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COMMUNICATION AS A FACTOR AFFECTING EFFECTIVE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine communication as a factor affecting effective strategy implementation in the banking industry in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This research limited itself to four selected commercial banks in Kakamega County covering a sample of 25 respondents drawn from 85 employees of Kenya commercial bank, Equity Bank, Co-operative bank and National bank. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used. The study relied on primary data which was obtained through a structured questionnaire. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The result of this study reveals that a relationship exists between communication and strategy implementation in the banking industry in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study recommends that managers should communicate with employees regularly to enhance strategy implementation.

Keywords: Strategy Implementation, strategy, Communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to attain corporate objectives organizations have found it necessary to embrace strategic management. Strategic management adoption subsumes that firms engage in formulation of strategy which, if successfully implemented would result in firm success. Strategy implementation being an important component of strategic management process entails strategy formulation, implementation, monitoring and control. Implementation involves transforming developed strategies into action (Shah**,** 1996).

According to Pearce and Robinson (2007) strategy aims to provide direction to an organization to enable it achieve its objectives while it responds to opportunities and threats in the environment. Ramesh (2011) asserted that Strategy implementation entailed organizing firm's resources and motivating staff to achieve objectives. Strategy implementation being a component of strategic management refers to a set of decisions and actions resulting in formulation and implementation of long term plans formed to achieve organizational objectives (Pearce and Robinson, 2003). Strategy formulation or strategic planning has attracted more attention relating to strategic and organizational research unlike strategy implementation. According to Alexander (2011) people overlook strategy implementation

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since they believe it can be done by anyone and people are not sure of what it entails and where it starts and ends.

According to Mintzberg and Quinn (2009) strategy is a pattern or a plan that integrates organization's major goals, policies and action into a cohesive whole. According to Pearce and Robinson (2011) strategic management is a set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation and control of plans that are desired to achieve organization's objectives, mission and vision within the environment the business operates. Few formulated strategies are successfully implemented (Mintzberg, 1990). Nutt (1998) revealed that strategies that fail when implemented can prove to be costly, in terms of forgone benefits and formulation costs associated with time and financial commitments. Successful strategy implementation should be made a priority in the banking industry if superior performance is to be realized.

The banking industry is highly competitive, with banks not only competing amongst each other; but also with non-banks and other financial institutions (Hull, 2002). The Banking industry in Kenya is governed by the Companies Act, the Banking Act, the Central Bank of Kenya Act and the various prudential guidelines issued by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK, 2009).

The Kenyan banking sector is comprised of 43 commercial banks, 1 mortgage finance company,

12 microfinance banks, 8 representative offices of foreign banks,14 money remittance providers, 86 foreign exchange bureaus and 3 credit reference bureaus (CBK, 2015). The banks have come together under the Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) which serves as a lobby for the banking sector's interests. Commercial banks play an important role in mobilizing financial resources for investment by mobilizing investors and boosting businesses as well as offering financial services to the public with the aim of making profit.

Kakamega County hosts several commercial banking branches including Kenya Commercial Bank, Barclay's Bank, National Bank, Co-operative Bank, Equity Bank, family bank, Post bank, National Bank, Equatorial Commercial Bank, Standard Chartered Bank and all do thriving business.

1.1. Statement of the problem

Research work according to Raps and Kauffman (2005) has revealed that companies, including banks, invest a lot of resources in crafting strategies to deal with the changes in the environment, competition, and also to respond to the ever changing needs of the customers.

Today, banking industry face a variety of challenges, including competition from global markets, restructuring by down-sizing, mergers, acquisitions, technological changes, increased awareness and demands from customers (Balogun and Hailey, 2004). Further Ngure (2013) concerted that in order to compete in an industry characterized by rivalry and competition it's necessary to adopt strategies that not only provide competitive advantage but also successful implementation of strategies. Commercial banks in Kenya employ various strategies such as introduction of unique products and emphasis on good customer relations management so as to maintain brand leadership and customer loyalty (kibet, 2014).

