



## **The Influence of Institutional Pressures on Strategy Implementation in Public Secondary Schools in Selected Counties in Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

This study sought to investigate the influence of institutional pressures on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in the four selected counties in Kenya. The target population was all the public secondary schools in the counties of Meru, Embu, Tharaka Nithi and Isiolo. The Slovin's formula yielded a sample size of 250 secondary schools from the target population of 672. Data was collected from the sampled schools using a closed ended questionnaire. The results indicate that schools rated themselves moderately high in strategy implementation success, (mean = 3.50, Sd = .46). Further, the schools rated the strength of the institutional pressures they experienced as moderate (mean = 3.39, Sd = .40). Spearman's rank correlation analysis showed moderate, positive and a statistically significant relationship between institutional pressures and strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya ( $\rho = .476$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The binary logistic regression test for the hypothesis showed that institutional

pressures had a Positive and statistically significant influence on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya { $(Exp(B) = 4.433, p < .001)$ }. The study recommends that the various public secondary schools stakeholders that are the originators of institutional pressures should play their roles effectively to ensure successful strategy implementation in their schools since these pressures have a significant influence.

**Key words:** Institutional pressures, strategy implementation, public secondary schools

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Strategic management has been traditionally influenced by two dominant paradigms. In the 1980s the field of strategic management was dominated by the industry based view as advanced by porter (1980). The decade of 1990s was on the other hand dominated by resource based view (RBV) of the firm whose proponent was Barney (1991). Since then the

two schools of thought have oscillated like a pendulum in trying to explain the fundamentals of strategy (Hoskisson et al., 1999). Recently a third paradigm that complements the two traditional paradigms has emerged; the institutional- based view (Peng et al., 2009).

This paradigm has its origins from both institutional economics (North, 1990, Williamson, 1985) and sociological-institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1993, Scott, 1995). This theory brings in the role of institutions in explaining why organizations have differing competitive advantages (Garrido et al., 2014).

According to Obeidat et al. (2017) strategy is implementation can be described as the action stage of strategic management process where the laid down plans are translated into actions geared towards the attainment of the organisation's goals and objectives. However, available literature indicates that globally many strategies fail at the implementation stage. For example, Gebczynska (2016) reported that strategy implementation phase is the most challenging phase of strategic management process among the Polish firms while a survey of organizations in China showed that 83% of organizations fail in implementing their strategies (Sial et al., 2013). Failure in strategy implementation has numerous undesirable effects on the organisation. Strategy formulation consumes organizational resources including the time spent in meetings and therefore failure to implement it successfully would translate into the loss of these resources. On the other hand such failures would cause negative psychological effects on subsequent efforts to implement other organizational changes (Sial et al., 2013).

Based on the foregoing, it is pertinent that factors influencing strategy implementation in various sectors are investigated and especially those factors that have not attracted sufficient empirical studies. This study sought to investigate the influence of institutional pressures on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya.

## **2.0 THEORY, OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS**

### **2.1 Institutional theory**

Institutional theory has its origins from both institutional economics (North, 1990, Williamson, 1985) and sociological-institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1993, Scott, 1995). According to Scott (2003) institutions are the forces that act on individuals and organizations such that they apply social pressures and restrictions on them. They determine what is acceptable or not.

Institutional theory seeks to comprehend organizations and management practices as a function of social and institutional pressures rather than economic and market pressures. These institutional forces that shape the behavior of organizations were grouped by Scott as cited by Calvalho et al. (2017) into three categories namely the regulative, normative and cognitive pressures.

The regulative pressures deal with both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by the government agencies and other organizations that have formal control or influence over the organization (Sutton et al., 2015). A critical characteristic of regulative pressure is their coercive enforcement mechanism (Petton & Peze, 2014).

Secondly the normative pressures represent the informal and uncodified rules and norms.

That is how things need to be done around the organization in line with the values held by both the individuals and the organization that influence the behavior of the individual and the organization (Yousafzai et al., 2015). It consists of social guidelines limiting behavior that lack a coercive enforcement mechanism. In other words normative pillar concerns itself with social patterns regulating the behavior such as values and norms Sutton et al. (2015)

Finally, the cognitive pillar consists of knowledge and skills, and taken for granted beliefs. The cognitive pressures are a function of levels of education, skills, training and access to support services (Yousafzai et al., 2015).

### 2.2 Objective of the study

The objective of the study was to assess the influence of institutional pressures on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya.

