EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN PUBLIC TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any University. No part of this work can be copied without the prior permission of the author and/or Moi University.

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DEDICATION

To my late father (Wilson Ruto) and mother (Esther Ruto), my wife Lilly and my children (Emmanuel, Bonface, Faith, Rufina and Benedict) for their love, care and support.

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ABSTRACT

Since Kenya`s independence, TVET system of education has been recognized by the Government as the major sector that produces skilled workforce which are absorbed in the industries and life support skills for self-employment. However, for the effective performance of this sector of education, institutions' strategies must have a viable roadmap for implementation as strategy implementation remains a dominant means of success in all organizations. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of management practices as perceived by employees on strategic plan implementation in Public Technical Vocational Education and Training institutions. The study was guided by the following objectives; Investigate employees' perceptions on strategic plan implementation: Examine the effectiveness of communication in the implementation of strategic plan: Assess the level of employee involvement in the implementation of strategic plan: Determine the role of leadership practice in the implementation of strategic plan. The implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions in Kenya is ineffective as evidence by weak managerial behavior, weak institutional policies and poor execution of planned programmes. The studies done on execution of strategic plans in different countries and few in Kenya did not conclusively identify factors directly influencing implementation of strategic plan's in public TVET institutions and hence established the gap of this study. The study was guided by change management theory and upper echelon theory. The study adopted descriptive survey research design using both qualitative and quantitative approach. The target population was 1255 employees in all the seven (7) public TVET institutions within Rift valley region. A sample size of two hundred ninety our (294) respondents was used in the study. A total of 21 top management and 49 middle level management employees were purposively sampled. Further, 224 lower level management employees were sampled using stratified random and simple random sampling. Primary data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. Only 242 respondents returned questionnaires translating to 82% of the valid response rate. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the pattern of the data and consistency of the responses of each hypothesized management practice influencing the implementation of strategic plans. Inferential analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation, regression analysis and ANOVA. Results were then presented using graphs, tables and charts. The findings indicated that there is significant and positive association between independent and dependent variables. Employees' perceptions had a strong positive significance on strategic plan implementation. The other variables, communication, employee involvement and leadership practice had a weak positive significance on strategic plan implementation. The study concluded that employees' perceptions, communication, employee involvement and leadership practice all affect the implementation of strategic plan. The study recommends that management need to foster their management practice and create awareness on the importance and processes involved in strategic plan implementation in order to ease employees understanding, participation and guard against conflict and sabotage that may arise.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA   Analysis of Variance

COM   Communication strategy,

EPSPI   Employees perception of strategic plan implementation

INVS   Involvement strategy

LOM   Level of management,

LST   Strategic leadership strategy

MDGs   Millennium Development Goals

MOE   Ministry of Education

MOHEST   Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology

PHD   Doctor of Philosophy

SPSS   Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the overview of the study, statement of the problem, purpose, and objectives of the study, research questions, research hypotheses, and assumptions of the study, significance, justification, theoretical framework, and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Strategic plan as a tool for improving institutional performance and competitiveness has been taken seriously by both private and public institutions (Demirkaya, 2015). Strategic management is a systematic approach to the major and increasingly important responsibility of general management to position and relate the institution to its environment in a way which will assure its continued success and make it secure from surprises. According Gebhardt and Eagles cited in Venance (2018) strategic plan implementation has generally been embraced across all sectors in the world due to its contribution and role in enhancing effectiveness of institutional performance. According to Chimhanzi (2004), the most daunting constraint when implementing strategic plans, especially at academic institutions, is the prevalence of interpersonal conflicts between administrators that hinder communication. McCaffery (2018) points out that conflicts are most likely to arise in the implementation of strategic plans at academic institutions because of the involvement of various stakeholders and players, for example, the principal, deputy principal, departmental heads, teachers, parents, the school governing body members and many other stakeholders. The relationship

between these schools' interest groups affects the smooth running of all the school activities, thus affecting strategic plan implementation (McCaffery, 2018).

Institutions, whether for profit or non-profit, private or public have found it necessary to engage in strategic management in order to achieve their goals. The environments in which they operate have become not only increasingly uncertain but also more tightly interconnected. This requires institutions to think strategically as never before, translate their insight into effective strategies to cope up with changed circumstances and develop rationales necessary for adopting and implementing strategies in the ever-changing environments (Chiuri, 2016).

Strategy implementation is the process that turns strategies and plans into actions to accomplish the set objectives (Ogunmokun *et al*., 2005). Strategy implementation is the collection of implementations and operations originating from the important managerial capabilities and behaviors defined for good leadership (de Kluyver & Pearce, 2003). The implementation process of the strategic plan is defined as the procedures and actions that are undertaken to achieve the goals and objectives of the strategic plan (Mohammad, 2011). Mintzberg (2004) argues that a good implementation of strategic plan is dependent on the learning and development environment for employees who are the true foot soldiers of implementation. Strategy implementation may help leaders shape the future (Crittenden &Crittenden, 2008) by enabling an organization to produce excellent performance by means of implementing an outstanding strategic plan**.** Strategy implementation requires the involvement of managers at all levels of the organization. Furthermore, implementation is an action-oriented human behavioral activity that calls for senior-level leadership and key managerial skills (Schaap, Stedham & Yamamura, 2008).

Juma and Okibo (2016) defined management practices as the skills, qualities and competencies that managers possess that get things done effectively through people in the firm. Adopting management practices that are superior improve the performance of TVET institutions which ensures that there is survival, growth and maintenance of a sustainable competitive advantage (Omerzel & Antoncic, 2008).

Management practices are thought to be initiatives that organization puts in place and have the capacity to influence strategic plan implementation in any given system. Strategic management provides an excellent opportunity to build a sense of teamwork and allows people to work in collaborative and efficient ways, to promote learning, to motivate employees and to build commitment across the organization (Burnes, 2004). Strategic management enables an organization to have greater influence over its circumstances and the environment in which it operates, rather than simply responding to an unending series of problems (Bryson, 1995). Different factors combine to influence the practice of strategic management in organizations. Otley (2011) noted that the ability to execute the strategy is a bigger management challenge than determining the right vision and the quality of the strategy itself. He further opined that all the managerial roles which include organizing, motivating, integrating, communication, planning among others are entirely used in organization implementation process. Chetty (2010) identified six fundamental components for an organization to implement its strategy in a successful way. Some of them includes: cascading accountabilities, obtaining top executive commitment, selecting the best people to drive key initiatives, communicating a clear tangible strategy, generating engagement at all levels and the ability to monitor and tract progress. Further, Thompson and Strickland (2003) asserted that internal factors to the institutions mainly influence strategic management practices even though some of them may be

external. Internal factors that influence strategic management practices include: current organizational structure, leadership style, organizational culture and politics, management skills, financial resources, employee training, reward system, existing organization policies, and organization's human resources. Aosa (1992) observed that an organization's strategies are likely to be successfully implemented when congruence is achieved between several elements.

Effective management practices ensure that the human resources, cultural aspects and structure of the organization are at the forefront. For better implementation, it is necessary for all organizations to put all these aspects into consideration (Rapa & Kauffman, 2005). Powers and Hahn, (2004) highlight that organizations could use the leadership skills and resources contained in competitive strategy through strategic management practices to enhance the strategic plan implementation. Studies on strategic management have established that strategic management practices are keen with establishing a strategy and planning how to implement that strategy through appropriate organization structure mechanism.

The selected management practices and issues that are conceptualized to influence strategic plan implementation in the study were: Employees perception, Communication practice, Involvement practice and leadership practice. Every unit within the organization which is involved must then accept the plan, agree to its direction, and implement specific actions. Executors play a very critical role in strategy implementation. Executors comprised of top management, middle management and lower level management. The agreement among top, middle and lower level managers will result in integrative point of view hence leading to successful implementation of the strategy. In order to effectively and efficiently

implement a plan, all individuals involved in its implementation must function as a whole or the plan is destined for failure. In a nutshell therefore, strategy implementation rests in the hands of the employees or any other individual in charge. Employees and managers of institutional organization are crucial aspects that have great effects in terms of implementation success. Moreover, the way in which employees view the strategy is according to their role, power and interest, and determines their attitude towards it (Stiles, 2000). It is therefore important for management to understand the way in which employees think and how they perceive the strategies in order to be successful in the implementation stage (Carrol, 2000). Further, it is important to understand how employees react to implementation strategies so as to develop strategies that are aligned to their perceptions thereby eliciting desired reactions.

The flow of information through various hierarchical levels in an organization is critical to the strategy implementation process. It provides opportunity to the implementers to give their reactions and hence enrich the strategy. When information is not flowing effectively from bottom to top, top management may not be aware of problems jeopardizing the implementation of the strategy, and therefore, not able to respond to these problems (Beer et al, 2000). On the other hand, institutions need effective communication for supervision of employees to ensure that they are performing the tasks they are expected and in a manner they are supposed to. Communicating poorly has negative effects on an organization's ability to implement and refine its strategy (George, *et.al*, 2017). Poor communication can lead to misinterpretation and loss of meaning and even undermine implementation efforts by the institutions. This may occur if information is inaccurate, poorly stated, sent to the wrong person or otherwise problematic (Salih & Doll, 2013). It is critical for

institutions therefore to pay close attention to mode of communication between different levels of management, communication channels and employees view of communication process in order to facilitate effective strategy implementation.

Strategy implementation requires the involvement of managers at all levels of the organization. Employee involvement is a process for empowering employees to participate in managerial decision-making and improvement activities appropriate to their levels in the organization. According to Lawler cited in Foudraine J. (2015), employee involvement practices is critical in that it concerns locating decisions at the lowest level in the organizations. It requires an institution to be designed in a way that employees can take control over decisions. Mohammed (2011) asserts that participatory approach should involve individuals from different levels of the organization (top, middle, and lower levels). This allows for the exchange of different views and knowledge between the stakeholders and the organization in a way that ensures the inclusion of the stakeholders' demands and needs. Participatory approaches provide employees from different levels with the chance to become familiar with the strategic goals in order to be more capable of implementing them. This approach also helps employees gain a better understanding of their roles, which may diminish any role ambiguities or conflicts that may arise when implementing the strategic plan (Kim, 2002). Involvement allows for the exchange of different views and knowledge between the stakeholders and the organization in a way that ensures the inclusion of the stakeholders' demands and needs. Employees' Involvement gives them a strong voice. It gives them the possibility to influence the selected courses of action (Lehner, 2004). If members of the organization are not aware of the same information, or if information passes through different layers in an organization, a

lower level of consensus may result. This lack of shared understanding may create obstacles to successful strategy implementation (Noble, 1999b).

Leadership is concerned with what effective top leaders actually do to produce a strategy-focused organization, (Rumsey, 2013). Effective leaders are fit for reframing the thinking of those whom they control, empowering them to see that critical changes are basic as well as achievable (Sethuraman and Suresh, 2014). Strategic leadership is presumed to have on effect on individuals and in addition on groups, and generally even on the whole organization (Muscalu, 2014). Leadership produces change by outlining all necessary direction, inspiring, aligning individuals and motivating them to adopt change (Adair, 2012). However, a lack of leadership, and specifically strategic leadership by the top management of the organization, has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation (Beer and Eisenstat 2000; Kaplan and Norton 2004; Hrebiniak 2005). Leadership plays a crucial role in the effective implementation of the strategic plan because leadership is the driving force behind any change effort (Scharmer, 2000; Greenleaf, 2002). Barry (1988) observed that the success or failure of a strategic planning effort often hinges on how well it is led. To implement a new strategic initiative, leaders must allocate resources, deal effectively with resistance to it, and convince employees that the new initiative is important and in the employees' interests to support (Cannella and Monroe, 1997; Rotemberg and Saloner, 1993). The leadership of the institution can be a determining factor in the success or failure of a strategic plan in public TVET institutions. Perkins (2007) found that leaders, who have a clear vision, implement change slowly, and work to unify the institution, will be most successful. Higher education is an arena where faculty members and staff members are key players in successfully

implementing a strategic plan, and the ability of the top management to lead them in the right direction is critical.

According to Zaribaf and Bayrami as cited in Rajasekar (2014), the majority of large organizations have problems with strategy implementation. There are many factors which affect the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation, some of which includes leadership styles, funding, community support, stakeholders' perceptions and management practices. The literature supports the view that unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation cannot be achieved by top management alone; it requires the collaboration of everyone inside the organization and, on many occasions, parties outside the organization. While formulating a strategy is normally a top-down endeavor, implementing it requires simultaneous top-down, bottom-up, and across efforts. Further, according to Rodriguez and Hickson cited in Nyakeriga, (2015), the success factors in strategy implementation are somewhat different between public and private sectors. In private sector the success of strategy implementation is more dependent on resources whereas in public sector the essential challenge is to attain appropriate employee participation. Beer and Eisenstat (2000) demonstrated that poor top-down management style or poor vertical communication can be a cause of resistance to strategy implementation. At the same time, they observed that top management is responsible for the provision and allocation of implementation factors such as leadership and organizational culture in facilitating strategy implementation.

