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**CHALLENGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT  
ADRIAN COMPANY LIMITED KENYA**

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## CHALLENGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT ADRIAN COMPANY LIMITED KENYA

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of the study was to determine strategy implementation practices at Adrian Company Limited Kenya and to establish challenges of strategy implementation at Adrian Company Limited Kenya.

**Methodology:** The study adopted a cases study research design and an interview guide was used to collect data. The respondents of the study were drawn from the top management team, who were drawn from the various departments comprising of human resource manager, project manager, marketing manager, logistics & procurement manager. Other respondents were drawn from the functional level and operational level departments. Data was analyzed using content analysis.

**Results:** Findings indicated that the strategy implementation practices carried out by Adrian Co Ltd consisted of the following critical tasks; the management commitment, team appointment, training for all levels, developing an implementation plan, and establishing an internal auditing system. Findings also indicated that that there existed various challenges to strategy implementation at Adrian Co Ltd. These challenges included inadequate resources and manpower for strategy implementation were inadequate, poor compensation as a challenge to strategy implementation, poor training for the current work force, mismatch between strategy and structure and poor bottom up as well as top bottom communication, organization politics, communication and clarity understanding during strategy implementation.

**Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy:** From the discussions and the conclusions, the study recommended that for an efficient and effective strategy implementation process senior management should be involved and committed throughout the process. The management should ensure that the critical strategy implementation tasks were considered during strategy implementation. In addition, the management should address the challenges of strategy implementation. For instance, regular training should be conducted and compensation should be facilitated through cost of living adjustments (COLA).

**Keywords:** *strategy implementation, strategy implementation practices, strategic management*

## 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Strategy, a fundamental management tool in any organization is a multi-dimensional concept that various authors have defined in different ways. It is the match between an organization's resources and skills and the environmental opportunities as well as the risks it faces and the purposes it wishes to accomplish (Thompson, 2003). It is meant to provide guidance and direction for the activities of the organization. Since strategic decisions influence the way organizations respond to their environment, it is very important for a firm to make strategic decisions and define strategy in terms of its function to the environment. The purpose of strategy is to provide directional cues to the organization that permit it to achieve its objectives while responding to the opportunities and threats in the environment (Pearce & Robinson, 2007).

Strategy implementation involves organization of the firm's resources and motivation of the staff to achieve objectives (Ramesh, 2011). The environmental conditions facing many firms have changed rapidly (Machuki & Aosa, 2011). Today's global competitive environment is complex, dynamic, and largely unpredictable (Acur & Englyst, 2006). To deal with this unprecedented level of change, a lot of thinking has gone into the issue of how strategies are best formulated. The assessment of strategy formulation processes becomes crucial for practitioners and researchers alike in order to conduct and evaluate different formulation processes (Olson et al., 2005).

Although formulating a consistent strategy is a difficult task for any management team, making that strategy work, that is, implementing it throughout the organization is even more difficult (Hrebiniak, 2006). A myriad of factors can potentially affect the process by which strategic plans are turned into organizational action. Unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation is often seen as something of a craft, rather than a science, and its research history has previously been described as fragmented and eclectic (Noble, 1999b). It is thus not surprising that, after a comprehensive strategy or single strategic decision has been formulated, significant difficulties usually arise during the subsequent implementation process.

Strategy implementation is one of the components of strategic management and refers to a set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of long term plans designed to achieve organizational objectives (Pearce & Robinson, 2007). Its purpose is to complete the transition from strategic planning to strategic management by incorporating adopted strategies throughout the relevant system (Bryson, 2005). Strategy implementation is important in that it bridges the activities of strategy formulation with strategy success. The poor implementation of an appropriate strategy may cause that strategy to fail (Kiruthi, 2001). An excellent implementation plan will not only cause the success of an appropriate strategy, but can also rescue an inappropriate strategy (Hunger & Wheelen, 1994). According to Aosa (1992), once strategies have been developed, they need to be implemented; they are of no value unless they are effectively translated into action.

