INFLUENCE OF CORPORATE CULTURE ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION: A SURVEY OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The question of successful implementation of strategies remains an unaddressed challenge in many organizations. Organizations unsuccessfully implement about 70 per cent of their unique strategies owing to poor organizational culture. Commercial banks create operating principles that typically define the way they interact with their customers, employees and operations. While these things are important to put in writing, it is the more intangible aspect of culture that sets one business apart from another and perhaps determines success or failure of strategy implementation. This study therefore sought to assess the influence of corporate culture on strategy implementation; a survey of commercial banks in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the influence of adhocracy culture on Strategy implementation in commercial banks in Kenya, to assess the influence of clan culture on Strategy Implementation in commercial banks in Kenya, to determine the influence of market culture on Strategy Implementation in commercial banks in Kenya, to assess the influence of hierarchical culture on Strategy Implementation in commercial banks in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The unit of analysis was the 42 commercial banks while the unit of observation was all the management level employees (Top level managers, middle level managers and lower level managers). The total target population therefore was 246 respondents. The study adopted stratified sampling approach and then proportionate random sampling technique. Primary data was collected through use of questionnaires. The data collected was edited, coded, entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 which also aided in the data analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted for the study. The research study found that there was a very strong and significant relationship between adhocracy culture, clan culture, market culture, hierarchical culture and Strategy Implementation. Research findings concluded that adhocracy culture has a positive and significant effect on the Strategy Implementation; Clan Culture has a positive and significant effect on the strategy implementation; Market Culture has a positive and significant effect on the Strategy Implementation and Hierarchical Culture also has a positive and significant effect on the Strategy Implementation of the Commercial banks in Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

A strategy for any firm offers, or should offer, the overarching blueprint against which management can succeed in challenging circumstances (Jain, Trehan & Trehan 2019). The most essential planned decision that has a significant impact on an enterprise's business operations is its strategy. Gupta (2017) noted that a corporation seeks to exploit all of its alternatives and avoid all of the risks in its environment through its strategy, as well as to use all of its advantages and minimize its weaknesses in relation to competitors. Increasing productivity, cutting expenses, boosting revenues, and enhancing service or product quality are all important components of any strategy (DeWit & Meyer, 2018). To successfully compete in the current global marketplace, this potent phenomenon is turning into a need.

Financial services are faced with the challenge of competition and dynamism of environment and unknowns of the outside and inside of the organization, each affecting the implementation of plans especially strategic ones (Gupta, 2017). Diversification and broadness of financial services have increased placing emphasis on successful strategy implementation. Therefore, in this environment an organization can survive and grow only when it continuously and quickly adapts to the changing environment (Jain, Trehan & Trehan 2019). As a response to this, organizations develop strategies to gain competitive advantage over other players in the market. The implementation of this strategy is determined by culture which is how the organization interacts with the internal and external environment as it implements strategy (Tharp, 2018).

Oliver (2018) identified cultural fit as one of the forms of fit that affects an organization’s adaptation processes. A tight culture-strategy fit is required for an organization to be able to successfully implement a competitive strategy. When implementing strategy corporate culture influences how management will grow the business, how it will build loyal clientele and out-compete its rivals (Hough *et al,* 2018). Inculcating corporate culture leads to fundamental changes in many aspects of the organization, including corporate structure, human resource selection and deployment, job characteristics, Market Culture measures and the reward system. It is in light of this and the challenges of Market Culture that more research needed to be done on corporate culture and the influence it has on strategy implementation.

As explained by Omid and Hamid (2017), executing good strategy depends upon its ‘hard and soft’ infrastructures, with hard infrastructure pertaining to the organization of the various business units, departments and employees while soft structure refers to the culture and norms of the company that is geared towards the achievement of the goals of the firm. Corporate culture links these infrastructures. The corporate culture influences the attitudes and behaviors of employees charged with the execution of strategy (Sheerwood, 2018).This means that if the corporate culture does not influence its employees to develop positive attitudes towards the efficient accomplishment of strategies or create an environment that encourages employees to recognize their important contribution to the fulfilment of the strategies of the firm, then the business would likely not have good strategies or fail to implement its policies.

Thompson *et al* (2019) further argues of forming organizational culture to enable adjustment of strategies. This include creating common values, defining ethical criteria, creating a work place which support strategies and creating high achievement motives in culture of organizations. Corporate culture is as important as successful Market Culture for organizational success. Both corporate culture and strategy implantation are tightly intertwined and focusing on one of them to the detriment of the other will not bring the desired results. It is in light of this and the challenges of Market Culture that this study seeks to assess the influence of corporate culture on strategy implementation.