According to Mintzenberg and Quins(1991) 90% of well formulated strategies fail at Implementation stage. After a strategy has been formulated challenges may arise during implementation. Noble (1999) argues that if strategies are not successfully implemented they may fail to give superior performance for the organization.

A number of studies have been carried out on strategy implementation in Kenya in various organizations. Messah and Mucai (2011) carried out an analysis of factors influencing the implementation of strategic management plans in selected tertiary institutions in Meru central District in Kenya. Wanyonyi (2011) set out to evaluate the factors and challenges influencing strategy implementation by commercial banks in Kenya. Wangari (2011) conducted a study on Strategy implementation challenges faced by National Hospital Insurance Fund in Kenya. Magambo (2012) studied the challenges of strategy implementation in public corporation in Kenya, The study established that inadequate funds, untimely distribution of funds, political interference, the staff resistance to change and lack of skill was a great challenge to the implementation strategies in the organizations. Mukola (2012) investigated Challenges facing Kenya medical research institute in the implementation of the automation strategy. Madegwa (2014) carried out a study on Factors affecting strategy implementation in government parastatals: Case of National Cereals and Produce Board of Kenya. The study sought to determine the effects of top management commitment, coordination of activities, individual responsibilities and organization culture on strategy implementation at National Cereals and Produce Board. Mukhalasie (2014) analyzed the factors affecting strategy implementation in Kenya Commercial Bank. The study found that organizational processes, organizational culture and organizational structure influence strategy implementation to a great extent .Malei (2015) carried out a study on Institutional factors influencing implementation of strategic plans in government hospitals in Kitui Central sub-county, Kitui County, Kenya and found that organizational structures, human resource, adequate financial resources, monitoring and evaluation influence implementation of strategic plans.

A review of the above studies indicates that most of them focused on the general factors affecting strategy implementation. Very few have attempted to investigate in detail how each of those individual factors affect strategy implementation in various organizations thus creating a gap that this research attempts to fill. Consequently, this study seeks to establish the relationship between communication and strategy implementation where the context of focus was the banking industry in Kakamega County by attempting to answer the question: Does communication affect effective strategy implementation in the banking industry in Kakamega County, Kenya?

1.2 Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine Communication as a factor affecting effective strategy implementation inthe banking industry in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.3 Research Question

How does communication affect effective strategy implementation in the banking industry in Kakamega County, Kenya?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical framework

Communications Theory

In this study, the researchers' theoretical framework was based on "The Communication theory". According to Leonarda and Susana (2009) communication theory outlines how the elements of communication processes would engage the others in dialogue. Wolfgang (2006) posited that the presence of a common language between sender and receiver enhances communication.

According to Shannon & Weaver (1949) communication process consists of seven steps: message, encoding, transmitting, receiving, decoding, understanding and feedback. Thus according to Shannon the first source which is the information source produces messages to be communicated to the receiving terminal. There is a need to personally inform staff of new policies and innovations in the banking industry to enable members of staff to be aware and participate effectively in issues that concern them. The source of any information should be clear. Secondly which is encoding is where the sender operates on the message to produce a signal suitable for transmission over the channel. Third is the medium used to transmit the signal from transmitter to receiver. The channel used should be adequate and free from barriers. The message can be transmitted by memo, phone call, face to face etc. Fourth, is the receiver which performs the inverse operation of that done by the transmitter, reconstructing the message from the signal. Fifth is the destination that is the person (or thing) for whom the message is intended. Sixth is the message from the receiver that confirms receipt that implies information or communication and the seventh item for effective communication is feedback which in strategic terms is the actualization of what has been communicated**.** It is through feedback that information achieves its desired results. According to Berrels A. (2010) effective communication takes place when the receiver understands the meaning intended and reacts accordingly. Thus managers need to communicate and interact effectively, so as to succeed in implementing strategies in the banking industry.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structure of concepts and or theories which are put together as a map for the study and it shows the relationship of research variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). The conceptual framework is used to explain the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The independent variable is communication while strategy implementation is the dependent variable. This relationship is diagrammatically shown in Figure 1 below.

