senior management has been cited as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation (Nyamwanza, 2013). According to Schaap (2006), strategy implementation is a hands-on operation and action oriented human behavioral activity that calls for executive leadership and key managerial skills. Shah's (2005) findings showed that inadequacy in management skills and leadership and direction provided by departmental managers, along with poor understanding of roles, may affect the quality of strategy implementation. The survey revealed that individual managers perceive issues like inadequate management skills, ill-defined key implementation tasks as major barriers to strategy implementation. On the other hand, Kiprop and Kanyiri's (2012) findings and also Buluma *et al.* (2013) cited lack of relevant skills and leadership qualities as major barriers to strategy implementation.

For effective implementation, top leaders must be committed to strategy implementation. According to Bower and Gilbert (2007), managers' everyday decisions can create or destroy a company's strategy. A study by Heide *et al.* (2002) revealed that 91 per cent of successful companies feel that having proper and committed management team plays a critical role in successful implementation of business strategy. On the other hand, Jusoh and Parnell's (2008) study found that reluctance from employees and leaders to accept high targets hampers strategy implementation. Another biggest challenge in strategy implementation is lack of coordination and clear guidelines (Herminia, 2005). Managers are therefore called upon to improve their coordination ability so as to improve chances of success. Thirdly managers are being called upon to perfect their communication ability so as to be able to sell and enhance understanding of strategy amongst employees (Herminia, 2005).

Hambrick and Cannella (1998) presented a framework in which successful implementation reflected the ability of top management to sell and champion the selected strategy, while ensuring the necessary substantive actions associated with resource allocation, organizational structure, people appointments and selling activities upward; downward and across the firm are necessary to achieve implementation success. A survey conducted in association with Robert Kaplan of the Harvard Business School and Business Intelligence (Rousseau & Rousseau, 1999) indicated that more than 40 per cent of senior managers and more than 90 per cent of all employees stated that they did not believe that they had a clear understanding of their company's strategy. Furthermore, Schaap's (2006) study that was conducted in the casino industry within the state of Nevada, shows that over 38 per cent of senior managers do not communicate the company's direction and business strategy to all of their subordinates. On the other hand, participation and involvement by top management is also crucial if strategy implementation is to be successful. Brenes *et al.* (2008) argue that top manager's guidance, support and active involvement in strategy implementation is critical in the implementation of corporate strategic plans.

Hit *et al.* (2007) outlined key strategic leadership actions that contribute positively to strategy implementation: determining strategic direction; establishing balanced organizational controls; effectively managing the organization's resource portfolio; sustaining an effective organizational culture; Emphasizing ethical practices; developing human capital and maintaining core competencies and developing social capital.

Wendy (2012) examined the role of strategic leadership in creating wealth in organizations. Strategic leadership influences others to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance the long-term viability of the organization, while at the same time maintaining its short-term financial stability in South Africa. Strategic leadership role in organization is making cooperative spirit among employees by embracing the spirit of participation of all employees (Poursadegh *et al.*, 2010). To be successful in the tasks, the role of strategic leadership need to have the ability to think strategically and to be emotionally intelligent. They must have a range of behaviors available and wisdom to apply the right combination of behaviors at the right time (Sterkfontein, 2010).

A study by Ishaq *et al.* (2018) examined leadership styles in terms of implementation of the strategy at the Administration Police Service in Lamu County, Kenya using a survey method of study. The study found out that there was a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and the implementation of the strategy.

Oketch and Kilika (2017) studied the literature on the link between the characteristics of top management (TMT), the execution of the strategy and the performance of the company. From the study, they concluded that although the TMT characteristics can influence the performance of their companies, this influence will be through the implementation of the various strategies identified by the organization. In addition, they added that the implementation of strategies can influence the final result of an organization, but this relationship occurs through the decisions and actions of TMT. Kabaiku and Karanja (2017) examined the effects of leadership in executing strategies in private dairies in Mount Kenya region. The study examined the effect of leadership style, leadership support, leadership communication and leadership structure in the execution of the strategy. They found a significant positive relationship between leadership and executing strategy in companies.

Koech and Namusunge (2012) conducted a study on the effect of leadership styles on the performance of the organization. The study focused on States Corporation in Mombasa, Kenya. Dimensions of leadership styles included leadership of laissez faire, transactional and transformational. The result of the study showed that laissez faire leadership is not significantly correlated with organizational performance. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the manager discard laissez faire leadership by becoming more involved in guiding subordinates; managers must formulate and implement an effective system of reward and recognition. A study by Shelley (2006) demonstrated that effective strategic leadership

seeks the involvement of subordinates for commitment and providing them with a clear vision statement of intent as a basis for achieving an organizational competitive advantage.

### **2.3.1 Transformational Leadership**

Transformation leadership according to Bass (2000) is more concerned with the performance of employees to voluntarily make day to day decisions that enhance long-term organizations viability and survival. The leadership affects the followers in more than one way. The leadership is known to make major strategic changes in the firm vision and mission statements. Strategic leadership is charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating and individualized consideration (Avolio *et al.*, 1998). They guide individual employees transcend their self-interest for the sake of larger vision in strategic decision making at the highest level.

The characteristic involves selection of strategies that define the long-term direction of the organization and proper deployment of human capital to achieve maximum organizational effectiveness by guiding the subordinates through their simplified personal visions, energizing and inspiring and creating excitement through their enthusiasm to the followers. Scholars like Antonalis and House (2003) contend that transformational leadership is more proactive at creating and increasing subordinate's awareness for collective interests and responsibilities to achieve extraordinary goals or results that have a major impact on the organizational overall performance and strategic change adaption. Transformational leadership has been considered to be more superior in the motivation of subordinates to transcend their expected strategic change, the leadership motivate teams to strive for higher goals rather than shorter terms interests (Antonalis & House, 2003).

Transformational leadership to focus on the development of organizational new level awareness where they consider the future of the firm lies, they energize the employee commitment required to achieve the long-term corporate objectives. Transformation leadership makes advantages of teams by building strong networks in order to motivate subordinate through collaborative mechanisms in goal setting employee involvement and application of desirable incentives useful in the pushing the organizational visionary agenda to realize strategic changes more successfully (Burns, 2000). Prior research has indicated that transformational leadership act in a transformative manner thus contributing to effective strategic change implementation in their respective firms. Burns (2000) further pointed out that high failure rate among firms is as a result of ill-prepared transformational leadership in

development. Researchers opined that transformational leadership is unlikely to contribute to business failure and attempted to address the role of transformative leaders play as mitigation to strategic management of modern organizations that have continued to be addressed by scholars and strategic management change practitioners. Furthermore, transformative leadership develops visionary roadmap thinking idealizing goals that represent a significant improvement in strategic change initiation (Jooste, 2007).

Jones and George (2006) study on the effect of transformative leadership (SL) concluded that transformational leadership influences strategic change in the three dimensions. Firstly, by making subordinates aware of how important their roles are and how it is necessary to perform the jobs to their best. Secondly, SL supports the subordinate to attain the desired goals. Finally, they empower subordinates to be aware of their own inspirational needs for growth development and accomplishment through workshops empowerment and a self-managed team that motivates staff to work for the good of the organization and not immediate personal gains or benefits. The extensive use of incentives and rewards is one of the most powerful weapons used by managers to gain employee commitment. The transformational leadership observes and designs a reward system that best suit all managers and employees (Thompson & Strickland, 2003).

Bass and Jung (1999) identified four factors which represent behavioral components of transformational leadership; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

### **Idealized influence**

Idealized influence is defined as having transforming leaders who behave in ways that result in role models for their followers. These leaders are admired, respected and trusted. The followers identify with the leaders and want to emulate them. Abeysekera (2011) studied the attribute of idealized influence on the behavior of a seller in the banking sector in Sri Lanka. Two state banks and six private banks were selected of these eight banks, a random sample of 170 corporate clients was selected. It was found that idealized influence behavior is greater in private banks and sellers in private banks had greater job satisfaction. Griffith (2003) conducted a study on the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, staff turnover and job performance. It was found that schools in which principals perceived themselves as transformational leaders had school staff that were more satisfied with their jobs and had less turnover.