Most corporate cultures do not originate by design. Instead, they evolve over time from a variety sources. These may include the views of the founders, management's assumptions about work ethics and about and critical precedents such as management responses to suggestions from subordinates (Sherwood, 2018). Norms, as part of corporate culture, are socially created standards that help employees interpret and evaluate events, and are significant because people behave in certain ways as a result of expectations of how others would act in similar circumstances (O'Reilly, 2019). Rewards depend on organizational or group performance. Market According to Njagi, Kamau, and Muraguri (2020), the clan culture is one that emphasizes internal upkeep, is adaptable, is customer-sensitive, and prioritizes the needs of its members.

People frequently perceive these firms as a welcoming workplace where they can be themselves. These organizations are united by tradition and devotion, and their success is measured by how much they care about people (Jain., Trehan, & Trehan, 2019). The culture values morality and collegiality in its decision-making (Muthoni, 2013). The banking sector operates on a relatively deregulated environment. Foreign banks entry has never been a substantial issue, as the banking system after independence consisted of foreign-owned banks and their dominance has been eroded since then but still account for a substantial part of the system. Monetary policy reforms in the past have entailed liberalizing interest rates and replacing direct controls on lending with open market operations. Brownbridge and Harvey (2018) found some evidence that the liberalization led to more vigorous competition among banks for deposits and in providing services.

Statement of the Problem

For a firm to succeed, its market culture must be strong (Larry, 2017). A thriving market culture requires a supportive corporate culture. When culture and strategy implementation are in line, a business can operate more successfully in the global market environment. Numerous firms continue to report high rates of strategy implementation failure. Raps and Kaufman's (2018) study discovered that barely 10 to 30 percent of strategies created globally are really put into practice. This results from the organization failing to pay attention to both the internal and exterior environmental variables at play. In many businesses, the issue of successfully implementing strategy is still a problem (Mehdi, 2020). Miller, referenced in Gachie (2018), claims that because of a dysfunctional organizational culture, organizations implement only around 70% of their original strategies successfully.

Commercial banks are currently putting their plan into practice as a result of the quickly changing environment, limited resources, growing customer awareness, and shifting customer tastes and preferences. Commercial banks have operating principles that usually outline how they communicate with their clients, team members, and business processes. While it is crucial to document these factors, it is the more elusive component of culture that distinguishes one company from another and may even influence whether a plan is implemented successfully or not. The difficulties faced by National Bank, as evidenced by its repeated organizational reorganization, are a glaring sign that its plan has not been successfully implemented, the recent merger of NIC bank and CBA bank is also a clear indicator of a perceived ease to implement strategy post-merger rather than pre-merger.

Previous researches on strategy have constantly acknowledged organization culture as an element affecting market culture (Abok, et al., 2018; Muthoni, 2017; Wanjiku, 2017; Isaboke, 2015; Gachua & Orwa, 2015). The study by Githui (2016) addressed the wider Market Culture factors among commercial banks. Koske (2017) conducted a study on Market Culture and its challenges in financial services provider, whereas Olali (2018) conducted a study on the challenges in the strategic plan implementation at Cooperative bank with both recommending that a further research be undertaken to determine how challenges influence the type of strategy.
However, the importance of corporate culture and Market Culture within commercial banks in Kenya haven't been given the much attention. It tends to be noted from writing that main associations which completely carry out techniques accomplish great records on viable Market Culture and different areas of hierarchical procedure execution. In spite of this, a couple of concentrates by implication zeroed in on hierarchical culture and its impact on procedure execution. Therefore, by determining the impact of corporate culture on technique execution and conducting a survey of business banks in Kenya, this focus hopes to close the knowledge gap.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the influence of corporate culture on strategy implementation; a survey of commercial banks in Kenya.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To establish the influence of adhocracy culture on Market Culture in commercial banks in Kenya
ii. To assess the influence of clan culture on Market Culture in commercial banks in Kenya
iii. To determine the influence of market culture on Market Culture in commercial banks in Kenya
iv. To assess the influence of hierarchical culture on Market Culture in commercial banks in Kenya

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Barreto (2010) defines dynamic capabilities as those capabilities that characterize a firm's potential to systematically solve problems, formed by its propensity to sense opportunities and threats, to make timely and market-oriented decisions, and change its resource base. Zollo and Winter (2002) indicate that the purpose of dynamic capabilities is to improve organizational strategy implementation, while Zahra et al. (2006) explained that the purpose of changing the resource base is to support the requirements of principal decision-makers of a firm. Wang and Ahmed (2017) explicitly state that the purpose of reconfiguration, reconstruction and upgrade of a firm's resource base is to respond to the changing environment in order to attain and sustain competitive advantage.

