



STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTY INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN (CIDP) IN BUSIA COUNTY

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Abstract

Strategy implementation has been considered as one of the most problematic and complicated areas in strategic management. While the formulation of a strategy may be considered hard, its implementation is even harder. In Kenya, public institutions, and more specifically, County governments, have formulated strategic plans, including the County Integrated Development Plan. In addition, the county governments have adopted strategic leadership in terms of leading and managing change, strategic direction and competencies development. However, despite the adoption of strategic leadership by County governments, the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan is still low and facing some challenges. This study therefore sought to examine the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County. The study also sought to examine the influence of strategic direction, leading and managing change and competencies development on implementation of County Integrated Development Plan. Explanatory research design was adopted in this study and the target population comprised of 38 chief officers and directors in Busia County. The study used a census approach and hence included all the staff working in 38 chief officers and directors in Busia County. The study used primary data, which was collected by use of a structured questionnaire. Quantitative data was analyzed by use both descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 25). Descriptive statistics include frequency distribution, percentages, measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). This was then followed by inferential statistics such as correlation analysis and regression analysis. The study discovered that strategic direction has a positive and statistically significant effect on the implementation of CIDP. In addition, leading and managing change has a positive significant effect on the implementation of CIDP. The study also established that core competencies development has a positive and significant effect on the implementation of CIDP. The study concludes that strategic direction, leading and managing change and core competencies development have a significant effect on implementation of CIDP in Busia County. The study recommends that County governments in Kenya should ensure the development of a vision and mission to guide decision making, which in turn improves the implementation of their strategies including the CIDP. In addition, leaders at the County government of Busia should be at the forefront in the implementation of CIDP and ensure that there are no bureaucracies and there is easy coordination and supervision of CIDP implementation. Further, the administration of the County government of Busia should ensure frequent review and adherence to staff development policies. Also, leaders in the County government should ensure frequent training of employees as well as operational coaching and mentorship programmes so as to improve the skills of the staff necessary in the implementation of CIDP.

Key Words: Strategic Direction, Leading Change, Competencies Development, Implementation

Introduction

Governments, all over the world, are responsible for ensuring political, economic and social development of their citizens. More specifically, governments provide infrastructure (water, electricity, roads, water, bridges and ports), health services and education facilities among others. Therefore, the success and performance of governments and public institutions are critical to achieving development agenda in the local communities across the world (Weiss, Schneider & Lebid, 2019). For public institutions to ensure achievement of their long-term and short-term goals, they formulate and implement strategies. An improvement in the performance of public institutions calls proper implementation of formulated strategies for organizations to achieve their performance. In order to enhance the performance standards and capabilities of the public service, governments now lay emphasis on efforts that promote the successful implementation of strategies (Mbaka & Mugambi, 2014).

Studies have however shown that between 50% and 90% of formulated strategies in public institutions are never fully implemented (Baroto, Arvand & Ahmad, 2014). As indicated by Nyong'a and Maina (2019) the implementation of strategies necessitates strategic leadership to guide implementation in terms of resource allocation and motivation of the team among other ways. According to Samimi, Cortes, Anderson and Herrmann (2020), strategic leadership is a practice in which executives, using different styles of management, develop a vision for their organization that enables it to adapt to or remain competitive in a changing economic and technological climate. Stringham (2012) highlighted the ability of a leader to lead and manage change as a key characteristic of a strategic leader. However, managing change and ambiguity requires strategic leaders who not only provide a sense of direction, but who can also build ownership and alignment within their workgroups to implement change (Alshawabkeh & Alsawalhah, 2019).

Donate and de Pablo (2015) observed that 83 % of public institutions in China fail to implement their strategies on time and within budget and only 17% managed to implement their strategies successfully. In Malaysia, Mubarak, Wan and Wan (2019) observed that strategic leadership, measured in terms of emphasis on ethical practices, strategic direction and competencies development, has a significant effect on strategy implementation. In South Africa, Hendriks and Reddy (2019) observed that less than 50% of strategies formulated are implemented and that most failures in implementation of strategies emanate from poor leadership skills. Most senior managers are able to successfully formulate their strategies, yet not all are able to successfully implement them and hence 57% of these objectives are never achieved. In Somalia, Muasya (2017) found that strategic leadership in terms of leading and managing change, strategic direction, emphasis on ethical practices and management of organizational resources, had a significant influence on strategic implementation.