Independent variable **Dependent Variable**

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

2.2 Communication

Communication involves explaining to the employees their new responsibilities, tasks, and duties needed to implement strategies. Further it explains reasons for changed job activities and why the new strategic decision was made. Thus efficient communication should explain the new duties, responsibilities and obligations which are to be carried in a given organization. “Communication refers to the process by which information is transmitted and understood between two or more people” (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005).

According to Haiemann (2011) communication involves imparting ideas and making oneself understood by others. Peter (2015) asserted that effective communication was a process by which sender of message, received feedback from receiver intended.

According to Mazzola and Kellermanns (2010) for effective strategy implementation effective communication is a requirement. Quirke (2008) also posits that communication is vital as people need to understand the strategy, its context and the rationale behind it. Scholars and academics have perceived communication as being important to an organization since its needed for exchanging opinions, exchanging information, making plans and proposals, reaching agreement, executing decisions, sending and fulfilling orders and conducting sales (Blalock, 2005; Alyssa, 2006; Kotler, 2006; amongst others).Communication enhances achievement of the organizational goals or objectives through directing and mobilizing and creating understanding thus enhancing cooperation and effective performance amongst the workforce (Stephen, 2011),

According to Heideet al. (2002) communication barriers include lack of communication skills, lack of sensitivity of receiver, insufficient knowledge on the subject, emotional interference, information overload, conflicting messages, physical distractions, long communication chain, channel barriers, inadequate feedback and absence of feedback. Thus Organizations should strive to eliminate communication barriers as they constitute the key barriers when implementing strategy.

Organizations should ensure that Strategies are communicated, understood and properly coordinated with stakeholders inside and outside the organization as the formulated strategy would be useless if it is poorly communicated (Henry, 2008).According to Mazzola & Kellermanns (2010) barriers to successful strategy implementation are created due to lack of knowledge by the employees. An organization must first persuade its employees about the importance of strategy before turning to its customers (Mazzola & Kellermanns, 2010).

Alexander (2006) pointed that due to lack of communication employees are not able to solicit questions and feedback, to know their new roles and to know the reasons for the changes. Li, Guohui and Eppler (2008) found out that those employees in supportive and open communication climates performed better than those in restrictive communication environment Aosa (1992) postulated that effective communication will energize people into fully participating in the firm activities thus it’s vital for people to be involved in the implementation of strategic plan.

An excellent strategy may increase a company’s competitive advantage and performance. Enterprises fail during execution because they neglect decision rights and information flow and focus on structural reorganization which produces only short-term gains (Blahová, 2011). In their discussion regarding the connection between communication and strategy Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2006) concluded that by managing communication so as to mold perceptions and interpretations, a company can establish competitive advantage.

Bhatti (2011) asserts that for strategy implementation to be successful, job descriptions should be defined and implementation tools such as technology and information should be accessible for staff. According to Heide, Gronhaug and Johannessen (2002). Communication barriers supersedes other type of barriers, such as learning barriers organizational structure barriers, cultural barriers or personnel management barriers. Oyaro (2013) alluded that effective communication in an organization connects it towards a set goal thus it's very useful during strategy implementation.

Kibet (2014) reiterated that strategy implementation problems arose due to absence of effective communication and hence misunderstanding and misrepresentation could be minimized with a proper communication system. Corporate communication function being a department or unit has a role to enhance implementation of strategy through communication (Forman & Argenti, 2005).

Kouzes and Pozner (2003) alluded that information sharing was essential for the development of people's capacity and people get to know what's to be done and reason why the thing is being done. In communicating strategy, the organization is communicating change. Communication is a process of effecting change to a system. Communication involves alignment of the extent and scope of change and the implementation approaches to the values and principles outlined in the related policy document (Jones, 2008). Bennebroek-Gravenhorst et. al. (2006) proved that distribution of information and actual communication regarding the need for the change and the objectives of the modification in business organization are also critical. According to Jones (2008) if implementers communicate what they want to achieve and how they will go about it the people can be motivated thus removing the stumbling blocks.

