

**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY  
IMPLEMENTATION IN KENYAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A  
CASE OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

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## **DECLARATION**

his research project is my original work and to the best of my knowledge, it has neither been examined nor presented for the award of a degree in any university or college.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to the Kamau Family for their moral support during the period of the study. May God abundantly bless all of you.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>AAU</b>	Africa Association of Universities
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CSF</b>	Critical Success Factor
<b>CU</b>	Commonwealth Universities
<b>CUE</b>	Commission for University Education
<b>GGSU</b>	Good Governance in all Sectors of University Life
<b>IAU</b>	International Association of Universities
<b>IEL</b>	Internal and External Links
<b>IUCEA</b>	Inter-University Council for East Africa
<b>LESE</b>	Learning Environment and Student/Staff Experience
<b>OS</b>	Organization Structure
<b>SL</b>	Strategic Leadership
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>TMT</b>	Top Management Team

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

<b>Critical Success Factors:</b>	These are key conditions that need to be considered since they significantly influence the success of an organization.
<b>Public University:</b>	Any university that majorly relies on funding from the national government to implement its strategies.
<b>Resources:</b>	It includes facilities as structures, land and the equipment required in instruction and efficient strategy implementation.
<b>Strategic Cognition:</b>	This is how top management's cognitive structures and processes define business strategies and how they guide in generating strategic initiatives
<b>Strategic Direction:</b>	This includes actions and plans set by top management to build synergy and teamwork within the organization in order to attain organizational objectives
<b>Strategic Learning:</b>	This is a continuous process of creating an adaptive organization by aligning the structures and processes with the selected strategies in order to attain sustainable competitiveness
<b>Strategic Plan:</b>	This is a tool that outlines set of activities to be implemented within a specific time of period, designed to bring about desirable results; which moves the organization from where it is to where it desires to be.
<b>Strategy Implementation:</b>	Execution of courses of action to attain organizational goals
<b>Strategic Leadership:</b>	This is the process of influencing other organization members to implement strategies in order to attain organizational goals
<b>Strategy Monitoring:</b>	Periodic monitoring of strategy to warrant its cogency and appropriate implementation executed every quarter, semiannually or annually.
<b>Strategy:</b>	A plan of action that enable an organization to succeed
<b>Structure:</b>	Levels of management, meetings, communication and lines of authority in the organization

## ABSTRACT

Strategy implementation is an important phase of the strategic management process because it involves translating the devised strategy into action. However, many academic institutions are often not able to change formulated strategies into successful execution. It is for instance not clear whether strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and critical successes factors at Kenyatta University can effectively explain and predict strategy implementation at the university. This study aimed at evaluating the effect of strategic direction, strategic cognition and strategic learning on strategy implementation. This study was anchored on the Bourgeois and Brodwin Strategy Implementation Model, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Resource Based Theory. Transformation Leadership model explained both strategic learning and strategic cognition as essential elements of strategy implementation. Bourgeois' and Brodwin's Strategy Implementation model focuses more on strategic learning, and critical success factors and strategic cognition. Resource based theory explained strategic direction. This study also heavily relied on the transformational leadership theory which addressed the independent variable of strategic leadership. The research used a descriptive research design where the data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires. The target population of the study consisted of 140 respondents who included directors, registrars, dean of students, heads of institutes and directorates and departmental heads in the Kenyatta University Campuses. Out of 140 of the target population, 59 respondents were sampled for the interview. To ascertain credibility of the study, Content-Scaling-Structure (CSS) procedure was followed to construct the research questionnaire based on the research objectives. Construct validity was realized through making sure that the operational variables reflect the theoretical constructs from reviewed literature. Reliability was attained by use of Cronbach Alpha to assess the internal consistency where all the study parameters returned Cronbach's alpha coefficients higher than 0.7. The data collected was analyzed within the lenses of descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and percentages as well as inferential statistics in the form of regression analysis. The results show that majority of the interviewees strongly agreed that university leadership is effective in developing strategic vision which gives the institution a sense of direction. It was also observed that Kenyatta University's strategic leaders have a good understanding of strategies selected. The results indicated that university strategic leaders monitor and continuously align processes with strategies chosen. The study findings indicate that strategic direction, strategic cognition and strategic learning account for 57.2% the variation of strategy implementation of Kenyatta University while other factors explain 42.8%. From results of hypothesis testing, it was evident that strategic direction ( $\beta=.213$ ,  $t=2.546$ ,  $p<0.000$ ), strategic cognition ( $\beta=.454$ ,  $t=4.989$ ,  $p<0.021$ ), and strategic learning ( $\beta=.235$ ,  $t=2.527$ ,  $p<0.019$ ) have positive explanation and prediction on strategy implementation. The study concluded that leaders at the university have good understanding of strategies selected. Additionally, to give institutions sense of direction, the leadership should be effective in developing strategic vision, have well elaborated objectives, have a mission which is aligned to its vision and the strategies well chosen to match with institutional objectives. The Universities should engage experts to guide the strategy formulation process and train employees to develop a sound strategy. This research however advocates that more studies should be conducted to be able to more specifically identify and isolate elements of strategic direction, strategic cognition, and strategic learning and which are suited for not only Kenyatta University but other universities across the country.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The major interest for strategic leaders is to enhance performance of their organization by developing and implementing efficient strategies to remain competitive (Tait & Nienaber, 2010). This is critically important at this time that competitiveness among firms has escalated due to advanced technology and dynamic customer demands. Firms are being pressured to achieve the expectations of the shareholders and owners who look forward to reasonable if not exceptional earnings. The market on the flip side, expects exceptional products and/or services at affordable prices. Employees on the other hand expect comfortable working environment and fair reward.

Creation and successful execution of strategies by firms enable organization gain a competitive advantage (Ul Musawir et al., 2017). Without execution, even the most superior strategies are deemed useless. When strategy implementation is successfully achieved, the customer needs are satisfied while the shareholders get desired returns. Strategy implementation is a critical segment of the strategic management system as it involves putting the acceptably devised strategy into action. Organizations that effectively execute their strategies benefit from better performance than organizations managed by incompetent managers who cannot implement strategies effectively (Hyväri,2016). Therefore, strategic leadership can only be effective if there is successful implementation of the strategy. According to Hyväri (2016), strategy implementation sometimes experience challenges such as conflicting priorities, lack of top management support, unfit organizational structures, inter-departmental conflicts and ineffective communication.

The effects of weak strategic leadership can spread both internally and externally. The staff may endure low motivation, disunity and poor performance. Stakeholders of the organization may become worried concerning the fate of their investments in the company. Others may withdraw their resources from the firm. A business' ability to gain competitive advantage and attain better returns is indeed put at risk when strategic leaders are unable to act appropriately and promptly in the midst of the global dynamic business environment (Pearce & Robinson 2007).

### **1.1.1 Strategic Leadership**

Strategic Leadership refers to the potential to influence others to willingly take actions that improve performance for the organization's long-term sustainable competitiveness (Robinson, 2007). Strategic leadership entails communicating organizational vision, creating structures, allocating resources to achieve organizational goals (Hunger, 2008). Thompson (2007) views strategic leadership as the ability to influence organization's members in implementing change. Chapman (2004) states that strategic leadership potential to ensure transformation by inspiring organizational members to acquire and work on the organization's vision. Strategic leadership can also be defined as a collection of resolutions and actions which create an enabling environment for staff members to conjecture the organization's prerequisites within the context of their line of business. According to Davies and Davies (2004), organizational competencies and individual characteristic features can be associated with strategic leadership.

Strategic leadership also enables managers to make decisions which motivate others in a manner which enhances the long-term realization of the organization's goals and objectives. It is based on a robust understanding of the multifaceted rapport between the organization and its immediate business environment

(DeMarco 2010). It further means a strategic leader's capability to express a strategic vision of the organization, and to spur the subordinates to acquire that vision.

Strategic leaders should have the capability to do what the plan as captured in the strategy says thereby converting it into efficient implementation. Boal, (2000) expressed a three-steps process through which strategic leaders are can develop appropriate strategies which are; awaken, envision and re-architecture. Strategic leadership is made up of strategic direction, strategic cognition and strategic learning.

Strategic direction entails actions and plans made to attain the objectives of the organization. It includes the vision, mission, strategies and core values set by the top management (Hammar, 2007). Strategic direction helps to build synergy and teamwork within the firm. It also enables employees to identify their key responsibilities and to understand the purpose for which the organization exists.

Strategic cognition is defined as a practice of linking cognitive structures and resolution making in strategy formulation. It entails the top leadership's perception about the business environment and the situation of the organization (Porac & Thomas, 2002). Strategic Cognition (SC) explains how top management's cognitive structures and processes define business strategies and mechanisms through which they guide in generating strategic programs. SC enables top managers in strategic choice and they are able to effectively communicate the strategies to the organization members (Carpenter & Sanders, 2004).

Strategic learning is the process of creating strategies on a continuous process in order to develop an adaptive organization. It includes situation analysis of the business environment and the organization position. It also entails continuous

realignment of systems, processes, organization structures and people to match the selected strategies (Pietersen, 2010). It lies in the belief that the ability to learn and adapt is the only sure way of sustainable competitiveness.

### **1.1.2 Strategy Implementation**

Strategy implementation is the course in which strategic plans are turned into action to attain organizational objectives. A strategic plan is a document which outlines how the organization will achieve its goals. According to Kalali et al (2011), the strategy implementation makes the organization's courses of action meaningful. Strategy implementation is crucial to a firm's success, since it addresses the timelines and how the preferred goals and objectives will be reached. Strategy execution takes place after environmental scans, analysis of issues that affect success of strategies. It entails assigning responsibilities and timelines which would enable an organization to successfully execute its strategies (Lorette, 2016).

A prosperous strategy implementation requires a committed leader such as a CEO, who communicates the vision, and provides resources that are necessary. Everybody in an organization need to be actively involved in planning whereby the standards of measuring performance are outlined and which also allow setting individual targets and follow-up (Wafula, 2015). This indicates that implementation includes a strategic map which outlines key factors that influence performance. Such factors are; financial resources, market environment, operational environment, staff and partners.

Strategy implementation is evident when policies and selected strategies are put into action through provision of required budgeted resources, creation of processes, procedures and programs to execute the chosen strategies as well as periodic

reporting on progress. The process of strategy implementation usually involves decision making on daily operation such as resource allocation (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008). Since strategy implementation is operation-oriented; it requires skillful decision making and execution of key business activities by front line managers and employees (Daft, 2009).

Strategic implementation is vital amongst universities at the top of success thresholds based on the fundamental belief that a successful strategy implementation provides rare openings for differentiation and far-fetching competition power. Therefore, universities are eager to know the effective tools and approaches which can promote successful strategy implementation (Mwangi, 2014).

Strategy implementation is an indispensable aspect of the strategic management since most responsibilities and resources are allocated during implementation. Strategic initiatives are useless without execution. A review of literature shows that 59% of business organizations failed to successfully execute their priority strategies in an examination of 276 American public institutions in 2004 (Allio, 2005). Another study on Chinese companies in 2006, 83% of the scrutinized companies had high failure rate in their strategy implementation process (Li, Guohui, & Eppler 2008).

### **1.1.3 Critical Success Factors**

Critical Success Factors (CSFs) are key and relevant areas that require to be given considerable attention for the achievement of the organization's objectives (Morrison, 2014). They include the important activities that must be done effectively for the organization to attain its mission. They also represent activity areas whose successful outcomes lead to a sustainable competitive advantage (Rockart, 2006).

Identification of CSFs enables firms to understand the activities that are essential for their success. Therefore, firms must establish the CSFs that need to be given serious attention of the top management for the organization to succeed (Abdalla, 2002). Managers are also supposed to continuously monitor the performance of the key activities identified since they eventually determine the overall success of the organization. Daniel (2004) identified five key sources of CSFs which include; the structure of the specific industry, the competitive tactics, environmental factors, geographic location of the company and functional structure of the organization.