Various authors appear to have a common view that implementation failures occur due to management practice (Birinci (2013), Abok (2013), Elwak (2013), Kettunen (2010). The strategy literature claims that between 50% and 80% of strategy

implementation efforts fail (Allio 2006: Atkinson 2006: Cater and Pucko 2010). Krause (1997) noted that, "battles are won by great execution, not by great plans. Great execution can save a mediocre plan; poor execution will always ruin a great plan". Thus, even with a good strategic plan implementation process successful outcome is unlikely if the beliefs and opinions of the implementers are not adequately addressed. Okumu (2003) cited in Elwak (2013) concur with the above researchers by asserting that challenges of strategy implementation include poor leadership and management, unhealthy organization politics, lack of motivation of staff, lack of involvement and participation of staff, the negative perception and resistance emanating from employees and other stakeholders. It would seem therefore that high failure rate of effective strategy implementation can be found in the existence of human behavior attributes as opposed to organization and systems related factors.

Ongus, Aming'a Nyamboga, and Okello, (2016) note that employee empowerment and leadership competency were critical to institutional performance. Juma and Okibo (2016) observed that effective communication strategies and strategic planning had a positive influence on the performance of health institutions. Kara, Tanui, and Kalai (2016) state that employee competency and effective management practices were essential for the effective satisfaction of clients.

Despite the above studies indicating a causal link between management practices and strategic plan implementation, there is limited research evidence examining TVET institutions, and therefore, the current study sought to bridge this knowledge gap.

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work. The purpose of TVET is to make people self-employable and to be a vehicle of transition for individuals to the

world of work thus leading to income-generation which is expected to contribute to the individuals' and their communities' well-being. In Kenya, Public universities and tertiary institutions including public TVET started using strategic plans in 2007 as part of the wider public management initiatives to enhance their operations and service delivery (MOHEST, 2008).The Vision 2030 has placed special demands on TVET as the leading engine that the economy must essentially rely upon to produce adequate levels of the middle level manpower needed to drive the economy towards the attainment of the vision. Moreover, the Constitution of Kenya 2010 has also created demands that require the technical and vocational education and training sector to develop policies and strategies to facilitate faster economic growth. Ministry of Education (MOE) Strategic Plan (2012-2017) further asserts that successful implementation of strategic plans is expected to improve efficiency in the education sector and thus consequently improve the human capital for Kenya's economy.

However, there seems to be a problem in the implementation of strategic plan in public TVET sector in Kenya as evidence by weak managerial behavior, weak institutional policies and poor implementation of planned programmes (MOHEST, 2012). Technical Vocational Education and Training objectives are formulated to address different economic sectors in the quest for the country's industrial growth. Despite such elaborate and sound policies, implementation has been inadequate and often uncoordinated, leading to unrealized objectives (GoK, 2007). To grapple with the above and other challenges, the TVET institutions in Kenya have found it necessary to practice strategic management in order for them to be relevant in the changing environment. However, little is known about management practices and their effect on strategic plan implementation in TVET institutions in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The demand of education for economic purposes due to the pressure of technological progress and modernization has been constantly on the rise in most countries during the 21st century. Public sector which includes TVET institutions embraced the use of strategic plan as a statutory requirement for enhancing result-based management and efficiency in their operations (MOHEST, 2008). Successful strategy implementation is a critical factor to any institution's survival in all sectors (Ferlie $ Ongaro, 2015). However, many scholars claimed that, many institutions especially in Africa context creates strategic plans which are rarely implemented according to the planned programmes (Joyce & Drumaux, 2014). The poor performance of TVET institutions would affect the quality, relevance and accessibility of skills necessary to produce adequate levels of the middle level manpower needed to drive the economy towards the attainment of the vision 2030 envisaged under the social pillar.

Lares-Mankki (2014) studied strategy implementation bottlenecks and revealed that, failure in implementation of strategic plans was due to poor and inadequate information sharing with uncertain responsibility and accountability. Similarly, Murage (2018) carried out a study on management practices and implementation of strategic plan in Anglican Church of Kenya and found out that lack of employee involvement, lack of leadership commitment and lack of communication and feedback mechanism limit the implementation. Moreover, Chacha (2018) did a study on management practices and implementation of strategic change in selected government ministries in Kenya and established that there was need for empowering the supervisory staff, use of effective and open communication and capacity building, to ensure that the lower staff members are on board with the strategy. Despite the effort of government and other stakeholders in ensuring that TVET institutions in

particular successfully adopt and implement strategic plan, a number of TVET institutions still face monumental failure in this regard. Gakure et al, 2014 argued that TVET performance as far as meeting their objectives is concerned is poor and the institutions infrastructures are in bad shape.

Despite the above empirical evidence on the challenges faced by TVET institutions in their strategic planning process, there has been minimal evidence indicating how management practices affect the implementation of the strategic plan. This study therefore sought to examine the influence of management practices as perceived by employees on strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya. The results of the research bridged the knowledge gap and foster sound management practice across the TVET institutions in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of management practices as perceived by employees on strategic plan implementation in Public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives at Public Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Rift Valley region, Kenya.

1. To investigate employees' perceptions on strategic plan implementation at public TVET institutions

2. To examine the effectiveness of communication in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions

3. To analyze the level of employee involvement in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions

4. To assess the role of leadership practice in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions

1.5 Research Hypothesis

This study sought to test the following hypotheses:

HO_1: There is no statistically significant relationship between employees' perceptions and strategic plan implementation at public TVET institutions.

HO_2: There is no statistically significant effect of communication in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions.

HO_3: There is no statistically significant effect of employee involvement in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions.

HO_4: There is no statistically significant effect of leadership practice in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions.

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

This study assumed that all public TVET institutions prepared strategic plans and management practices affect strategic plan implementation process. Further, the study assumed that informants were honest in giving information required by the researcher and the lecturers, Heads of department and top management staff who include principals, registrars and Dean of students in public TVET institutions were conversant with strategic planning process and implementation.

1.7   Significance of the Study

The study results will offer valuable contributions for policy, theory and practice. The findings of this study will provide policy makers a better position to understand strategy implementation challenges in tertiary institutions and avenues through which the challenges are overcome for successful implementation.

The policy makers will also use this study's information to take a leading role in formulating strategic planning policy. Policy makers will also find the study significant because it would assist them in making changes in the current policy for strategic planning in order to strengthen and make it more beneficial to all entities involved in the higher education process. Further, the ministry of higher education and policy makers will use the findings to re-look at the state and status of strategic plan implementation in higher education and come up with appropriate strategy on the policy of strategic management that firmly secures the future of TVET and other tertiary institutions in Kenya. It enables the institutions to put measures to ensure transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in their strategic plans and sealing loopholes in the implementation process. It should help in addressing the many bottlenecks affecting these institutions and in the making of guidelines aimed at improving the manner of improving strategic planning policy. This is important in enabling them survive during turbulent times.

The findings from this study will also provide valuable insight for top management and heads of departments to improve the current management practices in dealing with strategy implementation challenges. Further, the findings of this study provide administrators with strategies and tactics they can employ at their own institutions when implementing their strategic plans. Overall, findings of this study provide a

variety of constituents with a better understanding of ways in which strategic planning and implementation processes can be used to improve TVET and higher education. This research study is of significance to administrators at TVET colleges, universities, as well as other institutions of higher education, in that it equips them with knowledge of stakeholder experiences of strategic planning and implementation.

This study is significant because it contributes needed information about strategic planning implementation processes. The researchers and practitioners pursuing the subject would get an insight and a basis for future research. The study will provide researchers and research institutions new avenues for research, which would expand knowledge concerning strategic plan implementation in public sector.

Through this study, administrators at TVET Colleges may become conscious of the role that strategic management plays as an effective tool in enhancing the performance of academic institutions. To this end, other institutions that have been reluctant and/or ignorant to adapt and implement strategic planning maybe motivated and persuaded to do so to improve their operational performance. Administrators at TVET Colleges may also be influenced to commit to the full implementation of a strategic plan. This research will also enrich the literature on strategic planning implementation in Africa and Kenya in particular since there are little researches hitherto on this topic.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Strategic planning process improved institutional performance, however empirical literature illustrates that there is a high failure rate of strategy implementation in many institutions including public technical vocational education and training institutions. This poor performance of TVET activities would jeopardize production of manpower

needed to drive Kenya's' economy towards the attainment of the vision 2030 envisaged under the social pillar. The study revealed loopholes in management practices and also in the implementation process and thus support government initiatives to foster sound management practice across the TVET institutions in Kenya.

Through effective strategic plan implementation, organizations can be aligned to their developmental objectives, assess opportunities and be conscious of their competitors so that they remain competitive. Understanding the ways in which employees react to strategic plan implementation strategies will certainly provide a potential avenue for developing new strategic plan implementation strategies that may bring employees' perceptions and attitudes into alignment with the ones desired, thereby, eliciting desired reactions to strategic plan implementation process in public TVET institutions. In order to appreciate resistance or support for strategic plan implementation process, an understanding of the factors that play an important role in creating or changing them is necessary.

This study focused on the influence of key human management practices (employee perception, communication, involvement, leadership) and strategic plan implementation process. It is also worth noting that limited similar research has been done in this area in public TVET institutions in Kenya, thus, making the research valuable in terms of literature resources providence to the scholarly world.

1.9   Scope and Limitation to the Study

1.9.1   Scope of the Study

The study limited itself to all public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region. As such, this study was limited only to the conditions and activities of strategic plan implementation process in public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region. Public TVET institutions in Rift valley region were chosen for study because they portray typical characteristics of TVET institutions in Kenya, which consist of National polytechnic, Institute of technology and Technical training institutions and thus the findings of the study can be generalized to all TVET institutions. Moreover, the institutions have implemented strategic plan for over 10 years hence have necessary experience on strategic plan implementation. Further, there is no evidence of any research on the strategic plan implementation and in particular on the influence of employees' perception of management strategies on strategic plan implementation in public TVET within the region.

There are many factors which affect the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation, some of which includes organization structure, funding, community support, resource availability, stakeholders' perception and management strategies. However, this study focused on the people side or soft factors affecting strategic plan implementation which include employees' perceptions, effectiveness of Communication, level of employee involvement and leadership practice in public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region, Kenya.

The study focused on the top management (Principals/Deputy Principals, Registrars and Dean of students), Middle level management (Heads of department) and lower level management staff (lecturers) This was because the top management staffs

formulate strategic plan, middle management supervise the implementation of strategic plan, whereas the lower level management staffs are the implementers of the strategic plan in public TVET institutions. The data collection and analysis of the findings lasted nine months.

1.9.2 Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations were identified in this study. Although it would have been useful to include more TVET institutions to attain a broader understanding of factors affecting strategic plan implementation in higher education and enhance generalizability, it was not possible because it would require considerable time, resources and other logistics. However, the challenge was minimized by sampling institutions which had same characteristics as those in the other parts of the country, which include National polytechnic, Technical Training institutions and Institute of science and technology.

While the descriptive survey design was used, it is worth noting that the inherent limitations of this method such as not being forward looking to the solutions of educational problems, cannot obtain information not known to respondents and that respondents may not be honest is accepted. The study, however, generated adequate surveys through carefully developed instruments in order to eliminate these weaknesses. The other limitation to this study was that the answers provided by the participants were only perceptions of factors affecting the success or failure of strategic plan implementation. This challenge was overcome by using both questionnaire and interview to solicit information from the respondents.

Furthermore, it was so demanding to get the top management who were selected for follow-up interviews, majority were too busy and ended up delegating, that might have resulted to compromised data quality and usefulness. However, intensive interviews supplemented information needed. Moreover, to ensure questionnaires were delivered and avoid misplacement, questionnaires were hand-delivered and hand-picked later, in due process of filling questionnaire respondents were given clarifications on any queries raised. This helped respondents to avail information which were sure about and build confidence about the aim of the study.

The other limitation was that some respondents feared that the information they provided could be used against them or bear some adverse effects on the institution and therefore they did not wish to participate in the study. In order to ensure that respondents were comfortable sharing their information, they were not required to disclose their own identity or that of the organization on the questionnaire. They were further assured of the confidentiality of the information they were to give.

1.10 Theoretical Framework of the Study

A theory is a formal, testable explanation of some events that includes explanations of how things relate to one another. A theory can be built through a process of reviewing previous findings of similar studies, simple logical deduction, and/or knowledge of applicable theoretical areas at hand (Zikmund, Babin & Griffin, 2010). According to Trochim, 2006, Tormo 2006 and Cohen, *et al* 2013, a theoretical framework guides research, determining what variables to measure, and what statistical relationships to look for in the context of the problems under study. It also guides the study in determining what to be measured and the statistical relationship the study is looking

for (Creswell, 2015). This research was anchored on Change Management Theory and Upper Echelon Theory.

1.10.1 Change Management Theory

Lewin (1947) introduced the idea of a change model consisting of three steps or phases to creating successful organizational change. Lewin suggested that change occurs in three phases of unfreezing, moving, and refreezing. Lewin (1947) focused on change efforts to be on a group and not individuals. When group values remain the same, an individual will continue to resist; however, if the group standard is first changed, then the individual resistance is reduced (Lewin, 1947).