### **Individualized Consideration**

Individualized consideration is the degree to which the leader meets the needs of each follower, acts as a mentor or coach for the follower and listens to the follower's concerns. This type of leadership has a significant influence on the implementation of the strategy. Studies have been conducted on the influence of individualized consideration on the implementation of the strategy among them by Long *et al.* (2014) who examined the relationship between transformational leadership style and employee job satisfaction. An empirical study was carried out in a company linked to the government in Malaysia. 378 employees from 6 different departments were invited to be the respondents of this investigation. The results showed that only one of the four characteristics of transformational leadership has a significant relationship with job satisfaction. It was found that the characteristic of individualized consideration is the one that contributes the most to job satisfaction.

### **Inspirational motivation**

Inspirational motivation is the ability of superior leadership in an organization to motivate and inspire subordinates in a way that improves their commitment and commitment to their work. This type of leadership ensures that employees focus on the implementation of the organization's strategies. A study by Schaap (2012) revealed that consensus is vital in the implementation process. The study also indicated that frequent communication up and down the structure of the organization improves strategic consensus through the promotion of shared attitudes and values. According to the study, an organization that relates the rewards to the success of the strategy used is rewarded with higher levels of organizational performance and concluded that the strategies implementation plans must be clearly developed, indicating specific tasks for individuals, with time frames. Clearly defined, and identifying the people responsible for completing the task.

### **Intellectual stimulation**

Intellectual stimulation is defined as having a leader that encourages innovation and creativity, as well as critical thinking and problem solving. Intellectual stimulation involves awakening the thoughts and imagination of followers, as well as stimulating their ability to identify and solve problems creatively. Studies on the influence of intellectual stimulation include that of Jooste and Fourie (2011) who examined the role of strategic leadership in the effective implementation of the strategy in South African organizations. The study found that strategic leadership contributes positively to the effective implementation of the strategy. The

study argued that strategic leadership is supposed to offer strategic direction and establish balanced organizational controls. Organizational leadership can achieve this by managing the organization's portfolio of resources efficiently, maintaining an effective organizational culture and emphasizing ethical practices. These strategic leadership actions in turn contribute positively to the effective implementation of the strategy.

### **2.3.2 Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership involves situations and contents that characterizes day to day functional activities. The leadership is concerned with more comfortable functional areas of responsibilities and possesses more expertise in their functional areas. According to Stoner *et al.* (2002), Transactional leadership has also been referred to as managerial leadership which is an exchange role managers play with clarity of roles, duties, responsibilities and tasks required by subordinate staff in initiating structures and provisions of appropriate reward to meet social needs and helps subordinate satisfied in order to improve production bottom line. Stoner *et al.* (2002) suggested that transactional leadership behaviors determine what employees need to do in order to achieve their own aspirations and also the organization corporate objectives and by classifying those objectives and helping the employees to become confident in that they stand better chances to reach the organizational objectives by expanding their efforts.

Transactional leadership thus can be forced to an organization or imposed by strong executive officers and other top management teams. Within the context of Maslow hierarchy of needs, transactional leadership works at the basic levels of need satisfaction, where transactional leaders focus on the lower levels of the hierarchy. Transactional leaders use an exchange model, with rewards being given for good work or positive outcomes. Conversely, people with this leadership style also can punish poor work or negative outcomes, until the problem is corrected. One way that transactional leadership focuses on lower-level needs is by stressing specific task performance (Hargis *et al.*, 2001). Transactional leaders are effective in getting specific tasks completed by managing each portion individually.

Transactional leadership theory is grounded on the social learning and social exchange theories which recognize the reciprocal nature of leadership. The leadership involves issues like a reinforcement of followers behaviors' as motivated by promises, rewards, and praises when they accomplish the assigned tasks. Strategic management scholars like Vera and Crossan (2004) contend that transactional leadership applies the following three factors

contingent reward by exchanging punishment and reward for followers compliance and efforts in order to achieve overall organizational goals, management-by-exception characterize uses contingent rewards (Bass, 2004). Strategic management researchers like (Bass, 2009) who examined the effect of strategic leaders play in the implementation of strategic changes found out that subordinates who work under transactional leadership have greater influential power and the ability to affect the strength of the leadership, the style of behavior and the strategic change of the group in an organization.

The transactional leadership model takes the form of passive leadership, especially when the leadership practices passive management by exception to assist leaders transacts and exchange their followers' effort for specific rewards as well as recognition indirectly. To achieve expected performance, they build a relationship rather than waiting for issues or problems to arise before the action is taken, it is majorly concerned with punitive corrective measures to enhance performance (Bass, 2009). Jones and George (2006) argue that transactional leadership uses rewards and coercive power at their disposal to encourage high-level strategic change initiatives. The application of rewarding for the high performance and reprimanding low-level performers, in turn, motivate subordinate and reinforces on the desired behaviors suitable for engaging team spirit in a transactional manner.

### **Contingent Rewards**

In this dimension, transactional leaders focus on contingent reinforcement where followers are motivated by their leaders' promises, rewards, and praises. At the same time, the leaders react to whether the followers carry out what the leaders and followers have transacted to do (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). It may take the form of employees being rewarded accordingly and the leader will clarify to the followers through direction or participation (Erkutlu, 2008). This implies that subordinates who work under transactional leaders would have a greater power and the ability to affect the strength of a leader's influence, style of behavior and the performance of the group (Hollander, 1993). Conversely, this type of leadership may take the form of passive leadership, especially when the leader practices passive managing-by-exception by waiting for issues or problems to surface before taking corrective measure (Northouse, 2001).

### **Management by Exception**

Management by exception passive is not that different. Passive leaders just wait until deviations occur before intervening. This means that leaders pay attention more to the

subordinate when corrective actions are important. Therefore, there are no preventive actions or attempts by the leader to monitor or influence performance (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Management by exceptions uses rewards in inducing towards a constructive path-goal transaction of reward. These factors generally guarantee employees motivation in implementing strategic change in terms of operational, autonomy and ownership of the process of production (Bass, 2004).

Under active leadership, the leader and the followers must agree, except with the terms and provision of the exchange reward for work performance (Bass *et al.* 2005). The exchange forms a foundation of the leader-follower relationships (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999), and only last as long as the agreement remains mutually satisfying for both parties (Vishali & Mohit, 2004). The leader focuses on task completion and compliance, methods, techniques, and mechanisms rather than the purpose of the tasks are stressed (Kanungo, 2013). Role expectations, assignments and task-oriented goals are clarified.

## **2.4 Strategy Implementation**

Strategy implementation entails how an organization develops, utilizes and merges its structures, control systems and culture to follow strategies that lead to competitive advantage and hence improved performance (Srooshian *et al.*, 2010). Often considered to be the most difficult stage in strategic management, strategy implementation requires personal discipline, commitment, and sacrifice (Herminia, 2013). Successful strategy implementation hinges upon managers' ability to motivate employees, which is more of an art than a science. The challenge of implementation is to encourage managers and employees throughout an organization to work with pride and enthusiasm toward achieving stated objectives (David, 2011). Strategies are related with action plans that are prepared on all levels of the strategic management system setup (Stabryla, 2002).

A strategy is a collection of tasks or objectives that when combined form programs and plans that provide a model that can be used in decision making relating to the position, identity and capacity of a firm, while making use of its strengths and the probability of increasing its own success among competitors (Giers *et al.*, 2013). All strategies need to be designed, after which they can be implemented. The strategy implementation phase is the most problematic one, and usually creates the most serious complications resulting from issues such as emerging doubts, being consequences of complexity of the given problem (David, 2011).

Good strategy implementation results in tangible benefits for both the organization and its customers (Rashid *et al.*, 2016).