Achanga *et al.*, (2006) established CSFs as financial capacity, organization structure, competencies and expertise, supportive organization culture and innovation. The factors that relate to the institutional structure are the most critical in implementation of strategies according to Denti and Hemlin (2012). Allio (2005) indicates that good strategy-structure alignment is essential for efficient implementation of organizational operation strategies (Denti & Hemlin, 2012). They point out adjustment in the structure necessitate modification of the strategy implementation that will lead to the success of the organization mission.

Lack of consideration of the critical success factors in strategy implementation can cause undesirable performance and be at a detrimental competitive drawback and also affect the achievement of the mission. Organizations that are financially unstable may not be able to support innovation, employ skillful staff and may not be able to source adequate resources for efficient strategy implementation. Lack of flexibility in managing change hinders implementation of strategies in a dynamic business environment (Shehab, 2002).

#### **1.1.4 Public Universities in Kenya**

The Kenyan education paradigm has grown considerably since the elevation of the Royal College to a university status back in 1961 that enabled the college to groom 571 learners for undergraduate programs at the University of London. After the Kenyan independence, the college was upgraded to the University College Nairobi, immediately after the establishment of the University of East Africa in the same year.

The university education system however has tremendously expanded such that by 2009, Kenya had 7 accredited public owned universities and 12 university colleges and more than 22 private universities. Approximately, Kenya has 122,874 university students of which approximately 75% are in government owned universities. Currently, there are 31 government owned universities.

In as much as the 1980s through to 90s witnessed the establishment of some private higher learning institutions, government owned colleges and universities were still the major provider of university education. By the 2009, undergraduate enrollment in private universities was only at 15%. Presently, the Commission for University Education (CUE) establishes threshold requirements (such as land and resource) which private universities must comply with before they can be accredited. The commission also requires that the private universities or colleges review their programs quinquennially in a self-evaluation that can be audited by CUE, (Otieno & Ngolovoi, 2009).

Ateya (2007) indicated that it becomes even tougher to implement strategy in public colleges and universities due to the diverse scope of activities that must be done and the various competencies required to execute them. There is no guarantee that junior employees will fully participate in execution of strategies based on mere fact that the

management has made strategy choices. Many factors need to be put into consideration which include; deep-rooted practices, consigned interest, political interests, existing attitudes and all of which affect effective strategy implementation if not dealt with.

### **1.1.5 Kenyatta University**

The British government relinquished the Templar Barracks in Kahawa, to the just established government of Kenya in 1965. The barracks were therefore changed into Kenyatta College. In 1970, the college became a component College of the University of Nairobi, and thus change of name to Kenyatta University College, through an Act of Parliament. Later in 1985, the college was granted autonomous university status from which it was called Kenyatta University to date.

The university has had accreditation from Commission of University Education (CUE), Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Africa Association of Universities (AAU), International Association of Universities (IAU) and the Commonwealth Universities (CU). It has the following campuses; Main Campus in Kahawa, Nairobi, City Centre, Ruiru, Parklands, Kitui, Mombasa, Nyeri, Nakuru, Kericho, Dadaab, Embu, Arusha and Kigali (Kenyatta University 2017). The university offers undergraduate degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees as of September 2017. The university has school-based, part-time, full-time teaching and digital learning, virtual and open learning program (Kenyatta University Website, 2018).

Kenyatta University has a critical role to play in provision of tertiary education in Kenya. In order to remain effective and successful in the dynamic higher education market, the university needs to be effective in strategy implementation and ultimately service delivery. In its efforts to become a world class university; it develops

strategic and vision plans to guide implementation of its strategies. The university's strategic plan 2005-2015 was formulated and reviewed to match the Kenya Vision 2030.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Most often when a university's strategic plan is not fully implemented it influences the ability of the top management to steer the institution towards meeting its strategic goals and achieve competitive advantage. Many public universities in Kenya are not performing well because of challenges in strategy execution. The strategy implementation is expected to assist strategic planning to be transformed from just plans into meaningful action (Kimeli, 2008). Without proper monitoring to ensure that the strategies are implemented in full, it presents a problem of achieving the outlined objectives and strategies.

All public universities have well spelt out vision and mission statements, identity statements, philosophy statements as well as core values and most importantly, identity policy and strategy statements. However, an evaluation of what happens in reality shows that some of these statements have remained written. Some of them have not been implemented and consequently the desired outcomes have not been achieved. Kenyatta University among other public universities have had challenges in service delivery for a while now because of failure to implement some of the key strategies. Challenges experienced in strategy implementation as well as adoption of the best strategy to deliver expected objectives have lasting effects on the performance of the public universities (Mokwa, 2009).

The academic institutions are often not able to translate strategies into significant action, which implies failure in strategy implementation. The cause of the gap in

these academic institutions is the belief that if decision makers just talk about strategy implementation, it will eventually translate into implementation. It is thus critical that tertiary education institutions give the implementation segment the attention it deserves and apportion sufficient resources which can enable them realize the desired goals and objectives. It is extremely unfortunate for an organization to devise suitable strategies but fail to successfully implement them (Mwangi, 2014). A study conducted by Nyakiri (2012) showed that public universities in Kenya including Kenyatta University experience challenges in strategy implementation. These challenges include; lack of sufficient support from top management, unaligned structures, resistance to change, lack of proper coordination in assigning responsibility and uncontrollable external factors.

Given these challenges, it is noteworthy that executing a strategy is problematic and the more the degree of change a strategy need, the more demanding implementation tends to be. One of the key ingredients during strategy execution is strategic leadership (Lussier & Achua, 2007). Successful execution of strategies formulated is highly determined by efficient leadership of the senior most management in most institutions. However, many leaders assign implementation duties to junior staff and do not monitor the process (Speculand, 2011). IN the long run, strategies are not implemented as intended. The implication of failure to implement organizational strategies goals and objectives as well as vision and missions of the organization are either not achieved or achieved partially. To be able to address the problem above, the study examined the role of strategic leadership plays in strategy implementation in Kenyan government owned universities with a case of Kenyatta University.

### **1.3 General Objective**

The overall objective of the study was to investigate the effect of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in Kenyan Public Universities.

#### **1.3.1 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study were;

- i. To evaluate the influence of strategic direction on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya
- ii. To examine the influence of strategic cognition on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya
- iii. To assess how strategic learning influences strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya
- iv. To establish the moderating influence of critical success factors on the relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya

### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

The research was based on four hypotheses;

- H<sub>01</sub> Strategic direction has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya
- H<sub>02</sub> Strategic cognition has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya
- H<sub>03</sub> Strategic learning has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya
- H<sub>04</sub> Critical success factors have no moderating effect on the relationship between strategic direction and strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya

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

The management of Kenyan public universities which are involved in creation and implementation of strategies can profit from the outcomes of this research by establishing the impacts of strategic leadership on implementation of strategies. The top management of public universities will also be able to establish the degree to which levels of managements and different departments contribute to developing of strategies and subsequent implementation of the formulated strategies since this study targeted different departments and different levels of management.

The conclusions of this study are equally of great relevance to other leaders in organizations like regulatory bodies, colleges and other institutions of higher learning who can gain insight on how strategic leadership influence the implementation of various strategic plans and policies, therefore enabling an improvement of their organizational performance.

The findings of the study can also be utilized by academicians as a literature material for future studies in a similar area of study. Future researchers can also refer to the findings of this research to explore the effect of strategic leadership on strategy implementation in other industries. Researchers can also look at the effect of critical success factors on strategy implementation an aspect that was not investigated in this study.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study investigated the role of strategic leadership in strategy implementation in Kenyatta University. The study examined how strategic leadership, strategic cognition and strategic learning affect strategy learning. It also assessed the moderating effect critical success factors have on the correlation between strategic

leadership and strategy implementation. The study looked into the strategic plan implemented between the year 2005 and 2015 because it indicated both the strategies that were implemented successfully and unsuccessfully. The descriptive design methodology adopted which describes and documents aspects of a state of affairs as they occur naturally. The study population consisted of dean of schools, registrars, dean of students, directors and heads of departments. Stratified sampling method was adopted to identify the respondents. Data collection and collection tools was a both closed and open-ended questionnaires.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The study was primarily limited to by the concept of study, that is to say, strategy implementation as a function of strategic leadership. Although there could be many other functions of strategy implementation, the study was confined to attributes of organizational leadership. Additionally, the study was limited in the context of leadership in the education sector of public universities and most specifically Kenyatta University with regards to how the same affects strategy implementation.

Other limitation experienced during the study was that some of the targeted respondents were unable to timely give out information due to commitments in official duties. To overcome this, the researcher ensured consistent follow-up to remind the respondents who eventually responded positively.

Another challenge was finding experts to explain the comprehensive strategic plan of the university and how it is being implemented. Since the research also focused on historical strategy implementation and how it has been concluded, it was a challenge getting this information from university staff. To resolve this, the contents of the Kenyatta University Strategic & Vision Plan 2005-2015 was

evaluated alongside the research to understand the level of its implementation.

Finally, the research was primarily limited to descriptive design whose target population was leaders at different echelon of Kenyatta University from various campuses. Furthermore, the data collection was limited to semi-structured questionnaire for primary data collection.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

Chapter one presented the context of the study by elaborating the strategic leadership, strategy implementation, and overview of public universities in Kenya and Kenyatta University. It also presents the problem of the study, the objectives, research hypotheses, scope, limitations and the organization of the study. The second chapter covers the theoretical literature review, the empirical literature, conceptual framework as well as summary of research gaps and conceptual framework. The third chapter highlights the research methodology which includes; design of the research, the targeted population, technique of sampling and procedures, tools used for data collection, validity and reliability of data collection tools, data analysis and ethical considerations made during the study.

Chapter four consists of results of data collection, analysis of the rate of response, demography of the respondents, and descriptive and inferential statistics on the study parameters. The chapter further presents the interpretation of the analysis and discussion of the analyzed data. The last chapter comprises of summary of the study findings, conclusions and recommendation.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the discussion of some theories on which the study is anchored, review of empirical literature on similar fields of study from across the globe, critique of the literature, summary of the literature review, research gaps and conceptual framework.

### **2.2 Theoretical Literature Review**

#### **2.2.1 Introduction**

This section of the chapter delves into the theoretical frameworks which the study uses to explore the questions of organizational strategic leadership and strategy implemental. Consequently, the section explores three theories namely transformational leadership theory, Bourgeois and Brodwin Strategy Implementation Theory and Resource based theory.

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

Transformational leadership theory was proposed by leadership specialist, McGregor Burns (1978) who discerned between conventional leaders also known as transactional leaders, who give tangible rewards to followers who submit to them; and transformational leaders who involve followers, focus on intrinsic motivation, flexibility and conscious consideration about the importance of specific results and new methods in which those results might be attained (Guohui, & Eppler, 2008).

This theory emphasizes on the role of managers in motivating employees towards achieving more than their expectations. Transformational leadership elaborates the features of leaders and their relationship with subordinates. Transformational leaders

are those who are able to craft a common vision, to coherent clear and expressive goals, and influence followers to adopt the vision (Ahmad & Abbas, 2014).

Transformational leaders are viewed to be strategic since they focus on effecting change in organizations through commitments to the vision. They help their subordinates redefine their individual vision to be aligned to the organization's vision. They also enrich the morale of employees by associating the employees' sense of belonging to the organization's mission, being a good example to the employees and encouraging the employees to take grander tenure of their work (Ulgen, 2007).

According to Robbins et al. (2010), a transformational leader has the ability to motivate followers to give up their own self-interests and work towards a common vision. Transformational leaders put up regard and confidence from followers by conducting themselves in a way they expect their followers to. This theory assisted the study to determine how strategic direction, strategic cognition and strategic learning affect strategy implementation. It therefore addresses the independent variable of strategic leadership.