Among the County governments in Kenya, one of the main strategic plans adopted is County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), which is a plan prepared by County governments to guide development for a period of five years. According to the Public Finance Management Act, 2012, all funds should be appropriated within the planning framework of the counties. However, despite its development in each County, the implementation of the CIDP has been facing challenges in various counties. For instance, Psiwa, Irungu and Muriithi (2017) observed that the CIDP had been implemented to a moderate extent, Narok County Government had met less than 50% of the performance targets and less than 50% CIDP development projects or interventions had been implemented. The low implementation of CIDP as attributed to leadership challenges within the County. In the County government of Kisii, only 32% of the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) had been implemented (Onderi & Nyakwara, 2020). Among other factors, leadership was

identified as one of the factors affecting the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP). In addition, Kitumu (2016) observed that corporate leadership was one of the main factors affecting implementation of County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) measured in terms of completion time, quality and sustainability in the County government of Makueni.

Statement of the Problem

The implementation of strategies is an important foundation, both in the performance of an organization and in service-delivery (Kitumu, 2016). However, strategy implementation has, over the years, been considered as one of the most problematic and complicated areas in strategic management. According to Mbaka and Mugambi (2014), the formulation of strategies is considered hard, but their implementation is considered harder. Further, different studies conducted in Kenya highlight the high failure rate of strategy implementation. In Kenya, public institutions, and more specifically County governments, have formulated strategic plans, including the County Integrated Development Plan. In addition, the county governments have adopted strategic leadership in terms of leading and managing change, strategic direction and competencies development.

Despite the adoption of strategic direction by County governments, the implementation of CIDP is still low and facing some challenges. For instance, Nyong'a and Maina (2019) observed that most of the County governments in Kenya had implemented less than 40% of their County Integrated Development Plan. In addition, the Commission on Revenue Allocation for 2019/20 indicated that 42 counties had low absorption of development funds, unrealistic projections of own revenues collection, excessive expenditure on non-priority areas and weak monitoring and evaluation frameworks (Commission of Revenue Allocation, 2020). The office of Controller of Budgets indicated that the implementation of CIDP was characterized by delays in approval of key budget documents, inadequate audit function, late financial reports' submission, delays in disbursement of funds by the national government, high levels of pending bills and high wage bills.

Various studies have been conducted in Kenya on strategic leadership and implementation of strategies. For instance, Nyong'a and Maina (2019) examined the relationship between strategic leadership and strategy implementation at Kenya Revenue Authority; Ishaq, Simba and Ahmed (2018) examined the relationship between leadership and strategy implementation in the administration police service in Lamu County; and Tek and Deya (2020) examined the relationship between strategic leadership and implementation of environment and natural resources strategies in Nakuru County. However, the implementation of different strategies in different organizations requires the use of different resources and hence findings from one organization and strategy cannot be used in another organization. This study therefore sought to examine the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County.

The following were the null hypotheses in this study:

H₀₁: Strategic direction has no statistically significant influence on implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County.

H₀₂: Leading and managing change has no statistically significant influence on implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County.

H₀₃: Competencies development has no statistically significant influence on implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County.

Theoretical Framework

Strategic Leadership Theory

House and Baetz are credited with developing strategic leadership theory in 1979. According to the theory, strategic leadership allows corporate leaders to establish and re-create explanations for their organizations' persistent existence (Onchieku & Ragui, 2019). In addition, the theory indicates that strategic leaders shape formation of mission and intent and influence successful strategic actions for formulation as well as execution of strategies which yield competitiveness in their organizations. In addition, the theory suggests that leaders have a potential to influence their followers to help them achieve pre-determined goals and objectives.

In an organization, strategic leadership involves the ability of a leader to provide direction and opportunities for competencies development so as to ensure growth and an improvement in performance (Mulegwa & Imbambi, 2018). In order to successfully deal with organization change, leaders in an organization need tools and skills to both formulate and implement strategy. However, management of change requires leaders who not only provide direction and think strategically, but also those who build alignment and ownership within teams to implement change. For an organization to remain successful, it requires a different way of thinking about how to mobilize resources and efficiently deliver services (Onchieku & Ragui, 2019).

In this study, strategic leadership theory was used to show how strategic leadership influences implementation of strategies such as CIDP. Mintzberg (1978) observes that strategic leadership involves working with others to initiate and manage changes that will create a viable future for the organization and improve implementation of strategies. In the implementation of CIDP, managing change and ambiguity requires strategic leaders who not only provide a sense of direction, but who can also build ownership and alignment within their workgroups to implement change. Further, leaders in CIDP implementation have been empowering their followers by using training programmes and offering scholarships.

The Upper Echelons Theory

The Upper Echelons Theory (UET) is a management theory developed by Hambrick and Mason in 1984. It states that the Top Management Team (TMT) members have the characteristics, with inclusion of values, past experiences, personalities, tend to affect strategic and organizational decisions (Sozen, Rahman & O'Neill, 2022). UET stands on the principal that the outcomes of an organizational have direct impact on knowledge, expertise and experiences of the individuals taking prominent managerial organization roles. The authors introduced a model for management to address organizational life. Strategic choices made from this function were of unique characteristics exhibiting the individuals themselves. The choices of different individuals have a direct impact on strategy implementation. Lee, Kim and Moon (2016) indicate that focus need be directly related to the readily observable data, which reflect on individual characteristics regarding professional, educational, and social backgrounds. .