According to Lumpkin and Taylor (2005), strategy implementation is an internal operations driven activity involving organizing, budgeting, motivating, culture building, supervising and leading to make the strategy work. Thompson & Strickland (1993) noted that the cornerstone of strategy implementation is building an organization capable of carrying out the strategy successfully. Strategy implementation is realized through the consistent effort of internal and

external stakeholders in a firm. Such stakeholders include; the board, the senior management, the junior management, suppliers, customers, the government and the civil society (Schaap, 2006; Lehner, 2004; Harrington, 2006).

Several studies such as David (1997), Hunger and Wheelen (2000) and Bryson (2005) indicate that inadequate resources allocation, lack of fit between strategy and structure, poor compensation systems, resistance to change, lack of effective communication, lack of clear understanding and lack of coordination and support are challenges facing strategy implementation. The reviewed literature indicates that there is myriad of challenges facing strategy implementation and firms the Kenyan telecommunication is no exception.

The most common challenges to strategy implementation include; Resource insufficiency. David (1997) argues that allocating resources to particular divisions and departments does not mean that strategies will be successfully implemented. This is because a number of factors commonly prohibit effective resource allocation. These include overprotection of resources, too great emphasis on short-term financial criteria, organizational policies, vague strategy targets reluctant to take risks, and lack of sufficient knowledge. Also, established organizations may experience changes in the business environment that can make a large part of their resource base redundant resources, which may be unable to free sufficient funds to invest in the new resources that are needed and their cost base will be too high (Johnson & Scholes, 2002).

Adrian Company Ltd whose headquarter is based in Nairobi Kenya provides technical solutions for the telecommunications industry. Such solutions include; civil works construction, installation and testing, commissioning and maintenance of telecommunication networks. Incorporated in 2006, has branches in the East Africa region namely Tanzania & Uganda. The company aims to be a leading solution provider for the telecommunication industry in Kenya. As part of its strategy Adrian has defined its customer and its target market as the small and medium income earners of the society. This market consists of three broad segments based on the customers' sources of income. Adrian provides customized solutions which are anchored on strict delivery timelines and end-to-end quality checks.

The internal operating environment of Adrian company Ltd is characterized by weak revenue base, poor trained staff, poor legal and Institutional framework, lack of Board of Directors and corporate governance, poor quality assurance, lack of operational/ procedures manuals, inadequate exposure to modern regulatory approaches, lack of team spirit and team work and an organization structure that do not allow effective communication.

Despite all the efforts that Adrian Company puts in the strategic process, strategic implementation still remains a challenge. This evidenced by the failure of the company to achieve its strategy objectives outlined in the strategic plan. For example, the strategic goal and objective of realizing a market share of 10 percent of the marketing for the year 2010 was not realized. Adrian Company only managed to achieve a 2 percent market share which is far from the targeted 10 percent. In addition, a customer satisfaction index objective of at least 75 percent was also not realized as evidenced by the many complaints from clients of civil works construction, installation and testing, commissioning and maintenance of telecommunication networks. The failure to meet the strategic objectives may be pointer to poor strategy implementation as result of the issues observed in the internal operating environment.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Strategy implementation is an enigma in many companies. The problem is illustrated by the unsatisfying low success rate (only 10 to 30 percent) of intended strategies (Raps & Kauffman, 2005). The primary objectives are somehow dissipated as the strategy moves into implementation and the initial momentum is lost before the expected benefits are realized. The consequences of strategic implementation failure can be dire. For example, the going concern/survival of the company is threatened once it's unable to meet its strategic objectives. Not only does the failure or collapse of the company impacts negatively on the shareholders, it also have negative ramifications to the other stakeholders such as employees, customers, government and civic community.

Despite all the efforts that Adrian Company puts in the strategic process, strategic implementation still remains a challenge. This evidenced by the failure of the company to achieve its strategy objectives outlined in the strategic plan. For example, the strategic goal and objective of realizing a market share of 10 percent of the marketing for the year 2010 was not realized. Adrian Company only managed to achieve a 2 percent market share which is far from the targeted 10 percent. In addition, a customer satisfaction index objective of at least 75 percent was also not realized as evidenced by the many complaints from clients of civil works construction, installation and testing, commissioning and maintenance of telecommunication networks. The failure to meet the strategic objectives may be pointer to poor strategy implementation. The challenge of strategy implementation at Adrian Company is a historical as well as a current phenomenon. In the year 2006 the Adrian Company did not achieve its strategic objectives of attaining a 5 percent market share. This objective among others has not been achieved up to date despite the phenomenal growth of the ICT sector.