### **2.2.2 Bourgeois and Brodwin Strategy Implementation Theory**

The theory of strategy implementation was posited by Bourgeois and Brodwin in 1982. The theory developed three models for strategy implementation. These models show viewpoints a manager may adopt when implementing strategies. The commander model tows its motivation from the army life where the manager exercises all power and the subordinate adhere to commands given to them. The manager makes all decisions on how strategies will be implemented but takes no active role in the implementation process. The change paradigm is founded on programmatic activities and interventions in the firm's processes and systems

which will lead to expected results. This model outlines how the organization can implement more complicated strategic plans by creating flexibility for anticipated change in the course of implementation (Bourgeois et al., 2004). The collaborative model decentralizes decision making from senior most level of management to the lower level managers. The theory postulates that the strategy implementation is an activity of teamwork involving all employees. These models motivate the employees and also offer the strategy implementation team with better information and intellectual capital. This theory can be replicated in this study in understanding the approaches managers adopt to ensure successful strategy implementation. The theory is thus applicable to this study because it addresses strategy implementation which is the dependent variable.

### **2.2.3 Resource Based Theory**

It has never been obvious, to whom resource based view can be attributed. Rather, it is argued that the theory was developed in a process of juxtaposing the arguments of various scholars such as Jay B. Barney, George S. Day, Gary Hamel, Shelby D. Hunt, G. Hooley and C.K Prahalad (Priem, & Butler, 2001; Mahoney, & Pandian,1992). Resource based view sees organizations as cognitive systems characterized by context-dependent abilities that are essential to the strategic direction. This theory identifies a firm's competitive advantage by analyzing its unique set of competencies and assets. The proponents of this theory state that firms need to develop specialized and unique potentials on which their prospect competitiveness can be guaranteed. These potentials should be distinctive, tacit and often intangible in nature. Barney (1991) notes that for firms to acquire more competitiveness; they ought to build up resources that are inimitable, socially multifarious and grueling to copy in near future.

The resource-based approach proposes that the external business environment should not be the foundation of strategy formulation but rather the firm's unique resources. The theory also elaborates how organizations allocate their rare resources to attain a competitive edge; therefore, the firm strives to allocate its resources to superlative use and invests in competencies which supplement the existing capabilities which can enable the firm to take advantage of its unique resources exhaustively. Successful businesses configure their competencies anchored in the reality of the competition in the market environment, past performances and anticipated expectations (Song et al., 2007).

The resource-based view identifies organizations with superior systems, structures and processes as being successful in strategy implementation not because they invest strategically to raise prices above long run costs but because they have lower costs while offering high quality products and services hence improving performance. This theory looks at rents accruing to firm's unique and rare resources rather than profits from product and market positioning. Competitiveness' of the firm therefore relies on whether the firm is able count on its idiosyncratic and inimitable resources. Resource based theory is applicable to this study because it addresses objective four of critical success factors.

### **2.3. Empirical Literature Literature**

This section of the chapter focuses on empirical studies which have been done around the subject of strategic leadership and strategy implementation. The section is therefore organized under each of the objectives of the study. The aim of the section is to find out what other scholars have established and to relate the same to the gap that this study aimed to fill.

### **2.3.1 Strategic Direction and Strategy Implementation**

The strategic direction is critical in influencing the performance of an institution in implementing the strategies. Mwangi (2014) researched about factors which affect strategy implementation in government owned universities in Kenya. She pointed out that many tertiary education organizations know their customer expectations as well as the efforts they need for success. Nevertheless, a lot of universities both private and public, struggle to convert formulated strategies into successful actions even though execution of strategies successfully is critical for any institution. Even though Mwangi concentrated on the various factors that lead to institutional success, she failed to recognize that strategic direction determines the implementation of strategies.

Fourie (2010) studied on the strategy direction and implementation relationship for branches of tertiary education organizations. The study established the influence of the differences in structure layout between branches and the parent institutions in both strategic direction and implementation. This indicated that there must be plans to ensure effective implementation of any strategy, hence providing a form of guarantee in achieving the desired objectives. The gap therefore was that the study focused on the branches of academic institutions which often were involved in implementing the strategy.

Lopez et al. (2014), researched on effects of strategic direction on strategic change process. The study provided the view that the strategic direction is as strong factor for successful change in organizations. This left out the aspect of how strategic direction affects strategy implementation in academic institutions considering that the two go hand in hand but an effective strategic direction will lead to better strategy

implementation hence the realization of the desired returns as well as effective change management.

Pearce and Robinson (2009) note that leaders can help their organizations to embrace change by setting forth their strategic direction. Strategic direction in this sense is a clear sense of where the organization should head and the results expected. Organization leaders can do this by concentrating simultaneously and very clearly on vision and mission of the organization. The objective of clear vision and mission is to enable everyone in the organization to understand and appreciate the strategy and their individual and corporate role towards the realization of the same. Kihara, Bwisa, and Kihoro (2016) say that the objective is for everyone in the organization to understand the strategy and specifically how what they are doing will contribute to overall delivery. The first component of strategic direction consists of determining the firm's purpose or vision. This means that strategic leaders must articulate a clear and realistic statement about why the firm exists and what is distinctive about it. This statement will then empower members of the organization to develop and execute strategies that are in line with the vision of the firm (Serfontein, & Hough, 2011).

According to Tanković, (2013), a vision statement answers the question —What do we want to become? Developing a vision statement is often considered the first step in strategic planning, preceding even development of a mission statement. The vision of an organization brings into a common line, the actions of people across the whole organization. A real vision is very active and all the people in the organization understand the vision and live up to it. In other words, the vision points to the strategic direction of an organization. The leadership of an organization should there ensure that the vision addresses a comprehensive spectrum of f issues that may have

an effect on the performance of the organization. It is therefore expected of leadership in the organization to provide certainty together with uncertainty.

A Mission statement of the other hand is a description of an organization's activities to realize the vision (Tanković, 2013). To develop a good mission statement, organizational leadership should identify who their customer are, what the customers need and expects and how the needs and the expectation can be met. Dess, Lumpkin, and Eisner, (2008) emphasize that effective mission statements should incorporate the concept of stakeholder management which implies that the leadership should respond to compound constituencies if they are to be effective in strategy implementation. Mission statements also have the greatest impact when they reflect an organization's enduring overarching strategic priorities and competitive positioning. Mission statement scan also vary in length and specificity. Tanković, (2013), argues that mission statements are —enduring statements of purpose that distinguish one business from other similar firms. A mission statement identifies the scope of a firm's operations in product and market terms. It addresses the basic question that faces all strategists.

### **2.3.2 Strategic Cognition and Strategy Implementation**

According to a study by Hussey (1998) about the evolution of institutional understanding on strategy implementation and cognition, it was determined that effective strategy cognition and implementation leads to institutional growth and sustainability. The study also determined that if processes, systems and interrelationships are not understood and aligned such that there is consistency with the selected strategy, the structure is abandoned in the hands of fate. This however did not show how strategic cognition influences strategy implementation.

Research on strategic cognition many times focuses on conventional strategic issues, such as the definition of industry and competitive profiles (Bundy, Shropshire, & Buchholtz, 2013) or the nature of strategic change (Finkelstein et al., 2009), although some work has also addressed firm stakeholder interactions (Bundy, Shropshire, & Buchholtz, 2013) in the same arguments. However, the question remains: how do organizations cognitively process stakeholder concerns and interests to determine salience and subsequent strategy implementation? To answer this question, it is essential to focus on organizational cognitive structures, which represent the relatively stable characteristics and/or repeated patterns of behavior used to interpret strategic information (Bundy, Shropshire, & Buchholtz, 2013).

Organizations face numerous and diverse stakeholder concerns. For an external issue to receive attention and proper response from the organization, it must be interpreted as relevant to the organization. All cognitive mechanisms capture distinctive aspects of issue interpretation and can act independently to influence the salience of a stakeholder concern.

Iederen, et al. (2011) studied about the impact of strategic cognition on strategy implementation in manufacturing firms. The study found that cognition enable employees define and conceptualize new strategies in the organization and brings about a mutual appreciation of strategy by all, more specifically when there is a big gap between the developers of strategies and the junior employees. This research focuses on effects of strategic cognition in strategy implementation in public universities.

According to a study by Sypher, (2010) about the impact of cognition on development of strategic plans found out that strategic cognition, articulacy and

emotional intelligence are interwoven and a manager cannot effectively communicate about a strategy without considering these aspects. The study did not delve on how the features also contributed to strategy implementation.

Tikkanen et al. (2005) study on managerial cognition and strategic actions found out that the less ambiguous the link between the organization's strategies; the more crystallized the strategic intent. This study did not however show how strategic cognition affects strategy implementation. Keum (2015) in a study on strategy and cognition among firms identified that cognition affects organizational culture and outcomes. The study however did not scrutinize the influence of strategic cognition on strategy implementation.

Accounting for strategic cognition enables organizations to explore the black box of managerial decision-making to understand how organization acts as interpretation systems to receive and process stakeholder concerns and interests (Bundy, Shropshire, & Buchholtz, 2013). Strategic cognition is a function of organizational characteristics such as age, size; or top manager profiles such as functional or educational background; and values (Finkelstein et al., 2009). In this way, and consistent with prior literature in strategic cognition it is imperative to adopt leadership perspective.

### **2.3.3 Strategic Learning and Strategy Implementation**

Bimbaum (2009), did a study on how transfer of information lead to strategy implementation in modern working environments. The study determined that strategic learning allows review of structures, processes and ideas thus ensuring that the all strategies are fully implemented. The study also established that in modern organizations, information flowing in all directions; downwards, upwards and

literally helps top management make adjustments that improve strategy implementation. This study did not focus specifically to a particular industry.

From the study by Enberg (2013), strategic learning in academic institutions has contributed to achievement of goals since good strategic decisions lead to desired results. The study determined that the management of academic institutions often resort to strategic learning to understand the rate at which strategies are adopted. The gaps however did arise whereby the study did not show how strategic learning influence strategy implementation.

#### **2.3.4 Strategic Leadership, Critical Success Factors and Strategy Implementation**

Critical success factors (CSFs) are elements that are essential for a successful strategy implementation and could directly affect organizational performance positively or negatively (Raravi et al., 2013). The concept was introduced by Rockart in the late 1970s who highlighted the importance for organizations to have control over its CSFs in order to successfully implement strategies. According to Cöster, Engdahl, & Svensson, (2014), CSFs are the factors within the organization that helps organizations to be favorable on a competitive market. It should not be confused with competitive advantage, as a few actors on a certain market can only achieve it. However, CSFs can be possessed by all organizations in a given market, and can rather be seen as a must for survival but not all such organization may equally thrive in the market. A common misconception is that the percentage of growth within an organization is the CSF but that is not the case. A CSF is rather the goal behind the growth

Diken (2011) study on effects of strategic leadership on change management among manufacturing companies in Turkey found that critical success factors such as

innovation and sustainable capacity development have a moderating effect between strategic leadership and change management. Strategic leaders are able to effect change by adopting innovation and empowering employees through training and development. This study will investigate the arbitrating effect of critical success factors on the correlation between strategic leadership and strategy implementation.

Pournasir (2013) in a Study on key success factors of strategic management among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Iran established that critical success factors such as financial resources, monitoring and staff motivation and inspiration are key in strategy implementation. The study however never explored the mediating implication of the success factors on the interrelationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation.

In a study by Kaplan & Palmer (2014), critical success factors determine the creation of growth strategies in the business community through adoption of employee performance management practices. Critical success factors enable organizations to generate their next big ideas in business. It however left a gap on the mediating impacts of critical success factors on the relationship between strategic leadership and implementation of strategies adopted.

In another study by Brands (2015) critical factors and procedures ensure the adoption of innovation through separately and distinctly encouraging the overall institutional strategy through innovative approaches. There is a general moment within the history of an organization when it adopts innovative approaches but may also lead to growth in earnings, therefore not a comprehensive factor to adopt.