Researchers such as Eisenhardt and Martin (2000); Helfat *et al.* (2017) and Teece (2007) argue that dynamic capabilities represent an organization's capacity to identify the need or opportunity for change (sensing), formulate a response to such a need or opportunity (seizing), and execute a way of action (reconfiguring). The bridge between sensing and seizing is also understood to involve acquisition of strategic insights, whereas the relationship between seizing and reconfiguring refers to strategy execution (Helfat *et al*., 2017). The underlying assumption of the dynamic capabilities theory is that firms which are able to sense and then seize new opportunities and, further, reconfigure their resources and capabilities in line with recognized opportunities and environmental change can create and sustain a competitive advantage (Teece, 2012). Li and Liu's (2014) study of 217 firms China shows that dynamic capabilities significantly and positively affect competitive advantage, and that environmental dynamism is an important driver. Dynamic capabilities theory supports the variable of adhocracy culture by highlighting those organizations which are able to sense and then seize new opportunities and, further, reconfigure their resources and capabilities in line with recognized opportunities and environmental change can enhance and sustain desired strategy implementation. In this study, the dynamic capacities theory will be applied to determine how adhocracy culture affects market culture in Kenyan commercial banks.

Contingency theory

Contingency theory is the “process of achieving a fit” between the “conditions of an environment and the design of the organization” (Bess & Dee, 2018). It is an effort to determine through research which managerial practices and techniques are appropriate to different situations (Kreitner, 1992). The theory originated in the 1960’s as a challenge to the traditional management approach as the best way to organize tasks in the work place. The contingency theory holds that there is no “one best way” to organize, and organizations perform best when they adapt to fit their contingencies (Rajasekar, 2016).

The evolving business environment compels organizations to change if they do not want to avoid loss of Market Culture (Klein, 2018). Contingency theory’s most valuable contribution to organizational science “has been to make us aware that there are different ways to organize successfully and to begin to enumerate the possibilities and their consequences”.

In contrast it has been argued that the contingency theory does not attain full fit, but quasi fit, that is a structure that only partially fits the contingencies (Njagi, Kamau & Muraguri (2020). In addition, organizational managers may not always know these fit states of the theory and so cannot adequately change the organization towards it (Racelis, 2015). The contingency theory will be applied in this study to evaluate the impact of clan culture on the execution of strategy in Kenyan commercial banks.

Institutional Theory

Advocates of institutional theory claim that organizations are social systems with a high amount of resilience (Amenta, 2015). They have identified three main institutional pillars that regulate organizational behaviour: regulative, normative, and cognitive (Scott, 1995). The cognitive, normative, and regulative elements, along with the accompanying activities and resources, according to Iarossi, Miller, O'Connor, and Keil (2016), supply stability and control how organizational strategy is carried out. In policy texts, regulations are expressed as rules, incentives, and penalties. Through a set of values, norms serve as standards that direct corporate conduct. Social factors that influence decisions within the framework of an organization are a part of cognition.

Organizational qualities which are engraved in organizations are sent through different components, including emblematic frameworks, social frameworks, and schedules. Foundations are structures in view of pretty much underestimated, formal or casual, decides that guide Market Culture by confining social way of behaving (Johansson, 2017). These laid out establishments with regards to association hint strength yet are dependent upon future developments processes, both gradual and broken (DiMaggio and Powell, 2018). Institutional scholars attest that hierarchical interior climate is vital to affecting advancement of authoritative creative designs (Amenta, 2005). Institutional hypothesis likewise perceives that associations are not latent entertainers and can answer institutional requests in assorted ways from conformance to reshaping those tensions (Scott, 2018). This hypothesis assists the review with connecting between market culture and Market Culture in business banks in Kenya. The institutional hypothesis will be utilized in this review to survey the impact of market culture on Market Culture in business banks in Kenya.