The discourse of strategic implementation has attracted a lot of scholarly attention. For instance, Harrington (2006) investigated the moderating effects of size, manager tactics and involvement on strategy implementation in Canadian food service sector. Schaap (2006) conducted an empirical study on the role of senior-level leaders in the Nevada Gaming Industry in USA. On the other hand, Lehner (2004) investigated strategy implementation tactics as response to organizational, strategic, and environmental imperatives among 136 Upper-Austrian firms. However, all these studies were carried out in developed countries. Locally, Kiptugen (2003) did a study to determine the strategic responses of Kenya Commercial Bank to a changing competitive environment. Muturi (2005) on the other hand did a study to determine the strategic responses of Christian churches in Kenya to changes in the external environment. Bolo et al (2010) investigated the challenges facing the implementation of differentiation strategies in the sugar industry in Kenya. Aosa (1992) conducted an empirical investigation of aspects of strategy formulation and implementation within large private manufacturing companies in Kenya. In another study by Awino (2001) investigated the effectiveness and problems of strategy implementation of financing Higher Education in Kenya. Finally, Kiruthi, (2001) investigated the state of strategic management practices in Non-Profit Making Organizations, the case of public membership clubs in Nairobi. While the reviewed studies compare well to the current study they however focused on different organizations context as well as some conceptual ones. Therefore, the study attempts to answer the following question: what are the challenges facing strategy implementation at Adrian Company Limited?

### 1.3 Research Objectives

- i. To determine strategy implementation practices at Adrian Company Limited Kenya
- ii. To establish challenges of strategy implementation at Adrian Company Limited Kenya

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Historically, numerous researchers in strategic management bestowed great significance to the strategic formulation process and considered strategy implementation as a mere by-product or invariable consequence of planning (Wind and Robertson, 1983). Fortunately, insights in this area have been made recently which temper our knowledge of developing strategy with the reality of executing that which is crafted (Olson et al. 2005). However, as strategy implementation is both a multifaceted and complex organizational process, it is only by taking a broad view that a wide span of potentially valuable insights is generated.

Research emphasizing strategy implementation is classified by Bourgeois and Brodwin (2004) as part of a first wave of studies proposing structural views as important facilitators for strategy implementation success. Beyond the preoccupation of many authors with firm structure, a second wave of investigations advocated interpersonal processes and issues as crucial to any marketing strategy implementation effort (Noble & Mokwa, 1999). Conflicting empirical results founded upon contrasting theoretical premises indicate that strategy implementation is a complex phenomenon. In recent years organizations have sought to create greater organisational flexibility in responding to environmental turbulence by moving away from hierarchical structures to more modular forms.

The fatal problem with strategy implementation is the de facto success rate of intended strategies. In research studies it is as low as 10 percent (Judson, 1991). Despite this abysmal record, strategy implementation does not seem to be a popular topic at all. In fact, some managers mistake implementation as a strategic afterthought and a pure top-down-approach. Instead, management spends most of its attention on strategy formulation. According to Machuki (2005), good strategies only guarantee success if they are translated into action that yields acceptable results. Further, the treatment of strategy implementation as an administrative process makes it subject to the manifestations of an organization's internal environment. Consequently, the context in which strategy implementation takes place determines the nature of the challenges faced as well as influences the outcome of strategy.