Mika & Selve (2012) investigated the impact of critical success factors to service delivery in public organizations. They found out that critical success factors

influence the quality of services delivered. This presented an opening whereby the commitments to service delivery do not necessarily mean that strategies are always implemented to the fullest.

#### **2.4 Summary of Research Gaps**

The gaps left out by the empirical literature includes the failure to recognize that strategic direction determines the implementation of strategies, and too much focus on strategy adoption by branches of academic institutions which is inconclusive since strategy implementation is a holistic affair. Gaps were also noted in a study that left out the aspect of how strategic direction affects strategy implementation in academic institutions by focusing on institutional flexibility and strategy implementation.

The summary of literature review and research voids are presented in Table 2.1

**Table 2. 1: Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps**

<b>Author /year</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Research gaps</b>	<b>Focus of the current study</b>
Mwangi (2014)	Factors affecting strategy implementation in public universities in Kenya	Many institutions know their requirements and the efforts needed to succeed	Mwangi failed to recognize that strategic direction affects the implementation of strategies	This study aimed at establishing effect of strategic direction on strategy implementation.
Fourie (2010)	Strategy direction and implementation relationship for branches of higher education institutions	The study established that differences in structure layout between branches and the parent in public institutions affects strategy implementation	Fourie study focused on the branches of academic institutions which often were involved in implementing the strategy but failed to look at strategy implementation in the university as a whole	This study focused on the university as a whole rather than the branches individually.
Lopez, Peon, & Ordas (2014)	Effects of strategic direction on change process.	Lopez, Peon, & Ordas found out that strategic direction has a strong effect on change management.	The study focused on the relationship between strategic direction and change management but left out the aspect of how strategic direction affects strategy implementation	This study concentrated on effects of strategic direction on strategy implementation
Hussey (2003)	Evolution of institutional understanding on strategy implementation and cognition	This study concluded that effective strategic cognition leads to institutional growth and sustainability	Hussey did not investigate the effects cognition has on strategy implementation	This study concentrated on how cognition influences strategy implementation
Iederen et al (2011)	The impact of strategy cognition on strategy implementation in manufacturing firms	Iederen et al., found out that strategic cognition led to a common understanding among all workers and hence effective strategy implantation.	They narrowed to manufacturing firms but did not focus on institutions of higher learning	This study focused on the Kenyan Government owned universities

Sypher, M. (2010)	Impact of cognition on development of strategic plans	Sypher established that strategic cognition, articulacy and emotional intelligence are important aspects in strategic planning	Sypher examined the role of strategic cognition, articulacy and emotional intelligence in strategic planning but did not delve on how these features contributed to strategy implementation	This study concentrated on determining the effect of strategic cognition on strategy implementation
Tikkanen et al. (2005)	Effects of managerial cognition on strategic actions	This study concluded that less ambiguity among organizational strategies lead to more crystallized strategic intent	The study investigated the effect managerial cognition on strategic actions but did not analyze the how cognition affects strategy implementation	This study examined the effects of strategic cognition on strategy implementation in public universities.
Keum (2015)	Relationship between strategic cognition and performance	Keum found out that strategic cognition affects organizational culture and outcomes	Keum looked at the effect of strategic cognition on performance but did not analyze the how cognition affects strategy implementation	This study assessed the effects of strategic cognition on strategy implementation
Bimbaum (2009)	How strategic learning affect strategy implementation in modern working environments	Strategic learning allows review of structures, processes and ideas thus ensuring that the all strategies are fully implemented	The study focused on general working environment	This study focused on government owned
Enberg (2013)	How strategic learning affects performance in academic institutions	The study established that strategic learning led to desired results in academic institutions	Enberg did not establish the effects of strategic learning on strategy implementation	This study evaluated the correlation between strategic learning and strategy implementation in public universities
Diken (2011)	Effects of strategic leadership on strategic change management	Diken found out that critical success factors have a mediatory influence on the relationship between strategic leadership and change management	The study however did not examine the moderating effect of critical success factors on strategy implementation.	This study explored the moderating effect of critical success factors on strategy implementation
Pournasir (2013)	Critical success factors and strategy implementation	Pournasir established a positive relationship between critical success factors and strategy implementation	Pournasir however did not investigate the arbitrating influence of critical success factors on strategy implementation	This study examined the arbitrating impacts of critical success factors on the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic implementation

Kaplan & Palmer (2014)	The relationship between critical success factors and growth strategies	Critical success factors determine the creation of growth strategies in businesses	Gap on how critical success factors arbitrate the relationship between strategy leadership and implementation of strategies adopted	This study analyzed whether critical success factors have a mediating influence on the relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation
Brands (2015)	Relationship between critical success factors and adoption of innovation	Critical factors and procedures ensure the successful adoption of new innovation	Brands did not investigate the moderating influence on critical success factors on the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic implementation	This study analyzed the arbitrating influence of critical success factors on the correlation between strategic leadership and strategy implementation
Mika & Selve (2012)	Investigated the impact critical success factors on service delivery in public institutions	There is a strong correlation between critical success factors and quality of services delivered.	Mika & Selve did not assess the arbitrating effects of critical success factors on the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic implementation	The study concentrates on the moderating effects of critical success factors on strategy implementation

Source; Researcher (2021)

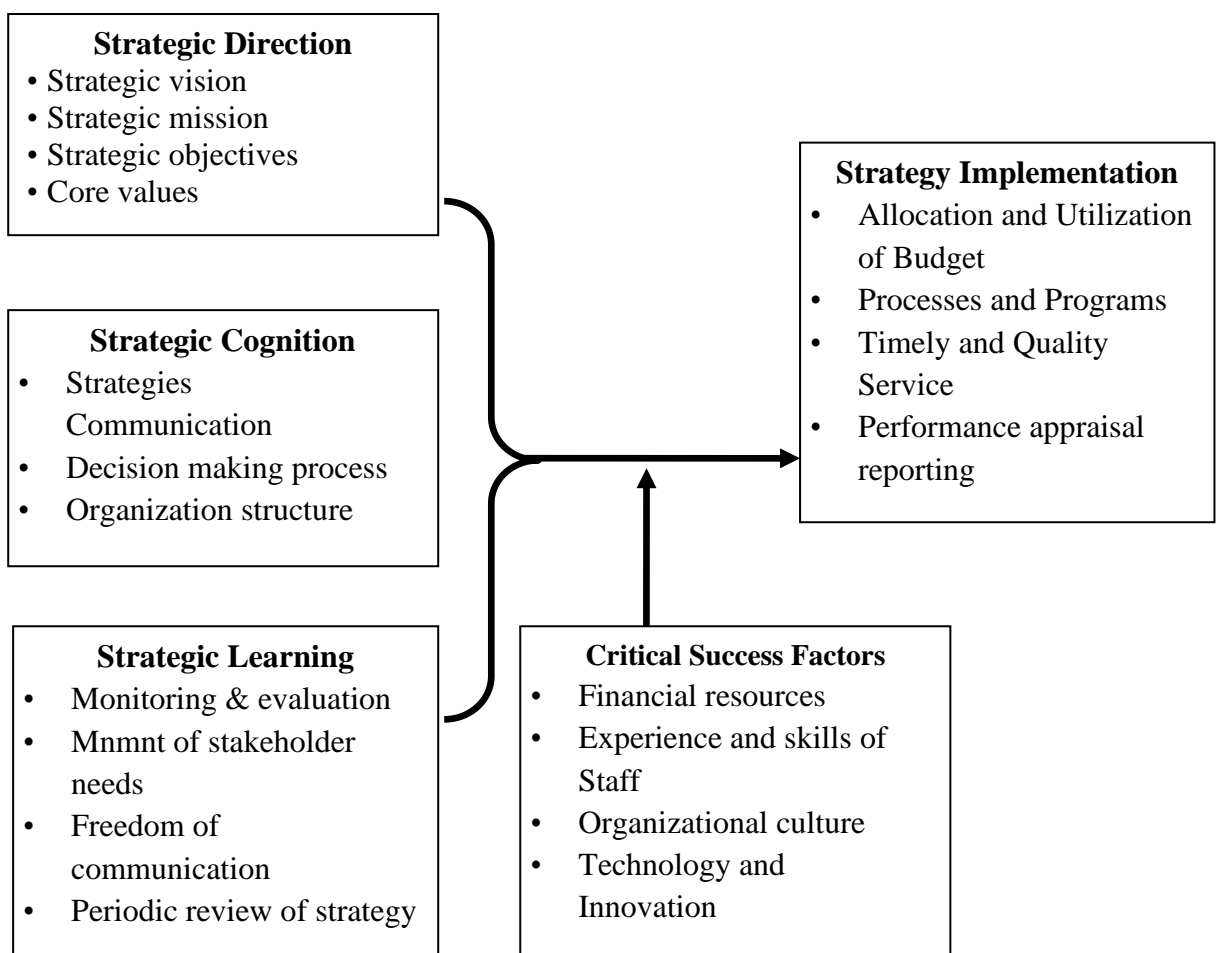
## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework profiles the relationship between dependent, independent and moderating variables as reviewed in the literature above. The relationship between the variables of this study is indicated in Figure 2.1 which indicates that independent variables are; strategic direction, cognition and strategic learning. The moderating variable is the critical success factors while the dependent variable is strategy implementation.

### Independent Variables

### Moderating Variable    Dependent

### Variable



**Figure 2 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source (Researcher, 2021)

Figure 2.1 above summarizes a hypothetical relationship between strategy implementation and strategic direction, strategic cognition and strategic learning under the moderating function of critical success factor (Ul Musawir et al., 2017). Realization of the objectives of an organization's strategy requires the execution of specific actions otherwise referred to as "strategic direction". It therefore follows that strategy implementation is a function of strategic directions, without which implementation remains a statement in a strategic plan. It is nevertheless essential to appreciate that the actions to be executed and the actual execution goes through a decision making process. Decision making process itself should be understood within the scope of strategic cognition. Bundy et al., (2013) considers strategic cognition as the "study of organizational cognitive structures and decision processes" and hold that strategic cognition culture contributes significantly to how strategies are formulated and implemented in an organization. Any good strategic direction and strategic cognition requires proper development of strategic orientation which on the other hand can only be successful with proper knowledge of stakeholders of an organization with regards to the organization's downstream goals, the strategies and the mechanism of how they can be achieved (Thomas et al., 2001). This therefore explains why strategic direction, strategic cognition and strategic learning all hypothetically affect whether or not an organization's strategies are properly implemented or not.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the research methods that were used to conduct this study. It therefore covers the design of the research, research instruments, data sources, data collection, presentation techniques and analytical techniques.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive research design. Nassaji (2015), indicates that descriptive research is used to determine or examine who, what, where and how of a phenomenon in its natural occurrence. Descriptive research design help with describing and is documenting facets of a situation as it is without interfering with the conditions (Kothari, 2004).

A descriptive design was preferred for the research because it describes a phenomenon without attempting to change the behavior or conditions. The approach was adopted for this study by seeking to get information that describes exciting phenomena from respondents about the strategic direction and implementation of strategies.

The adoption of descriptive study model was founded on the recognition that the interest of the study is clear hence data was collected from interviewees about their sentiments and feelings concerning strategic direction and strategy implementation in government owned universities in Kenya. Descriptive design helped to explain the situation of the subjects as they are perceived which further expounded on the fact finding as well as giving an experience of what happens in the field. Additional, cross-sectional study model was partially used in this study to supplement descriptive

approach. Cross-sectional research model attempts to investigate common characteristics among categories of respondents in a study (Erickson, 2008).