2.3 Strategy implementation

Implementation is important to institutional performance because strategies do not add value unless properly implemented (Raps, 2009).Effective and successful implementation of strategy is subject to a number of factors both inside and outside the organization. Business success is governed more by how well strategies are implemented than by how good the strategy is to begin with, the implementation of the strategy delivers revenue, not the crafting of it (Sorroshian, Norzima, Yusuf & Rosnah, 2010).

Atkinson (2006) argued that most strategies devised were never implemented due to increased competition and globalization hence effective strategy implementation was necessary. Allio (2005) in his findings agrees that strategies fail at the implementation phase and further emphasizes that by using a straight forward approach, format and process, managers can bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality. According to Omondi, Ombui, and Mungatu (2013) policy regulations, managerial competencies and resource allocations are the critical factors that affect the effective strategy implementation .

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to look at the banking industry in Kakamega County, Kenya. Kothari (2004) describes descriptive survey as a design which gives attention on formulating objectives, designing of data collection methods, sample selection, data collection, processing and analyzing the data and lastly giving a report of the findings. The design is appropriate as survey design entails the collection of data on more than one case and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables, which are then examined to detect patterns of association (Bryman, 2012). The target population included 85 employees from four randomly selected commercial banks in Kakamega County. The sample frame covered employees from Kenya commercial bank, Equity Bank, Co-operative bank and National bank in Kakamega County. The study grouped the population into two (2) strata based on the category of staff as managerial and non-managerial staff. Stratification was used because the population was structured into various non-homogenous units, hence the need for sample diversity. From each stratum the study used simple random sampling to select 30% of the total population in the region as shown in table 3.1 below to come up with a total sample of 25respondents.The main advantage of simple random sampling was that it eliminates bias in selection of respondents (Kothari, 2008). According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) a sample size of 10% to 30% is representative enough for the study population. Kothari (2008) also argues that if well chosen, samples of about 30% of a population can often give good reliability.

Table 3.1: Sample size

Employee category	Total Population	Sample size
Managerial staff	16	5
Non managerial staff	69	20
Total	**85**	**25**

Source: researcher 2016

The data was collected using self-administered structured questionnaires which were designed to get specific responses for quantitative analysis. A pilot study was conducted through a sample of four employees of Barclays bank and tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. Data obtained from the survey was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics by using SPSS version 20. The mean and standard deviation were used for the descriptive statistics while for inferential statistics Pearson's correlation, factor analysis and simple regression analysis were used. The simple regression formulae used was:-

$$\mathbf{Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon}$$

Whereby Y = strategy implementation
B_0 = Constant
β_1, = Coefficients of determination
X_1=communication

e =error

The data collected and analyzed was presented in the form of tables and figures.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Response rate

Out of the 25 questionnaires that were issued, 16 were received back forming a response rate of 64% which was considered to be good enough.

4.2 Reliability test

A reliability test was performed before commencing the statistical analysis and the results showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 94.6%. This was judged to be acceptable, since it is more than the 0.70 recommended minimum (Santos, 1999; Wynd et al, 2003).

Table 4.1: Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.946	7

Source: Research data 2016

4.3 Descriptive analysis

4.3.1 Respondents demographic characteristics

On the gender of the respondents, the study established that the 75% of respondents were male while female were 25%. Regarding education level of employees majority 80% of the respondents were degree holders while 20 % were master's holders. On the staff category managers were 31.25% while non-managerial staffs were 68.75%.