### 2.3 Hypothesis of the study

H<sub>0</sub>: Institutional pressures have no statistically significant influence on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

This study employed descriptive survey research design. This design was found to be the most appropriate for this study for two reasons: First, descriptive research design lends itself for collecting large amounts of research data from a representative sample of a target population using questionnaires (Lavrakas, 2008). Secondly the design is appropriate for collecting data without manipulation of the variables and reporting the issues as they are (Fraenkel and Wallen 2009).

### 3.2 Target Population

The target population was all the six hundred and seventy-two public secondary schools in the selected counties. The distribution of the schools by county was shown in the Table 1.

Table 1: Study Population

County	Number of schools
Meru	354
Embu	166
Tharaka Nithi	135
Isiolo	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>672</b>

Source: Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2014).

The respondents were the principals of the said secondary schools because they are the accounting officers of their respective institutions and therefore responsible for strategy implementation in the school.

### 3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample size for this study was determined using the Slovin's formula that states as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2} \quad (1)$$

Where n = Sample size

N = target population

e = margin of error

Hence

$$n = \frac{672}{1 + 672(0.05)^2} \approx 250$$

Each county contributed to the sample in the ratio of its population as shown Table 2:

Table 2: Sample size

County	Ratio	Sample size
Meru	$\frac{354}{672} \times 250$	132

Embu	$\frac{166}{672} \times 250$	62
Tharaka Nithi	$\frac{135}{672} \times 250$	50
Isiolo	$\frac{17}{672} \times 250$	6
<b>Study Sample Size</b>		<b>250</b>

Source: Author

The simple random sampling technique was applied to obtain the respondents from each of the counties. This ensured that within the county all schools had equal chance of inclusion in the study sample.

### 3.4 Data Collection Instrument

This study used a self-administered questionnaire as the data collection instrument. This enabled the researcher to collect data from a large sample and realize a high response rate because the respondents could fill the questionnaire at their own free time. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended items on a five-point Likert Scale. The level of agreement with each of the statement was scored as follows 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 2= Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

### 3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The study exclusively used primary data collected from the respondents. The primary data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the sampled respondents who were allowed time to respond to the items in the questionnaire after which they were collected for analysis.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

The Study used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows software for analysis. The analysis was done in two stages where the first stage dealt with descriptive

statistics and the second stage involved the inferential statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics involved frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. On the other hand inferential statistics involved Spearman's rank correlation and binary logistic analysis.

### 3.5 Model Specification

Binary logistic regression was used to determine the influence of institutional pressures on strategy implementation.

To achieve this data was coded as:

$$X = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{for } \bar{X} \geq 3.5 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad \text{and}$$

$$Y = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{for } \bar{Y} \geq 3.5 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

The logit model took the form:

$$\text{Logit } Y = \ln\left(\frac{P}{1-P}\right) = Z \quad (3)$$

Where

Y = strategy implementation

X = Institutional pressures

$\beta_0$  = the constant term

$\beta_1$  = the coefficients of X.

e = the error term

$$Z = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + e$$

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Reliability of the instrument

The reliability of the data collection instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha statistics as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Reliability of instruments

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
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Strategy implementation	0.701	8
Institutional pressures	0.829	22

**Source: Survey Data (2019)**

According to table 3 the dependent variable (strategy implementation) returned an alpha value of 0.701 while institutional pressures had an alpha value of 0.829. This indicates that the instrument reliably measured the dependent and independent variable as argued by Olaniyi, A.A. (2019) cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 is an acceptable indicator of reliability of the instrument.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

Two hundred and five questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of 82%.

#### 4.3 Respondents' Characteristics

The distribution of the respondents based on gender, age, education and work experience were conducted and the results are presented in table 4.