### 3.3 Target Population of the study

The target population for the research mainly comprised of the directors, registrars, dean of students, and departmental heads in the Kenyatta University Campuses. These strata of the target population were part of the management of the university and are regularly involved in policy formulation and implementation. The target population is illustrated in Table 3.1

**Table 3. 1: Target Population**

<b>Cadre of Management</b>	<b>Target population</b>
Dean of Students	1
Dean of Schools	15
Registrars	5
Heads of Institutes and Directorates	38
Heads of Department	73
Campus Directors	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>

**Source:** <http://www.ku.ac.ke/index.php/about-ku/ku-management> (2021)

### 3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study used stratified sampling where the population was divided into subgroups categorized into the management, teaching and non-teaching staff. Simple random sampling was then performed on each strata to ensure that the relevance of bias can be minimized. This was to reduce the sampling error and also ensure that there was a greater level of representation of the population.

40% of the target population was sampled from each stratum in proportion that each strata has of the total population. According to Gay (1976) a sample size of 40% is

suitable for representation for descriptive research. The sample size is illustrated in Table 3.2

**Table 3. 2: Sample Size**

<b>Cadre of management</b>	<b>Target population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Dean of Students	1	1
Dean of Schools	15	6
Registrars	5	3
Heads of Institutes and Directorates	38	15
Heads of Department	73	30
Campus Directors	8	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>59</b>

Source: Researcher (2021)

### **3.5 Data Sources and Collection Instruments**

Primary data was collected from the deans of student, deans of school, registrars, heads of institutes and directorates, heads of department and campus directors of Kenyatta University who are involved in strategy implementation or understand about the various strategies being adopted by the institution. The data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires which had both closed and open-ended questions. Structured questionnaires are appropriate for this study because they are inexpensive and give interviewees sufficient time to understand the questions. They are also free from researcher's biases therefore ensuring objectivity (Orodho, 2002). Structured questions are easily analyzed because they are presented in ready to use form (Kombo, 2003). The part one of the questionnaires sought for demographic data of the interviewees while the other sections were developed based on the research objectives. The question items were determined using the five-point Likert Scale to ensure consistency and easy analysis of data collected (Dillman, 2000).

### **3.6 Pilot study**

A pilot study was done at Kenyatta University the study area where 10 questionnaires were randomly distributed, then later collected and analyzed. Pilot study is essential in answering the question of whether the research design and instruments are reliable with regards to the research objectives. It is thus an indicator of whether the study design and the corresponding research instruments would enable the realization of the objectives of the study or not (Thabane et al., 2010). The experimentation study is therefore done either to establish the dependability of the study model or the data collection tools. This study's piloting was done to validate the research instrument. Data collection tool was piloted and deviations corrected before finalizing the questionnaire.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments**

#### **3.7.1 Validity**

Validity is the extent to which test measures the parameter it is intended to measure. It is the degree to which outcomes gotten really correspond to the phenomenon being investigated (Sila & Gichinga, 2016). Burns and Grove (1999) describe validity as the degree to which the findings can be put into broad view beyond the sample used in the study.

Content validity was attained by developing the questionnaire based on the research objectives. To achieve this, *Content-Scaling-Structure* (CSS) procedure was followed. CSS approach is suitable and recommended for assessing and enhancing the content validity of a questionnaire or measurement (Koller et al., 2017). According to Koller et al., (2017) the method is seemly for sundry research hypothesis in the domain of content validity, for instance, construction of a-priori hypotheses for item analysis based on theory, the enhancement of the meaning of a

target hypothesis, including likely separation into sub-dimensions, the assessment of representativeness of elements for the target hypothesis, or the examination of the effect of associated hypothesis on the elements of a scale. Validity of the instrument was attained by seeking expert opinion from the research supervisor who has extensive experience in research. The research tools were improved based on the advice given by the supervisor. Construct validity was realized through ensuring that the operational variables reflect the theoretical constructs from reviewed literature. The study as well depended on data collection tools developed in previous related studies to ensure construct validity.

### **3.7.2 Reliability**

Reliability is the level to which a research instruments produce the same results upon repeated measurements (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Where reliability is attained, it means that the same results would be yielded if the study were to be repeated by other researchers using the same procedure.

To achieve reliability the study used the Cronbach Alpha test. The Cronbach Alpha tests internal uniformity of a scale of test elements of research (Cronbach, 1951). It indicates the accuracy of the multiple Likert scale in measuring the variable of interest. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients obtained were 0.821 on strategic direction, 0.792, on strategic cognition, 0.802 on strategic learning and 0.830 on strategy implementation against a threshold of 0.70. According to Cronbach (1951), alpha value of 0.7 and above indicates reliability of the questionnaire.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedures**

Prior to administering the questionnaires, the researcher requested for authorization to conduct the study in the university. A written introductory letter was used in order

to allow for voluntary participation of respondents. Necessary prior appointments with the respondents were also made to adequately prepare the interviewees respondents to take part in the study in the research. The questionnaires were administered through ‘drop and pick method’.

### **3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Collected data was cleaned for consistency, accuracy and completeness. Preceding analysis cleaning of data was done to purge incongruities and thereafter, categorized according to similarity and then tabulated. Qualitative data was analyzed using content descriptive method. This involved objective analysis of similar features, categories or classes in qualitative data.

Descriptive statistics in the form of mean, standard deviation and percentages were used study to the data. Inferential statistics included correlation coefficient and ANOVA (analysis of variance). The following regression model determined implication of the independent variable on the dependent variable;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots$$

Where:

Y = Strategy implementation (which is the dependent variable)

X<sub>1</sub> = Strategic Direction

X<sub>2</sub> = Strategic Cognition

X<sub>3</sub> = Strategic Learning

β<sub>0</sub> = Constant;

β<sub>1</sub> – β<sub>3</sub> = Coefficients of independent variables and

ε = Error term

Structural Equation Model of estimating the moderating variable;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 MO + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots (3.2) \text{ (Hayes, 2017)}$$

Where;

Y = Strategy implementation

X = Strategic direction (independent variable)

MO = Moderating variable.

Regression model estimated the trend and influence of the moderating variable on the independent measure and the sum effect on the dependent variable;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 MO + \beta_3 X^* MO + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots (3.3)$$

Where;

X\*MO = Strategic leadership\*Critical success factors

### 3.9.1 Diagnostic Tests

The supposition of the study is that the respondents from which data was collected is normally distributed therefore before analysis is done diagnostic tests will be carried out. Normality is the postulation that the error is evenly dispersed with a mean of zero and a uniform variance (Wahy, 2011). Data is considered normally spread when the Skewness and Kurtosis Z-values are within  $\pm 1.96$ . Alternatively, data is considered normally or approximately normally distributed if the p-values (Sig.) from Shapiro Wilk tests are above 0.05 (Razali, & Wah, 2011). Normality was tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test which identifies deviation of data from normality due to skewness or kurtosis. A limit of p-value of 0.05 was used to measure normality of the data. P-values above 0.05 were indicative of approximately normally distributed data.

Multicollinearity Test was done using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test to examine the linear relationship between the study variables. The test identifies the

direction of the relationship between more than two variables and how strong the relationship is. When there is a seamless linear relationship between the predictors, the guesstimates for a regression model cannot be inimitably worked out. The terminology collinearity means that two parameters are almost faultless and directly proportional to each another. The same is called multicollinearity when more than two variables are involved, though the two terminologies are frequently used interchangeably. The main fear is that when the level of multicollinearity rises, the regression model measurements of the coefficients tend to be unpredictable and the standard errors for the coefficients can be outrageously exaggerated. The "tolerance" is a measurement of the percentage of divergence in the predictor that cannot be explained through other predictors, thus inconsequential values shows that a variable is surplus, and values that are below 0.1 implies that multicollinearity among the predictors is not a problem (Raykov, & Marcoulides, 2012). The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), is  $(1 / \text{tolerance})$  and as conventionally accepted, a variable whose VIF value is above 10 may point need for additional analysis. A positive value shows directly relationship of the variables while a negative value points that the parameters measured are inversely related (Dancey, 2004).

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

To adhere to ethical standards voluntary participation of respondents in this study was clearly communicated during data collection and that they had the rights to withdraw from the study if they wished to do so. They took part in the study because they consented to the prior information and assurances about taking part in the research and that all the information was to be held with greatest privacy. Names of respondents were not required to ensure anonymity of the individuals responding to the study.

In order to uphold integrity, the researcher used gender sensitive and acceptable language in the formulation of questionnaires and data presentation. The highest level of objectivity in discussions and analysis was maintained throughout the study as well as maintaining all the ethical requirements of Kenyatta University.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This section presents outcomes of the study, interpretation and discussion of the analysis results. Consequently, this section covers the data, data analysis, the corresponding explanation and discussion on demographic information, response rate, reliability test, descriptive statistics for the study variables, inferential statistics, and hypothesis testing.

### **4.2 Response Rate**

The research administered a total of 59 questionnaires for data collection. Nevertheless, only 54 questionnaires were duly responded to and returned. This translated to 92% response rate. Babbie (1990) recommends that a response rate of 54% is satisfactory, 60% is good and 70% and above is remarkable for analysis. It therefore means that the 92 % response rate was exceptionally good for analysis.

### **4.3 Reliability Tests**

The reliability of the data collection tools was analyzed through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The study constructs which returned alpha coefficients  $\geq 0.7$  were considered to be reliable. The results of the test are shown in Table. 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Results of Reliability Testing**

<b>Study Variable</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient</b>
Strategic direction	5	0.821
Strategic cognition	5	0.792
Strategic learning	5	0.802
strategy implementation	5	0.830

**Source: Research data (2019)**

As shown in Table 4.1, all the five study variables returned Cronbach's alpha coefficients greater than 0.7. According to Cronbach (1951), Cronbach's alpha Coefficient of 0.7 and above is satisfactory for testing reliability of research questionnaire. Therefore, the research questionnaire was deemed reliable.

#### 4.4 Respondents Demographic Information

This section presents background data of the interviewed people. It covers data on gender, age, level of education and length of work experience .

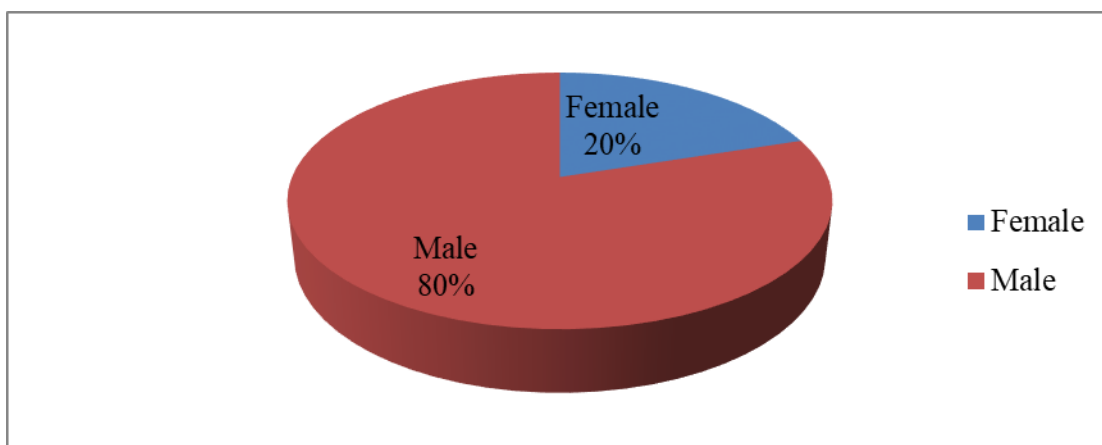
##### 4.4.1 Gender Composition

The researcher requested information on the gender of the respondents. The results are as indicated in Figure 4.2 The gender ratio per positions sampled is as presented in Table 4.2

**Table 4.2; Gender Composition**

Cadre of Management	Sample size	Gender Distribution			
		Males		Females	
		No.	%	No.	%
Dean of Students	1	1	100	0	0
Dean of Schools	6	5	83	1	17
Registrars	3	1	33	2	67
Heads of Institutes and Directorates	15	12	80	3	20
Heads of Department	30	25	83	5	17
Campus Directors	4	3	75	1	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>

**Source: Survey Data (2019)**



**Figure 4. 1: Gender Composition**

**Source: Research data (2019)**

The gender distribution of the participants in the study showed that 80% were males while 20% were females. A cross checks of the distribution of gender per position revealed that very few positions are occupied by females. The data testifies that women are underrepresented in management and leadership of Kenyatta University. It thus shows that the university is likely to experience limited or slow organizational performance, innovation, corporate governance, and occupational wellbeing. According to Born et al, (2018), workplace gender diversity has potential benefits and is critically essential for comprehensive, quicker and well-balanced policy making. Comprehensive, quicker and well balanced policy making are all essential for strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and thus for strategy implementation. As a matter of fact, workplace gender balancing is in itself a critical success factor. Fine *et al.*, (2020) emphasizes that compromised workplace gender diversity significantly compromises organizational productivity and growth, lowers organizational performance, minimizes potential of the organization to appeal to talent and keep employees and lowers organizational reputation. All these combined could significantly impact on strategy implementation. This implies that higher percentage of the management team are males and therefore necessitates the need to employ more females to increase the gender parity as required by employments laws.