Management commitment is one of the best practices in the strategy implementation process. The old adage that commitment must come from the top holds true in strategy implementation. Senior management must be committed to achieving compliance with a firm determination to accomplish the objective, allocate the necessary resources, and assign responsibility appropriately (Bryson, 2005). Team appointment is an important task in strategy implementation practices. Organizing a corporate-level quality steering council or project team by top management is the necessary first step in planning and implementing a documented quality management system. This team must be responsible for co-coordinating all activities related to all levels of the organization in preparing the quality system. The members of this team should be selected based on their expertise and the contribution they can make in successfully achieving the registration goal. Training should also be provided to all members at the very beginning of

the registration process to understand and interpret fully the requirements (Machuki, 2005; Aosa, 1992)

Training for all levels is a critical ingredient in strategy implementation. It is essential that everyone comprehend the meaning and the requirements of strategy implementation, as it demands the full participation of all employees in formulating and implementing an effective quality system. Letting everyone know why you are introducing the strategy reduces the resistance to change and gains support for continued compliance (Okumu, 2003; Aosa 1992). Developing an implementation plan is crucial in strategy implementation process. An implementation plan must be developed which may include, but not be limited to, the following items: review of strategy requirements; discuss audit questions; evaluate compliance of individual units; discuss adequacy of existing systems; generate specific actions needed; assign responsibilities; obtain commitment; audit actions taken (Machuki, 2005; Okumu, 2003; Bryson, 2005).

Establishing a documentation structure enhances the success of strategy implementation process. A multiple-tiered approach to quality management documentation is commonly adopted (Okumu, 2003). Establishing an internal auditing system will be the key, not only to the organization's certification efforts, but also, to its ongoing continuous improvement efforts as well. It is an effective process for measuring progress and finding the sources of many future improvements and additions to the quality system. This is the preferred strategy in the long term as they really understand the operation of the quality system. The internal audits are key activities to not only becoming certified but staying certified, as they verify effective implementation of the quality system (Okumu, 2003; Bryson, 2005).

Challenges that occur during the implementation process of a strategy are an important area of research because even the best strategy would be ineffective if not implemented successfully. Despite the fact that challenges to successful strategy implementation have not been widely investigated, there are some issues that have surfaced in many studies (Muthuiya, 2004). Selecting people for the key positions by putting a strong management team with the right personal chemistry and mix of skills is one of the first strategy implementation steps (Thompson & Strickland, 1997).

Awino (2001) in the study to investigate effectiveness and problems of strategy implementation of financing higher education in Kenya by the higher education loans board identified lack of fit between strategy and structure as factor affecting successful strategy implementation. He cited lack of fit between strategy and structure; inadequate information and communication systems; and failure to impart new skills. Koske (2003) observes that there are many organizational characteristics, which act to constrain strategy implementation. He identified most challenges as concerning connecting strategy formulation to implementation; resource allocation; match between structure with strategy; linking performance and pay to strategies; and creating a strategy supportive culture. Whilst the strategy should be chosen in a way that it fits the organization structure the process of matching structure to strategy is complex (Bryars et al 1996).

Sterling (2003) identified reasons why strategies fail as unanticipated market changes; lack of senior management support; effective competitor responses to strategy application of insufficient

resources; failure of buy in, understanding, and/or communication; timeliness and distinctiveness; lack of focus; and bad strategy poorly conceived business models. Sometimes strategies fail because they are simply ill conceived. For example business models are flawed because of a misunderstanding of how demand would be met in the market.

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was conducted through a case study. It was done at the Adrian Company Limited Kenya to identify the various challenges that are faced in the process of strategy implementation. The design was considered suitable as allowed an in-depth study of the subject of the challenges in the strategy implementation. In this study primary data was collected through the use of an interview guide. The nature of data to be collected was qualitative data and through the interview guide the researcher had a chance of clarifying any unclear issues. The interview guide was semi-structured implying that some questions had a definite response while others were indefinite. The respondent of the study was drawn from the top management team, who were drawn from the various departments comprising of human resource manager, project manager, marketing manager, logistics & procurement manager. Other respondents were drawn from the functional level and operational level departments. This research yielded qualitative data from the interview schedules. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis, and given that it is a case study. Analysis of data collected was compared with the theoretical approaches and documentations cited in the literature review. The researcher made meanings from informants' responses through conceptualization and explanation building.