The first stage, unfreezing, refers to the process of destabilizing the status quo by identifying dissatisfaction in the status (Lewin, 1947). According to Lewin, different cases and changes may face different problems at the unfreezing stage. Burnes and Cooke (2013) have added their interpretation and further explanation of Lewin's original vague process. Inducing guilt or survival anxiety involves nurturing the belief among the organizational members that change is necessary if the organization is to survive. Burnes & Cooke, (2013) submitted that at this stage, old behaviors make way for the successful adoption of new behaviors or processes. Top management must unfreeze or disrupt any comfort zone that may tend to support the status quo. They should discourage old practices among employees and replace them with new practices for effective implementation of strategic plan. Top management is responsible for initiating and motivating change in the organization, and guide change efforts and convince key stakeholders of the necessity for investing their time and efforts in the change plan. The goal is to create a need in top management and cause them to communicate the vision of change to the employees.

At the second stage, moving, the status quo is not sustainable, and change is introduced (Lewin, 1947). Those affected by change start to feel guilt and survival anxiety, and they question their physiological safety by resisting the change (Lewin, 1947). Burnes & Cooke, (2013), argued that in this stage, the organizational leaders should first identify what needs to be changed and how to implement changes. Leaders should then develop an implementation strategy to meet these goals or change target. The complexity of forces that can affect groups as well as the members of these groups during a change process calls for leaders to take into account all of these forces using trial and error to explore all possible options to bring about change (Burnes & Cooke, 2013). It is during this phase when staff reacts and adjust to change, before accepting it as the norm. All the stakeholders involved in strategic plan process should ensure that appropriate policies and initiatives are implemented for the organization to realize transition from old state to the new state. Leaders should manage the change process and identify obstacles that hinder the strategy implementation process and suggest appropriate measure to be taken.

The third stage of this model, refreezing, occurs after changes result in an ideal state. Refreezing is necessary to stabilize the group at a new quasi-stationary equilibrium (Lewin, 1947). For refreezing to occur, group life cannot return to its previous state; instead, it must gain permanency (Lewin, 1947). The new ways and behaviors adopted from the change process must correspond with or match the overall group personality as well as the environment of the organization, or this may result in a new round of disconfirmation and change (Burnes & Cooke, 2013). Change is a group activity to make sure the norms and routines accommodate new individual behaviors (Lewin, 1947). The necessity for refreezing is to ensure that members do not return to previous behaviors (Burnes & Cooke, 2013). This step in the model recognizes that

new approaches and subjects are fragile and require time to be instilled in the culture. It is imperative that management does not declare a victory before the culture internalizes the vision because doing so may stop the changes and revert to the traditional ways.

The three-phase model has been widely applied in many studies to introduce organizational changes (Trinidad Kristy, 2016). Scheuer (2015) and Van den Heuvel et al. (2013) showed that Lewin's model constitutes an operational framework that can be used to predict human behavior, especially resistance to change, while offering a solution for ensuring strategies will be successful implemented. Top management should refreeze or reinforce new behaviors after implementation by training, delegating, promoting, rewarding and recognizing employee efforts towards implementation of institutions strategies.

The concept of change management is grounded in the principle of sustained measurement of and feedback from people, processes, and systems within organization, in which people behave as they are measured (Berger, Sikora, and Berger, 1994). Kotter (1995), observed that the 50% of the companies failed during implementation, because of managers underestimation of getting people on board as well as overestimation of how successful they have been in raising the urgency level. A major change in organizations will also never be successful with high complacency Kotter explains. In the change process, promoting urgency involves using visuals to show what will happen to the organization without the change, establishing goals for everyone, creating cross-sectional teams, evaluating methods of measuring success, offering rewards, and openly discussing organizational weaknesses (Van den Heuvel et al., 2013). These basic concepts as associated with the theory of change

management form the basis of management practices and strategic plan implementation which this study sought to focus on.

Management theory is central to implementation of plans in any organization. Managers should strive to create an environment in which others are motivated to put in their best (Bhargara, 2003). It is incumbent upon the leader to provide direction and purpose for the organization and to carry everyone along with her/him. The manager must get commitment of his subordinates (employees). Essentially management involves accomplishing goals with and through people. As such, a manager must be concerned about tasks and human relationships.

This theory provides insights on the steps that public TVET institutions can adopt to implement strategic plan with minimal difficulty. The three-step levers relate with the variables under the study that influence effective strategy implementation in public TVET institutions.

The theory was applicable in this study based on the premise that public TVET institutions could easily implement strategic plan if they can effectively embrace or embark on adopting appropriate management practices such as paying attention to employees' perceptions, effective communication, employee involvement and leadership practice in order to enhance their competitiveness in service delivery.

1.10.2 Upper Echelon Theory

The origin of upper echelon theory is traced to the research of Hambrick and Mason in 1984. According to the proponents of this theory, leaders' personal characteristics are reflected in the decisions they take in organizations or institutions. This theory was founded on the premise that organizational outcomes were directly influenced by

the knowledge, experience, and expertise of the strategic leaders (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). The knowledge, experience, and skills are essential predictors of strategic leadership practice and organizational performance. They argued that organizations are a reflection of their strategic leaders.

This theory explains the various levels of employees in the organizational hierarchy in terms of positions (Carpenter, Pollock & Leary, 2004). The manner in which management positions are organized in an organization determines how well information flows and informs strategy implementation in an organization (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). The upper management is normally the ones involved in strategy formulation. The level of understanding and involvement of other staff in strategy formulation affects how well strategies are implemented (Opong, 2014).

This theory is relevant for this study because it puts into perspective how various cadres of employees in an organization affect strategy implementation. It defines the different roles of each position in strategy implementation. A rigid and mechanical structure negatively affects strategy implementation.

1.11 Conceptual Framework of the Study

McGrath (2009) and Mosby (2009) defined conceptual framework as a group of concepts that are broadly defined and systematically organized to provide a focus, a rationale, and a tool for the integration and interpretation of information. A conceptual framework is defined as a network or a "plane" of linked concepts (Jabareen 2008). The conceptual framework of any study is an intermediate theory in diagrammatic form that attempts to connect and show the relationship of the variables under study. It is a map that gives consistency to empirical enquiry (Venance, 2018) A conceptual framework helps a researcher to postulate or hypothesize and test certain relationships

and thus improving understanding of the dynamics of situation. Strategic management practices are useful only when they make a positive difference in output.

Therefore, in this study, while holding other factors constant, successful implementation of strategic plans is theorized as the dependent variable to employees' perception, Leadership practice, involvement practice and Communication practice. The predictors, employees' perception, Leadership practice, involvement practice and Communication practice positively or negatively influence the successful implementation of the strategic plan (dependent variable) in the public TVET institutions. Figure 1 displays the conceptual framework and how the variables were operationalized in this study.

Independent

```
Employees' perception
    • Relevance of SP
    • Employees training
    • Existence of steering committee
    • Level of employees' support
```

```
Communication
  • Mode of communication between
    employees of different level of
    management
  • Communication channels
  • Employees view of communication
    process on SP implementation
```

Dependent Variable

```
Strategic plan implementation
    • Level of success of SPI
    • Pace of SPI
      implementation
```

```
Employee Involvement
    • Level of employees' motivation on
      their involvement on strategy
      implementation
    • Level of employees' commitment
      and ownership of sp
      implementation
    • Extent of employee involvement
      and participation
```

```
Leadership practice
  • Level of support from top leadership
    to employees
  • Employees evaluation of leadership
    practices on SP implementation
  • Employees view on leadership
    commitment on SP implementation
```

Source: Author

```
Government
Policy
```

Intervening Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates how employees' perception, communication, employee involvement and leadership practice impacts implementation of strategic plans.

1.12 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terminologies were adopted:

Strategic plan: Strategic plan is a process that charts out an institution's broad direction forward. It is step by step guides that map out how the organization will reach its goals in the future (Ferlie & Ongaro, 2015).

Public Technical and Vocational Education Training institutions (TVET): In this study incorporates Technical Training institutions (TTI), Institutes of Technology (IT) and National polytechnics which have been in existent for the last ten years.

Management practices: Management practices are thought to be initiatives that organizations put in place and have the capacity to influence change implementation in any given system (Murugi and Ongoto, 2018). In this study management practices is limited to include leadership practice, involvement practice and communication strategy.

Perception: is defined as the extent to which employees indicate importance of a variable in attaining/ not attaining desired results of a strategy (Robbins, 2004).

Involvement: means that every employee is regarded as a unique human being, and each employee is involved in helping the organization meet its goals. Each employee's input is solicited and valued by his/her management (Foudraine, 2015).

Leadership: leadership is defined as the ability to influence, change, motivate, communicate and set goals for an organization (Raush, 2005). In this study leadership strategy involves the capacity to support employees, ability to provide direction and sense of commitment to institutional strategy.

Communication practice: It is defined as information transit which occurs because people in an organization need to receive and transmit information to coordinate their activities and execute their tasks in order to achieve desired results (Niculae, 2006).

Strategy: strategy is a scope and direction of a firm designed to change environment over the long-term through its alignment of resources and competences aimed at accomplishing the vision, goals and expectations of stakeholder (Joyce & Drumaux, 2014). So, it is a means of achieving organizational objectives. Also, strategy is defined as a coordinated set of actions that fulfill firm's objectives, purposes and goals (Demirkaya, 2015).

Implementation: implementation in an organizational context refers to turning strategy into action. It involves managing the organisation's resources, motivation and leading employees towards achieving organizational objectives (Lares Mankki, 2014)

Strategy implementation: it is defined as an iterative, dynamic and a complex process, which comprises of series of decisions and activities by the management and administration of those affected by many interrelated internal and external factors, to turn strategic plans into reality in order to achieve the objectives of the institution (Abok, 2013). This is a process that turns the strategies and plans developed by TVET institutions into actions aimed at accomplishing strategic objectives and goals set.

Top Management: It is defined as top leadership of the organization who are charged with the responsibility of formulating strategic plans and ensures successful implementation (Chacha, 2018). In this study, it refers to principals, registrars and deans of student.

Middle Management: It is defined as employees who are the link between the top management and lower level management. They are the immediate supervisors of the lower level management staff. In this study, it refers to heads of departments in the institutions (Rheinecker, 2015).

Lower Management: It is defined as employees who are the key implementers of the strategies formulated in the institutions. In this study, it refers to the lecturers in the institutions (Robbins, 2010)

1.13   Organization of the Rest of the Study

This thesis is organized into five separate and interlinked chapters. Chapter one as an introductory chapter presents an overall view of the research and offers a background for the four other chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on management practices and strategic plan implementation. In Chapter three study research design and methodology constituted of: the study research design, targeted population, the sampling procedure, study research instruments, the validity and reliability of the research instruments and data analysis. Chapter four was confined to data analysis and data presentation while chapter five included, summary conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on literature in the following areas, Concept of strategy, Perception, Strategic plan implementation, Employees' Perceptions and Strategic Plan Implementation, Management practices factors and strategic plan implementation, Leadership and Strategic plan implementation, Employee Involvement and Strategic plan implementation, Communication strategy and Strategic plan implementation and summary of the literature review and research gap.

2.2 Concept of Strategy

A strategy is plans of action to have an organization attain its objectives successfully. It is also a broad program of goals and activities to have an institution attain corporate success (porter, 2012). A strategy is a framework through which an organization can assert its vital continuity whilst managing to adapt to the changing environment to gain competitive advantage (Ansoff, 2002). It is a mediating force between the organization and its environment through which consistent streams of organizational decisions are developed to deal with the environment.

On the other hand, strategic management is a systematic approach to the major and increasingly important responsibility of general management to position and relate the firm to its environment in a way which will assure its continued success and make it secure from surprises. Gole (2005) proposes that strategic management is a process, directed by top management to determine the fundamental aims or goals of the organization, and ensure a range of decisions which will allow for the achievement of

those aims or goals in the long-term, while providing for adaptive responses in the short-term. The three core areas of corporate strategy as outlined by Gole encompasses: strategy analysis, strategy development and strategy implementation. Strategic analysis deals with examining the environment within which the organization operates. Pearce and Robinson (2007) states that strategy formulation is concerned with determining where the organization is, where it wants to go and how to get there. It involves carrying out situation analysis that leads to setting of objectives. Vision and mission statements are crafted and overall corporate objectives, strategic business unit objectives and tactical objectives are also developed. Strategy implementation is the process of allocating resources to support an organization's chosen strategies. This process includes the various management activities that are necessary to put strategy in motion and institute strategic controls that monitor progress and ultimately achieve organizational goals. Strategy evaluation includes review of external and internal factors that are bases for strategies formulated, measuring performance and taking corrective action, if necessary.

Current thinking is that strategy should be viewed as choosing a direction within a given context, through leadership, and articulating that direction through management practices. Within this view, there are many elements of strategy, some under the leadership dimension and others the management dimension. Strategy is the key to aligning all school management processes (Gole, 2005). Through effective strategy, the educational leader can deliberately and purposefully align the organisational structure with the work of the people within the organization in consideration of organisational performance. Strategy is the avenue to escape the ad hoc, fragmented, piecemeal approach to institutional management adopted by less effective leaders.

2.3 Perception

Perception according to Saha (2008) is an influential phenomenon as employees usually act upon their perceptions. He argues that employee perception acts as a critical component in the work place and it plays a key role in employees' performance.