#### **4.4.2 Age**

The respondents were requested to indicate their ages and the about which they responded as shown in Table 4.3

**Table 4. 3: Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
18-30 years	0	0
31-40	10	19
41-50	32	59
51-60	12	22
Over 61 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Survey (2018)**

From the results, none of the interviewed personnel stated that they were aged 18-30 years, 19% of them were in the age of 31-40 years, 59% were between 41 and 50 years old, 22% were in the age of 51-60 years while none of the interviewees were over 61 years. This implies that most of the interviewed managers were aged between 31 and 40 years. The implication of the dominant age bracket is that the Human resource management is keen on people presumed to have earned a lot of experience through age. Only people with long years of experience have the highest chances of occupying the position. Longer years of experience on the other hand imply better skills, abilities and knowledge which translate to efficiency and effectiveness in strategic planning and strategy implementation. The University thus focuses on acquiring management employees who are at the top of their productivity age wise and have had relatively longer work experience. According to Kotur, & Anbazhagan, (2014), the older one is, the most likely that he /she has had longer work experience which enables managers to acquire more intellectual capital which is a critical force needed to effectively and efficiently drive growth in an organization.

#### 4.4.3 Respondents' Highest Level of Education

The respondents were requested to specify their highest education attainment. The results were as shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Respondents' Highest Level of Education**

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Diploma	0	0
Bachelors' degree	0	0
Master degree	6	11
PhD	48	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Survy data (2019)**

From the findings on education attainment of the respondents, all of them are holders of either masters degree or PhD. AS a matter of fact, 11% indicated hold masters degree while the rest (89%) were PhD holders. This shows that the university is especially interested in PhD holders for management positions. Higher level of education among managers is a sign of endeavours to create a quality workforce which can reduce staff turnover and improve job satisfaction leading to higher moral at the workplace. Additionally, the educational structure of the workforce demonstrate that the university is particularly focused on driving innovation towards better strategic leadership, planning and strategy implementation. According to Ng & Feldman, (2009). masters and PhD levels of education put the holders at the top of existing knowledge and skills and thus positive impact of more efficient productivity, output and staff morale. Experience, knowledge and skills-based leadership and management requires highly skilled, well-educated and technically minded workforce (Kotur, & Anbazhagan, 2014).

#### 4.4.4 Work Experience

The results shown in Table 4.5, indicates the work experience of the managers interviewed

**Table 4. 5: Work Experience**

<b>Years of Work</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Less than 1 Years	0	0
1-5 Years	5	9
6-10Years	19	35
11-15 years	20	37
Over 16 years and above	10	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Survey Data (2019)**

According to the data, none of the managers had been employed in the institution for less than 1 year, 9% of them stated that they had worked in the institution for between 1 and 5 years, 35% had served in the institution for a duration of 6-10 years, 37% had served the institution for 11-15 years, while 18% of the respondents had rendered their services for more than 16 years in the university. This implies the employees are satisfied and pleased at their job while the university is satisfied by their service delivery. A lower staff turnover is an indicator that the university has created environment which enable work-force stability. In other words, the university is keen on the welfare of its employees at management position (Self, & Dewald, 2011). Additionally, Sengupta, & Dev (2013), postulate that employee inertia is strengthened if the degree of harmony is high between the employees' work etiquette and the core values established by the employer. The employee retention witnessed thus testifies that the employees meet the expectation of the university based on its values as derived from societal norms, procedures and dogmas of the management and the prescribed decisions by the board of directors.

## 4.5 Descriptive Statistics for the Research Variables

This section highlights on the results as guided by the study objectives. The research used descriptive and inferential statistics in the analysis of the data and corresponding discussion.

### 4.5.1 Strategic Direction

The study worked towards evaluating the level of agreement that the respondents had on strategic direction of Kenyatta University. The results area evidenced in Table 4.6

**Table 4. 6: Strategic Direction**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
University leadership is effective in developing strategic vision give the institution a sense of direction.	54	4.158	.886
Objectives have been well elaborated by university management.	54	3.632	.942
The university's mission is aligned to the vision of the university.	54	3.790	.935
The university's core values are consistent with the mission	54	3.790	.935
Strategies chosen match the university objectives	54	3.974	.915
<b>Overall Aggregate Mean and Std Dev</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.905</b>	<b>.923</b>

**Source: Survey (2019)**

From the findings, it is clear that university strategic direction is effective in enhancing strategy implementation strategic vision. All the aggregate means fall between 3.5 and 4.5 which translate to 'Agree' in the Lickert scale ( $4.5 > AM \geq 3.5$  is "Agree" (AM=Aggregate Average) with an average standard deviation of 0.923. The aggregate means indicate that the respondents in overall scale agreed that strategic direction can influence strategy implementation. The standard deviation is very small which means that the data sets are very close to the mean which emphasizes normal

distribution of the data. In an overall sense, the university's focus on strategic direction translates to focus on strategy implementation and thus strategic direction can influence strategy implementation. According to Fourie (2010) and Lopez et al. (2014), successful organizational strategy implementation requires critical focus on strategic direction. Through well-spelt strategic direction, shareholders, and private investors are attracted and thus an organization is better placed to secure capitals for its development and growth purposes. Additionally, strategic direction allows an organization to focus the employees to specific goals and thus they are more able to work with better efficiencies. Moreover, through strategic directly, an organization is able to assess its strengths and weaknesses in time and readjust plans which best suits the outcomes of the assessment. Lastly, Lopez et al. (2014), adds that solutions to operations problem is a function of strategic directions.

#### **4.5.2 Strategic Cognition**

Objective two of the research was to find out how strategic cognition affect strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. The researcher was interested in knowing whether strategic cognition affects strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. The outcomes are as shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4. 7: Strategic Cognition**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
Kenyatta University's strategic leaders have a good understanding of strategies selected	54	3.8947	.95265
Strategies are well communicated to all the employees	54	4.1579	.88612
Decision making process on strategy implementation is well outlined	54	3.8947	.86335
The university leadership is able to effectively respond to challenges during strategy implementation	54	4.2105	.90518
The organization structure has been aligned with the selected strategies	54	3.6579	.90871
<b>Aggregate Mean and Std Dev</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.9631</b>	<b>.90320</b>

**Source: Survey (2021)**

From the weighted means results, it is evident that strategic cognition significantly explains and predicts strategy implementation. All the questions generated responses whose aggregate means fall between 3.5 and 4.5 ( $4.5 > WA \geq 3.5$  is “Agree”). In other words, the respondents agreed that strategic cognition helps in aligning the strategic activities of the university to strategy implementation. Notably, the standard deviation is very small which implies that the data sets are very close to the mean which underscore the fact that the data was normally distributed. The study agrees with Iederen, *et al* (2011) findings which indicated that cognition enable employees define and conceptualize new strategies in the organization and brings about a mutual perception of strategy by all, most specifically when there is discordance between the strategy formulation team and other members of staff. These establishments are also in line with those of Sypher, (2010), Tikkanen et al. (2005) and Keum (2015). They respectively studied the relationship between strategic cognition on development of strategic plans, managerial cognition and strategic actions, and strategy and cognition.

They all found a significant relationship between cognition and some elements of strategy implementation. In short, the cognitive structures and decision making process of strategic management are significantly adhered to in strategy formulation and implementation at the university.

#### 4.5.3 Strategic Learning

Objective three of the study concentrated on establishing the effect of strategic learning on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. The researcher wanted to conclude effect of strategic learning on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. The results were as shown in Table 4.8

**Table 4. 8: Strategic Learning**

	N	Weighted Mean	Std
The university strategic leaders monitor and continuously align processes with strategies chosen	54	3.8947	1.00779
The university strategic leadership is able to convert stakeholders' needs to meaningful strategies	54	3.8947	1.03426
The strategic leaders in the university allows open communication of ideas, facts, opinions and emotions about strategy implementation from lower level employees	54	4.0000	.95860
There is periodic review of strategic plans to make adjustments	54	4.4474	.68566
There is flexibility in strategy implementation to allow adoption of emergent strategies	54	4.3947	.67941
<b>Aggregate Mean and Std Dev</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>4.1263</b>	<b>.87314</b>

**Source: Survey (2021)**

From the findings, it is clear that strategic learning within the University's management is oriented so that development of strategic orientation of the organization meets the organizational strategic goals and objectives. The aggregate means are all within the "agree" score on the Likert scale. In other words, all the respondents agreed that influence of strategic learning on strategy implementation is

statistically significant ( $4.5 > AM \geq 3.5$  is “Agree”) with an average Standard deviation of 0.8731. In other words, a change in strategic learning would moderately but significantly contribute to a change in strategy implementation. The standard deviation is very small which implies that the data are very close to the mean which emphasizes normal distribution of the data. These findings agree with Bimbaum (2009) findings which indicated that strategic learning allows review of structures, processes and ideas thus ensuring that all strategies are implemented accordingly. Enberg (2013), further emphasized that achievement of organizational goals is a function of strategic learning and therefore a pointer to strategy implementation.

#### 4.5.4 Critical Success Factors

The respondents were asked about the moderating effect of critical success factors on the association connecting strategic leadership and strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. The findings were as indicated in Table 4.9

**Table 4.9: Critical Success Factors**

	N	Weighted Mean	Std
The university allocates adequate financial resources for strategy implementation	54	3.855	1.185
The university employees are well equipped with skills required for strategy implementation	54	4.403	0.778
There is a culture of adopting change among the university staff	54	4.307	0.738
The university organizational structure facilitate efficient strategy implementation	54	4.145	0.807
There is adoption of technology and innovation to improve processes of strategy implementation	54	4.387	0.869
<b>Overall Aggregate Mean and Std Dev</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>4.2194</b>	<b>.8754</b>

Source: Survey Data (2021)

From the research findings, there is significant association between critical success factors and strategy implementation. The average of the aggregate means is 4.2194 which fall at the “agree” score of the Likert scale. ( $4.5 > AM \geq 3.5$  is “Agree”) with an average standard deviation of 0.8754. The respondents therefore agreed that critical success factors explain strategy implementation. Notably, the standard deviation is very small which means that the data sets are very close to the mean which emphasizes normal distribution of the data. The findings align with those of Pournasir (2013), Kaplan & Palmer (2014), Brands (2015) regarding implication of critical success factors on strategy implementation. In their researches, critical success factors such as innovation, sustainable capacity development, monitoring and evaluation and staff motivation ad inspiration. Through these factors, an organization is able to impact positively on quality service delivery. The university is therefore on the trajectory with efforts to optimize strategy implementation through harnessing its critical success factors.

#### **4.5.5 Strategy Implementation**

The managers interviewed were asked to point out their degree of agreement on strategy implementation in Kenyatta University. The findings were as indicated in Table 4.10.