### **4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 General Information and Response Rate**

The study targeted the top management team, who were drawn from the various departments comprising of human resource manager, project manager, marketing manager, logistics & procurement manager. Other respondents were drawn from the functional level and operational level departments of Adrian Company Limited Kenya. The field report which accompanied the interview report indicated that individuals in the top management were the most inaccessible for interviews (for instance, two crucial managers, the CEO and the financial manager could not be traced for an interview). In another instance, the logistics and procurement manager had to be traced to the field where he was inspecting some faulty cabling for a certain client. Even though he was instrumental in volunteering a lot of helpful information on strategic implementation, the interview was done amid numerous calls from clients who were facing problems and who wanted his attention. The marketing and project manager could also not stay until all the questions were exhausted. However, a lot of meaningful information was obtained from top level management since they are directly answerable to strategy implementation. It was observed that the majority of functional level managers and operational level staff warmed up to the idea of volunteering information. However, it also seemed as though the researcher was educating some of the operational staff on strategy because some could not comprehend the questions that were asked. Perhaps, this was because the respondents from the operational level may have been unaware of strategies being implemented or was generally not conversant with concepts such as strategy implementation. Overall, 4 top level managers were interviewed, 6 functional level managers and 10 operational level staff were interviewed.

#### **4.2 Strategy Implementation Practices at Adrian Co. Ltd**

This section aimed at discussing the responses from top level management respondents, functional level respondents and operational level respondents. On the question of whether management commitment is a critical strategy implementation task, top level managers indicated that they considered it to be crucial. Some of the explanations given were that managers needed the support of other staff to implement strategy, that without operational support, the company cannot achieve its objectives, and that most strategies fail because of functional staff sabotage. In one case, one of the top level managers was of the opinion that top level managers must preach water and drink water; they are supposed to talk the talk and walk the walk. Another top level respondent was emphatic on the commitment of top level management and stated that lower level management and operational staff have a way of detecting poor management commitment on a strategy, so one had to be careful about the signals they sent to lower cadre of staff. This may be an indication that top level management has considered the commitment of operational staff a critical strategy implementation task.

Some respondents from functional level also agreed that top management considers management commitment as a critical implementation task. Some of the responses obtained indicated that the current top level management makes sure that it enhances commitment by involving the junior management, that there was commitment since functional level participated in budget preparation and most of the time they got what they had requested in the budget, and that top level management constantly consults functional level management on their view on strategy. However, not all respondents from functional level agreed with the statement that top level management considers management commitment as a critical implementation task. In one instance, respondents indicated that the current management assumed it knew too much and therefore did not take into consideration the respondents suggestions. In another instance, a respondent indicated that top level management asked for progress reports on some of the projects but it never did anything about it, and that he was tired of making useless reports. In addition, he was never invited to discuss those reports and the way forward, the more the reason he did not care. This may be an indication that in some instances top level management may have failed to consider the commitment of operational staff a critical strategy implementation task.

Most of the respondents from the operational level seemed to disagree that top and functional level management considers commitment as a critical implementation task. Some of the responses obtained were that the managers talked about cost cutting strategy but they were the ones who were living in rented houses paid for by the company. The respondents wondered how the company could cut costs if some of the top level managers lived in apartments with rent of about KShs 250,000 paid for by the company but insisted that the cost of office refreshments were high and they needed to be reduced. In another case, respondents indicated that sometimes one had to do the job so that one gets the salary, because even if one went an extra mile to give recommendations, nothing happened. This may be an indication that top and functional level management may have failed to consider the commitment of operational staff a critical strategy implementation task.

On the question of whether top level management considers team appointment as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents in the top level category indicated that indeed they do.

In one instance, a respondent in this category indicated that the organizational always sets up a project steering committee with members appointed on merit and relevance of expertise. Some respondents from the functional level also indicate that the top level management considers team appointment as a critical strategy implementation task. However, some respondents queried the way the appointments to strategy/project steering committees were done. In one instance, a respondents indicated that he didn't believe in the effectiveness of the project committees because most of the time , top level management considered bootlickers and did not consider to appoint an expert who may not agree with them. Respondents from the operational level categorically stated that both top level and functional level management did not consider team appointment as a critical strategy implementation task. In one instance, the respondents indicated that he was not aware of any strategy implementation committees and if they were there, he wondered how come they never tell the respondents to apply. In another instance, the respondents felt that strategy is the concern of the senior managers. The finding implies that while top level management considers project team appointment to be a critical strategy implementation task, it may be important to use a transparent and inclusive process of vetting members to be included in the team. In addition, there seems to be low awareness on the part of operational staff on their role in project steering committees.