Robbins (2004) defines employee perception as 'a process by which individuals organize and interpret their impressions in order to get meaning of their environment'. He argues that perception is not necessarily based on reality but on individual's view of a particular situation He adds that in dealing with employees' behavior, perception becomes important because employees' behavior is based on their perception of what reality is, not on reality itself. He further argues that without perception, nothing can be done in the organization and a perception that is accepted by all is paramount for high performances.

Smith et al. (2007) define perception as the process in which individuals arrange and interpret sensory impressions in order to make sense of their environment and stresses that it is important for managers to realize that what employees perceive is often different from reality and people react not to reality but what they perceive as reality. Perception of members of an organization is important in that when well analyzed and executed, it should furnish or make available to management critical information on which decisions impact on organizations success on the side of employees or other stakeholders (Owidi, 2006).

Therefore, understanding the ways in which employees establish certain reactions to change will provide a potential path for developing strategy that stimulate everyone to the common objectives of the organization. Developing a unity across all levels in the

organization that facilitate all members of the organization perceive things in a similar manner is crucial because it in turn result in consistency with the desired objectives of the organization thus leading to successful strategy implementation.

Executors play a very critical role in strategy implementation. Executors are comprised of top management, middle management, lower management. Effectiveness of strategy implementation is affected by the quality of people involved in the process (Govindarajan, 1989). The people working in an organization are the key to achieve effective implementation of the strategy. Knowledgeable, dependable and versatile employees have the ability to overcome the obstacles to change and can meet performance goals even when other resources are scarce.

Strategic plan implementation requires integrative point of view. The agreement therefore among top, middle and lower level managers will result to successful implementation of the strategy. If there is no understanding among them, it may create obstacles to successful strategy implementation. Yuki (2006) argued that the top management may differ substantially in the way in which they operate. He further opined that regardless of the formal structure of an organization, there will be differences in the extent to which management practices are executed. In this study, therefore level of employees' support of strategic plan implementation, relevance of strategic plan implementation, training on Strategic plan and existence of steering committee were considered to see how they affect implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions.

2.4   Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation is the process of putting strategies and policies into action through the development of programs, budgets and procedures (Bradford *et al* 2000). Strategy implementation is an enigma in many companies. Successful implementation requires that the strategy, the organization, the people and their relationships, the systems and the measures all must be aligned and made to work towards a common goal (Mwangoe, 2011). Effective strategies are bound to fail or succeed depending on how implementing agencies monitor, evaluate and constantly manage factors both in immediate internal and external environment of the organization

 Strategy implementation always involves the introduction of change to an organization. Managers spend a lot of time evaluating alternatives and selecting a strategy. Frequently this strategy is then announced to the organization with the expectation that organization members will automatically see why the alternative is the best one and will begin immediate implementation. When a strategic change is poorly introduced, managers may actually spend more time implementing changes resulting from the new strategy than was spent in selecting it.

David (2003), concluded that successful strategy implementation must consider issues central to its implementation which include, matching organizational structure to strategy, creating a supportive organizational culture among other issues. Kubinski (2002) observe that the most important thing when implementing a strategy is the top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself and stresses that this is undoubtedly a prerequisite for strategy implementation. He further noted that, to successfully improve strategy implementation, senior executives must ensure that

lower-level managers have the same perceptions of the strategy and its implementation.

According to Thompson et al (2007), effective strategy implementation depends on competent personnel and effective internal organizational systems. No organization can hope to perform the activities required for successful strategy implementation without attracting, motivating and retaining talented managers and employees with suitable skills and intellectual capital. Without a smart, capable result-oriented management team, the implementation process ends up being hampered by missed deadlines, misdirected or wasteful efforts. Building a capable organization is thus a priority in strategy execution, Worley (2005).

Letting (2009) established that management was a key factor in the success of strategic plans. Beer and Eisenstat (2000) demonstrated that poor top-down management style or poor vertical communication can be a cause of resistance to strategy implementation. At the same time, they observed that top management is responsible for the provision and allocation of implementation factors such as leadership and organizational culture in facilitating strategy implementation. It may be argued that management of an organization strategy should not be restricted to the top managers but managers at all levels. In fact various authors appear to have a common view that implementation failures occur at middle level and lower level management (Abok, 2013).

The studies on implementation of strategic plans identified failure rate of strategy execution range between 50% and 80% (Lynch, 2012; Lares-Mankki, 2014) or 50% and 90% (Cherop, 2012). Similarly, Gebhardt & Eagles (2014) revealed that, although 80% of organizations have good crafted strategies, only 14% have succeeded to

execute them well. A study by Allio (2005) found that a discouraging 57 percent of firms were unsuccessful at executing strategic initiatives. According to the White Paper of Strategy Implementation of Chinese Corporations (2006), 83 percent of the surveyed companies failed to implement their strategy smoothly. Moreover, Atkinson (2006), found out more than 50 percent of the new strategies developed by organizations in Europe are not implemented. The management strategies challenges in strategy implementation includes ineffective leadership, lack of ownership, ineffective communication, poor clarity on tasks and responsibilities, lack of resources and poor risk identification (Awino et al, 2012, Machuki and Aosa, 2011, Okumo 2003). The high failure rate in implementation of strategic plan as discussed above calls for need to investigate the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation in organizations.

Aosa (2012) surveyed 51 large private manufacturing firms through a survey and established that management practices were the key factors that influenced strategic plans formulation and implementation. He further noted that an effective implementation process required a collective approach to culture and communication while keeping clear communication channels and realigning firm resources so that strategic plans are not halted by lack or inadequate implementation resources.

Strategic plan implementation is broadly recognized as a key management challenge in many organisation (Lynch, 2012; Lares-Mankki, 2014). It is a process which is complex, iterative, dynamic and composed of a series of activities and decision by employees and managers who are affected by external and internal factors towards achieving objectives.

Employee's resistance or support for strategic plan implementation often depend on, among other things, how employees construct numerous perceptions on human related issues and assign the degree of importance to each perception. Each of these perceptions can lead to resistance and or support for strategic plan implementation process which subsequently affect institutional performance. In this study the effects of employee's perception on strategic plan implementation and the effects of leadership, communication and involvement practices were considered. Strategic plan implementation components considered in this study was Level of success of strategic plan implementation and pace of strategic plan implementation.

In this study, the researcher was interested in how independent variables affect one dependent variable. The four independent variables are considered to be the ones that affect the strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya.

2.5 Employees' Perceptions and Strategic Plan Implementation

Human Resource capabilities play a very critical role in strategy implementation. Executors are comprised of top management, middle management, lower management. Longurasia (2008) argued that when employees interpret or perceive the outcome of the factors as fair, they are more likely to engage in working relationship that exceeds normal expectations of the performance. He further stressed that positive perception develops commitment slowly and consistently over time which is reflected in employees' acceptance of the organization goals and strategies.

Smith, (2007) submitted that managers require a sound knowledge of the complex nature of people. Min et al (2006) in their research findings indicated that managers should be alert at all times to employees' reaction to change in order to make change

successful. Further, managers must understand employees' acceptance and willingness to apply and support change in order to prevent poor customer service.

Johnson and Scholes (2007) refer to people as being at the heart of strategy and further acknowledge that the knowledge and experience of people can be the key factors enabling success of strategies. They further emphasized that possession of resources, including people, do not guarantee strategic success, but the way the resources are deployed, managed, controlled and in the case of people, motivated, creates competencies leading to strategic capability.

It is important therefore to understand the perceptions of employees because employees' behavior is based on their perception of what reality is, not on reality itself. The employees' perceptions and interpretations of strategy control is the way in which such is implemented (Sebaa, 2010). He stressed that employees' behaviors are based on their perceptions and hence this highlights the importance of strategy clarity. Moreover, he argued that the way in which employees view the strategy is according to their role, power and interest, and determines their attitude towards it. It is therefore important for management to understand the way in which employees think and how they perceive the world in order to be successful in the implementation stage. The way in which employees perceive strategy implementation subsequently has an effect on the success. According to Allison and Kaye (2005), in some cases, frontline employees do not agree with the strategic direction of the institution and choose not to implement the plan the way it was intended.

Research by Fenton O'Creevy (2000) shows that, in many cases, middle managers block the strategy due to perceiving it as a threat to their role, and to their power and position within the organization. Arya and Green (2013) argued that leaders perceive

themselves as key players in high level and important roles whereas middle level managers are only expected to act on what they are asked to do. This is a misrepresentation of middle managers' roles. Middle managers have the ability to contribute ideas that are both practical as well as "entrepreneurial" because of their interaction and familiarity with daily operations. They also are better at bridging the gap between senior administrators and frontline employees while paying attention to their employees' feelings and opinions (Rheinecker, 2015). Therefore, for the successful implementation of strategies, both lower level managers and non-management employees should be adequately informed of the facts and issues regarding the implementation of strategies. However, they should not only inform the employees, they should also leave room for questions and discussion with the affected employees. Otherwise, a lack of consensus creates barriers to the successful implementing of the strategic plan (Buluma et al. 2013).

Yuki (2006) argued that the top management may differ substantially in the way in which they operate. He further opined that regardless of the formal structure of an organization, there will be differences in the extent to which strategic leadership is shared among the members of the top team. The failure to assess leadership capacity systematically, prior to implementing a selected strategy, can have significant negative consequences for an organization. Great leaders in top management positions are more likely to fail if they are not well versed in the conditions that affect the implementation strategy (Hrebiniak, 2005).

Omondi (2017) examined Perception of employees on institutional factors affecting the implementation of strategic plans at Wrigley East Africa, Kenya and established that majority of the lower level management staff felt that they were not sensitized on

strategic planning process and top management in the company did not create conducive environment for strategy implementation at other levels of management. In this study, therefore level of employees' support of strategic plan implementation, relevance of strategic plan implementation, training on Strategic plan and existence of steering committee were considered to see how employees perceive them and their effect on implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions.

2.6 Communication and Strategic Plan Implementation

Communication can be defined as information transit which occurs because people in organizations need to receive and transmit information to coordinate their activities and execute their tasks. Managerial communication in any organization is meant to achieve correct and effective information, both vertically and horizontally, in order to accomplish in good conditions, the internal and external requests according to the managerial and organizational objectives (Niculae, 2006).

Managerial communication which is direct between superior and subordinate is important. Problems appear when the perception differences are extreme and persistent, not when there are insignificant disagreements. Communication and understanding shared among all employees is a crucial aspect of the strategy implementation process: hence, top management needs to ensure that all the information concerning strategic plans is at the disposal of all the employees (Buluma et al. 2013).

Even though studies point out that communication is a key success factor within strategy implementation (Hanna, 2005), communicating with employees concerning issues related to the strategy implementation is frequently delayed until the changes have already crystallized. Abok (2013) argued that poor understanding by the

employees of the strategy and ineffective communication are the most important barriers to the effective implementation of strategy. Keeping the lines of communication open is perhaps the most important role of employees during the implementation process. This includes taking the time to voice concerns, seek out answers and resolve any difficulties as changes are put in place. Staying in touch with management and helping co-workers overcome obstacles will help make the implementation process as simple and efficient as possible Robinson and Pearce (2004).

Dransfield (2001) states that effective communication systems are needed in implementing strategy to make sure that everyone within the organization shares the vision, mission, objectives and values and has a good grasp of the strategy and how it relates to their own efforts. Multi-channel flows of communication are helpful in creating a shared sense of ownership of corporate strategy. Rapert et al (2002) all agree that communication is one of the most important parts of strategy implementation. Communication is important both in the formulation process as a means of creating consensus and understanding and in the continuous implementation process and it is imperative successful implementation. Particularly, when vertical communication is frequent, strategic consensus is enhanced and an organization's performance improves. Training, knowledge dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation are also enhanced through communication, Otundo (2015). Communication is a process of sending and receiving symbols with meaning attached to them. It is the meaningful of signs to establish social relationships. Raper, Velliquette, and Garreston (2000) stated that communication and shared understandings play a principal role in the implementation process. In

particular, when vertical communication is frequent, strategic consensus is enhanced and organization performance improves.

Communication is the key to gaining people's involvement and significantly reducing their level of uncertainty in the activities of an organization (Burnes cited in Abok, 2013). It is the lifeblood of an organization and without effective communication; the pattern of relationships that we call organizations will not serve anyone's needs. Communication should be a regular rather than a one-off exercise and should be pursued through various channels that management deem fit to access the employees of an organization.

Communication seeks to change or confirm the receiver's knowledge, attitude or overt behavior in some predetermined manner, Robbins et al, (2010). Organizations, especially in the public sector, involve organizational hierarchies and the division of labour. Some people are superiors and some are subordinates. These roles strongly affect communication behavior. Supervisors are usually the information managers because they have decision-making and control functions allowing them to control information flows. They transmit messages to subordinates who must receive and obey the contents. Organizations need sets of interconnected communication channels for receiving, processing and sending internal and external messages. They also need to receive information from their environment. Information can be managed, decisions made, feedback obtained and further corrections made through these information channels.