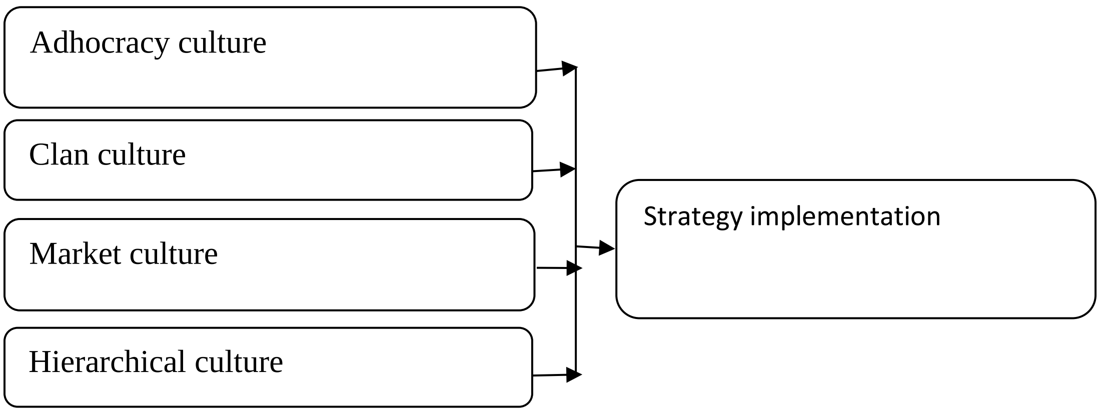
Schein's Organizational Culture Model

Edgar Schein (1992) asserts that organizations don't create a culture overnight; rather, it develops through time as staff members experience numerous changes, make adjustments to their surroundings, and work through issues. They learn from their prior experiences and begin putting them into practice on a daily basis, helping to shape the workplace culture. The new hires work really hard to fit in with the new culture and live stress-free lives.

Edgar Schein (1992) asserts that organizations don't create a culture overnight; rather, culture develops over time as a result of staff transitions, environmental changes, and problem-solving. They learn from their prior experiences and begin putting them into practice daily, thereby establishing the culture of the business. The brand-new workers work arduously to fit into the new environment and lead stress-free lives. This encompasses a company's goal statement, official policies, corporate identity, traditions, and design. Points of reference for fostering cultural transformation are also provided by Schein's organizational culture model. It seems sense to speak with as many people as you can to learn about the underlying causes and components of the corporate culture. These might serve as the foundation for cultural change.

People need to be aware that social change is a cycle, and that old behaviors need to be unlearned before new ones can be learned to replace them. Social mediations should take place when a distinction between the ideal and the popular culture becomes apparent. Senior administration, supported by a labour force division, is responsible. This calls for a thorough technique. Another logo, a different corporate look, or customer orientation training won't help. Results estimation and rewarding excellent Market Culture are essential. According to Schein, there are three distinct levels of culture, and he uses an analogy from archaeology to illustrate them. By all accounts, metaphorically speaking, the historical cultural peculiarities to translate are the observable, if frequently difficult, signs. These are the explicit and commonly created components of culture. To continue with the similarities, one must delve further into social soil, where one eventually comes across the cherished principles that underlay these curiosities. These characteristics refer to the gathering's motivating factors, which are being tested through experience (learning) and may be implemented effectively. In essence, association culture can hinder or aid system execution. If the organizational culture encourages change, system implementation is supported (Racelis, 2015). To illustrate how progressive culture affects market culture in business banks, Schein's Authoritative Culture Model will be utilized to lay out the impact of progressive culture on Market Culture in business banks in Kenya.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Adopted

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was used. The population of study comprised of all commercial banks whose objective is to receive money deposits from investors and lending it in form of short or long-term loans and advances to its customers at pre-arranged rates of interest (CBK, 2021). According to the Central Bank of Kenya Website, there were 42 banks in Kenya which essentially takes deposits from individuals and organizations to invest on their behalf. Therefore, the unit of analysis was 42 commercial banks while the unit of observation was the management level employees (Top level managers, middle level managers and lower level managers) or equivalent. The management level employees were chosen since they were considered to have adequate information on strategy implementation. The sample frame for this study consisted of 246 senior employees working in 42 commercial banks in Kenya. A sample population of 156was arrived at by calculating the target population of 246with a 95% confidence level and an error of 0.05 using the below formula. The study collected primary data using semi-structured questionnaires. Specifically, respondents targeted to provide information needed for the study.