On the question of whether top level management considers training for all levels as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents in the top level category indicated that they considered it to be so. Respondents in the functional level also indicated that top level management also considers training for all levels as a critical strategy implementation task. The respondents further indicated that some of the organization supported both professional and work base courses to prepare team members for strategy implementation. However, some respondents in the operational level seemed to disagree. In one instance, a respondent indicated that the management only supports training for managers only. In another instance, a respondent indicated that he was had applied for a diploma in project management in one of the local colleges which would directly help in the workplace but could not get sponsorship from the organization. The finding may imply that even though top and middle level consider training as a critical strategy implementation task, this consideration does not include all levels.

On the question of whether top management considers developing an implementation plan as a critical strategy implementation strategy, all of the respondents in the top management level indicated that they did. Majority of respondents in the functional level also indicated that top management considers developing an implementation plan as a critical strategy implementation strategy. Meanwhile, there some respondents in this category who thought that top management did not consider developing an implementation plan as a critical strategy implementation strategy since some of the strategies had been executed haphazardly which was an indication of poor planning. In one instance, a respondents indicated that the automation of filing systems had been done without considering the security of some of the documents and the fall back procedures in case there were implementation hitches. This question was not posed for operational level staff therefore no response from this category was obtained.

Regarding to question of whether top management considers establishing a documentation structure as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents indicated that indeed this was the case. However, some respondents from the functional level management expressed doubts as to

whether this was the case. Some cited unclear reporting structures and others were still handling conflicting roles. For instance, the department dealing with customer care complaints was not sure on who the final authority was on deciding as to whether to agree to demands of a client or to refuse. This question was not posed for operational level staff therefore no response from this category was obtained.

Regarding the question on whether top management considered establishing an internal auditing system as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents from top management unequivocally affirmed that indeed this was the case. Some respondents from the functional also indicated that top management considered establishing an internal auditing system as a critical strategy implementation task. However, they were those that cited lack of adult independence as a loop hole. They were of the opinion that existence of an auditing system was not the issue but rather the independence of such a system. This question was not posed for operational levels staff therefore no response from this category was obtained.

#### **4.3 Challenges of Strategy Implementation at Adrian Co. Ltd**

This section attempted to address the second objective of the study which was to identify the challenges of strategy implementation at Adrian Co. Ltd. Top and functional management were asked what they consider as challenges to strategy implementation at Adrian Company LTD. Some of the respondents indicated that lack of lower management commitment and resistances from staff were some of the challenges to strategy implementation at Adrian Co. Ltd. In one instance, a respondent from top level management identified external environmental turbulence and the uncertainty of the future as a challenge to strategy implementation. For instance, the depreciation of the Kenya shilling had made importation of cables expensive which had eaten into the revenue basis for the company. This had made it impossible to achieve the revenue goals stipulated in its strategy.

Some respondents from functional level management also indicated that resources for strategy implementation were inadequate. For instance, one respondent indicated that he had requested for vehicles to facilitate the transport of staff to customer sites where cabling and network installations were being done but has not been allocated any vehicle to date. In another instance, a respondent cited inadequate manpower to ensure that the department meets its strategic targets. In still another instance, a respondent quoted poor compensation as a challenge to strategy implementation. According to him, the failure by the management to make cost of living adjustment to the departmental members' salaries had left those embers with low morale. Other challenges included poor training for the current work force, mismatch between strategy and structure and poor bottom up as well as top bottom communication. Organization politics also played a role in strategy implementation as indicated some respondents. In one instance, the respondents indicated that some promotions were awarded on mere sycophancy rather than merit.