Communication is also important in creating and maintaining an appropriate organizational climate and culture. Adequate information flow in an organization is a crucial factor when members assess their working climate. Employees must feel

themselves to be in tune with the organization. Believing that they are well informed and can communicate adequately with superiors and co-workers is important for employees (Cunneen, 2008).

In terms of the structure of the organization, communication can flow in either a vertical (downward/upward) or lateral (horizontal) direction (Luneburg, 2010). Downward communication flows from the top level of the organization to the lower levels. Top-level managers utilize this kind of communication to delegate responsibilities, establish and disseminate instructions, provide information about policies, highlight problem areas, and offer performance-related feedback (Robbins et al., 2010). It is important for public service managers to ensure that all staff members are continuously informed about the strategy to be adopted and how they fit in. It is important that management promote an organizational culture of shared values by ensuring that employees understand the vision and mission statements of the organization.

Upward communication flows from the lower levels of the organization to the top levels (Luneburg, 2010). In this approach, the lower levels inform top-level managers about their progress in achieving the organization's goals. In addition, members of the lower tiers express their feelings about the work to their managers and inform them about their ideas for improvements (Robbins et al., 2010). Clearly, lower level management can participate in a democratic framework, as long as they are able to offer suggestions to the top-level managers.

Lateral-flowing communication is characterized by information that is shared horizontally between employees from the same or similar levels so as to support coordination (Luneburge, 2010; Robbins, et al., 2010). Upward type of

communication in any organization has always been viewed as a challenge. Employees don't feel free to communicate their views to the management since most of the time they feel inferior. In most cases the information flows in one direction from the managers to the employees. Employees are often reluctant to share information that could be interpreted as negative or threatening to those above them in an organizational hierarchy (Olkkonen, Lisa & Aho, 2015). This reluctance to speak up, and the silence or information withholding that it gives rise to, has the potential to undermine strategy formulation and implementation and to damage employee trust and morale (Lamm, Gordon & Purser, 2010). Remaining silent may make sense when it is considered from the perspective of the employee who fears that his or her manager will react negatively to the upward communication of concerns and may react further by taking steps that undermine the employee's ability to work in the organization.

Henry (2008) stated that even the best formulated strategy in the world can fail if it is poorly implemented, hence the need for strategies to be effectively communicated and properly resourced. The need for change needs to be understood and properly coordinated with stakeholders inside and outside the organization. Although the leader of an organization will ultimately be responsible for a strategy's success or failure, their role should be to encourage and create an organizational culture that empowers managers to respond to opportunities. This will provide employees with confidence to try out new ideas and innovations without fear of reprisals. The successful implementation of a strategy in public institutions depends on how effectively the strategy was communicated to all the employees that would be involved in the implementation of such strategy. Communication enables dialogue, and dialogue enables learning. It is important that employees understand the strategic direction and

how they are able to contribute to the strategic mission of the organization Marr (2006).

Moreover, Fills (2009) states that employees form part of a major stakeholder group in any given organization. The employees make a major contribution to the success of the organization through their individual contributions. They are responsible for the performance of the organization and their role has become increasingly recognized. Management should therefore take cognizance of the existence of this group of stakeholders and keep it informed on issues related to strategy implementation. Any weaknesses in communication can lead to the presentation of inadequate information, which creates misunderstandings for the implementers, who may be confused as to what exactly is required of them (Makinde, 2005). Burnes (2004) asserted that the interpretation of communication plays a vital role which requires managers to enforce a strong culture that embrace clear understanding of communications. He adds that this means that managers must be aware of people's beliefs, attitudes, behaviour, demands and arguments in order to communicate effectively the message of strategic plan implementation to the employees.

Poor or ineffective communication, that is top-down, bottom-up and across functions and divisions, could negatively affect the strategy implementation. When information is not flowing effectively from bottom to top, top management may not be aware of problems jeopardizing the implementation of the strategy, and therefore, not able to respond to these problems (Beer et al, 2000). The information flow does not only include people communicating with each other but also information systems through which management is monitoring the implementation efforts. The flow of information through various hierarchical levels in an organization is critical to the strategy

implementation process. It provides opportunity to the implementers to give their reactions and hence enrich the strategy.

The study by Gedi and Muturi (2016) on "Influence of Communication on Stakeholders Strategy Implementation in Garissa County, Kenya" revealed that there was insignificant influence of communication to stakeholders towards execution of strategy and hence, the study suggested the need to plan for public relations and communication which is fully funded. However, Odanga et al (2016) in the study on factors affecting implementation of strategic plans by water service providers under Athi water services board, noted that the flow of communication within organizations have little influence on degree of effectiveness on implementation of strategic plans. On the other hand, Chacha (2018) in her study found strong positive correlation between strategic change implementation and communication in government ministries in Kenya. Further, Curswoth, (2013) found out that there is strong negative correlation between strategy implementation and communication in the private sector.

Communication is the key to gaining people's involvement and significantly reducing uncertainty in the activities of an organization (Burnes, 2004). Communication should be a regular rather than a one-off exercise and should be pursued through various channels that management deem fit to access the employees of an organization. The flow of information through various hierarchical levels in an organization is critical to the implementation team. When information is not flowing effectively from bottom to top, top management may not be aware of problems jeopardizing the implementation of the strategy, and therefore, not able to respond to these problems (Beer et al, 2000; Al-Ghamdi, 1998). On the other hand, people who work for an organization need effective communication for supervision of employees to ensure that they are

performing the tasks they are expected and, in a manner, they are supposed to. Communicating poorly has negative effects on an organization's ability to implement and refine its strategy (George,*et.al*, 2017).

From the above literature, it seems that there is conflict among researchers as to whether communication strategy is significant or not in its effect on strategic plan implementation. Due to the fact that there was no universally agreed upon effect of communication practice on strategic plan implementation, it meant that there was a void that needed to be filled through this study. In this study, therefore, mode of communication between different levels of management, communication channels and employees view of communication process sub-variables were considered to see how they influence implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions.

2.7 Employee Involvement and Strategic Plan Implementation

Strategic planning in many sectors, such as in education, depends on the stakeholders that lie inside and outside the organization (Al-Sakarna, 2010). Stakeholders may become partners in the strategic plan process in that they support the plan's formulation and implementation in a participative framework (Puanmau, 2000). One of the greatest underlying factors in the success or failure of any organization is the power of its people, and how well that power is focused towards meeting the organization's objectives. Apostolou cited in Theodosia (2010) argued that organizations that can tap the strengths of their people will be stronger and more competitive than those that cannot. Employee involvement is a process for empowering employees to participate in managerial decision-making and improvement activities appropriate to their levels in the organization.

According to Lawler cited in Foudraine (2015), employee involvement practices is critical in that it concerns locating decisions at the lowest level in the organizations. It requires an institution to be designed in a way that employees can take control over decisions. In addition, it is argued that the individuals or teams should be given the power, information, and knowledge they need to work autonomously or independently of management control and direction. The job of management is seen as one of preparing the individuals or teams to function in an autonomous manner. Management is an enabler, culture setter, and supporter rather than a director of employee action.

Stakeholders are the individuals who share a mutual interest with the organization in an effort to achieve definitive aims, either individually or collectively (Johnson and Scholes, 2006). Thus, stakeholders are those who have relationships with the education system, and who affect, or are affected by, education-related decisions. Mohammed (2011) asserts that participatory approach should involve individuals from different levels of the organization (top, middle, and lower levels). This allows for the exchange of different views and knowledge between the stakeholders and the organization in a way that ensures the inclusion of the stakeholders' demands and needs. Participatory approaches provide employees from different levels with the chance to become familiar with the strategic goals in order to be more capable of implementing them. This approach also helps employees gain a better understanding of their roles, which may diminish any role ambiguities or conflicts that may arise when implementing the strategic plan (Kim, 2002). This allows for the exchange of different views and knowledge between the stakeholders and the organization in a way that ensures the inclusion of the stakeholders' demands and needs. Employees' Involvement gives them a strong voice. It gives them the possibility to influence the

selected courses of action (Lehner, 2004). If members of the organization are not aware of the same information, or if information passes through different layers in an organization, a lower level of consensus may result. This lack of shared understanding may create obstacles to successful strategy implementation (Noble, 1999b).

The study by Dandira (2011), concluded that managers will always strive to sell the strategic plan to employees who never participated in their formulation but are expected to implement them, resulting to resistance or poorly implemented strategy. Decision-making in organizations has been the preserve of top management without the involvement of those on the lower rungs of the ladder of management, yet they are the very ones expected to see to the implementation of these decisions. It is important to ensure that mid-level managers get involved in the planning process. The non-involvement of lower level management in decision-making also means that vital input from employees is often not factored into decisions made. This gives rise to the problems that are experienced in organizations when it comes to the acceptance of these decisions and its implementation because employees feel slighted and of no importance because their views were not sought (Theodosia L.Q, 2010). They also do not feel as being part of the decision process but rather decisions are taken and 'pushed down their throats'. This leads to resistance to compliance or a negative attitude to implementation.

Cascading strategic plans was often considered a serious problem in implementing strategic plans (Poister 2010). This finding shows that top management in most of the researched organizations made too little effort to ask each functional area to identify how they would contribute to carrying out the overall strategic plan of their organization. Strategic plans cascaded by charismatic leaders through workshops,

events and even celebrations can pass the message down and reduce the resistance of staff, thus making the implementation process easier. Huy (2011) conducted a study of a large Canadian information technology (IT) company that was involved with the strategic planning process. More than 200 interviews were conducted with approximately 200 employees. Huy found that senior executives could increase the chances of successful implementation by paying greater attention to the emotions of their middle management team. The emotions of these managers dictated the reaction and commitment to recommended change

Getting feedback benefits the senior leadership team because they may discover that they have left out an important issue that the feedback will highlight. By making them participants in the plan's development, they are more likely to support implementation actions. Their perspectives and insights can make a better, more executable plan. Their involvement will also dispel the perception that the strategic plan is a document created by those in charge and thrust upon the organization. Owing to this reason, it is important for the senior leadership team to establish a process for obtaining feedback from mid-level managers. The strategic plan should not be finalized until their input has been considered. As Hughes et al. (2002) wrote senior-level leaders who report high levels of participation with their subordinates tend to deal better with interpersonal conflict and have high levels of morale and cohesion. It is the employees that make things happen. They put their shoulder to the wheel to get the organization's machinery moving. Without their contributions everything comes to a standstill and the goals of the organization cannot be efficiently and effectively achieved. They should, therefore be given the recognition as the most important resource (asset) in the organization (Hughes, 2002). If middle and lower level

managers and key subordinates are permitted to be involved with the detailed implementation planning, their commitment will likely increase.

Mgomezulu (2007) argued that stakeholders' involvement can be meaningful, only when the stakeholders themselves are empowered to make decisions that influence organizational practices, polices, and directions. According to him, this could only happen when people in leadership positions, such as educational leaders, are willing to work with stakeholders to teach them the skills and expertise necessary to implement these policies. The involvement of stakeholders creates a consensus and minimizes conflict hence successful implementation of strategic plan.

Stakeholders are, undoubtedly, important in strategic plan implementation; yet it must also be kept in mind that there are some negative aspects associated with involving stakeholders, which must be considered. One potential problem is that stakeholders can become resisters rather than helpers. In other words, some stakeholders may oppose the strategic plan, which could be due to individual interests that the new plans threaten, or the stakeholders may simply resent due to their inability to participate effectively (Al-Sakarna, 2010). Another issue is that involving the stakeholders may not always work especially if the strategic plans are limited by tight timelines, it will be hard to involve stakeholders, especially when training or some additional work is required. As Sabatier (1986) indicates, one such problem is the existence of difficulties within the plan's implementation, which are sometimes due to bureaucratic incompetence or bureaucratic excess. In this light, employees are often unable to successfully complete the tasks they are required to fulfill. This can be interpreted as meaning that certain tasks require a specific type of experience, but bureaucracy may prevent its development, thus removing one's ability to complete

certain tasks. Makinde (2005) emphasizes that, in order to create and implement successful policies, they should be developed in a participatory way. By involving both the target groups and the policymakers in the development of the plans, the policies may more directly meet the needs of the target group. It is argued that by encouraging such participation, the target groups will feel a greater sense of involvement in the governing of their own situations, and the likelihood with which they will support successful policy implementation will increase.

To ensure the employees' level of commitment and enthusiasm toward implementing the plan effectively, the sense of ownership felt by both the professionals and the managerial team needs to be strengthened (Puanmau, 2006). Al-Sharrah (2002) confirms this idea, stating that by encouraging stakeholders to participate in the planning process, and by building a sense of ownership among them, they will be able to achieve better results when implementing the plan. The sense of ownership and the ability to participate in designing the plan would also enhance an understanding of the plan's components, thus allowing for better plan implementation. Even in situations where the resources of the organization are sufficient enough to carry out the strategic plan, not involving the implementers in the planning stages from the very beginning might affect their level of commitment and devotion to the implementation (Puanmau, 2006). In order to implement employee involvement and empowerment to an organization the following key actions need to take place: Giving employee the responsibility: Training employee to accept responsibility: Communicating and giving feedback: Giving rewards and recognition.