*Table 4: Characteristics of respondents*

Variable		Freq.	%
Gender	Male	108	52.7
	Female	97	47.3
	Total	205	100
Age of respondents	Below 40 years	7	3.4
	41 - 50 years	105	51.2
	51 - 60 years	93	45.4
	Total	205	100
Level of education	Diploma	6	2.9
	Bachelor's degree	129	62.9
	Master's degree	69	33.7
	Ph.D.	1	0.5
	Total	205	100

Work experience	Below 5 years	40	19.5
	6 - 10 years	66	32.2
	11 - 15 years	70	34.1
	16 - 20 years	27	13.2
	Over 20 years	2	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Survey Data (2019)

According to the results in Table 4, majority of the respondents were aged between 41 – 50 years (51.2 %) followed by those aged between 51– 60 years at 45.4%. Respondents aged below forty years were the least at 3.4%. Majority of the respondents had a bachelor's degree (62.9%), followed by master's degree holders (33.7%). Diploma holders constituted only 2.9% of the respondents while Ph.D. holders were the fewest at 0.5%. Majority of the respondents had served as principals for a period of 11-15 years (34.1%) followed closely by those that had 6-10 years' experience (32.2%). The least were those that had over 20 years' experience as principals that stood at only 1%.

#### Summary Descriptive Results

Descriptive statistics for strategy implementation (dependent variable) and the institutional pressures (independent variable) were summarized as shown in the Table 5.

*Table 5: Summary Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	N	Mean	S. D
Strategy implementation	205	3.50	.46
Institutional pressures	205	3.39	.40
Valid N	205		

Source: Survey Data (2019)

Table 5 shows that the respondents perceived strategy implementation in their institutions as moderately successful (Mean = 3.50, SD = .46) the low standard deviation is indicative that the perception of the respondents regarding the level of success in strategy implementation approached homogeneity. The respondents further rated the amount of institutional pressures they experience as moderate (mean = 3.39, SD = .40). The low standard deviation shows near agreement on the extent of institutional pressures experienced.

#### 4.5 Relationship between institutional factors and strategy implementation

In order to examine the strength and the direction of the relationship between institutional pressures and strategy implementation, Spearman's rank correlation on summated scores of the two variables was done. The results are presented in table 6.

From the results in Table 6, institutional pressures had moderate, positive and statistically significant relationship with strategy implementation ( $\rho = .476$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This implies that holding all other factors constant, a unit increase in institutional pressures would lead to an increase in success in strategy implementation by a factor of .476.

Table 6: Relationship between institutional pressures and strategy implementation

		1	2
Strategy implementation (1)	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	205	205
Institutional pressures (2)	Correlation Coefficient	.476**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.

N	205	205

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Data (2019)

#### 4.7 Effects of institutional pressures on strategy implementation

The logit tests for the effects of institutional pressures on strategy implementation were performed and the results presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Effect of institutional Pressures on strategy implementation

Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Inst. pressures	1.49	.30	24.71	1	.000	4.43
Constant	-.62	.21	8.72	1	.003	.538

Source: Survey Data (2019)

The binary logistic regression analysis therefore specifies the model as:

$$\text{Logit (SI)} = -.169 + 1.489(\text{IP}) \quad (4)$$

From table 7 the results show that a unit increase in the institutional pressures increase the odds of strategy implementation success by a factor of 4 { $(\text{Exp(B)} = 4.433$ ,  $p < .05$ )}. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that institutional factors have no statistically significant influence on strategy implementation in public secondary schools failed to be accepted. This implies that institutional pressures have a statistically significant influence on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya.

#### 4.0 DISCUSSION

The study sought to investigate the influence of institutional pressures on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya. The results showed that the respondents perceived institutional pressures they experience to implement strategies as moderate while they rated the extent of successful strategy implementation in public secondary schools as moderately high.

Finally the test of hypothesis showed that institutional pressures had a positive and statistically significant influence on the likelihood of successful strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya. The finding is supported by Osewe (2019) who found out that there existed a

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

The study established that institutional pressures are positively associated with strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya. Institutional pressures have a statistically significance influence on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya. Increase in institutional pressures increase the likelihood of successful strategy implementation in public secondary schools. Institutional pressures should therefore be considered among the factors that predict success in strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya.

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Correlation between institutional pressures and strategy implementation was assessed using Spearman's rank correlation. There was a moderate, positive and statistically significant relationship between institutional pressures and strategy implementation in public secondary schools.

positive statistically significant relationship between institutional pressures and organizational performance. Similarly, the finding agrees with Alkalbani et al. (2017) who found institutional factors to have a positive statistically significant impact on information security compliance in organizations.

### **6.2 Implication**

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study adds the limited empirical studies on strategy implementation hence narrowing the gap between studies on strategy planning and strategy implementation. The study also used institutional pressures that have scarcely been used before to predict success strategy implementation. For practice, the various stakeholders that originate the various types of institutional pressures should actively play their roles as these pressures have a significant positive influence on strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya.

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