The questionnaires were self-administered to the respondents by the researcher. Respondents were allowed one week to fill and return their questionnaires. By doing so, the respondents had sufficient time to fill the questionnaire and return either by mail on hard copy. Questionnaires are advantageous in data collection because the researcher gets the opportunity to personally introduce the study to the respondents, explaining to them the purpose of the study and answering or clarifying any issues they might be having. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 was used to modify, code, and enter the acquired data, which benefited in the data analysis. The study produced both qualitative and quantitative data as anticipated. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data.
The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency distribution tables, measures of central tendency (the mean), measures of variability (the standard deviation), and measures of relative frequencies, were used to assess the quantitative data. Correlation and regression analysis were two of the inferential statistics. The association between the variables was established using a regression model. Tables, charts, and graphs were used to present the quantitative information. Open-ended questions yielded qualitative data that was organized into themes in accordance with the study's aims and reported in prose alongside quantitative data.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

		Strategy implementation	**Adhocracy Culture**	**Clan Culture**	**Market Culture**	**Hierarchical Culture**
Strategy implementation	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Adhocracy culture	Pearson Correlation	.849**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002				
Clan Culture	Pearson Correlation	.857**	.289	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.061			

Market Culture	Pearson Correlation	.899**	.172	.193	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.079	.084		
Hierarchical Culture	Pearson Correlation	.915**	.185	.189	.279	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.078	.081	.074	
	N	74	74	74	74	74

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

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.942	.887	.862	.10582

a. Predictors: (Constant), Adhocracy Culture , Clan Culture , Market Culture, Hierarchical Culture

Model	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4	172.027	43.007	870.587	.000[b]
Residual	133	6.568	.0494		
Total	138	178.595			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Adhocracy Culture , Clan Culture , Market Culture, Hierarchical Culture

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.134	0.039		0.872	0.001
Adhocracy culture	0.387	0.112	0.384	3.545	0.000
Clan Culture	0.486	0.107	0.482	4.121	0.001
Market Culture	0.379	0.104	0.380	3.663	0.002

Hierarchical Culture	0.454	0.088	0.452	5.057	0.000

a Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation of Commercial banks

From the study results, the regression model of the study was as follows:

$$\boldsymbol{Y = 0.134 + 0.387X_1 + 0.486X_2 + 0.379X_3 + 0.454X_4 + \varepsilon}$$

Hierarchical Culture thus emerged as the most significant contributory factor to Strategy Implementation (t = 5.057, 0.05), followed by Clan Culture (t = 4.121, 0.05), based on the individual contributions of the explanatory factors to the Strategy Implementation of these Commercial banks in Kenya. Adhocracy culture had a contributing power of 3.545, 0.05, while Market Culture had a t-value of 3.663, 0.05.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that adhocracy culture has a positive and significant effect on the Strategy Implementation of Commercial banks in Kenya. This implies that a unit improvement in adhocracy culture leads to improvement in the strategy implementation of Commercial banks in Kenya.

In addition, the study concludes that Clan Culture has a positive and significant effect on the strategy implementation of Commercial banks in Kenya. This implies that a unit improvement in Clan Culture leads to improvement in the strategy implementation of Commercial banks in Kenya.

The study also comes to the conclusion that Market Culture significantly and favourably affects how Kenyan Commercial Banks implement their strategies. This suggests that a unit improvement in market culture results in an improvement in the way commercial banks in Kenya implement their strategies.

Furthermore, the study comes to the conclusion that hierarchical culture positively and significantly affects how Kenyan commercial banks implement their strategies. This suggests that a unit improvement in hierarchical culture results in an improvement in the way Kenyan commercial banks implement their strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that adhocracy culture has a positive and significant effect on the Strategy Implementation of the Commercial banks in Kenya. This study therefore recommends that the management of these Commercial banks should ensure they scan the environment and collect all the necessary information in order to improve their strategy implementation.

Likewise, the investigation discovered that Tribe Culture affects the Methodology Execution of the Business banks in Kenya. This concentrate thusly suggests that the administration of these Business banks ought to guarantee that procedures are all around created and figured out to further develop their Technique Execution in the serious business.

Further, the investigation discovered that Market Culture affects the Methodology Execution of Business banks in Kenya. This concentrate hence suggests that the administration of Business banks ought to guarantee that they appropriately execution methodologies for working with Methodology Execution of these Business banks.

The study also discovered that hierarchical culture has a favourable and significant impact on how commercial banks in Kenya implement their strategies. In order to improve their strategy implementation, the management of these commercial banks is advised by this study to make sure that the strategies are thoroughly examined.

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