By the collection of data and analysis, UET can state the outcomes in the organisational, and the prediction to some degree based on executive management characteristics (Weiss, Schneider & Lebid, 2019). Owing to that cognitions, perceptions, values of TMT employees are tough to measure, UET tend to lay focus in examining the demographics in the suggestion that the managerial characteristics have resonated proxies to tackle the core variances in the aspects of values, cognition, and perceptions (Sozen, Rahman & O'Neill, 2022). The variables of age, years, and specific work experience, as well

as educational background are of use in predicting actions of the TMT employees in strategic organizational decision making.

Upper echelons theory was used to explain the association between strategic leadership and strategy implementation. The characteristics of strategic leadership are built up within leaders out of their experiences, personalities and values. Therefore, the ability of leaders in CIDP implementation to develop the core competencies of the employees, provide strategic direction as well as lead change is influenced by the managerial background characteristics and the experience of a leader. The outcome of an organization (performance) depends of the managerial background characteristics of a leader as it influences the ability of a leader to provide direction, motivate employees and lead change.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework refers to the diagrammatical visualization of theoretical aspects of a particular research so as to show the existing relationship between variables. The independent variables in the study were strategic direction, leading and managing change and competencies development. The dependent variable was implementation of County Integrated Development Plan.

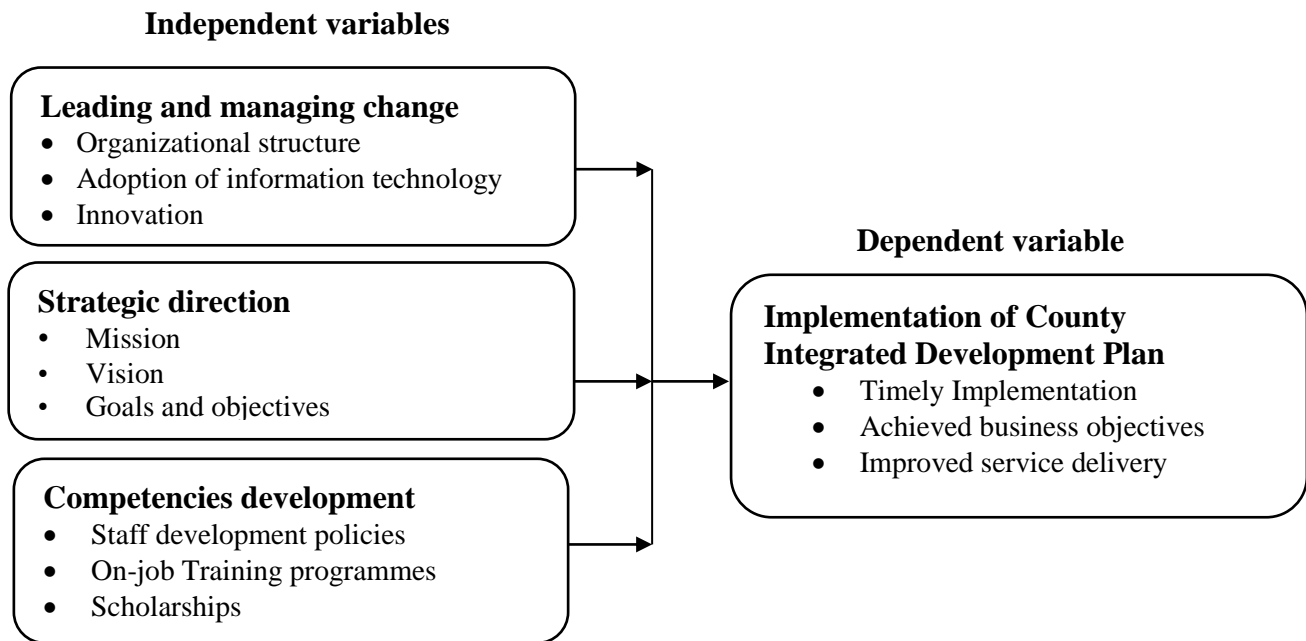


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review of Literature

This section covers empirical literature on the effect of strategic direction, leading and managing change and competencies development on implementation of County Integrated Development Plan.

Strategic Direction and Implementation of CIDP

Strategic direction refers to the central forces that propel an organization towards its intended objectives and goals. According to Lee *et al.* (2016), the vision and purpose of a firm streamline the employee behavior, in the entire organization. The establishment of the vision enables all individuals to understand it and live with it. It also provides energy and drive among employees and leaders and

makes them their organizational vision and purpose. Mubarak, Wan and Wan (2019) studied the effect of strategic direction on strategy implementation. The study adopted mixed research designs which include descriptive, quantitative and qualitative designs. The results indicated that strategic direction had an effect on strategy implementation.