On the question of how they rated the communication and clarity understanding during strategy implementation, respondents from operation level rated it poorly. The operational level staff indicated that they were rarely consulted or involved in strategy formulation and implementation and that the management rarely bothered to seek input from them. Therefore, it is likely that management did not bother to cultivate staff buy in and involvement. On the question of whether

they considered the resources allocated to strategy implementation as adequate, respondents from operation level indicated that they were not equipped with enough computers and communication gadgets. For instance, respondents who work in the field cited that laptops from those who worked in the field were not provided despite the fact that the management expected them to prepare accurate and timely field reports. Some respondents also cited being understaffed in their departments.

On the question of whether they considered compensation systems as appropriate and supportive of strategy implementation, respondents from operation level indicated that this was far from the ideal. Some respondents cited the high cost of living and the failure of management to factor in a cost of living adjustment to their salaries. This led to low morale in strategy implementation. When asked to describe a situation when there was resistance to strategy implementation, some respondents from the operational level cited the resistance witnessed in the automating the filing system from paper based to computerized. There was resistance to change during strategy implementation at Adrian LTD when they were changing the filing systems from paperwork to soft copy filing. This was experienced since the staffs did not have computer skills.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Findings**

This section dwelt on the summary of the findings generated from data analysis. The summary was done along the objectives of the study. The first objective of the study was to determine Strategy implementation practices at Adrian Company Limited Kenya. From the study, the researcher found that Adrian Co Ltd considers several tasks as critical to strategy implementation. For instance, on the question of whether management commitment is a critical strategy implementation task, top level managers indicated that they considered it to be crucial. This may be an indication that top level management has considered the commitment of operational staff a critical strategy implementation task. However, in view of some functional and operational level staff, the top management may have failed to consider the commitment of operational staff a critical strategy implementation task.

On the question of whether top level management considers team appointment as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents in the top level category indicated that indeed they do. Some respondents from the functional level also indicate that the top level management considers team appointment as a critical strategy implementation task. Respondents from the operational level categorically stated that both top level and functional level management did not consider team appointment as a critical strategy implementation task. The finding implies that while top level management considers project team appointment to be a critical strategy implementation task, it may be important to use a transparent and inclusive process of vetting members to be included in the team. In addition, there seems to be low awareness on the part of operational staff on their role in project steering committees.

On the question of whether top level management considers training for all levels as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents in the top level category indicated that they considered it to be so. Respondents in the functional level also indicated that top level management also considers training for all levels as a critical strategy implementation task. The respondents

further indicated that some of the organization supported both professional and work base courses to prepare team members for strategy implementation. However, some respondents in the operational level seemed to disagree. The finding may imply that even though top and middle levels consider training as a critical strategy implementation task, this consideration does not include all levels.

On the question of whether top management considers developing an implementation plan as a critical strategy implementation strategy, all of the respondents in the top management level indicated that they did. Majority of respondents in the functional level also indicated that top management considers developing an implementation plan as a critical strategy implementation strategy. Meanwhile, there some respondents in this category who thought that top management did not consider developing an implementation plan as a critical strategy implementation strategy since some of the strategies had been executed haphazardly which was an indication of poor planning.

Regarding the question on whether top management considered establishing an internal auditing system as a critical strategy implementation task, respondents from top management unequivocally affirmed that indeed this was the case. Some respondents from the functional also indicated that top management considered establishing an internal auditing system as a critical strategy implementation task. However, they were those that cited lack of adult independence as a loop hole. They were of the opinion that existence of an auditing system was not the issue but rather the independence of such a system. Overall, the following critical strategy implementation tasks were identified: management commitment, team appointment, and training for all levels, developing an implementation plan, and establishing an internal auditing system.

The second objective of the study was to determine the challenges of strategy implementation at Adrian Co Ltd. Study findings indicate that there are various challenges of strategy implementation at Adrian Co Ltd. For instance, some respondents from functional level management indicated that resources and manpower for strategy implementation were inadequate. In still another instance, a respondent quoted poor compensation as a challenge to strategy implementation. According to the respondent, the failure by the management to make cost of living adjustment to the departmental members' salaries had left those embers with low morale.