Chances of success in the strategy implementation stage are termed as easy theoretically, but difficult in practice (Cater & Pucko, 2010; Raps, 2008). Burlton (2015) emphasizes this by positing that, “Classically, somewhere in the range of half of all ideas described in strategic plans never see the light of day... A strategy well defined is but half its success.” The reason for strategies failing to yield the expected outcomes may not necessarily be due to lack of a clear vision, but rather due to a lack of appropriate implementation. Unfortunately, even the best of strategies may fail in being transformed into actions (Rummler & Brache, 2000). The assumptions concerning issues faced while implementing a strategy are confirmed by studies which prove that the majority (between 60 to 90 percent) of strategies being created are not implemented at all (Kaleta, 2013).

There are fundamental stages of the strategy implementation process (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). The first stage leads to the creation of a strategy, which is developed based on the nature of strategic analysis performed, the mission, vision defined and the values assumed. The second stage deals with transforming strategy into operational activities. This entails defining, measuring and setting quantitative targets for selected strategic objectives and themes (Basili, 2013). The result of this phase is drawing out a strategic plan which is based on the operational activities developed. The manager also defines the demand for resources and develops budgets in the strategic plan (Gebczynska, 2016). The manager thereafter continues with implementation of processes and initiatives, which is based on the strategic and operational plan previously prepared (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). Once this phase is completed, indicators are monitored and the results obtained are subjected to an assessment. While analyzing the information acquired during the process of monitoring and referring to the environmental assessment, suitable adjustments to the existing solutions are proposed. The final phase of the strategy implementation focusses on testing and adjusting the existing solutions to the organization’s current situation as well as on a continuous search for alternatives (Gebczynska, 2016).

The most important features of strategy implementation are business processes and organizational units (Simons, 2014). Efficient implementation of any strategy requires managers to ensure that structures and processes are internally matched with the envisioned strategy (Yaprak *et al.*, 2011). The procedure followed in performing the required processes

determines the quality of products and outcomes achieved, thus affecting the strategy implementation process. Managers need to first cascade strategies onto lower levels, which include tactical and operating levels, so as to successfully implement a strategy (David, 2011). Formulating recommended activities in the scope of strategy implementation, the manager assumes that corporate strategy should be reflected in both the functional and the process-oriented system. Therefore, decomposition of strategic goals should only concern the objectives of departments and of processes (Gębczyńska, 2016). Implementing a strategy in an organization requires that all employees are involved and a uniform mode of action matched with strategic objectives is planned (Pearce & Robinson, 2013). Involving employees in the strategy implementation process is a first step to empowering them, hence they own the process. It is important for the manager to explain how objectives are translated into tasks of employees (Foundraine, 2015). According to Schaap (2012), strategy implementation plans must be developed indicating particular tasks for individuals, with clear time frames, and identifying people responsible for task completion. Strategy implementation is often called the “action stage” of strategic management. It means mobilizing employees and managers to put strategies into action.

Annual objectives are essential because they represent the basis for allocating resources, are a primary mechanism for evaluating managers, and are the major instrument for monitoring progress toward achieving long-term objectives and establishing organizational, divisional, and departmental priorities. Time and effort are required to ensure that annual objectives are well conceived, consistent with long-term objectives, and supportive of strategies to be implemented (David, 2011). Functional tactics identify activities to be undertaken in the immediate future, while business strategies focus on the firm’s posture three to five years later. The shorter time horizon of functional tactics is critical to successful implementation of a business for two reasons (Pearce & Robinson, 2013).

A study by Schaap (2012) on the role of senior-level managers in the Nevada gaming industry concluded that strategy implementation plans must be clearly developed, indicating particular tasks for individuals, with clear time frames, and identifying people responsible for task completion. Policies are directives designed to guide the thinking, decisions, and actions of managers and their subordinates in implementing the organization’s strategy (Wheelan *et al.*, 2015). Sometimes called standard operating procedures, policies increase manager effectiveness by standardizing routine decisions and clarifying the discretion managers and

subordinates can exercise in implementing functional tactics. Policies ought to be derived from functional tactics, with the key purpose of aiding strategy execution (Hinton, 2012).

Managers find it difficult to think through the relationship between an organization's culture and the critical factors on which strategy depends. They however recognize that key components of the firm – including structure, staff, systems, people and style – influence the ways in which key manager tasks are executed and how critical management relationships are formed (Shahzad *et al.*, 2012). Implementation of a new strategy is largely concerned with adjustment of these components to accommodate the perceived needs of the strategy. Consequently, managing strategy-culture relationship requires sensitivity to the interaction between the changes necessary to implement the new strategy and the compatibility to “fit” between those changes and the firm's culture (Pearce & Robinson, 2013). Evidence suggests that performance declines when the firm's strategy is not matched with the most appropriate structure and controls (Ireland *et al.*, 2009). Organizational structure is a critical component of effective strategy implementation processes. Strategy and structure have a reciprocal relationship. The general nature of the strategy-structure relationship means that changes to the firm's strategy create the need to change how the organization completes its work. Supporting the implementation of strategies, the structure is concerned with processes used to complete organizational tasks (Ireland *et al.*, 2009). Discussions of the relationship between organizational structure and strategy indicate that structure follows strategy (Claver-Cortes *et al.*, 2012). When an organization's structure is properly aligned with its strategy, the structure facilitates effective use of the firm's strategies.

The people inside an organization ought to use the strategic resources within the organizational structure to carry out the assigned tasks (Thompson, 2010). The actions of people should be carefully monitored and evaluated to check their compatibility with the set targets and the success of the intended strategy (Hinton, 2012). The model did not, however, explain the mechanism of monitoring and evaluating the actions of the people within the organization. The major shortcoming of this conceptual framework is the unclear role of the strategic leader at the levels of monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation. Strategic consensus plays an important role in the implementation process (Rapert *et al.*, 2002).

In the past few years there has been a significant shift of focus from strategy formulation to strategy implementation (Kalali *et al.*, 2011). This is as a result of the growing recognition

that the most important problems in the field of strategic management are not related to strategy formulation, but rather strategy implementation (Candido & Santos, 2015). Strategy implementation is essentially the most difficult and time-consuming part of strategic management that possesses a significant challenge to organizations (Li *et al.*, 2008). According to Franken *et al.* (2009), up 34 per cent of strategic change initiatives fail while the Economist Intelligence Unit (2013) and Project Management Institute (2014) estimate strategy implementation failure at 44 percent, confirming the difficulty of successful strategy implementation in organizations (Candido & Santos, 2015).

In an attempt to identify the most important factors influencing implementation of strategic plans, several researchers have come up with various models of strategy implementation. Herminia and Joyce (1984) presented one of the first models of strategy implementation. They argued that a well-articulated strategy is the critical ingredient of strategy implementation, followed by the design of a primary organizational structure, establishing operational level objectives, the design of operating structures and lastly, the creation of proper incentives and control mechanisms that support implementation. Higgins (2005) proposes a revision of Mckinsey's original '7s' model and proposes a '8s' model consisting of strategy, structure, systems and processes, leadership style, staff, resources, shared values and strategic performance. Lichtblau (2011) identifies seven key success factors for effective strategy implementation, namely: competence, confidence, commitment, creativity, competitive edge, communication and continuity. Lepsinger (2011) presents a framework for successful strategy implementation namely leader's ability to manage change, appropriate structure, having the right people in right positions, alignment between leader actions and organizational values and priorities as well as organization wide cooperation and coordination.

A study conducted by Jooste and Fourie (2009) identified strategic leadership, organizational culture, resource allocation, and organizational strategy as the most important barriers to strategy implementation. Nyamwanza (2013) did a case study review of prerequisites for strategy implementation among SMEs in Zimbabwe. The aim of the study was to establish whether or not entrepreneurs understood what was required in order for them to successfully implement strategies. The respondents identified fourteen potential prerequisites for successful strategy implementation. Among the factors identified include skilled employees, clear vision and goals, experienced and competent employees, effective communication and organizational culture and values. Ng'ang'a and Ombui (2013) conducted a study on factors

influencing implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Lari district, Kiambu County and found organizational structure and resource allocation as significant impeters to strategy implementation.