Wakhisi (2021) examined the relationship between strategic direction and organization performance of state-owned sugar manufacturing firms in Western Kenya. The study adopted a survey research design and the population was 917 employees from Chemelil, South Nyanza, Muhoroni, and Nzoia. Data was collected by use of questionnaires. The results indicated that strategic direction, measured in terms of vision, mission, strategic goals, objectives, strategic plan, had a statistically significant effect on organization performance of state-owned sugar manufacturing firms in Western Kenya.

Among selected multinational agrochemical companies, Makori and Waithaka (2019) examined the role of strategic direction in strategy implementation. This study utilized an explorative research design. Target population was 70 individuals from seven multinational agrochemical companies in Kenya. The result showed that strategy implementation at the selected multinational agrochemical companies could be attributed to strategic direction in terms of goals, mission, vision and strategic objectives.

Leading and Managing Change and Implementation of CIDP

Leading people is an important in organizations. Change management is critical in assisting workers in coping with the never-ending shifts that occur in the workplace (Alshawabkeh & Alsawalhah, 2019). Workers and employees benefit from the transition because their talents, attitudes, abilities, expertise, and efficiency in their fields increase. To remain relevant, organizations consider leading and managing people as well as general organizational change. In the United States, Carroll (2021) examined leadership strategies for implementing organizational change. The study made use of a descriptive research design and the population consisted of 4 business leaders from 4 heating, ventilation, and air conditioning companies who successfully implemented change initiatives within their organization. The four businesses have fewer than 100 employees located in Charlotte, North Carolina. The results indicated that improving leadership support, enhancing stakeholders' involvement, improving communication, and strengthening organizational culture had an influence on change management.

In addition, Aarons, Ehrhart and Farahnak (2018) examined leadership and organizational change for implementation (LOCI) in the United States. The study was a randomized mixed method pilot study of a leadership and organization development intervention for evidence-based practice implementation. The population covered 12 mental health service team leaders and their staff from three different agencies that provide mental health services to children and families in California. The results indicated that LOCI training and organizational strategy intervention in regard to feasibility, acceptability, and perceived utility, as well as impact on leader and supervisee-rated outcomes. LOCI may be a viable strategy to support organizations in preparing for the implementation and sustainment of evidence-based practice (EBP).

In Kenya, Riwo-Abudho, Njanja and Ochieng (2012) examined the role of strategic leadership during change. The study employed survey research design with a sample of 173 respondents drawn from executive directors, senior managers and managers through stratified sampling. Self-administered questionnaires and personal interviews were used as well as data from books, journals, periodicals, company reports, press releases and the internet. The results indicated that strategic leadership is

ultimate for success of change programs as it directs all organization resources towards a common goal by effectively motivating employees to achieve a desired common change vision.

At the United Nations Office, Mudanya (2017) examined the effect of change management practices on the implementation of enterprise resource planning. Primary data was collected through a census, by sending questionnaires electronically to 146 staff of the division of conference services in United Nations Office at Nairobi. The results indicated that change management practices such as strategic vision, leadership, communication and staff empowerment had a significant influence on implementation of enterprise resource planning at the United Nations Office.

Competencies development and Implementation of CIDP

Strategic leaders are corporate managers who make decisions in helping their organizations in the developing, maintaining, strengthening, leveraging, and exploiting core competencies (Rotich & Osodo, 2017). The exploitation of core competencies in a firm involves the sharing of resources in all units. Core competencies, in any organization, cannot be adequately developed or even exploited devoid of the appropriate human capital. Core competencies can be described as skills and resources that provide an organization with a competitive advantage (Ishaq, Simba & Ahmed, 2018).

In Machakos County Government, Mutuku (2021) examined the effect of employee training on strategy implementation. The research adopted a descriptive research approach and used 196 employees as the target population. The results indicated that employee training, measured in terms of training methods, training programs and delivery style, had a significant effect on strategy implementation in Machakos County government measured in terms of achievement of goals, amount of revenue collected and number of customer complaints.

At Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission in North Rift and Western Regions, Rotich and Osodo (2017) examined the effect of employee training on strategy implementation. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The target population was 139 employees and 3 regional managers at Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission regions of North Rift and Western Regions. The findings show that employee training has a significant effect on strategy implementation at IEBC in North Rift and Western Regions.

At the Kenya Wildlife Services, Barmasai (2016) examined the effect of staff competencies on strategy implementation. The study adopted a descriptive research design and the target population was 166 members of staff in different managerial levels currently working at the Kenya Wildlife Services. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data. The findings revealed that staff competencies had a positive influence on implementation of strategic plans at Kenya Wildlife Services. The findings indicated that lack of essential competencies among staff members such as knowledge, skills and abilities impede implementation.