**Table 4. 10: Strategy Implementation**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
There is efficient allocation and utilization of budgeted resources	54	4.419	0.667
There are processes and programs that translate strategies into actions	54	3.887	1.073
The university ensures timely delivery of quality services to customers	54	4.177	0.932
There is periodic reporting of strategy implementation progress	54	3.984	1.032
The university performance targets are measured after each action step	54	4.145	0.921
<b>Overall Aggregate Mean &amp; Std Dev</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>4.122</b>	<b>.739</b>

**Source: Survey Data (2021)**

According to the results, the respondents approved that there is efficient allocation and utilization of budgeted resources at an average of 4.419. The average of the aggregate means is 4.122 which fall at the “agree” score of the Likert scale. ( $4.5 > AM \geq 3.5$  is “Agree”) with an average standard deviation of 0.739. The outcomes additionally designated that there are processes and programs that translate strategies into actions (mean of 3.887). Moreover, the findings showed that the respondents reach agreement that the university ensures timely delivery of quality services to customers with a mean of 4.177. The respondents also approved that there is periodic reporting on strategy implementation progress with a mean of 3.984. The study results also show that the university performance targets are measured after each action step with (mean, 4.145).

#### **4.6 Inferential Statistics**

The study used a regression model to find out the association between strategic

direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and critical success factors in strategy implementation in Kenyatta University based on the *p*-values, tolerance, variance inflation factors (VIF) and Pearson’s correlations coefficients of study variables. The regression model supposed the following equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon.....$$

Where:

Y = Strategy implementation (dependent variable)

X<sub>1</sub> = Strategic Direction

X<sub>2</sub> = Strategic Cognition

X<sub>3</sub> = Strategic Learning

β<sub>0</sub> = Constant;

β<sub>1</sub> – β<sub>3</sub> = Coefficients of independent variables and

ε = Error term

However, before proceeding with regression analysis, tests for regression assumptions were carried out. The findings are presented in the sections that follow.

#### 4.6.1 Test for Normality

In this study normal spread of data was tested through Shapiro Wilk Test as captured in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Shapiro Wilk Test**

	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Strategic direction	.921	.228
Strategic cognition	.946	.234
Strategic learning	.928	.432

**Source: (Survey Data, 2021)**

As shown in in the findings captured in Table 4.11, the data for the four variables were normally distributed. Data is considered normally spread out if the Skewness

and Kurtosis Z-values are within  $\pm 1.96$ . Alternatively, data is considered normally or approximately normally distributed if the p-values (Sig.) from Shapiro Wilk tests are above 0.05. This study relied on the Sig. values. The findings show that the responses on strategic direction (Shapiro Wilk test = 0.921,  $p$ -value=0.228), strategic cognition (Shapiro Wilk test = 0.921,  $p$ -value =0.234), strategic learning (Shapiro Wilk test = 0.921,  $p$ -value=0.432), and critical success factors (Shapiro Wilk test = 0.921,  $p$ -value=0.523) were normally distributed. In other words, the scores on all the four independent variables were normally distributed. It therefore eliminates possibilities of biasness of the responses and thus creating more credibility.

#### 4.6.2 Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity tested using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the results were as captured in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Collinearity Statistics**

	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
Strategic direction	.552	1.813
Strategic cognition	.439	2.277
Strategic learning	.537	1.863

**Source: Researcher, (2021)**

From the collinearity analysis results, Strategic direction array had a tolerance of 0.552 and a VIF of 1.813, Strategic cognition had a tolerance of 0.439 and a VIF of 2.277 and Strategic learning had a tolerance of 0.537 and a VIF of 1.863. Because the tolerances for all the variables were greater than 0.1 and the VIFs were far less than 10, none of them was linearly correlated with each other. The findings implied that all the independent variables have varied prediction and explanation on strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. There was therefore no need of further investigations

### 4.6.3 Test of Linearity

Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis was done to establish the strength of the association linking independent variables and strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. Pearson's correlations were chosen because the independent and dependent variables are in ratio scale.

From the correlation output in Table 4.13, it is notable that all the variables are almost moderately positively correlated with each other. The Pearson correlation values are all about 40% (all are between 0.365 and 0.467 and thus an indicator of moderate correlations. Considering the Sig. values, it is evident that the correlations are statistically significant. Wong and Hiew (2005) affirmed that desirable correlation coefficient value ( $r$ ) should be in the range of 0.5-0.8 because that is where most significant values are pointed out. Any value  $<0.5$  is either moderate or feeble. Field (2005) additionally contended the coefficient score should not be  $\geq 0.8$  that to avoid multicollinearity. Since all the  $p$  values are  $\leq 0.05$ , there is enough proof that a significant positive correlation exists between the variables.

**Table 4.13 Correlations**

		Strategy Implementation	Strategic direction	Strategic Cognition	Strategic Learning
Strategy Implementation	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2- tailed)				
Strategic Direction	Pearson Correlation	.535**	1		
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.003			
Strategic Cognition	Pearson Correlation	.625**	.573**	1	
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.001	.003		
Strategic Learning	Pearson Correlation	.708**	.530**	.637**	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.002	
Critical Success Factors	Pearson Correlation	.510**	.615**	.585	.667**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.004	.000	.001

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

Source: Survey Data (2019)

#### 4.7 Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses of the study were tested using regression analysis to test for the following hypotheses:

H<sub>01</sub> Strategic direction has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya

H<sub>02</sub> Strategic cognition has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya

H<sub>03</sub> Strategic learning has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya

H<sub>o4</sub> Critical success factors have no moderating effect on the relationship between strategic direction and strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya

To test out for the variables extrapolative power, regression was computed and the outcomes are as captured on Table 4.13, 4.14, 4.15.

#### 4.7.1 Model Summary

The study evaluated effect of (strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and strategic leadership on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. Through multiple regression analysis and ANOVA, the integrated effect of strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and strategic leadership was established.

#### *Regression 1*

**Table 4.14 Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.782 <sup>a</sup>	.868	.793	.186	2.362

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Direction, ,Strategic Cognition and Strategic Learning

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

#### **Source: Survey (2019)**

From the summary in Table 4.15, above, there is a positive directional correlation relationship between the predicted values indicated by the dependent variable and the observed principles. The coefficient of determination  $R^2$  of 0.868 indicates that 86.8% of the variance in strategy implementation is explained and predicted by strategic direction, strategic learning, and strategic cognition.

**Table 4.15 ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.7930	2	11.8965	42.301	.001*
	Residual	14.4290	51	.2829		
	Total	38.2220	53			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic direction, Strategic Cognition, and Strategic Learning

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

**Source: Survey (2019)**

ANOVA results in Table 4.16, was used to test if the model is a suitable fit for the data. From the analysis, the *p*-value was 0.001 which is below 0.05 and thus the model was reliable in predicting how strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and strategic leadership explain and predict strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. Moreover, the *F*-calculated (42.0520) was greater than the *F*-critical and hence indicating that the model was suitable in predicting the effect of strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and strategic leadership the independent variables on strategy implementation.

<b>Table 4.16 Regression Coefficients</b>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	6.797	2.024		3.358	0.000
	Strategic Direction	0.213	0.085	0.198	2.546	0.021
	Strategic Cognition	0.454	0.091	0.345	4.989	0.001
	Strategic Learning	0.235	0.093	0.212	2.527	0.019
	Critical Success Factor	0.245	0.089	0.233		0.002

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation

**Source: Survey (2019)**

The results in Table 4.16 above, the generated t-value ( $t=3.358$ ) indicates significance at 0.001 per cent level ( $F<0.05$ ), and hence making the aptness conformation affirmative. Consequently, based on the  $p$  values all of which were  $\leq 0.5$ , there is a statistically significant relationship linking strategic direction, strategic cognition, and strategic learning and to strategy implementation at Kenyatta University. Furthermore, the beta results ( $\beta$  from Table 4.16 above), the study interprets the model as:

$$Y_0 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Therefore,

$$Y = 6.767 + 0.213X_1 + 0.454X_2 + 0.235X_3 + e$$

Where:

$Y$  = Strategy implementation (which is the dependent variable)

$X_1$  = Strategic Direction

$X_2$  = Strategic Cognition

$X_3$  = Strategic Learning

### **Influence of Strategic Direction on Strategy Implementation of Kenyatta University**

Going by the intercept ( $\beta_0$ ), when all the independent are assumed constant, the value of strategy implementation of Kenyatta University will be 6.797. On the other hand, if all the other independent variables are assumed to be insignificant, a unit change in strategic direction would lead to 0.213 (21.3%) change in strategy implementation of Kenyatta University. The effect is significant ( $p$ -value of 0.021). It therefore means that in order to effect a change on strategy implementation, the university should consider a 21.3% of equivalence of investment efforts on strategic direction. The

hypotheses  $H_{01}$  Strategic direction has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya is thus rejected. The results of regression analysis results coincide with the findings of Fourie (2010) and Lopez (2014) as far as influence of strategic direction on strategy implementation in concern. Fourie (2010), established that strategic direction in higher educational institutions impacted on strategy implementation because strategic direction defined organizational structure. She noted that organizational structure under the umbrella of strategic direction increased guarantee of achieving the strategic goals and objectives of higher educational organization like universities. Lopez (2014) on the other hand considered how strategic direction influences organizational change process and established that strategic direction strongly contributes to success change in organization.

### **Influence of Strategic Cognition on Strategy Implementation of Kenyatta University,**

Further, if strategic direction and strategic learning are assumed insignificant, a unit change in strategic cognition would steer a 0.454 possibility of improvement in strategy implementation in Kenyatta University. A 45.4% of successful strategy implementation would require a unit change on strategic cognition in Kenyatta University. It implies that to enhance strategy implementation at the university, 45.4% equivalence of efforts can be invested on strategic cognition. The effect was statistically significant as shown by  $p$ -value of 0.001. The Hypothesis;  $H_{02}$  Strategic cognition has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University is therefore rejected. Iederen et al., (2011), studied impacts of strategic cognition on strategy implementation in manufacturing companies, found that strategic cognition enabled employees to define and intellectualize new strategies in an organization and thus can come to a common understanding of the organization's strategies by all of them.

Through strategic cognition, the gap between strategy developers and the junior staff is significantly minimized and thus a unified approach is given in executions geared towards strategy implementation. Sypher (2010), and Keum (2015), emphasized on the same by noting that strategic cognition, emotional intelligence and articulacy are interwoven such that successful communication of organizational strategy with the stakeholders cannot succeed if one is neglected because together they define organizational culture.

### **Influence of Strategic Cognition on Strategy Implementation of Kenyatta University**

Similarly, if strategic direction, and strategic cognition are assumed constant, a unit change in strategic learning would cause a 0.235 change of improvement in strategy implementation at Kenyatta University at a significance level of  $p= 0.019$ . It thus implies that 23.5% of strategy implementation can be predicted by strategic learning at Kenyatta University. To improve strategy implementation at the university, the strategy implementation team should therefor consider 23.5% equivalence of investment on strategic learning. The hypothesis;  $H_{03}$  Strategic learning has no effect on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya is thus rejected.

The results of the analyses also aligned with the findings of Bimbaum (2009). Bimbaum focused on relationship between transfer of information and strategy implementation and found that strategic learning creates room to review structures, ideas and process and thus facilitating implementation of strategies. Additionally, the study established that vertical and horizontal flow of information enhances adjustments aimed at optimizing strategy implementation. These findings were echoed by Enberg (2013) who emphasized that strategic learning in academic

organization contributes to achievement of goals through information of good strategic decisions and rate at which strategies are adopted in the organization.

Notably Dikekn (2011) on the hand noted that critical success factors isolated strategic leadership and its effects on change management among manufacturing companies in Turkey. In his findings, he noted that innovation and sustainable capacity development as critical success factors have moderating effects on strategic leadership and change management. It is in the same light that Kaplan (2014), found that critical succeed factors determined the creation of growth strategies in the business community when employee performance management practices are adopted. Through critical success factors, organizations are able continuously generate better business or management ideas.