Facilitating employee involvement requires recognizing the value of each individual, understanding human motivations, assigning people to positions in which they can be

successful, and listening to employees. If management does not acknowledge employee recommendations, employees will rapidly conclude that management has no interest in their ideas (Apostolon, 2000). Management must acknowledge all improvement recommendations, including the ones that are not deemed feasible. In a highly top-down system, workplaces tend to be restrictive, and this might affect the implementers' decision making and reduce their capacity to set goals to manage their own work. The roles of each stakeholder on strategic management vary; some play a pivotal role while others remain at the periphery. Primary stakeholders (employees) wield a lot of power and interest in the success of the organization's strategy and can influence the degree of success of a strategy in an organization.

Research by Guth and Macmillan, cited in Apostolon, (2000) suggest that employees with low or negative commitment to that strategies formulated by senior management create significant obstacles to effective implementation. Employees and managers are motivated more by their perceived self interest than by the goals of the organization unless they coincide. Therefore, if the perceived degree of goal alignment is low, the individual's commitment to strategy will be low, and as a result, the amount of effort the employees would be willing to invest in implementing that strategy will also be low. It is thus evident from literature that management employs various set of levers such as organization structure, reward systems, staff, culture and information and control to ensure strategy implementation. Hence, less attention is paid to involvement or there is haphazard way of involvement of employees in the process.

Successful strategy implementation starts with a good strategy. Implementation process is deemed to have failed from the start if the formulated strategy is not implementable or worth implementing. To ensure that an implementable strategy is

formulated, key employees from different levels of the organization should be involved in the formulation process. This way, valuable knowledge from all organizational levels is used to create the strategy that best fits the ultimate goals of top management, and can realistically be implemented considering the available resources of the organization, and the market conditions. Moreover, involving key personnel already in the process of strategy formulation will create ownership of strategic decisions, which is crucial for the success of the strategy implementation.

A study by Kaplan and Norton (2010) on strategy execution problems in organizations in the United States revealed that in the great majority of surveyed companies; not more than 10 percent of employees understood their company's strategy. Other research studies have also revealed that less than 5 percent of the employees typically understand their organization's strategy (Kaplan and Norton, 2010). Similarly, Hrebiniak (2012) has stated that in many organizations he studied, employees most often were not aware of their company's strategy. It is clear that if all employees cannot understand the strategy and their roles in it, successful strategy execution is highly unlikely (Kaplan and Norton, 2008).

Moreover, Harriet, Kwabena and Asuo (2014), in their studies argued that involvement of stakeholder gives a way of safeguarding consent from the governed in a clearer way and can avoid oppositional confrontations or reduce litigations. Therefore, the deeper public relations which are grounded on reliable opportunities for meeting and concern sharing are likely to build trustworthiness and confidence to facilitate execution of policy and revising processes.

Wheelen and Hunger (2015) states that lack of direction in the organization makes people to do their work according to their personal view of what tasks should be done,

how, and in what order. This therefore compromises the priorities of the organization. Strategy executors are comprised of top management, middle management, lower management and non-management. In this regard, therefore for a strategy to be effectively executed, at least the people involved should be of very high quality (Govindarajan, 2011).

Managers empower subordinates by delegating duties which allows them to learn and improve the quality of their services (Michel, Nabel & Adiel 2011). Managers should develop, upgrade employee's knowledge, skills and attitudes, and improve their productivity through effective planning, development and implementation of educational programs (Michel et al., 2011)

Employee empowerment offers several benefits that are linked to a commitment to the organizations and consequently improving organizational performance. Sharing power, resources, and knowledge with employees through empowerment increases job satisfaction and commitment. These factors have a positive influence on an individual's productivity (Chen et al., 2008).

Torka (2013), who adopted a descriptive survey design in his study on enterprise development and found that in the Netherlands, involvement improved commitment of metalwork employees to the organization strategies. This study is based in the Netherlands and may not appropriately represent the Kenyan context.

Noraani and Zaizara (2013) studied the effect of promotion opportunity on job Satisfaction among Malaysian graduates. The researchers employed a descriptive research approach, and the results showed that promotion opportunities positively affected employee satisfaction. They argued that when employees perceive promotion decisions as fair, then they are likely to perform better and are more committed. The

study only focused on employee empowerment alone and did not consider other management practices such as leadership and communication, which the current considered. Literature shows that when managers directly participate in the decision-making process, then it improves organizational commitment hence improving performance (Randall, 2007)

Wairimu and Theuri (2014) studied on w affluences the level of staff involvement in the strategic planning process in public institutions, the case of department of immigration in Kenya, targeting senior, middle-level management and junior staff. Their sample size was 80 and the sampling technique was stratified, job groups being the strata. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. The study established that lower levels staff are usually unaware of the organization's strategic planning processes or their roles in the planning, and that this non-involvement, especially subordinate staff members led to some staff members being unaccountable of the strategic planning process.

However, prior empirical studies on participation in decision-making have shown mixed results. According to Locke, et al, 1984 cited in Chaiporn V., (2005) participation on decision-making was less effective in production setting. Murage (2018) in her study on management practices and strategic plan implementation in Anglican Church of Kenya found a strong positive correlation between employee involvement and strategy implementation.

Poor involvement and participation of employees has negative effects on an organization's ability to implement their strategies. In this study, therefore, level of employees' motivation on their involvement on strategic plan implementation, Level of employees' commitment and ownership of strategic plan implementation, and

extent of employee involvement and participation sub-variables were considered to see how they influence implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions. Employees participation is about employees playing a greater role in the decision-making process. It is an arrangement that ensure that employees are given the opportunity to influence management decisions and to contribute to the improvement of strategic plan implementation.

From the foregoing studies, it is therefore understood that involvement and strategy implementation is a well researched area but what is lacking in these studies is its effect on strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya. Hence, this research was intended to fill that knowledge gap.

2.8 Leadership Practice and Strategic Plan Implementation

The implementation of strategy is perceived to play an important role in organizational success. Strategic leadership plays a critical in the effective implementation of strategy and Strategic leaders can be the basis for creating a sustainable competitive advantage. Strategic leadership is defined as "the leader's ability to anticipate, envision, and maintain flexibility and to empower others to create strategic change as necessary" (Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson 2007). A leader is viewed in this study as a managerial employee who is tasked to oversee the successful execution of strategic initiatives. Strategic leadership is multifunctional; it involves managing through others, and helps organization cope with change (Huey 1994).

Strategic leadership requires the ability to accommodate and integrate both the internal and external business environment of the organization, and to manage and engage in complex information processing. Several identifiable actions characterize strategic leadership that positively contributes to effective strategy implementation

which includes: Determining strategic direction, establishing balanced organizational controls, effectively managing the organization's resource portfolio, sustaining an effective organizational culture, Emphasizing ethical practices. This complements what Russell (2009) claims; that the commitment to the strategic direction is a prerequisite for strategy implementation, so top managers have to show their dedication to the effort.

Strategic leadership is viewed as the most critical component required in effectively implementing strategy. The process of implementing a chosen strategy or strategies requires a change in the internal environment of an organization and effective strategic leadership are required to drive this change (Thompson and Strickland 2007: Kaplan and Norton 2004; Pearce and Robinson 2007; Hrebiniak 2005). Leadership is essential in the success of a strategy in organizations or institutions. kalali et.al (2011) argued that, failure of strategic plan implementation in institutions of learning in Iraq consisted of sixteen factors of which leadership role accounts for up to 71%. He argued that without proper leadership, universities and colleges in Iraq would continue to lack mission, vision, work ethics, and strategic plans for development, resources, better structures, well defined culture.

However, a lack of leadership, and specifically strategic leadership by the top management of the organization, has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective strategy implementation (Kaplan and Norton 2004; Hrebiniak 2005). Leadership plays a crucial role in the effective implementation of the strategic plan because leadership is the driving force behind any change effort (Greenleaf, 2002). He further observed that the success or failure of a strategic planning effort often hinges on how well it is led.

To implement strategy successfully, leaders must not assume that lower level managers have the same perceptions of the strategic plan and its implementation, its underlying rationale, and its urgency. Instead, they must assume they don't, so executives must persuade employees of the validity of their ideas. This therefore implies that to realize successful strategy implementation both senior and subordinate leaders should effectively communicate the strategy and take actions to ensure commitment among the staff. Berson and Avolia (2004) argue that upper-level leaders' actions influence the ways lower level leaders translate and disseminate information about a new strategy. Khurana, and Hill-Popper (2005) argue that the roots of executive leadership are in the creation of meaning within the organization. If these messages lack clarity and consistency across leaders at different levels they may reduce members' ability to understand the importance of and implement strategic initiatives (Cha & Edmondson, 2006; Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002).

Leadership is a perceptual phenomenon, with followers observing the words and actions of their superiors and making inferences about their motives (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004). Podolny, Khurana and Hill-Popper (2005) argued that leadership is explicitly about those words and actions that create meaning for employees. In fact, the successful transition from strategy formulation to the implementation of strategy ultimately depends on the strategic leaders of the organization. Strategic leadership reluctance or incompetence in crafting the process for implementing strategic change is the single most reliable predictor of its failure (Freedman &Tregoe 2003); and it is only through effective strategic leadership that organizations are able to implement strategy effectively (Hitt et al. 2007).

According to Atreya (2007), internal leadership is needed to drive strategy implementation process towards the right direction. What makes it even tougher to implement strategy is the varied range of activities that need to be performed and the varied skills needed to perform them. Just because the management has decided on strategy does not mean that subordinates will follow and cooperate in its implementation. A number of issues are involved including vested interest; office politics, existing attitudes and ingrained practices all of which play major role in strategy implementation (Atreya, 2007).

Rajasekar, (2010) study concluded that it was only when leader's effectiveness at different levels was considered in the aggregate that significant performance improvement occurred while implementing strategies. Jooste and Fourie (2011) further argue that strategic leadership is one of the key drivers of effective strategy implementation and lack of it by the top management of the organization and higher institutions is major barrier to effective strategy implementation. They continue to show that, it is the leader's ability to anticipate, envision, and maintain flexibility and to empower others to create strategic change as necessary.

 Useem (2011) also showed that, several identifiable actions characterize strategic leadership in public colleges and universities positively contributes to effective strategy implementation, namely: Determining strategic direction, establishing balanced organizational control, effectively managing the organization's resource portfolio, sustaining an effective organizational culture, Emphasizing ethical practices. Therefore, Strategic leaders have a role to play in each of the above-mentioned strategic leadership actions.

Ongong'a (2014) did a study on the role of leadership in strategic planning and management as a factor influencing strategy implementation, organizational culture, technology, employees' training among others. Mapetere (2012) in his journal did a study on Strategic Role of Leadership in Strategy Implementation in Zimbabwe's State Owned Enterprises, Fourie (2011) did a study on the role of strategic leadership in effective strategy implementation: Perceptions of South African strategic leaders in Public Universities, Nyakeriga (2015) cited by Mwaikali, 2016 did a study on Factors Influencing Strategic Plan Implementation in the Newly Established Public Universities In Kenya. Further Messah cited by Mwaikali, 2016 did a study on the Factors Affecting the Implementation of Strategic Plans in Government Tertiary Institutions: A Survey of Selected Technical Training Institutes. The finding of these studies demonstrates a lack of strategic leadership by the top managers of the organization as one of the major barriers to the effective implementation of strategy.

Mwenda and Wachira (2015) studied how different leadership styles affect the implementation of strategic plans of organizations in SMEs in Nairobi and found out that leadership styles had significant effect of the implementation of strategic plans.

Guth and MacMillan cited in Atreya, (2007) found that the level of effort that an individual manager will apply to the implementation of a particular strategy depends on his perception of his and the organization's potential to perform, and his perception of the likelihood that successful performance will lead to an outcome that he desires. Leaders who believe their self-interest is being compromised can redirect a strategy, delay its implementation, reduce the quality of its implementation, or sabotage the effort by what Guth and Macmillan call "upward intervention". Upward intervention, in their conception, may include subversive behaviors such as verbal arguments,

objecting memos, coalition formation, the deliberate creation of barriers to implementation, and even sabotage. Passive intervention can take the form of giving a strategy a low priority or taking too much time implementing strategic decisions, both of which can result in unnecessary delays and inhibit the implementation effort. This agrees with Heracleous (2000) who found that if middle management do not think the strategy is the right one, or do not feel that they have the requisite skills to implement it, then they are likely to sabotage its implementation.

According to Rumsey (2013), strategic leadership is concerned with what effective top leaders actually do to produce a strategy-focused organization. Effective leaders are fit for reframing the thinking of those whom they control, empowering them to see that critical changes are basic as well as achievable (Sethuraman and Suresh, 2014). Strategic leadership is presumed to have on effect on individuals and in addition on groups, and generally even on the whole organization (Muscalu, 2014). Leadership produces change by outlining all necessary direction, inspiring, aligning individuals and motivating them to adopt change (Adair, 2012). To some extent, leadership is thought to be naturally multilevel phenomenon (Farahnak & Hurlburt, 2015).