Strategy implementation consists of the basically administrative tasks needed to put strategy into practice. Successful strategy implementation depends in part on the organization structure. Strategy needs to be institutionalized, or incorporated into a system of values, norms and roles that will help shape employee behavior, making it easier to reach strategic goals. Strategy also must be operationalized, or translated into specific policies, procedures and rules that will guide planning and decision making by managers and employees Stoner *et al.* (2001). Implementing an operations strategy involves taking ideas, decisions, plans, policies, objectives and other aspects of the strategy and implementing them into actions Waters and Waters (2006).

Researchers Marginson (2012), Lares (2014) and Koske (2013) have pointed out number of problems in strategy implementation: for example, weak and poor management roles in implementation, lack or insufficient of communication, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, inadequate commitment to the strategy, unaligned organizational resources and systems, poor work coordination and sharing of responsibilities, competing activities, inadequate capabilities and uncontrollable environment.

In their study, Beer and Eisenstat (2000) identified poor coordination across functions and inadequate down-the-line leadership skills and development as barriers of strategy implementation. In a study involving Zimbabwe's state-owned enterprises, Mapetere *et al.* (2012) found that relatively low leadership involvement in strategy implementation led to partial strategy success in the organization studied. A study by O'Reilly *et al.* (2010) concluded that it was only when leaders' effectiveness at different levels was considered in the aggregate that significant performance improvement occurred while implementing strategies. While studying how implementation of competitive strategies affects business units' performance, Menguc *et al.* (2007) argued that managers' use of transformational leadership skills results in the best competitive strategies, including innovation differentiation, marketing differentiation, and low cost of the product.

According to Mbaka and Mugambi (2014) effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy communication in an organization that eventually leads to strategy implementation. Organization communication plays an important role in training, knowledge

dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation. Therefore, effective communication should clearly explain the new responsibilities, duties and tasks which will be done by targeted employees. Lucey *et al.* (2013) argued that top managers with higher socioeconomic status and personal wealth display a lower preference for risky choices in the leadership strategy when it comes to implementing of policies or developing innovative management practices, which is similar to Hambrick and Mason's (1984) argument that older and longer-tenured managers are more risk-averse and less open for innovations to organizational structure in the Upper Echelons Theory.

Heracleous (2000) identified several roles played by leaders during the strategy implementation process and classified them as commanders (a leader trying to formulate an optimal strategy), an architect (a leader who tries to design the best way to implement a strategy) a coordinator (a leader who tries to involve other managers to commit to a specific strategy, a coach (a leader who tries to involve everyone in the implementation efforts of the strategy) and a premise provider (a leader who encourages to other managers to advance as champions of sensible strategies.) A study by Jooste and Fourie (2011) in South Africa concluded that leadership and especially the role of strategic leadership in providing direction during the implementation of the strategy is important to influence the performance of the organization.

Maurice (2015) studied the challenges of strategy implementation in private hospitals in Kenya: a case study of the Aga Khan University hospital. The study sought to investigate the effect of the corporate structure, corporate communication, leadership and technological changes in the implementation of the strategy. The study found out that no timely and regular communication was made and that the communication made did not request comments from the lower levels which led to poor implementation of strategy.

## **2.5 Strategic Leadership and Strategy Implementation**

Strategic leadership has been described by O'Reilly *et al.* (2010) as an organizational pillar that determines whether organizations will succeed in their strategy implementation or fail. According to O'Reilly *et al.* (2010), strategic leadership entails very many management practices including: employees' talent management, subordination of individual interests, prudent management of both physical and human resources as well as ability to easily adopt to change. Basically, strategic leadership is the main predictor of strategy implementation. It is the vision of a strategic leader that provides base line for strategy formulation and its

commitment ensure the implementation of strategy (Fairholm, 2004). In the Universities, Strategic leaders should be able to establish controls that facilitate flexible, innovative employee behaviors which will earn a competitive premium for their firm (Ireland & Hitts, 2005).

Strategic leaders manage the firm's portfolio of resources by organizing them into capabilities, structuring the firm to use the capabilities, developing and implementing a strategy leverage those resources to achieve a competitive advantage (Hit *et al.*, 2007). Proficient strategy implementation depends heavily on competent personnel, adequate competitive capabilities, and effective internal organization (Thompson *et al.*, 2008). Putting together a strong management team with the needed experience, technical skills, and intellectual capital and building core competencies and competitive capabilities is a critical leadership task. Pearce and Robinson (2005) mention that recruiting and developing talented operational leaders is one of the critical strategic leadership functions that drive the effective implementation of strategy.

It is believed that in the 21st century, strategic leadership should be executed through interactions that are based on a sharing of insights, knowledge, and responsibilities for achieved outcomes (Ireland & Hit, 2005). These interactions should occur between the firm's great leaders who are the top manager and its citizens. These interactions take place as the firm satisfies the requirements associated with six key effective strategic leadership practices. Although considered individually, it is through the configuration of all six activities that strategic leadership can be effective in the 21st century organization Ireland and Hit (2005). Effective top managers seek to develop and use a balanced set of strategic and financial controls. Useem (2011) also shows that, several identifiable actions characterize strategic leadership in public colleges and Universities in SA that positively contributes to effective strategy implementation, namely: Determining strategic direction, establishing balanced organizational control, effectively managing the organization's resource portfolio, sustaining an effective organizational culture, emphasizing ethical practices.

People look to leaders to bring meaning, to make sense of the seemingly unquenchable demand for results and the need for individuals to find purpose and value (Chapman, 2016). Successful strategy implementation depends on doing a good job of working with and through others, building and strengthening competitive capabilities, motivating and

rewarding people in a strategy supportive manner and instilling a discipline of getting things done (Strickland *et al.*, 2008).

The study by Chepkirui (2012) examined the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of the strategy in the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) in Kenya. According to the study, strategic leadership awakens the commitment of people within the organization to adopt change and implement strategies aimed at achieving the strategic vision. The study listed the role of leadership in determining the strategy of strategic direction, building an organization, shaping an effective organizational culture, effective management of the portfolio of resources of the organization, compliance with ethical compliance, communication strategy, development of objectives short-term and operational plans.

Muhoro (2011) investigated the effect of leadership in the implementation of strategic change in Telkom Kenya. The study used a descriptive survey to explain the relationship between strategic leadership and the implementation of strategic change management. The results showed that leadership was an essential tool in the effective management of change; the leaders provided support, direction, facilities and resources that improved the successful implementation of the strategy. Ngure (2013) examined the influence of leadership style on the implementation of the strategy in the Cooperative Bank in Kenya. The study found that the participatory (democratic) leadership style and the transformational leadership style were the dominant leadership styles in the Cooperative Bank. The study found that leadership styles influence the implementation of the strategy. The study recommended that organizations apply transformative and participatory leadership styles to achieve a successful implementation of the strategy.

Serfonte (2010) in the research on the impact of strategic leadership on the operational strategy and performance of business organizations in South Africa, it was observed that strategic leadership is directly and indirectly positively associated with operational strategy and organizational performance of business organizations in South Africa. Also, the research recommended that organizations that want to improve their performance need to implement effective strategic leadership practices.

### **2.5.1 Transformational Leadership and Strategy Implementation**

According to García-Morales (2012), transformational leadership style has a direct impact on strategy implementation. Generally, strategy implementation is more successful under a transformational leader. However, García-Morales (2012) argue that such leaders are rare but the most important thing is the dominant style displayed by a leader. Transformational leaders are essentially change agents and, as such, borrow heavily from known change models in managing effective transformation in organizations (Mokgolo, & Modiba, 2012). Mapetere (2012) argues that, leaders in all organizations are aware of the need to strategically plan the future of their organizations as well as to partake in the effective implementation of these crafted strategies. In strategy implementation, transformational leadership empowers followers to exude exceptionally high employee outcomes and as a result better organizational performance.