### **The Moderating Effect of Critical Success Factors on Strategy Implementation**

The three independent variables above (strategic direction, strategic learning and strategic cognition influences strategy implemented but not in isolation. In other words, critical success factors have a moderating function or role in determining the success of strategy implementation.

**Table 4.17 Regression Coefficients (Moderating Variable)**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)					
Strategy implementation	6.797	2.024	0.272	3.358	0.000
Critical Success Factor	0.245	0.089	0.233	2.677	0.002

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation

From correlation analysis in Table 4.14, and now the summarized regression in table 4.17, strategy implementation is positively influence with the moderating function of

critical success factors. The results show that critical success factors are significant ( $p$ -value = 0.002) in the process of strategy implementation.

Since all the independent factors are statistically significant at  $p$  values  $<0.05$ , the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ ,  $H_{03}$  and  $H_{04}$  are therefore rejected. In a nut shell, strategic direction, strategic cognition, and strategic learning are key elements which must be harnessed and harmonized within the context of critical success factors for better organizational strategy development and implementation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter captures the summary of main findings established through the descriptive and inferential statistics. It also highlights on the conclusions drawn from the findings as well as the recommendations for the university, other institutional and organizations regarding strategy implementation. Finally, the researcher suggests associated areas which need further research.

### **5.2 Summary**

The research concentrated on establishing if and how much strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and critical success factors affect strategy implementation. The analysis of the data collected revealed that strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning have statistically significant effects on strategy implementation under the moderating function of critical success factors. All the Aggregate means fell between 3.5 and 4.5 which translate to ‘Agree’ in the Lickert scale ( $4.5 > WA \geq 3.5$  is “Agree” at standard deviation ranging from 0. 0.923(Strategic direction), 0.8731 (Strategic Learning) and 0.8754 (strategic cognition).

*To evaluate the influence of strategic direction on strategy implementation of  
Kenyatta University, Kenya*

Strategic direction was positively correlated (0.535, p-value=.003) with strategy implementation. Additionally, from regression analysis, strategic direction showed positive prediction power (0.213 at p-value = 0.021) on strategy implementation. This means that strategic direction has significant effects on strategy implementation in Kenyatta University

***To examine the influence of strategic cognition on strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya***

A similar pattern was noted with strategic cognition which was also positively correlated (.625, p-value = 0.01) with a significant predictive power of 0.454, p-value = 0.001. The results demonstrate that strategic cognition significantly affects strategy implementation at Kenyatta University.

***To assess how strategic learning influences strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya***

Strategic Learning had similar effects, correlating positively (0.454, p-value= 0.000) with strategy implementation with a significant predictive potential of 0.235; p-value = 0.019 on strategy implementation. The result implies that Strategic Learning significantly affects strategy implementation at Kenyatta University.

***To establish the moderating influence of critical success factors on the relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation of Kenyatta University, Kenya***

Finally critical success factor has a significantly positive moderating function on strategy implementation (Unstandardized coefficient, = 0.245,  $\beta = 0.233$ ,

Standardized coefficient 2.677,  $\beta = 0.002$ ; p-value = 0.002). The result implies that critical factors play a significant moderating function on strategy implementation at Kenyatta University.

Additionally, from results of hypothesis testing, it was evident that strategic direction ( $\beta = .213$ ,  $t = 2.546$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), strategic cognition ( $\beta = .454$ ,  $t = 4.989$ ,  $p < 0.021$ ), and strategic learning ( $\beta = .235$ ,  $t = 2.527$ ,  $p < 0.019$ ) have positive explanation and prediction

on strategy implementation. It is therefore evident that through well-spelt strategic direction, strategic cognition, and strategic learning, shareholders, stakeholders and private investors can be attracted to an organization and thus better place it to secure capitals for its development and growth purposes.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Kenyatta University leadership is effective in developing strategic vision which gives the institution a sense of direction. Further, the university has well elaborated strategies matched to the strategic objectives and well aligned mission to the university's vision. Additionally, the university's core values are consistent with the mission

The university has a good understanding of strategies it selects and communicated to all the strategy implementation team. Additionally, the university's structure is such that it is well aligned to the strategies. Consequently, the decision-making process on strategy implementation is well outlined. Furthermore, the researcher established that the university leadership is able to effectively respond to challenges during strategy implementation. The university thus has a well formulated framework of strategy implementation.

The researcher established that university strategic leaders monitor and continuously align processes with strategies chosen and they are able to convert stakeholders' needs to meaningful strategies and allows open communication of ideas, facts, opinions and emotions about strategy implementation from lower-level employees. Additionally, researcher found that there is periodic review of strategic plans to make adjustments also that the university has flexibility in strategy implementation to allow adoption of

emergent strategies. The Researcher thus concluded that the university is committed to strategy implementation.

Regarding this objective the researcher established that the strategic direction, strategic cognition, and strategic learning significantly affect strategy implementation at Kenyatta University.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

This study recommends that Kenyatta University's strategy implementation team should give concerted effort to enhance their strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning, and critical success factors. Additionally, the researcher recommends that to give institutions sense of direction, the leadership have well elaborated objectives, have a mission which is aligned to its vision and the strategies well chosen to match with institution objectives develop effective strategy implementation paradigm. Universities should engage experts to guide the strategy formulation process and train employees to develop a sound strategy. This will ensure production of sound strategy with high chances of successful implementation.

#### **Policy Makers**

The study recommends that policy makers, particularly those involved with management of universities in Kenya, should work toward policies which enhance effective strategy formulation and implementation that is based on strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and critical success factors. In the process, effective communication should be given priority to ensure that strategic issues are discussed and resolved in time to realize the strategic goals. Additionally, policy makers should be keen ensure that strategy is compatible with existing culture to realize desired performance. It is also necessary to designate the main functions and tasks needed for efficacious strategy implementation at all levels of the organization.

#### **5.4.2 Suggestions for Further Research**

The researcher suggests that further studies should be conducted on critical success factors that influence strategy implementation in organizations. Further study should be done to identify specific critical success factors and how much they affect strategy implementation. Without identification of the factors and how they affect strategy implementation, this study would be less useful. More research should also be done to be able to more specifically identify and isolate elements of strategic direction, strategic cognition, strategic learning and critical success factors which are suited for not only Kenyatta University but other universities across the country.

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# APPEDICES

## Appendix I: Questionnaire

I'm a student in Kenyatta University, carrying out an academic research project study for the partial fulfillment of the award of the degree of Masters in Business administration. I kindly request you to accurately fill the information requested as per instructions given. The information provided will be held in confidence and will be used for academic purposes only.

### Section A: Background Information

1. Gender:  Male  Female
2. Age bracket (Tick where appropriate)

Table 4. 1: Age Bracket

Age Brackets	Tick
18 - 30 Years	
31 - 40 Years	
41 - 50 Years	
51- 60 Years	
Over 61 Years	

3. What is your highest education level? (Tick as applicable)

Table 4. 2: Education Level

Education Level	Tick
Diploma/certificate	
Bachelors' degree	
Master degree	
PhD	

4. Working Experience

Table 4. 3: Work Experience

Experience	Tick
Less than 1 year	
1-5 years	
6-10 years	
11-15 years	
Over 16 years and above	

### Section B: Strategic Direction

5. On a Likert scale rating indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements on strategic direction.

where;

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
University leadership is effective in developing strategic vision give the institution a sense of direction.					
Objectives have been well elaborated by university management.					
The university's mission is aligned to the university vision.					
The university core values are consistent with the mission					
Strategies chosen match the university objectives					

### Section C: Strategic Cognition

6. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about strategic cognition

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Kenyatta University's strategic leaders have a good understanding of strategies selected.					
Strategies are well communicated to all the employees.					
Decision making process on strategy implementation is well outlined					
The university leadership is able to effectively respond to challenges during strategy implementation					
The organization structure has been aligned with the selected strategies					

### Section D: Strategic Learning

7. On a Likert scale rating indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about strategic learning.

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The university strategic leaders monitor and continuously align processes with strategies chosen					
The university strategic leadership is able to convert stakeholders' needs to meaningful strategies					
The strategic leaders in the university allows open communication of ideas, facts, opinions and emotions about strategy implementation from lower level employees					
There is periodic review of strategic plans to make adjustments					
There is flexibility in strategy implementation to allow adoption of emergent strategies					

### Section E: Critical Success Factors

8. On a Likert scale rating indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about critical success factors.

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The university allocates adequate financial resources for strategy implementation					
The university employees are well equipped with skills required for strategy implementation					
There is a culture of adopting change among the university staff					
The university organizational structure facilitates efficient strategy implementation					
There is adoption of technology and innovation to improve processes of strategy implementation					

### Section F: Strategy Implementation

9. On a Likert scale rating indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about strategy implementation in Kenyatta University.

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
There is efficient allocation and utilization of budgeted resources					
There are processes and programs that translate strategies into actions					
The university ensures timely delivery of quality services to customers					
There is periodic reporting of strategy implementation progress					
The university performance targets are measured after each action step					

## Appendix II: Data Collection Letter



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

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NAIROBI, KENYA  
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Internal Memo

---

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2018

TO: David Muhia Kamau  
C/o Business Administration Dept.

REF: D53/OL/NKU/26873/2014

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

---

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board at its meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2018 approved your Research Project Proposal for the M.B.A Degree Entitled, "Strategic leadership and strategy implementation in Kenyan public universities: a case of Kenyatta university".

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, Subject to Clearance with Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the Progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Thank you.

ELIJAH MUTUA  
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

c.c. Chairman, Business Administration Department.

Supervisor: Dr. Jane Wanjiru  
C/o Department of Business Administration  
Kenyatta University

EM/jm

Appendix III: NACOSTI Letter


**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**MR. DAVID MUHIA KAMAU**  
**of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 36000-600**  
**NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct**  
**research in Nairobi County**


**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/18/34756/25785**  
**Date Of Issue : 27th November,2018**  
**Fee Received :Ksh 1000**

**on the topic: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**  
**AND STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN**  
**KENYAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A CASE**  
**OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

**for the period ending:**  
**26th November,2019**

.....  
**Applicant's**  
**Signature**



.....  
  
**Director General**  
**National Commission for Science,**  
**Technology & Innovation**

**THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND  
INNOVATION ACT, 2013**

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science,  
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3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
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**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**



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**CONDITIONS: see back page**



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NACOSTI, Upper Kileleshwa  
Off Wangari Way  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No: **NACOSTI/P/18/34756/25785**

Date: **27<sup>th</sup> November, 2018**

David Muhia Kamau  
Kenyatta University  
P.O. Box 43844-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Strategic leadership and strategy implementation in Kenyan Public Universities: A case of Kenyatta University*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **26<sup>th</sup> November, 2019**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** 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.

**DR. STEPHEN K. KIBIRU, PhD.**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education  
Nairobi County.

#### **Appendix IV: List of Public Universities in Kenya**

1. University of Nairobi,
  2. Egerton University,
  3. Kenyatta University, Moi University,
  4. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology,
  5. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology,
  6. Maseno University,
  7. Dedan Kimathi University of Technology,
  8. Technical University of Mombasa,
  9. Chuka University,
  10. Technical University of Kenya (Kenya Polytechnic University College),
  11. Pwani University,
  12. Kirinyaga University,
  13. Rongo University,
  14. Co-operative University of Kenya,
  15. Taita Taveta University,
  16. Machakos University,
  17. Garissa University,
  18. University of Embu,
  19. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University,
  20. Laikipia University,
  21. Kisii University,
  22. Murang'a University,
  23. University of Eldoret,
  24. Kibabii University,
  25. Masaai Mara University,
  26. Multimedia University of Kenya,
  27. South Eastern Kenya University,
  28. Karatina University,
  29. University of Kabianga,
  30. Meru University of Science and Technology
- (Commission for University Education, 2017).