4.3.2 Communication descriptive statistics

The study aimed at establishing employee's level of agreement with statements regarding communication and strategy implementation. The respondents were asked whether they were in agreement that communication affects effective strategy implementation in the banking industry through statements in the questions that were rated on the five(5) point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, 5=strongly agree. The items mean and standard deviation measuring level of agreement were computed from the respondent's response as shown on the table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization has clear lines of communication	16	2.00	4.00	2.5000	.73030

employees are aware of objectives	16	1.00	5.00	3.0000	.89443
There's adequate communication of new strategies	16	2.00	5.00	3.7500	.85635
Employees are informed about changes that will occur	16	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.89443
Employees are informed about their new roles, tasks and duties	16	2.00	5.00	3.6875	.87321
Communication channels promote strategy implementation	16	2.00	5.00	3.7500	.85635
Communication influences effective implementation of strategies	16	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.95743
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Source: Research data 2013

Majority of the respondents were not in agreement that the organization has clear lines of communication (mean 2.5000); majority were neutral on the statement that employees are aware of objectives (mean 3.0000); The respondents agreed on the statements that there's adequate communication of new strategies (mean 3.7500); Majority of the respondents agreed that employees are informed about changes that will occur (mean 4.000); Employees are informed about their new roles, tasks and duties (mean 3.6875); Communication channels promote strategy implementation(mean 3.7500).Majority of the respondents were in agreement that Communication influences effective implementation of strategies (mean 4.1250).

4.4 Inferential statistics

4.4.1Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3 Correlation matrix for communication

		Communication	Strategy implementation
Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	16	
Strategy implementation	Pearson Correlation	.641**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	16	16

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

Table 4.3 shows that communication displays a strong positive correlation with strategy implementation at 99 % confidence level ($r=0.641$; $p<0.01$). Therefore the correlation is feasible since it's significant at 99% confidence level. These findings are corroborated by Abdalla (2014) who found that there was a significant positive relationship between internal communication and strategy implementation. Further Nyakeriga (2015) found that effective communication and consensus influence strategic plan implementation in newly established public universities.

4.4.2 Factor analysis

Guzami (2013) restated that factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. The analyzed data was presented by use tables for easy understanding.

Table 4.4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.546
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	41.798
	Df	21
	Sig.	.004

Table 4.4 presents the results of a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), Bartlett's test of sphericity. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) is a measure of sampling adequacy used to examine the appropriateness of the use of factor analysis (Hair et al. 2006).Specific to this method of analysis is the assumption of independence of the main components that can be validated by several tests, including: $\chi2$ test statistic (for testing a connection between variables) and the KMO statistic (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, to determine the intensity of this link) (Tanasă F. Horomnea E. & Ungureanu S. 2012). A range of 0.5 – 1.0 in KMO indicates the use of factor analysis is appropriate. The KMO value of 0.546 signified that factor analysis was appropriate to be used in this analysis. Considering Bartlett's test of sphericity the chi- square value is 41.798 with a p value of 0.004 which is significant at 99% confidence this shows that all items on each scale were correlated. Bartlett's test of sphericity assumes that all values are uncorrelated.

Table 4.5 Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.993	42.752	42.752	2.993	42.752	42.752
2	1.440	20.566	63.318	1.440	20.566	63.318
3	1.126	16.080	79.398	1.126	16.080	79.398
4	.793	11.327	90.725			
5	.354	5.061	95.786			
6	.164	2.349	98.135			
7	.131	1.865	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The principal components analysis performed extracted three factors having eigen values greater than 1.0. These factors (1, 2 and 3), represented seven of the items and accounted for 79.398% of the total variance. It is common to consider a solution that accounts for about 60%. (Hair et al. 2006).