Transformational leaders are known to reduce the effects of uncertainty and change and positively affect a wide range of individual and organizational outcomes in a variety of contexts, including business, the public and private sector and education (Mokgolo *et al.*, 2012). Transformational leaders give respect to and empower their followers to exude exceptionally high effort, high commitment and willingness to take risks (Senior & Fleming, 2006). Fuller (2012) in his study on the leader's role in strategy implementation in Liverpool University gave a number of roles performed by the transformational leader. In the responses gotten from 197 respondents who made his sample population for his study, factors like: developing a vision and mission, setting goals and objectives, crafting a strategy, executing the strategy, and evaluating performance scored strongly on a scale of measure shows that strategic leadership is essential in the success of a strategy implementation in organizations.

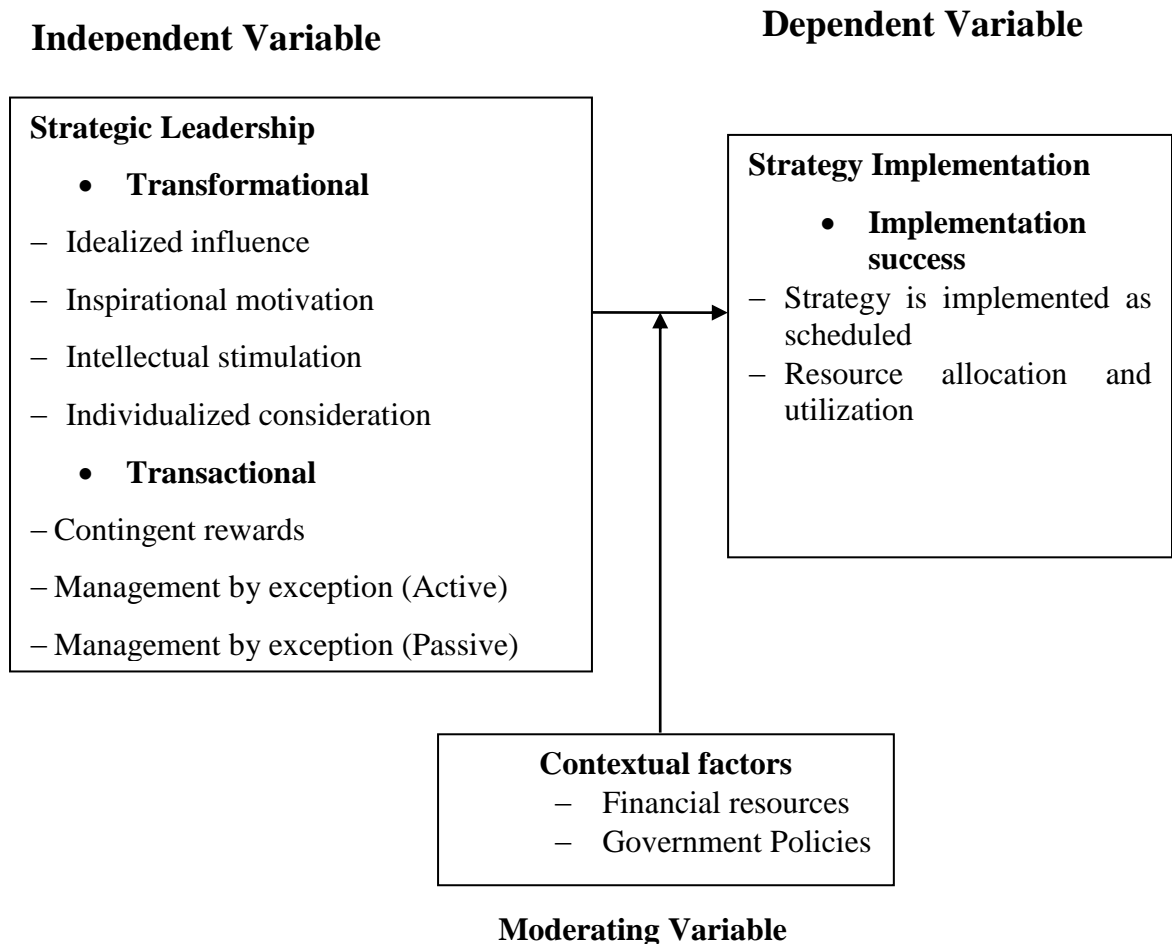
### **2.5.2 Transactional Leadership and Strategy Implementation**

While transactional leadership is anchored on contracts and agreements, Wang *et al.* (2010) explains that there exists a thin line between this leadership style and strategy implementation. The researcher explains that transactional style is good up to a certain extent. For instance, rules and regulations are good to keep the organizational culture of the organization as well as promote discipline among employees. However, strict adherence to agreements and contracts may lead to poor strategy implementation.

Bass (1985) argued that transactional leadership builds the foundation for relationships between leaders and followers in terms of specifying expectations, clarifying responsibilities, negotiating contracts, and providing recognition and rewards for achieving expected performance. Transactional leadership is based on the exchange process where the leader administers rewards and sanctions. In transactional leadership, the leader and follower agree, explicitly or implicitly, that desired follower behaviors will be rewarded, while undesirable behaviors will draw out punishment. Potential rewards include an increase in salary, promotions, and more benefits. Conversely, penalties may include pay cuts, demotions, and terminations. Transactional leadership power is based much more on the notion of hierarchy and position (Bryant, 2003).

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

In the study, the independent variables are transformational and transactional leadership while the dependent variable is strategy implementation. These variables are related as shown in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model of Relationship between Strategic Leadership, Contextual Factors and Strategy Implementation.**

Figure 2.1 shows the existence of a relationship between strategic leadership and strategy variables in the study. The components of transformational leadership include; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. The dimensions of transactional leadership include; contingent rewards, management by exception (active) and management by exception (Passive).

Strategy implementation is the implementation that essentially entails the achievement of the strategic objectives that the Universities intend to achieve. The achievement of the strategic objectives realized when strategy is implemented as scheduled, activities are well organized as per the strategy and proper allocation and utilization of resources. It is expected that transformational leadership would influence strategy implementation. It is also expected that that the relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation is influenced by contextual factors such as availability of financial resources and government policies.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology that was used to conduct the study. It explains research design, population of the study, data collection, test of reliability and validity, regression assumptions and statistical techniques used to summarize data.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study adopted explanatory research design to determine the effect of strategic leadership on strategy implementation. The study also adopted a cross-sectional survey design in that data was collect across the study units over a short period of time.

#### **3.3 Target Population**

The study population comprised 31 chartered public universities and 18 chartered private Universities in Kenya as at November 2017 (CUE, 2017). This constituted a target population of 49 Universities. Given the small number the study adopted census survey

#### **3.4 Data Collection**

To achieve the objectives of this study, primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised closed ended questions to measure the dimensions of the research variables. The questionnaire contained two sections: the first section contained questions on the respondents' demographic data. The second section contained questions on the research variables – strategic leadership and strategy implementation. The questionnaire was developed to measure the respondents' perceptions of the existence and extent of the research variables.

The unit of analysis in this study was the organization; hence, one respondent was targeted in each University. The respondents were the executive officers of the Universities who included Vice-Chancellors, DVC's, and Registrars. During data collection the researcher was advised from the VC's Office on the senior manager who could help in completing the questionnaire. The top managers are considered to be better informed about strategic leadership and strategy implementation.

### 3.5 Measurement of Variables

In this study, the independent variable was strategic leadership while the dependent variable was strategy implementation. The strategic leadership was measured in terms of transformational and transactional leadership. The measures were borrowed from (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Strategy implementation was measured using implementation success as conceptualized (Herminia, 2008).

### 3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

A pilot study was undertaken on 5 Universities which were randomly selected and did not participate in the final study to test reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The respondents in the pilot study were asked to make comments and suggestions regarding the instruction and clarity of the questions asked. From the pre-test, the questions in the tool were well understood and answered.

#### 3.6.1 Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Validity of the instrument was assessed through the development of the scales with the help of the experts in the Faculty of Commerce, Egerton University.

#### 3.6.2 Reliability

This study used Cronbach reliability coefficient to assess the internal consistency of the responses. Cronbach alpha is a coefficient of internal consistency used as an estimate of reliability and it ranges in values from 0-1. According to Kombo and Tromb (2006) values exceeding the standard of 0.7 in the reliability of the model will be considered reliable enough to be used in a study. The questionnaire items were tested for internal consistency before being used for data collection and analysis as shown in the Cronbach Table 3.1.