In Kenya Copyright Board, Ketty and Juma (2018) examined the effect of strategic training and strategy implementation. This study employed a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was all (42) officers currently serving at the Kenya copyright Board. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The results showed that strategic training had a positive influence on the ability of the employee to perform given tasks. Through need based, competence and demand driven training, employees are equipped with the necessary skills to take on important tasks and they work efficiently and are personally responsible for their job outcomes.

Research Methodology

Explanatory research design was adopted in this study. Explanatory research is conducted in order to identify the extent and nature of cause-and-effect relationships (Babbie, 2017). Explanatory research design was used to explain the cause and effect relationship between strategic leadership and implementation of County Integrated Development Plan. The population of this study comprised of 38 chief officers and directors in Busia County. The study used a census approach and hence included all the 38 chief officers and directors in the study. One of the advantages of census is that the results drawn by conducting a census are accurate and reliable while there are chances of errors in the results drawn from the sample (Kumar, 2019).

The study used primary data, which was collected by use of a structured questionnaire. A structured questionnaire comprised of closed ended questions. Structured questions included likert scale and nominal scale. The study used a five point Likert scale to collect data on the dependent variable and the independent variables. Nominal scale was used to collect data on the demographic information of the respondents. Questionnaires are easy to administer and large amounts of information can be obtained from a large number of respondents (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Questionnaires are also cost-effective when the researchers aim to target a large population.

A structured questionnaire produces quantitative data. The quantitative data was edited, coded and entered into statistical software known as the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 25). Quantitative data was analyzed by use both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics include frequency distribution, percentages, measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). This was then followed by inferential statistics such as correlation analysis and regression analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was used to establish the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The results were then presented in tables and figures such as bar charts and pie charts. Multi regression model was as follows;

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

Whereby; Y = Implementation of County Integrated Development Plan; B_0 = Constant; β_1 - β_3 =Coefficients of determination; X_1 = Strategic direction; X_2 = Leading and managing change; X_3 = Competencies development; ε = Error term

Research Findings and Discussion

The target population of this study comprised of 38 chief officers and directors in Busia County, out of which, 35 respondents successfully filled and returned their questionnaires. This provided 92.11% response rate. According to Babbie (2017), a response rate of 75% is adequate for analysis, for making conclusions and making inferences on a population. In addition, Creswell and Creswell (2017) indicate that a response rate of 60% and above is acceptable for analysis. This implies that the response rate (92.11%) was adequate for analysis, drawing conclusions and reporting.

Strategic Direction and Strategy Implementation

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with various statements in regard to strategic direction and the implementation of County integrated development plan. The respondents agreed with a mean of 4.371 (SD=0.770) that the organization's mission serves as a guide in decision-making. In addition, they agreed that the mission of the organization clearly states its purpose as shown by a mean of 4.314 (SD=0.963). These findings conform to Lee et al. (2016)

argument that organization's mission is a short statement that explains why an entity exists, what its ultimate purpose is, and what its operational goals are. Moreover, with a mean of 3.971 (SD=0.954) the respondents agreed that the mission of the organization targets shareholders, employees and leaders.

With a mean of 4.171 (SD=0.891), the respondents agreed that the organizations' vision inspires people to commit, to persist and to give their best. Moreover, they agreed that the mission of the organization shapes strategy as shown by a mean of 4.029 (SD=1.071). These findings are in line with Makori and Waithaka (2019) discoveries that in a firm, vision statements are most often associated with strategic planning and focus on where the company wants to go in the future. Furthermore, they agreed that the vision of the organization pulls in people, ideas, and other resources. This is shown by a mean of 3.943 (SD=0.968).

The respondents agreed with a mean of 4.286 (SD=0.825) that goals motivate and inspire employees in the organization. Moreover, the respondents agreed that goals enable the organization to evaluate and control performance as shown by a mean of 4.200 (SD=0.994). These findings conform to Wakhisi (2021) findings that goals help in assessment, build teamwork, expose priorities, and concentrate collaboration. They also agreed that goals in the organization facilitate planning as shown by a mean of 4.171 (SD=1.071). Moreover, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.143 (SD=0.845) that the vision of the organization helps the staff to keep focused and work together.