Yuki (2006) stated the importance of strategic leaders and their effect on the performance of large organizations is a controversial issue. According to Yuki (2006) some authors argue that leadership has a major influence on organizational performance. Whereas others contend that leaders have very little impact on organization performance (Thompson and Strickland ,2003: Kaplan and Norton, 2004)). Schaap (2006) had carried out an empirical study to test whether effective senior-level leadership behaviors will be directly related to successful strategy implementation. This hypothesis, however, resulted in mixed support; those senior-

level leaders who have been trained in or studied strategic planning and implementation are more likely to meet the performance targets set for the company. The study concluded that there is a weak relationship. Some of the reasons why these authors doubt the influence of individual leaders include among others: an individual strategic leader has little influence on organization performance due to the many internal and external constraints in an organization, including powerful stakeholders, internal coalitions, organization culture and resource constraints.

Waititu (2016) noted that leadership commitment to the strategic direction of an organization is of paramount importance and therefore top management must not spare any effort to persuade, inspire, motivate and encourage employees in order to generate valuable ideas for effective strategy implementation. Gudo cited in Murugi and Ongoto, (2018) point out that effective leader implement change through articulating the vision, fostering acceptance of group goals, providing individualized support and intellectual stimulation and clarifying performance expectations. Leaders make proactive rather than reactive measures.

Okibo and Agili (2015) revealed that there exists a positive correlation between strategic leadership and strategy implementation. The philosophy behind the practice of leadership is to use strategy in every act of decision making. A more thoughtful management approach can lead to greater success in the workplace if many factors are considered before action is implemented.

Further, Mumenya, Mokaya, and Kihara (2014) looked at the role of leadership in effective strategy implementation in the manufacturing industry in their case study of Bidco Oil Refineries in Nakuru County, Kenya. They found that organizational leadership was found to be the most important factor influencing effective strategy

implementation. Furthermore, Ng'ang'a and Ombui (2013) in their study on, factors influencing implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Lari District, Kiambu County found that leadership was key in the execution of strategic plans followed by resource allocation, communication and organization structure.

Moreover, in the study of corporate performance comprising 49 large insurance organizations, Genc (2017) revealed that culture and management were very critical variables in firms' performance. Also, it was revealed that 70% of failed strategies are due to poor execution caused by the indecisiveness of managers and lack of commitment (Lynch, 2012; Cools & Prinzie, 2017).

Lares-Mankki (2014) studied on strategy implementation bottlenecks and revealed that, failure in implementation of strategic plans was due to poor and inadequate information sharing with uncertain responsibility and accountability. Similarly, a study by Koech and Were (2016) found that managers mostly rely on organizing and planning activities when executing strategies, while the main hindrance to execution of strategies is poor leadership.

Lufthans cited in Chacha (2018) opined that a leader in any institution need to provide resources to show commitment, share the vision, and involve people in the process of strategy implementation while listening to various possibilities. If the leader and employees share the same values and internalize these values, the bond between leader and employee will be strong in all situations leading to free communication that will enable transfer of knowledge. This clearly leads to the observation that an effective leader has to focus on management strategies and influence every individual to singularly focus on the organization vision.

Aosa (2012) noted that participating in the implementation of strategic plans varied with some companies exhibiting high participation while others had low participation as dictated upon by their leadership style. Leaders should focus their members in the same direction with top management being at the forefront to provide vision, initiative, motivation and inspiration.

Another challenge that can affect successful implementation of strategies is the discord between top level management and lower level employees. This implies that top management either disregards their role in implementation or is unaware of it. Hrebiniak's (2006) study found that top management often had an attitude towards implementation where they believed their role was to plan the strategy while the lower level employees carried out the demands and implementation requirements. Therefore, if the strategy failed the fault would not lie with the managers but instead with the employees who were not successful in implementing an otherwise viable and sound plan.

Leadership of an institution can enhance commitment of employees across all levels of management (Lynch, 2012). This generates ownership of the new strategy and in turn boost pace and level of employees support of the implementation of strategic plan. Other scholars argue that organization require a capable, effective, contributing, competent leadership at the executive level as far as strategy implementation is concerned. Cherop (2012) submit that a well-designed strategy with effective and a strong pool of skills positively influences implementation of strategies; where as poor leadership is well-thought-out as one of the crucial hindrances for implementation of strategies in an institution. Employee's resistance or support for strategic plan implementation often depend on, among other things, how employees construct

numerous perceptions on leadership related issues and assign the degree of importance to each perception. Each of these perceptions can lead to resistance and or support for strategic plan implementation process which subsequently affect institutional performance.

Therefore, this study considered factors such as top management support, employees' evaluation of leadership practices and employees view on leadership commitment and how they influence implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in Kenya.

2.9 Research Gap

Based on the literature, there exists a research gap specifically in respect of the poor implementation of strategic planning in TVET institutions. A review of available literature on strategic plan implementation in TVET institutions shows that there is little or no research that has been carried to investigate management practices and the implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in Kenya. Much of the research, (Genc, 2017, Cater and Pucko, 2010: Torka,2013) and (Gebhardt & Eagles, 2014) have been carried out in developed countries. Those studies that have been carried out in the African context, were carried out beyond Kenyan borders, (Nambi and Werner, 2013: Venance,2018).

Nambi and Werner, (2013) undertook a study on challenges impacting performance management implementation in public universities: A case of Uganda. The study adopted a pragmatic approach with a mixed methodology used in the data collection process. The main factors affecting the implementation within the institution were; limited employee engagement and communication, structural constraints, lack of institutional governance mechanisms and poor resource allocation. The above study,

however, focused on universities, whereas the current study was on public TVET institutions in Kenya.

Venance (2018) adopted descriptive research design using both qualitative and quantitative on the study of factors influencing implementation of strategic plans in Tanzania's executive agencies. The study variables in the study were top management support, organizational resources, organizational culture and role of stakeholders on implementation of strategic plans. However, the current study focused on management practices as perceived by employees on strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya.

Torka (2013), who adopted a descriptive survey design in his study on enterprise development and found that in the Netherlands, involvement improved commitment of metalwork employees to the organization, this study is based in the Netherlands and may not appropriately represent the education context in Kenya.

Bassa (2015) did a study on Practice of strategic planning and strategy implementation in public universities of Ethiopia and employed a descriptive research design with mixed methodology utilized in the data collection. The study found a Weak communication, inadequate monitoring and evaluation in strategies led to poor strategy implementation within the institutions. The study was concentrated in universities and current studies focused on public TVET institutions.

Further, most of studies in Kenya, (Okioga, 2012; Abok, 2013; Gachua and Orwa, (2015): Omondi, 2017; Waititu, 2016) concentrated in NGOs, private-sector companies, Universities and Secondary schools. Gachua and Orwa, (2015) studied factors affecting strategy implementation in public universities in Kenya. The study employed a case study design with research data collected using both interview

schedules and questionnaires. The study found out that organization structure positively and significantly influences the success of strategic implementation. The current study employed a descriptive survey research design not a case study as the previous research adopted. Further the current study focused on other variables which include communication and leadership practice which were not part of the previous research.

Murage (2018 carried out a study on management practices and implementation of strategic plan in Anglican church of Kenya, Head office in Nairobi city county, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design and utilized semi structured questionnaire in the data collection but the current study used descriptive survey research design using mixed methodology. Despite the study being done in a faith-based organization, the findings clearly indicate that lack of employee involvement, lack of leadership commitment and lack of communication and feedback mechanism limit the implementation; hence the current study sought to examine if same results can be replicated within public TVET institutions in Kenya.

Chacha (2018) did a study on management practices and implementation of strategic change in selected government ministries in Kenya. The research study employed census survey and utilize questionnaire and document analysis in the data collection. The research findings indicated that there was need for empowering the supervisory staff, use of effective and open communication and capacity building, to ensure that the lower staff members are on board with the strategy. The current study focused on employees' perception of management practices in public TVET institutions and adopted descriptive research design using mixed methodology and utilized questionnaire and interview schedules.

Mwenda and Wachira (2015) studied how different leadership styles affect the implementation of strategic plans of organizations in SMEs in Nairobi. The study employed a descriptive research design and used semi-structured questionnaires. After both descriptive and inferential statistics, the study showed that leadership styles had significant effect on the implementation of strategic plans. The study however considered SMEs' within Nairobi County whereas the current study sampled public TVET institutions in Rifty valley region and used mixed methodology.

Despite the vital role played by strategic plans in guiding institutions towards achieving their mission and objectives, minimal research has been done on the implementation of such a strategic plan in public TVET institutions. It is evident that the literature above has provided important aspects regarding strategic plan, its implementation, components and its usefulness/importance. None of these studies has, however, tackled on the influence of management practices on the implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions despite its uniqueness in terms of development of quality human capital which is critical in propelling the country to a middle income economy as envisioned in vision 2030. Gakure et al, 2014 argued that TVET performance as far as meeting their objectives is concerned is poor and the institutions infrastructures are in bad shape.

Given the importance of TVETs in trying to address the vast skills shortages in Kenya, it is expected that these TVET colleges should be well run and effectively managed academic institutions. Hence, this study investigates management practices and strategic plan implementation at public TVET institutions. The focus is how employees' perceptions, communication, employee involvement and leadership practice impact strategic plan implementation within public TVET institutions in rift valley region.

2.10   Summary of Literature Review

The main aim of this chapter was to discuss the literature associated with this study. The literature showed that strategic plan implementation is critical in enhancing institutions effectiveness and performance. The literature survey shows that little has been done in Kenya with regards to the management practices and the implementation of strategic plans at public TVET institutions. The next chapter shall discuss the study's research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and methodology that was used in the study. It describes target population, the sampling frame, sample selection techniques, and the sample size. Further the instruments for data collection, the procedures for data collection, validity, and reliability of research instruments, analysis of data and ethical consideration.

3.2 The Research Area

The study was carried out in all the seven public TVET institutions under Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology in Rift Valley region, Kenya. Rift valley borders Southern Sudan and Ethiopia to the north, Uganda to the North West, Western and Nyanza to the west, Tanzania to the southwest, Coast to the south, and east of Eastern, Nairobi, and Central counties. The institutions were selected for the study because of the following reasons: Most of the studies done on strategic planning in higher education are from colleges and Universities in developed countries and hence the need to do it in developing countries and in particular public technical institutions in Kenya: Public TVET institutions in Rift valley region were chosen for study because they portray typical characteristics of TVET institutions in Kenya, which consist of National polytechnic, Institute of technology and Technical training institutions and thus the findings of the study can be generalized to all TVET institutions. Moreover, the institutions have implemented strategic plan for over 10 years hence have necessary experience on strategic plan implementation. Further, there is no evidence of any research on the strategic plan implementation and in

particular on the influence of employees' perception of management strategies on strategic plan implementation in public TVET within the region.

According to Singleton (1993), the ideal setting for the study is one that is directly related to the researcher's interest. He further points out that the setting be easily accessible to the researcher and that it should allow immediate rapport with participants. Rift valley region covers the following counties: Uasin Gishu, Transnzoia, Nandi, Kericho, Nakuru, Bomet, Narok, and Kajiado. The table below, table 3.1, shows the distribution of public TVET institutions. The region is rich agriculturally, with the activities being livestock keeping growing of crops such as tea, maize, wheat, sugar cane, and horticultural crops.

Table 3. 1: *Distribution of TVET Institutions in Rift Valley Region as at 2008*

Institution	County	Category
Eldoret National Polytechnic	Uasin Gishu	National Polytechnic
Rift Valley Technical Training Institute	Uasin Gishu	Technical Training Institute
Kitale National Polytechnic	Tranzoia	National Polytechnic
Kaiboi Technical Training Institute	Nandi	Technical Training Institute
Ol'lessos Technical Training Institute	Nandi	Technical Training Institute
Masai Technical Training Institute	Kajiado	Technical Training Institute
Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology (RVIST)	Nakuru	Institute of Science and Technology

3.3 Research Design and Methodology

3.3.1 Research Philosophy

Philosophy is a term that relates to knowledge development that relates to research (Saunders et al, 2012). According to Grix (2010), research in the fields of education and the social sciences is generally based on two distinct philosophical paradigms namely positivist and interpretive paradigms, which point out the ideology behind the

adoption of using quantitative and qualitative methods. Research in the interpretive paradigm, the researcher thinks that the investigation of specific phenomena in the social sciences should be done subjectively: thus, participants' experiences should be shared in detail with the researcher. The researcher should focus on the participants' views, as well as on the contexts in which these views are developed in order to understand, clarify, and interpret social realities (Grix, 2010; Cohen et al. 2007). The interpretive paradigm is more qualitative in nature and takes an epistemological position that advocates the need to appreciate the difference between humans in their roles as social actors (Sounders et al, 2012, Fuller et al, 2015).

The positivistic paradigm utilizes methodological approaches that are adopted from the natural sciences, and which employ objective analyses of the social realities and phenomena observed as "laws or law-like generalizations" (Cohen et al., 2007). According to Mungai (2012) positivist paradigm is somewhat quantitative in nature, is concerned with phenomena that can be measured, observed, and validated. Also, positivists attempt to identify the causes which influence outcomes; and they assume a useful research is based on theory, hypothesis, and quantitative data (Creswell, 2014; Gibson, 2017).