<b>Construct Measured</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
Transformational Leadership	12	0.738
Transactional Leadership	6	0.832

As shown in Table 3.1, all the variables have Cronbach of above 0.7 and therefore the instrument was taken to be reliable.

### 3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

The data collected was edited and coded for analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and standard deviation were used to summarize data regarding the profiles of Universities and study variables. To test the research hypotheses, simple regression analysis and multiple regression analysis were used.

To test hypothesis H0<sub>1</sub>, which state that transformational leadership has no significant effect on strategy implementation simple regression analysis was used. The following model was used:

$$Y = a + b_1 x_1 + e$$

Where;

Y= Strategy Implementation

a=Constant

b<sub>1</sub>=regression coefficient

x<sub>1</sub>=Transformational Leadership

e = Error term

To test hypothesis H0<sub>2</sub>, which state that transactional leadership has no significant effect on strategy implementation simple regression analysis was used. The following model was used:

$$Y = \alpha + b_2 x_2 + e$$

Where;

Y= Strategy Implémentation

$\alpha$  =Constant

b<sub>2</sub>=régression coefficient

x<sub>2</sub>=Transactional Leadership

e = Error term

To test hypothesis H0<sub>3</sub>, which state that transformational leadership and transactional leadership jointly do not have significant effect on strategy implementation multiple regression analysis was used. The following model was used:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

Where;

Y = Strategy implementation

a = constant

X<sub>1</sub> = Transformational leadership strategy

X2 = Transactional leadership strategy

$\beta_1$ -  $\beta_2$  = regression coefficients

e = error term

The results of analysis are presented using tables and figures.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, research findings and discussion. Descriptive statistics of the profile of the organization and study variables are presented followed by hypotheses testing results.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

The study targeted 49 Universities. Complete responses were obtained from 37 Universities representing a response rate of 75.5%. The response rate was sufficient as suggested by Yin (2017) who opines that response rate of over 70% are excellent for analysis, presentation as well as interpretation of the study findings.

##### 4.2.1 Profile of Respondents

The study targeted 49 Chartered Universities in Kenya. The Unit of analysis in this study was the organization as each organization had unique set of strategic leadership and strategy implementation. Hence the respondents in this study were Vice-Chancellors, DVC's, Registrars, Human Resource Managers and Chief Finance Officers. The profile of the respondents of the studied organizations is shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Position**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Vice-Chancellor	8	21.62
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	15	40.54
Registrar	9	24.32
Human Resource Manager	2	5.41
Chief Finance Officer	3	8.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in Table 4.1, the majority of the respondents were Registrars 24.32%, 40.54% were Deputy Vice-Chancellors, 21.62% were Vice-Chancellors/CEOs, 5.41% were Human Resource Managers and 8.41% were Chief Finance Officers. Given the position of the respondents, it can be concluded that they were well informed.

### 4.2.2 Profile of Organizations

The 37 Universities studied were assessed by the number of years in operation and number of employees. Frequencies and percentages were used to examine the distribution for each characteristic.

**Table 4.2: gives analysis of the general information in terms of years in operation and number of employees for the studied universities.**

**Table 4.2 Profile of Universities**

Category	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Age of the University	1-5 years	3	6.1
	6-5 years	4	10.81
	11-15 years	6	16.21
	More than 15 years	24	64.86
	<b>Total</b>		37
Number of employees	Less than 100	3	6.6
	100 - 499	24	66.2
	Above 500	9	25,2
	<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>

From Table 4.2, most of the respondents (64.86%) indicated that their university had been in operation for over 15 years, 16.21% for 11-15 years, 10.81% for 6-10 years and 8.1% for 1-5 years.

Regarding the number of employees in the Universities, Table 4.2 shows that 8.6% of the Universities employed less than 100 staff, 66.2% employed 100-499 employees and 25.2% had employed over 500 staff.

### 4.2.3 Strategy Implementation

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with the statements on aspects of strategy implementation. A Likert scale of 1-5 was used where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. To measure the distribution of the responses to the statements, mean and standard deviation was used. The results are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Mean and Standard Deviation for measures of Strategy Implementation**

<b>Strategy Implementation Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Implementation of the strategy is done as scheduled	<b>37</b>	3.76	1.002
Activities are organized according to the strategy to be implemented	<b>37</b>	3.84	.624
Resources for strategy implementation are allocated as budgeted	<b>37</b>	3.94	.611
Strategy achieves targeted performance	<b>37</b>	4.18	.785
<b>Overall mean</b>		<b>3.93</b>	

From Table 4.3, the overall mean for strategy implementation was 3.93. The overall standard deviation was 0.753 which reflect that the responses were not far spread from each other among respondents thus low variability in response to the statements. The item with the highest score was ‘Strategy achieves targeted performance’ (M=4.18, SD=0.785) while the item with the lowest score was ‘Implementation of the strategy is done as scheduled’ (M = 3.76, SD = 1.002). The results generally indicate that the respondents agreed with the statements regarding strategy implementation in their institutions. This demonstrates that to a great extent strategy is implemented as scheduled.

#### **4.2.4 Strategic Leadership**

Regarding strategic leadership, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the statements of aspects of strategic leadership described their institutions. A five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), uncertain (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5) was used Table 4.5 presents the results of the analysis.

**Table 4.3: Mean and Standard Deviation for measures of Strategy Implementation**

<b>Strategy Implementation Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Implementation of the strategy is done as scheduled	<b>37</b>	3.76	1.002
Activities are organized according to the strategy to be implemented	<b>37</b>	3.84	.624
Resources for strategy implementation are allocated as budgeted	<b>37</b>	3.94	.611
Strategy achieves targeted performance	<b>37</b>	4.18	.785
<b>Overall mean</b>		<b>3.93</b>	

**Table 4.4: Mean and standard Deviation for measures of Strategic Leadership**

<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
<b>Transformational leadership</b>		<b>3.78</b>	
<b>Idealized Influence/Charismatic leadership;</b>			
The management of this organization;	<b>37</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>0.705</b>
Makes everyone enthusiastic about assignments	37	3.70	0.520
Is completely trusted by the employees	37	3.57	0.713
Encourages employees to express their ideas and opinions	37	3.73	0.883
<b>Inspirational motivation</b>		<b>3.86</b>	
The management of this organization . . .			
Inspires employees	37	3.82	0.845
Inspires employees' loyalty to leadership	37	3.87	0.721
Inspires employees' loyalty to the organization	37	3.89	1.012
<b>Intellectual stimulation</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>0.823</b>
The management of this organization . . .			
Gets employees to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before	37	3.91	0.675
Enables employees to think about old problems in new ways	37	3.93	0.786
Provides employees with new ways of looking at things	37	3.63	1.009
<b>Individualized consideration</b>		<b>3.76</b>	
The management of this organization . . .			
Gives personal attention to members who seem neglected	37	3.87	0.815
Finds out what employees want and tries to help them get it	37	3.58	0.970
Appreciate employees when they do a good job	37	3.83	0.738
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
<b>Transactional Leadership</b>		<b>3.80</b>	
<b>Contingent reward</b> The management of this organization . .			