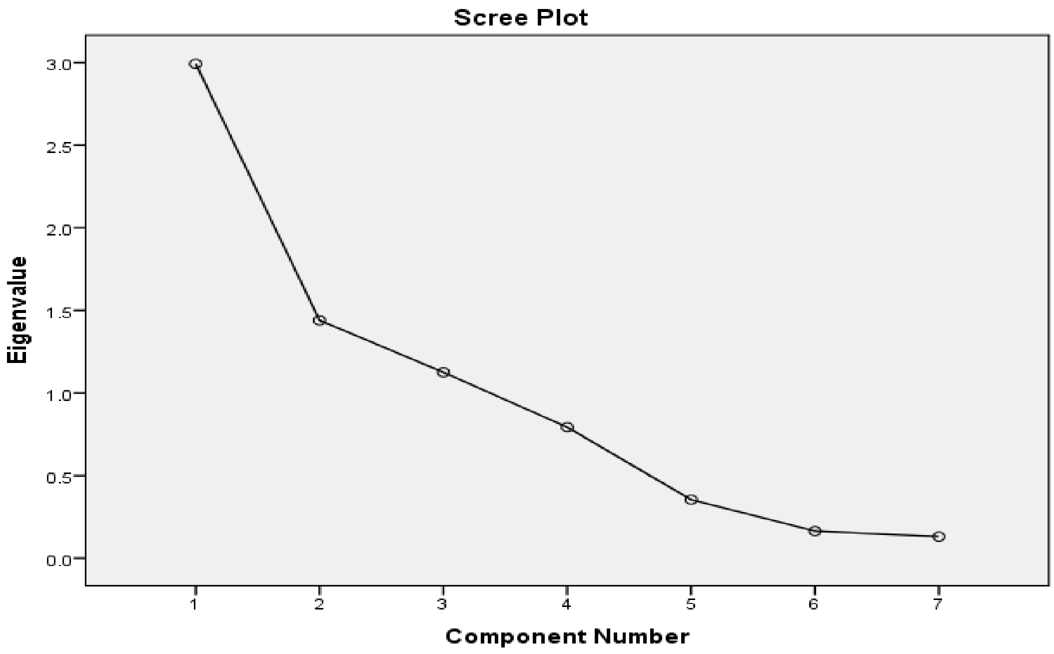

Fig. 4.1: Scree Plot

The scree plot Figure 4.1 shows the eigen value associated with each component. Eigen value represents the variance explained by each component. The screen also confirms that there are 3 principal factors that this analysis has extracted for this research.

Table 4.6: Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component		
	1	2	3
The organization has clear lines of communication	.275	.847	-.146
employees are aware of objectives	.063	.077	.904
Theres adequate communication of new strategies	.695	.307	.374
Employees are informed about changes that will occur	-.072	.846	.384
Employees are informed about their new roles, tasks and duties	.633	.409	.047
Communication channels promote strategy implementation	.924	-.057	-.237
Communication influences effective implementation of strategies	.773	.007	.500

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Factor 1 comprised of four items (There's adequate communication of new strategies, Employees are informed about their new roles, tasks and duties, Communication channels promote strategy implementation, Communication influences effective implementation of strategies) as principal extracted components explaining 42.752 % of the total variance. Factor 2 has two items (The organization has clear lines of communication, Employees are informed about changes that will occur) explaining 20.566 % of the total variance. Factor 3 has two items (employees are aware of objectives, Communication influences effective implementation of strategies) explaining 16.080 % of the total variance. We should take knowledge of the fact that only eigen values greater than one are of interest because only the principal components with higher variance than the standardized original variables should be evidenced hence we proceed to undertake regression analysis of the principle components.

4.4.3 Regression analysis

Simple regression analysis was used to find out the relationship between variables of the study.

Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.641[a]	.411	.369	.76081	.411	9.754	1	14	.007	1.361

a. Predictors: (Constant), communication
b. Dependent Variable: strategy implementation

The value of R square in table 4.10 above is 0. 411. This indicates that 41.1% of variance in dependent variable (strategy implementation) is explained by variance in the independent variable (communication). This shows that 41.1% changes in the bank's strategy implementation could be accounted for by communication at 99% confidence interval while the remaining 58.9% can be attributed by other factors which are not studied, since they are outside the scope of the study. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.641 in the table above shows that there is a positive relationship between communication and strategy implementation.

Durbin Watson

There is no auto-correlation problem in the regression model used as the Durbin Watson value 1.361 is less than 3 which is the rule of thumb. When Durbin-Watson factors are between (1) and (3) there is no autocorrelation problem (Alsaeed, 2005).