Table 2: Aspects of Strategic Direction

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The mission of our organization clearly states its purpose.	4.314	0.963
The organization's mission serves as a guide in decision-making.	4.371	0.770
The mission of our organization targets shareholders, employees and leaders	3.971	0.954
The mission of the organization shapes strategy	4.029	1.071
The vision of the organization pulls in people, ideas, and other resources	3.943	0.968
An organizations vision inspires people to commit, to persist and to give their best.	4.171	0.891
The vision of the organization helps staff to keep focused and work together	4.143	0.845
Goals in the organization facilitate planning	4.171	1.071
Goals motivate and inspire employees in the organization	4.286	0.825
Goals enable the organization to evaluate and control performance	4.200	0.994

Leading and Managing Change and Strategy Implementation

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with various statement on leading and managing change and implementation of County integrated development plan. With a mean of 3.371 (SD=1.140), the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that task allocation in the organization is fair. Moreover, the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that there have been frequent changes in the structure of the organization as indicated by a mean of 3.029 (SD=1.175). These findings are contrary to Aarons, Ehrhart and Farahnak (2018) arguments that the organization should change the structure of the organization to ensure it has no weakness and enable explicit assignment of roles for various roles as well as processes to various entities, including the branch, workgroup, department and employee. However, the respondents disagreed with a mean of 2.486 (SD=1.197) with the statement indicating that there are no bureaucracies in the organization.

The respondents agreed with a mean of 3.743 (SD=0.919) that the organization has adopted information technology in the finance department. However, the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that there is easy coordination and supervision in the organization as shown by a mean of 3.400 (SD=1.006). These findings are contrary to Mudanya (2017) arguments that the adoption of ITs in the organization is an essential decision for the growth, competitiveness, productivity, and survival of non-governmental organizations since it makes coordination and supervision easy. Moreover, the respondents were neutral on the statement indicating that the organization has adopted information technology in human resources. This is shown by a mean of 2.943 (SD=1.162).

With a mean of 3.400 (SD=1.218), the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that there is knowledge sharing in the organization. They were also neutral with the statement indicating that information technology has been adopted in service delivery as shown by a mean = 3.314, SD=1.231). Moreover, the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that the organization encourages creativity among staff as shown by a mean of 2.914 (SD=1.246) that. These findings contrary to Riwo-Abudho *et al.* (2012) argument that the organization should encourage creativity among employees since it improves productivity, improves efficiency in service delivery, creates new partnerships and relationships, improves customer satisfaction and enables problem solving and provides creative insight that allows the management to look at things from a different perspective. The respondents disagreed with the statement indicating that the organization has a research and development department as shown by a mean=1.971, SD=1.071).

Table 3: Aspects of Leading and Managing Change

	Mean	Std. Deviation
There have been frequent changes in the structure of the organization	3.029	1.175
Task allocation in the organization is fair	3.371	1.140
There are no bureaucracies in the organization	2.486	1.197
There is easy coordination and supervision in the organization	3.400	1.006
The organization has adopted information technology in human resources	2.943	1.162
The organization has adopted information technology in finance department	3.743	0.919
Information technology has been adopted in service delivery	3.314	1.231
The organization has a research and development department	1.971	1.071
The organization encourages creativity among staff	2.914	1.246
There is knowledge sharing in the organization	3.400	1.218

Competencies Development and Strategy Implementation

The respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with various statement concerning competencies development and implementation of County integrated development plan. The respondents were neutral on the statement indicating that the organization has staff development policies as shown by a mean of 3.343 (SD=1.056). Moreover, the respondents disagreed with a mean of 2.486 (SD=1.121) with the statement indicating that the organization strictly adheres to staff development policies. These findings are contrary to Rotich and Osodo (2017) arguments that conforming to staff development policies improve and enrich the lives of all employees through organizational, career, and personal development. Furthermore, the respondents disagreed with the statement indicating that staff development policies are frequently revised. This is shown by a mean of 2.457 (SD=1.120).

With a mean of 3.743 (SD=1.094), the respondents agreed with the statement indicating that training

programmes in the organization improves employee productivity and performance. These findings concur with Ishaq, Simba and Ahmed (2018) findings that training increases productivity and performance, creates uniformity of work processes, minimizes employee supervision, improves organizational structure and boosts employees' morale. Furthermore, the respondents were neutral on the statement indicating that the organization offers training programmes for all staff as shown by a mean of 2.914 (SD=1.197). Moreover, the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that there are mentorship and coaching programmes in the organization as indicated by a mean of 2.857 (SD=1.216).

With a mean of 2.257 (SD=1.010) the respondents disagreed with the statement indicating that scholarships in the organization cover tuition fee. Moreover, they disagreed with the statement indicating that the organization offers scholarships to staff, as shown by a mean of 2.229 (SD=1.285). These findings are contrary to Ketty and Juma (2018) arguments that an organization should offer scholarship to the employees to encourage diversity in the organizations' workforce, help achieve specific objectives, creates a resource for future recruitment, attract and retain loyal employees through an employee benefit programme and raise the profile and awareness of a company and products among the brightest talents of tomorrow. Moreover, the respondents disagreed with the statement indicating that scholarships in the organization cover individual expenses. This was shown by a mean of 2.057 (SD= 0.873).