.	37	3.75	0.658
Tells employees what to do if they want to be rewarded for their efforts	37	3.67	0.696
Allows agreement between what employees are expected to put into the group effort and what they can get out of it	37	3.85	0.647
Allows negotiation with employees about what they can get from what they can accomplish	37	3.73	0.632
<b>Management by exception- active</b>		<b>3.84</b>	
The management of this organization . . .			
Asks employees no more of them than what is absolutely essential to get the work done	37	3.79	0.794
Allows employees to take initiatives but does not encourage them to do so	37	3.84	0.629
Tells employees what they have to know to do their job	37	3.90	0.302
<b>Overall mean</b>		<b>3.78</b>	

As shown in Table 4.5, the mean score for idealized influence was 3.67. The item with the highest score was ‘Encourages employees to express their ideas and opinions’ (M = 3.73, SD = 0.883). The item with the lowest score was ‘Management of organization is completely trusted by the employees’ (M = 3.57, SD = 0.713)

The mean score for inspiration motivation is 3.86. The item with the highest score was ‘Inspires employees’ loyalty to the organization’ (M = 3.89, SD = 1.01). The item with the lowest score was ‘Inspires employees’ (M = 3.82, SD = 0.845)

The mean score for intellectual stimulation was 3.82. The item with the highest score was ‘Enables employees’ to think about old problems in new ways’ (M = 3.93, SD = 0.786). The item with the lowest score was ‘Provide employees’ with new ways of looking at things’ (M = 3.63, SD = 1.01)

The mean for individualized consideration was 3.76. The item with the highest score was ‘Gives personal attention to members who seem neglected’ (M = 3.87, SD = 0.815). The item with the lowest score was ‘Finds out what employees’ wants and tries to help them get it’ (M = 3.58, SD = 0.970)

The overall mean for transformational leadership was 4. This score indicated that the respondents agreed with the statements regarding the items of the idealized influence, inspiration motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration to a great extent. However, the mean score for idealized influence dimension was relatively low (3.67) which was interpreted to mean that institutions adopted less idealized influence compared to inspiration motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

Further Table 4.4 shows that the mean score for contingent reward was 3.75. The item with the highest score was 'Allows agreement between what employees' are expected to put into the group effort and what they can get out of it' (M = 3.85, SD = 0.647). The item with the lowest score was 'Tells employees' what to do if they want to be rewarded for their efforts'

The mean for management by exception-active was 3.84. The item with the highest score is 'Tells employees' what they have to know to do their job' (M = 3.9, SD = 0.302). The item with the lowest score was 'Asks employees' no more of them than what is absolutely essential to get the work done' (M = 3.79, SD = 0.794)

The overall mean for transactional leadership dimension is 3.8. This score indicated that the respondents agreed with the statements of contingent reward and management by exception-active to a great extent. However, the mean score for contingent reward was slightly less (3.75) than that one for management by exception-active, this was interpreted to mean that institution adopted less contingent reward compared to management by exception-active.

The overall mean for strategic leadership was 3.78. These results indicate that the respondents agreed that management in the institutions practice both transformational and transactional leadership behaviors to a great extent.

### **4.3 Hypothesis Testing**

This section presents analysis and results of the tests of hypotheses using inferential statistics. Simple regression analysis and multiple regression analysis were conducted to test the hypotheses of the study.

#### **4.3.1 Transformational Leadership and Strategy Implementation**

The study sought to determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategy implementation. It was hypothesized that transformational leadership has no significant influence on strategy implementation. The hypothesis was tested using simple regression analysis. Results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Simple Regression Results for Effect of Transformational Leadership on Strategy Implementation**

<b>Model Summary</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>	
1	.566 <sup>a</sup>	.320	.315	1.73456	
<b>ANOVA</b>					
	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	193.995	1	193.995	16.472	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	412.192	35	11.776		
<b>Total</b>	<b>606.187</b>	<b>36</b>			
<b>Coefficients</b>					
	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>		
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(Constant)	4.380	1.423		3.078	.003
Transformational Leadership	.251	.031	.566	8.030	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership

As shown in Table 4.5, the coefficient of determination R square is 0.320; this can be interpreted to mean that 32.0% change in strategy implementation among Universities is explained by adopting transformational leadership.

The ANOVA results show that the model is significant. The model shows that the effect of transformational leadership on strategy implementation is significant ( $F = 16.472, p < 0.05$ ).

The standardized coefficient also shows that transformational leadership has a positive significant influence on strategy implementation ( $\beta = 0.566, p < 0.05$ ) thus the hypothesis that transformational leadership has no significant influence on strategy implementation was rejected. Thus it is concluded that transformational leadership has a significant influence on strategy implementation. These findings are consistent with the findings of Long *et al.* (2014)

who established that the characteristics of transformational leadership have significant relationship with job satisfaction.

#### 4.3.2 Transactional Leadership and Strategy Implementation

The study sought to determine the influence of transactional leadership on strategy implementation. It was hypothesized that transactional leadership has no significant influence on strategy implementation. The hypothesis was tested using simple regression analysis. Results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Simple Regression Results for Influence of Transactional Leadership on Strategy Implementation**

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.649 <sup>a</sup>	.422	.417	1.59963	
ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	255.63	1	255.63	25.522	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	350.557	35	10.015		
Total	606.187	36			
Coefficients					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.063	1.687		.630	.530
Transactional Leadership	.738	.074	.649	9.995	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transactional Leadership

As shown in Table 4.6, the value of R square is 0.422; this means that 42.2% change in strategy implementation is explained by transactional leadership.

The ANOVA results show that the model is significant. The model shows that the effect of transactional leadership on strategy implementation is significant (F = 25.522, P < 0.05).

The standardized coefficient also shows that transactional leadership has a significant influence on strategy implementation ( $\beta = 0.649$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) thus the hypothesis that transactional leadership has no significant influence on strategy implementation was rejected. It was concluded that transformational leadership has a significant influence on strategy implementation. These findings are consistent with findings of Bass *et al.* (2003), who found that transactional leaders tend to be stronger on systems, structures and implementation and they also give employees something they want in exchange for something the leaders want.

#### 4.4.3 Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership and Strategy Implementation

The study sought to establish the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on strategy implementation. It was hypothesized that transformational and transactional leadership jointly do not have significant influence on strategy implementation. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis. Results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7 Multiple Regression results for influence of Transformational and Transactional leadership on Strategy Implementation.**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.750 <sup>a</sup>	.562	.556	1.39714

Analysis of Variance					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	340.717	2	170.3585	21.818	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	265.470	34	7.807		
<b>Total</b>	<b>606.187</b>	<b>36</b>			

Regression Coefficients					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
Constant)	5.685	1.632		3.484	.001
Transformational Leadership	.176	.027	.396	6.602	.000

Transactional Leadership	.591	.068	.520	8.670	.000
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a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transactional Leadership, Transformational Leadership

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Model in Table 4.7 shows the influence of transformational leadership and transactional leadership on strategy implementation. The model shows that R square is 0.562, which shows that 56.2% of the variation in strategy implementation is explained by the transformational leadership and transactional leadership.

The ANOVA results show that the model was significant ( $F = 21.81, p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that the influence of transformational leadership and transactional leadership on strategy implementation is significant. Thus, the hypothesis that transformational and transactional leadership jointly do not have significant influence on strategy implementation was rejected and concluded that transformational and transactional leadership jointly have a significant effect on strategy implementation.

The coefficient results show that transformational leadership and transactional leadership have positive effect on strategy implementation. Further, transactional leadership has a greater effect ( $\beta = 0.520, p < 0.05$ ) on strategy implementation than the effect transformational leadership ( $\beta = 0.396, p < 0.05$ ) on strategy implementation. The findings are consistent with the findings of Ishan *et al.* (2018) who found that there was a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and the implementation of the strategy. The findings support the findings of Kabaiku and Karanja (2017) who established a significant positive relationship between leadership and execution of strategy in companies

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study based on the formulated objectives. The chapter also presents conclusions and recommendations of the study. Finally, the chapter discusses the implications of the study to management policy and practice and theory.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

The first objective was to determine the influence of transformational leadership on strategy implementation. The findings revealed that transformational leadership has a positive effect on strategy implementation.

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of transactional leadership on strategy implementation. The findings revealed that transactional leadership has a positive effect on strategy implementation.

The third objective of the study was to determine the joint effect of transformational and transactional leadership on strategy implementation. The findings revealed that transformational and transactional leadership jointly have a positive significant effect on strategy implementation.

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

The results of the study revealed that Universities in Kenya practice strategic leadership to a great extent. The findings of the study lead to the following conclusions:

Transformational leadership influences strategy implementation. Hence adopting transformational leadership in management of Universities in Kenya would result in successful strategy implementation.