Some of the respondents in top level management indicated that lack of lower management commitment and resistances from staff were some of the challenges to strategy implementation at Adrian Co. Ltd. In one instance, a respondent from top level management identified external environmental turbulence and the uncertainty of the future as a challenge to strategy implementation. For instance, the depreciation of the Kenya shilling had made importation of cables expensive which had eaten into the revenue basis for the company. This had made it impossible to achieve the revenue goals stipulated in its strategy.

Other challenges included poor training for the current work force, mismatch between strategy and structure and poor bottom up as well as top bottom communication. Organization politics also played a role in strategy implementation as indicated some respondents. In one instance, the respondents indicated that some promotions were awarded on mere sycophancy rather than merit. Another challenge to strategy implementation at Adrian Co. Ltd was identified from the

responses of operation level staff. On the question of how they rated the communication and clarity understanding during strategy implementation, respondents from operation level rated it poorly. The operational level staff indicated that they were rarely consulted or involved in strategy formulation and implementation and that the management rarely bothered to seek input from them. Therefore, it is likely that management did not bother to cultivate staff buy in and involvement from operation level staff.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

It was possible to conclude the following based on the objectives and research questions of the study. The strategy implementation practices carried out by Adrian co Ltd consisted of the following critical tasks; the management commitment, team appointment, training for all levels, developing an implementation plan, and establishing an internal auditing system. It was also possible to conclude that there existed various challenges to strategy implementation at Adrian Co Ltd. These challenges included inadequate resources and manpower for strategy implementation were inadequate, poor compensation as a challenge to strategy implementation ,poor training for the current work force, mismatch between strategy and structure and poor bottom up as well as top bottom communication, organization politics ,communication and clarity understanding during strategy implementation

It was also possible to infer that some of the challenges identified in this study may have been responsible for the inability of Adrian Co ltd to meet its strategic goal as shown by revenue targets. The current study identifies various issues in its problem statement. For example, the strategic goal and objective of realizing a market share of 10 percent of the marketing for the year 2010 was not realized. Adrian Company only managed to achieve a 2 percent market share which is far from the targeted 10 percent. In addition, a customer satisfaction index objective of at least 75 percent was also not realized as evidenced by the many complaints from clients of civil works construction, installation and testing, commissioning and maintenance of telecommunication networks. The findings are useful in ascertaining that the failure to meet the strategic objectives can be attributed to identified challenges strategy implementation. For instance, some of the respondents in top level management indicated that lack of lower management commitment and resistances from staff were some of the challenges to strategy implementation at Adrian Co. Ltd. In one instance, a respondent from top level management identified external environmental turbulence and the uncertainty of the future as a challenge to strategy implementation. Specifically, the depreciation of the Kenya shilling in the year 2010 had made importation of cables expensive which had eaten into the revenue basis for the company. This had made it impossible to achieve the revenue goals stipulated in its strategy

## **5.3 Recommendations**

From the discussions and the conclusions, the researcher recommends that for an efficient and effective strategy implementation process senior management should be involved and committed throughout the process. The management should ensure that the critical strategy implementation tasks are considered during strategy implementation. These tasks include management commitment, team appointment, and training for all levels, developing an implementation plan, and establishing an internal auditing system.

In addition, the management should address the challenges of strategy implementation. The challenges to be addressed include inadequate resources and manpower for strategy implementation were inadequate, poor compensation as a challenge to strategy implementation, poor training for the current work force, mismatch between strategy and structure and poor bottom up as well as top bottom communication, organization politics, communication and clarity understanding during strategy implementation. For instance, regular training should be conducted and compensation should be facilitated through cost of living adjustments (COLA).

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

The researcher recommends that a replicate study be done on other contractors and network providers in the telecommunication industry so as to find out how other companies implement strategy since each company do have a different approach. The researcher further recommends that a similar study be done on other institutions for the purposes of benchmarking. In addition, a statistical regression model should be established to reduce the heat to light ratio on the argument of which challenge needs to be prioritized over others.

Another area of study would be to determine the drivers of competition facing Adrian Co Ltd. This may be complemented by another study on the strategic responses adopted by Adrian Co Ltd. The two studies would be interlinked by a third study on the horizontal and vertical fit of strategy with the internal and external forces, capabilities and resources of Adrian Co Ltd.

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