Table 4: Aspects of Competencies Development

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our organization has staff development policies	3.343	1.056
Staff development policies are frequently revised	2.457	1.120
Our organization strictly adheres to staff development policies	2.486	1.121
There are mentorship and coaching programmes in our organization	2.857	1.216
The organization offers training programmes for all staff	2.914	1.197
Training programmes in the organization improves employee productivity and performance	3.743	1.094
Our organization offers scholarships to staff	2.229	1.285
Scholarships in our organization cover tuition fee	2.257	1.010
Scholarships in our organization cover individual expenses	2.057	0.873

Implementation of County Integrated Development Plan

The implementation of county integrated development plan was the dependent variable in this study. Timely implementation, achieved business objectives and improved service delivery were used as the measures of implementation of County Integrated Development Plan. The respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with various statements regarding the implementation of county integrated development plan. The respondents agreed with a mean of 4.400 (SD=0.976) that completion within the schedule depends on factors like funding and seriousness of the team members. Furthermore, they agreed that some strategies take more time that required as shown by a mean of 3.943 (SD=0.765). Nonetheless, the respondents were neutral with mean of 2.686 (SD=1.231) on the statement indicating that strategies are always completed within the specified time.

The respondents agreed with a mean of 4.400 (SD=0.881) that most strategies are left unimplemented due to insufficient budget. They also agreed that some strategies incur cost overrun. This is shown by a

mean of 3.943 (SD=0.906). However, the respondents were neutral with a mean of 2.800 (SD=1.106) on the statement indicating that strategies are completed within the specified budget.

With a mean of 3.457 (SD=1.039), the respondents were neutral with the statement indicating that strategies achieve the intended objectives. Moreover, they were neutral with mean of 3.200 (SD=1.052) on the statement indicating that they have received few complaints regarding performance of the projects. Moreover, the respondents were neutral with a mean of 2.857 (SD=1.192) on the statement indicating that strategies always achieve their targets. The respondents were also neutral with a mean of 2.857 (SD=1.033) with the statement indicating that stakeholders are satisfied with strategies implemented.

Table 5: Aspects of Implementation of County Integrated Development Plan

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strategies are always completed within the specified time	2.686	1.231
Some strategies take more time that required	3.943	0.765
Completion within the schedule depends on factors like funding and seriousness of the team members	4.400	0.976
Strategies are completed within the specified budget	2.800	1.106
Some strategies incur cost overrun	3.943	0.906
Most strategies are left unimplemented due to insufficient budget	4.400	0.881
Strategies achieve the intended objectives	3.457	1.039
Strategies always achieve their targets	2.857	1.192
Stakeholders are satisfied with strategies implemented	2.857	1.033
We have received few complaints regarding performance of the projects	3.200	1.052

Inferential Statistics

The inferential statistics including multivariate regression and correlation analysis were used to show the effect of strategic direction, leading and managing change and competencies development on the implementation of CIDP.

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was deployed to assess the strength of the relationship between independent variables (strategic direction, leading and managing change, competencies development) and the dependent variable (implementation of CIDP). The study findings indicated that there exists a positive and significant relationship between strategic direction and implementation of County integrated development plan ($r=0.514$, $p\text{-value}=0.002$). Besides that, the p -value was less than the significance level of 0.05 hence, the relationship was considered to be significant. The findings concur with Wakhisi (2021) discoveries that strategic direction had a statistically significant effect on organization performance of state-owned sugar manufacturing firms in Western Kenya

Moreover, the findings revealed that there exists a positive and significant relationship between leading and managing change and the implementation of County integrated development plan ($r=0.584$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). Since the p -value was less than 0.05 (significance level), the relationship was considered to be significant. The results conform to Mudanya (2017) arguments that change

management practices had a significant influence on implementation of enterprise resource planning at the United Nations Office.

The study found a positive and significant relationship between core competencies development and the implementation of County integrated development plan ($r=0.688$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). Since the p -value was less than the significance level of 0.05, the relationship was considered to be significant. These findings are in line with Rotich and Osodo (2017) arguments that core competencies development has a significant effect on strategy implementation at IEBC in North Rift and Western Regions.

Table 6: Correlation Coefficients

		Implementation of County Integrated Development Plan	Strategic Direction	Leading and Managing Change	Core Competencies Development
Implementation of County Integrated Development Plan	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	1 35			
Strategic Direction	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	.514** .002 35	1		
Leading and Managing Change	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	.584** .000 35	.062 .161 35	1	
Core Competencies Development	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2- tailed) N	.688** .000 35	.107 .100 35	.152 .101 35	1

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

Regression Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis was employed in this study to examine the association between independent variables (strategic direction, leading and managing change, competencies development) and the dependent variable (implementation of CIDP). According to Table 7, the R-squared for the relationship between strategic leadership and implementation of CIDP was 0.518. This means that 51.8% of the variation of dependent variable (implementation of CIDP) could be explained by independent study variables (strategic direction, leading and managing change, competencies development).