The results also revealed that transactional leadership influences strategy implementation. Therefore, adopting transactional leadership in management of universities is crucial for successful strategy implementation.

Finally, the results showed that transformational and transactional leadership jointly influence strategy implementation. This shows that integrating transformational and transactional leadership in management of universities enhances strategy implementation.

## **5.4 Recommendations of the Study**

This section discusses recommendations for management policy and practice and proposed areas for further research.

### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Management, Policy and Practice**

This study has implication to management policy and practice. First the study demonstrated that strategic leadership influences strategy implementation. This implies that transformational leadership is essential in strategy implementation. Thus, senior management teams of Universities in Kenya should adopt transformational leadership.

Secondly, the study revealed that transactional leadership influence strategy implementation. The Universities' management therefore should adopt transactional leadership practices to achieve successful strategy implementation.

Further, the research findings showed that transformational leadership and transactional leadership jointly influence strategy implementation. This implies that the top Management of Universities in Kenya should adopt transformational and transactional leadership in their institutions for successful strategy implementation.

### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

The study focused at strategic leadership and how it influences strategy implementation. The constructs of strategic leadership that the study focused on include transformational and transactional leadership style, where it was established that they jointly result to 56.2% change in strategy implementation. Thus, apart from these constructs, there are other aspects of management leadership like participative leadership, democratic as well as visionary leadership which future studies should focus on.

The study was carried out among universities in Kenya. More specifically, the study concentrated on 49 chartered public and private universities in Kenya. Future studies should be conducted in other areas and sectors for instance in the banking, insurance as well as manufacturing sectors. Future studies should also be done in the education sector but with a focus on primary, secondary as well as tertiary institutions in Kenya. This will enhance comparison of the findings for more informed decision making.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Questionnaire

**NB:** Please do not write your name anywhere on this questionnaire.

#### PART A: Profile of the Respondent/University

Please tick appropriately where applicable in the spaces provided

1. Position of the respondent? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How old is this University?

1-5 years [ ]

6-10 years [ ]

11-15 years [ ]

16 years and above [ ]

3. How many employees are there in your University?

Less than 100 [ ]

100 – 499 [ ]

Above 500 [ ]

## PART B: Strategic Leadership

The statements presented below describe aspects of strategic leadership styles. Please indicate the extent to which you agree that each of the statements describes leadership style of your organization's top management by ticking '√' in the appropriate box (from 1 to 5); where: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD); 2 = Disagree (D); 3 = Uncertain (U); 4 Agree (A); 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

### (i) Transformational leadership style

	<b>Idealized Influence/Charismatic leadership</b> The management of this organization....	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
i.	Makes everyone enthusiastic about assignments	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	Is completely trusted by the employees	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	Encourages employees to express their ideas and opinions	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Inspirational motivation</b> The management of this organization . . .					
i.	Inspires employees	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	Inspires employees' loyalty to leadership	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	Inspires employees' loyalty to the organization	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Intellectual stimulation</b> The management of this organization . . .					
i.	Gets employees to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	Enables employees to think about old problems in new ways	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	Provides employees with new ways of looking at things	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Individualized consideration</b> The management of this organization . . .					
i.	Gives personal attention to members who seem neglected	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	Finds out what employees want and tries to help them get it	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	Expresses appreciation to employees when they do a good job	1	2	3	4	5

**(ii) Transactional leadership style**

	<b>Contingent reward</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
I	The management of this organization . . .	1	2	3	4	5
ii	Tells employees what to do if they want to be rewarded for their efforts	1	2	3	4	5
iii	Allows agreement between what employees are expected to put into the group effort and what they can get out of it	1	2	3	4	5
iv	Allows negotiation with employees about what they can get from what they can accomplish	1	2	3	4	5
v	<b>Management by exception- active</b> The management of this organization . . .					
vi	Asks employees no more of them than what is absolutely essential to get the work done	1	2	3	4	5
Vii	Allows employees to take initiatives but does not encourage them to do so	1	2	3	4	5
viii	Tells employees what they have to know to do their job	1	2	3	4	5

**PART C: Strategy implementation**

The following items contain some aspects of Strategy implementation as you perceive it. Please answer all items in this section and indicate to what extent you agree with the statement regarding the strategy implementation in your organization. Tick ‘√’ in the appropriate box (from 1 to 5); where: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD); 2 = Disagree (D); 3 = Uncertain(N); 4 Agree (A); 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

<b>No</b>	<b>Strategy implementation Dimensions</b>	<b>SD</b> <b>1</b>	<b>D</b> <b>2</b>	<b>U</b> <b>3</b>	<b>A</b> <b>4</b>	<b>SA</b> <b>5</b>
i.	Implementation of the strategy is done as scheduled	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	Activities are organized according to the strategy to be implemented	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	Resources for strategy implementation are allocated as budgeted	1	2	3	4	5
iv.	Strategy achieves targeted performance	1	2	3	4	5

**THANK YOU.**

## **Appendix II: List of Public and Private Universities in Kenya**

### **Public Universities**

1. University of Nairobi
2. Moi University
3. Kenyatta University
4. Egerton University
5. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
6. Maseno University
7. Chuka University
8. Dedan Kimathi University
9. Kisii University
10. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
11. Pwani University
12. Technical University of Kenya
13. Technical University of Mombasa
14. Maasai Mara University
15. Meru University of Science and Technology
16. Multimedia University of Kenya
17. South Eastern Kenya University
18. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
19. Laikipia University
20. University of Kabianga
21. Karatina University
22. University of Eldoret
23. Kibabii University
24. Kirinyaga University
25. Machakos University
26. Murang'a University of Technology
27. Rongo University
28. Taita Taveta University
29. The Co-operative University of Kenya
30. University of Embu
31. Garissa University

### **Private Universities**

1. University of Eastern Africa
2. Catholic University of Eastern Africa
3. Daystar University
4. Scott Christian University
5. United States International University
6. Africa Nazarene University
7. Kenya Methodist University
8. St. Paul's University
9. Pan African Christian University
10. Kabarak University
11. Strathmore University
12. Africa International University
13. Kenya Highlands Evangelical University
14. Mount Kenya University
15. Great Lakes University of Kisumu
16. Adventist University
17. KCA University
18. KAG East University

**Source: Commission for University Education (November 2017)**

## Appendix III: Research Authorization Letter



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/19/12475/31323**

Date: **3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019**

Sarah Njeri Kamundia  
Egerton University  
P.O. Box 536-20115  
**NJORO.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in Universities in Kenya.”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **selected Counties** for the period ending **3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioners, and the County Directors of Education, selected Counties** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

**BONFACE WANYAMA,  
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**MISS. SARAH NJERI KAMUNDIA**  
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Permit No : **NACOSTI/P/19/12475/31323**  
Date Of Issue : **3rd July, 2019**  
Fee Received : **Ksh 1000**



on the topic: **INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC  
LEADERSHIP ON STRATEGY  
IMPLEMENTATION IN UNIVERSITIES IN  
KENYA**

for the period ending:  
**3rd July, 2020**

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Include a snapshot of the abstract page of paper(s) published from the work.

## Appendix V: Research Publication

Journal of International Business, Innovation and Strategic Management  
Volume 5, Issue 3, 2021, ISSN (Online): 2617-1805

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### INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES

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#### ABSTRACT

Strategic leadership has been identified as one of the possible determinants of organizational processes and outcomes. In spite of the increasing role of strategic leadership in organizations, the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation has been given scanty attention in prior studies. This study therefore sought to examine the influence of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in universities in Kenya. The study targeted 31 chartered public universities and 18 chartered private universities. Structured questionnaires were used to collect the data. The respondents were the executive officers of the universities who included Vice-Chancellors, DVC's, Registrars, Principals, Deputy Principals, Human Resource Managers and Chief Finance Officers. Regression analysis was performed to determine the effect of strategic leadership on strategy implementation. The results revealed that strategic leadership styles (transformational and transactional) singly and jointly had a positive effect on strategy implementation.

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1 | Page



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