Table 4.8: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.646	1	5.646	9.754	.007[b]
	Residual	8.104	14	.579		
	Total	13.750	15			

a. Dependent Variable: strategy implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), communication

The F value is 9.754 (p value < 0.01) is significant at 99% confidence level, showing the applicability of the overall model. This implies that the regression model is significant and can thus be used to assess the association between the dependent and independent variable.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.182	1.277		.143	.889
	communication	1.144	.366	.641	3.123	.007

From the regression findings, the substitution of the equation ($Y= a_0 + a_1X_1 + e$) becomes: $Y =-0.182+1.144 X_1$ Where Y is the dependent variable (Strategy implementation) and X_1 is communication.

Assuming all other independent variables are 0.000 strategy implementation will be 0.182 . A unit increase in communication leads to an increase of 1.144 in strategy implementation in the same direction which means they are positively related.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

These results imply that communication influences the strategy implementation of a banking industry. This is consistent with Otieno (2013) who proved that communication was important as it provided direction and ensured that the team were united hence resulting to successful implementation of strategies. Penget al. (2001) also proved that effective communication was a key requirement for effective strategy implementation as it played the role of knowledge dissemination, training and learning during strategy implementation process. Further Kibet (2014) and Wachira (2014) also concurred that effective communication was important for successful implementation of strategy in their research carried out at Family Bank and KRA respectively. According to Mazzola and Kellermanns (2010) effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation. Majority of the respondents indicated that there were no clear communication lines**.**

Majority were in agreement that Communication channels promote strategy implementation (mean 3.7500). The findings are corroborated by other scholars' findings including Kandie, 2004; Robinson and Pearce, 2004; Osoro, 2009; Kidombo, 2007 and Abok,2013 who all proved that effective strategic plan implementation, require clear channels of communication inculcated into the culture of the organization.

The result reinforces findings that employees were knowledgeable regarding objectives of the organization (Abok, 2013). Cole (2002), Korten (1990) and Mintzberg (2004) found lack of knowledge on strategic objectives on part of the employees as a hindrance during implementation. Similarly Mulube (2009) and Amukobole (2010) cited poor knowledge of organization objectives as a factor in implementation of strategy.

Majority of the respondents agreed that employees are informed about changes that will occur (mean 4.000). This finding confirms the earlier assertion of Gekonge (1999) and Kariuki and Ombui (2014) who found that proper internal communication enhances the success of strategic change implementation. Alexander (2006) posited that absence of communication resulted to lack of intimation on the part of employees regarding the new tasks, requirements, and activities to be performed and also the employees were not informed on the reason for the changed circumstances.

Majority of the respondents were in agreement that they were informed about their new roles, tasks and duties (mean 3.6875).These findings confirm the earlier assertion of Abdalla (2014) who posited that communication should involve explanations of new duties, responsibilities and obligations. Further Alexander (2003) alluded that the workforce needs to be informed about their new responsibilities, duties and obligations.

According to results of a research carried out by Atamba (2013) in Commercial banks in Kenya leadership, communication, change management and timing were found to influence strategy implementation to a great extent.

6. CONCLUSION

Further, the study concludes that communication is essential in the strategy implementation as it facilitates performance of activities and tasks. From the findings the researcher concluded that communication influences the strategy implementation in the banking industry to a great extent. Effective communication process should be an integral part of strategy implementation because it goes a long way to enhancing the realization of organizational goals.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Communication to all stakeholders is necessary to ensure that the strategic process receives support from all concerned function. Communication should be done on a timely manner so that employees may know about the changes that will occur and prepare themselves prior to implementation. The study also recommends that there is need to enhance communication among all levels in the organization. To promote strategy implementation the organization should empower employees, encourage freedom of expression and the shared communication.

8. SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY

This research focused on communication as a factor affecting strategy implementation in the banking industry in Kakamega County. The same should be replicated in other industries as the current research was limited to Banking industry.

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