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.720 ^a	.518	.472	.44468

a. Predictors: (Constant), Core Competencies Development, Strategic Direction, Leading and Managing Change

The ANOVA was conducted in this study to establish whether or not the model was a good fit for the data. The F-calculated was 11.120, and the F-critical from the F-distribution table was 2.91. The model was considered a good fit for the data because the F-calculated was more than the F-critical and p-value (0.000) was less than than 0.05 (significance level).

Table 8: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.597	3	2.199	11.120	.000 ^b
	Residual	6.130	31	.198		
	Total	12.727	34			

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of County Integrated Development Plan

b. Predictors: (Constant), Core Competencies Development, Strategic Direction, Leading and Managing Change

Regression equation was;

$$Y = 1.283 + 0.314X_1 + 0.165X_2 + 0.401 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The study indicated that strategic direction has a positive and significant effect on the implementation of CIDP in Busia County ($\beta_1=0.314$, p-value=0.021). The association was considered significant because the p-value (0.000) was less than the significance level of 0.05. These findings support Makori and Waithaka (2019) arguments that strategy implementation at the selected multinational agrochemical companies could be attributed to strategic direction in terms of goals, mission, vision and strategic objectives. Furthermore, results discovered that leading and managing change has a significant and positive effect on the implementation of CIDP in Busia County ($\beta_2=0.165$, p value=0.036). Since the p-value was less than the significance level of 0.05, the relationship was considered to be significant. The findings are consistent with those of Carroll (2021) who found that improving leadership support had an influence on strategy implementation. Furthermore, the study found that core competencies development has a positive and significant effect on the implementation of CIDP in Busia County ($\beta_3=0.401$; p-value=0.012). Since the p-value was less than the significance level of 0.05, the relationship was considered to be significant. These findings support Mutuku (2021) argument that core competencies development had a significant effect on strategy implementation in Machakos County government.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	(Constant)	1.283	0.313		4.099	0.000
	Strategic Direction	0.314	0.110	0.304	2.855	0.021
1	Leading and Managing Change	0.165	0.079	0.158	2.089	0.036
	Core Competencies Development	0.401	0.112	0.389	3.580	0.012

Conclusion

The study concludes that strategic direction has a positive and statistically significant effect on the implementation of CIDP in Busia County. This implies that an improvement in strategic direction (mission, vision and goals and objectives) would increase the implementation of CIDP. The study concludes that leading and managing change had a significant and positive effect on the implementation of CIDP in Busia County. This implies that an improvement in leading and managing change (organizational structure, adoption of information technology and innovation) would increase the implementation of CIDP. The study concludes that core competencies development has a positive and significant effect on the implementation of CIDP in Busia County. This implies that an improvement in core competencies development (staff development policies, on-job training programmes and scholarships) would improve the implementation of CIDP.

Recommendations

The study found that strategic direction in terms of mission, vision and strategic objectives have an influence on the implementation of CIDP. This study therefore recommends that County governments in Kenya should ensure the development of a vision and mission to guide decision making, which in turn improves the implementation of their strategies including the CIDP. In addition, the administration of the County government should come up with clear and measurable strategic objectives to enable the implementation of CIDP within budget and timeline.

The study found that leading and managing change have has an influence on implementation of CIDP. The study therefore recommends that leaders of the County government of Busia should be at the forefront in the implementation of CIDP. This should be done by showing support in the adoption of innovations and information technology important in the implementation of CIDP and service delivery in the County government. In addition, leaders should ensure that there are no bureaucracies and there is easy coordination and supervision of CIDP implementation.

The study found that competencies development have an influence on implementation of CIDP. The study therefore recommends that administration of the County government of Busia should ensure frequent review and adherence to staff development policies. Also, leaders in the County government should ensure frequent training of employees as well as operational coaching and mentorship programmes so as to improve the skills of the staff necessary in the implementation of CIDP. Further, the County government of Busia should ensure that there scholarships offered to the staff so as to help them improve their skills and competence.

Areas for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County. Nonetheless, the scope of the study was confined to Busia County CIDP and hence the findings cannot be generalized to other counties in Kenya. Therefore, more studies ought to be carried out to investigate the role of strategic leadership in the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in other Counties in Kenya. Furthermore, the study discovered that leading and managing change, strategic direction and competencies development explain 51.8% of implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County. As a result, more research is needed to investigate other factors that influence the implementation of County Integrated Development Plan in Busia County.

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