The pragmatic paradigm integrates both the positivistic paradigm and the interpretivistic paradigm, as this philosophical system exploits features from both of these paradigms (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) argue that in pragmatic research decisions regarding the use of either quantitative/qualitative methods, or both, depend on the current statement of the research questions and the on-going phase of the inductive-deductive research cycle. Therefore, the determination of which research method is used in

pragmatism is ultimately based on what best serves the research purpose (Creswell, 2008).

Consequently, this study being a mixed study, the research philosophies guiding this study are both positivism and interpretive paradigms in relation to research objectives and hypotheses of this study; and use of both questionnaires and interviews as tools used for data collections (Creswell, 2015; Cohen, West & Aiken, 2013). The use of both qualitative and quantitative approach was chosen to eliminate the weakness of one approach by being complimented by another approach in this study (Fuller, et al., 2015; Gibson, 2017). The usefulness of the mixed method for this study was that data gathered through the questionnaire and the in-depth interviews were triangulated, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the study.

3.3.2 Research Design

Research design is the blueprint for data collection, measurement and analysis in order to achieve objectives of a given study (Kothari, 2013; Gibson, 2017). On the other hand, Creswell (2015) refers research design a procedure on how data collection and analysis are structured towards achieving research objectives through empirical evidence both systematically and economically. Further, to Orodho (2005), research design is a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analyzing and interpreting observed facts. It is a master plan that stipulates the methods, data collection procedures and analyzing the needed information (Cohen, West and Aiken, 2013). It helps to guide what the researcher will do from hypotheses writing and the implications of the final data analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

Among the designs used by researchers are descriptive survey designs, case studies, experimental, historical and ex-post facto designs (Trochim and Land, 1982). Descriptive research designs generally fall into three categories: cross-sectional, time series and case studies (Isaack & Michael, (1984). Descriptive research assists to: collect detailed, factual information that describes existing phenomena, identify problems or justify current conditions and practices, make comparison and evaluations and determine what others are doing with similar problems or situations and benefits from their experience in making future plans and decisions. Research that is primarily descriptive is designed to "describe rather than explain a set of conditions, characteristics, or attributes of people in a population, based on measurement of a sample" (Alreck and Settle, 1995). Survey design facilitates collection of information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social science issue (Orodho, 2005). Descriptive survey research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interest policy makers and educators, Kothari (2013). By involving the sample of the various stakeholders, the proposed study, fits within the cross-sectional sub-types of descriptive survey study designs.

Descriptive survey design was used in this study with the aim of collecting information from employees of public TVET institutions in respect to employees' perception of management practices on strategic plan implementation. According to O'sullivian and Rassel (1989), descriptive survey design approach is particularly suited for the studies that either involve the gathering of information about people's attitudes and behavior or answer questions across a variety of settings. Further descriptive survey design is appropriate in this study because it involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or questions concerning the current status of subjects

of the study. It is used to test attitudes and opinions about events, individuals or procedure (Gay, 1993). Kothari (2013) notes that descriptive survey design is concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and reporting conditions that exist or existed. Descriptive methods are widely used to obtain data useful in evaluating present practices and in providing the basis for decision-making (Gibson, 2017). Moreover, the descriptive survey design is useful because of the economy of taking a sample of the population to generalize results of the whole population. This is supported by Creswell (2015) who submit that descriptive survey research designs are more typically structured and formalized with evaluative questions which are clearly stated. Hence, this design is selected due to its ability to warranty the increased objectivity and reliability of the evidence collected.

The study focused on seven (7) public TVET institutions in rift valley region of Kenya to investigate the effect of management strategies on strategic plan implementation and used different methods of data collection to triangulate the findings of the study. Wilson (2014) describes triangulation as the mixture of different methods and methodologies in a same study with the major assumption that, they can complement and supplement each other. This approach provided completeness and confirmation, where it does not only combine different data, but it relates different types of information to validate each type of data gathered using different methods in collecting them (Gibson, 2017). Therefore, the use of triangulation allows researchers to capture a more holistic, complete, contextual portrayal and give the valid lengths of a given phenomenon.

3.3.3 Research Methodology

The overall approach to research in this study is referred to as methodology (Kothari, 2009, Koul, 1992: Robson, 1990). It is a plan of action that links methods to outcomes, process lying behind the choice and use of those approaches. It is concern with the logical and philosophical assumptions of the particular research methods. This study adopted a mixed method approach. The study was informed by pragmatic philosophical worldview. Tashakkori and Teddlie, (2003) contend that the philosophical underpinning which is appropriate for mixed method approach is pragmatism because it involves many approaches for collecting and analyzing data rather than subscribing to only one way. Pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis.

Mixed method approach was adopted in this study because the process of integrating these diverse paradigms can better clarify and illustrate the findings (Cresswell, 2015). To paraphrase Miles and Huberman (1994), the purpose for utilizing a mixed design is to add depth to survey information, to uncover a weakness in quantitative data, or to compliment the objective data. Another rationale for using a mixed method study was to address both quantitative and qualitative research questions. Moreover, the use of both open-ended and close-ended questions on the study deepened the understanding of the research topic.

 The aim of adapting qualitative approach in this study was to gain deeper understanding into top management, middle level management and lower level management's attitudes, perceptions and concerns about management practices and strategic plan implementation. Qualitative method provided description and accounts

of strategic plan implementation in its natural settings and also facilitates in-depth understanding of the strategy. Qualitative research techniques were particularly appropriate to research strategic plan implementation because organizational processes are being studied and these processes vary according the type of organization, the experience of people, and people's perceptions and judgments about that experience (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The qualitative component of the research is directed at uncovering themes and meaning of structures that practitioners have synthesized from a combination of background knowledge and experience with strategic plan implementation in TVET institutions. Qualitative methods are particularly useful for generating categories for understanding human phenomena and for the investigation of the interpretation and meaning that people give to events they experience. Qualitative methods are the methods of choice when the objective is to gain a deeper understanding of theoretical propositions (Cresswell, 2014).

On the other hand, quantitative method facilitated the discovery of facts concerning the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation in TVET institutions. Quantitative method is 'based on the rationalistic, empiricist philosophy' (Mertens, 2005) and "reflects a deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determines effects or outcomes" (Cresswell, 2015). Quantitative research is concerned with phenomena that can be measured, observed and validate. Quantitative research may be applied to the social world on the assumption that "social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world, that there is a method for studying the social world that is value free, and that explanation of a causal nature can be provided" (Mertens, 2005). This study used quantitative approach in order to inform on the sample size of the respondents, quantify categorization of respondents, and present the means, percentages and apply inferential statistics in order to further

understand the differences noted in descriptive statistics on aspects of the employees' perceptions of the influence of management practices on strategic plan implementation.

Mixed methods in this study neutralized biasness and convergence of results (Creswell, 2015), and at the same time bring out clearly the contradictions and fresh perspectives. This in effect produced a final product which highlighted the significant contribution of both qualitative and quantitative approaches as Jayaratne (1993) asserts that qualitative data will support explicitly the meaning of quantitative research. Wilson (2014) say qualitative and quantitative data are turning ideas around by providing fresh insights. In this way the effectiveness of eclecticism in this study was informed on the premise that the weaknesses in each method are augmented by strengths of the other. All methods entail certain strengths and weaknesses, and so a mix offers resources for more comprehensive and effective inquiry (Chatterji, 2004: Greene, Benjamin & Goodyear, 2001). The use of both methodologies in this study facilitated the triangulation of data. Triangulation in research refers to combining two or more theories, methods, or data sources in one study of a single phenomenon to converge on single construct (Amaratunga et al, 2000, Brewer, 2001). Wilson (2014) describes triangulation as the mixture of different methods and methodologies in a same study with the major assumption that, they can complement and supplement each other. This approach provides completeness and confirmation, where it does not only combine different data, but it relates different types of information to validate each type of data gathered using different methods in collecting them (Gibson, 2017). Therefore, the use of triangulation allows researchers to capture a more holistic, complete, contextual portrayal and give the valid lengths of a given phenomenon (Venance S. 2018). Triangulation is a powerful way of gaining insight, making

inferences, drawing conclusions (Fellows and Liu, 1997), as well as contributing to the trustworthiness of the resulting data (Ely et al 2000). Data triangulation is considered to gather data about strategic plan implementation from three different points of view, that of top management, middle management and lower level management (person triangulation). Methodological triangulation was also considered, since data was collected by interviews and structured questionnaires (between methods triangulation). The closed-ended questions in this study forms good content for quantification, while open-ended that mainly ask for opinions on issues of strategic plan implementation were presented qualitatively.

3.4 Target Population

Target population refers to all members of a set of people, events or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the results of the study (Kasomo, 2007: Orodho 2005, Creswell, 2015). Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006 defines population as an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics. A similar view is expressed by Kothari (2013) when he defines a population as a group of events, things and people of interest and having features which are commonly observed. Target population is a group of individuals, objects or events having observable common features of interest in the study (Gibson, 2017)

This study was carried out in all the seven Public TVET institutions in Rift valley region, namely, Rift Valley Technical Training Institute, Eldoret National polytechnic, Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology, Kaiboi Technical Training Institute, Ol'lessos Technical Training Institute, Kitale National polytechnic and Maasai Technical Training Institute which started to prepare and implement strategic plans in 2008. The target population for this study was all employees of the

public TVET institution who have taught for at least one year. The target population consisted of top management, middle level management and lower level management. In this study the Principal/Deputy, registrars and Dean of students were categorized as top management while heads of department (HODS) as middle management and the lecturers as lower level management. The lower level management staffs are the key implementers of strategic plans while the middle level management oversee the implementation of strategic plans and also act as the link between the top management and lower level management staff. On the other hand, the top management facilitates the formulation of strategic plans and ensures effective implementation. The target population consisted of 21 from top management, 49 from middle management and 1185 from lower level management, making a total of one thousand two hundred and fifty-five (1255) as shown in table 3.2.

Table 3.2 *Target Population*

Institution	Top management	Middle management	lower level management	Population
Eldoret National Polytechnic	3	7	285	295
Rift Valley Technical Training Institute	3	7	160	170
Kitale National Polytechnic	3	7	150	160
Kaiboi Technical Training Institute	3	7	120	130
Ol'lessos Technical Training Institute	3	7	110	120
Masai Technical Training Institute	3	7	110	120
Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology (RVIST)	3	7	250	260
Total	**21**	**49**	**1185**	**1255**

3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

3.5.1 Sample Size

A sampling frame is defined as a physical representation of all elements in the target population from which the sample was drawn (Kothari, 2013). It constitutes all the units that are potential members of a sample (Wilson, 2014). These views were also supported by Creswell (2015) who argued that, a sampling frame is a list of the whole accessible population from which the sample will be drawn.

Kothari (2013) argued that a sample is a subset of a large population and that a good sample should have the characteristic of the population. Wilson (2014) on the other hand confirms that a sample may be more accurate than a census, since a census

increases the volume of work which may result in the introduction of tabulation errors. Further, the size of a sample is a function of the variation in the population (Cohen, et.al., 2013; Gibson, 2017).

Further, according to Orodho (2005), Sampling is the process of selecting a sub-set of cases in order to draw conclusions about the entire set. A sample is therefore a small part of large population, which is thought to be representative of the larger population. Any statement made about the sample should be true for the entire population. Furthermore, Creswell (2015) contend that sampling is that part of the statistical practice concerned with individual selection or observations intended to generate some knowledge of the population of a given study; and advise that a researcher sample size of 10% is likely to be appropriate. Taking a larger sample than is needed to achieve the desired results is wasteful in terms of resources whereas very small samples often lead to results that are not suitable for practical use and for making good decisions (Orodho,). The researcher in this study selected representatives of employees from three strata of management (Top management, middle Management, and lower management) at the TVET institutions in order to reduce sampling error. This is in line with Salkind (2000) who maintained that a study with a low sampling error results in a high degree of generalizability, thereby increasing the likelihood that the results can be extrapolated for use at similar institutions. The researcher intends to obtain both desirable accuracy and confidence level with minimum cost hence surveying a relatively large number of respondents. In this study the researcher used Krejcie and Morgan formula (1970) as quoted by Kasomo (2001) to determine the required sample size. The formula is given as follows:

$$n = \frac{x^2 \text{ x } N \text{ x } p(1-p)}{(ME^2 \text{ x}(N-1) + (x^2 \text{ xp x}(1-p)}$$

Where

n= Sample size

x^2=chi-square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom=(3.841) from tables

N= Population size

P= Population proportion (.50 in the table)

ME= Desired margin of error (expressed as a proportion = .05)

Therefore, the sample size, n=3.841x 1255x.50 (1-.50)/.05x.05(1255-1) + (3.841 x .50 (1-.50)

n= 1205.11375/4.09525= 294

The entire target population yielded a total sample size of two hundred and ninety four (294) based on Krejcie and Morgan table for determining sample size as shown in table 3.3.

Table 3.3 *Sample Size*

Institution	Top management	Middle management	lower management	Total Sample
Eldoret National Polytechnic	3	7	54	64
Rift Valley Technical Training Institute	3	7	30	40
Kitale National Polytechnic	3	7	28	38
Kaiboi Technical Training Institute	3	7	23	33
Ol'lessos Technical Training Institute	3	7	21	31
Masai Technical Training Institute	3	7	21	31
Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology (RVIST)	3	7	47	57
Total	**21**	**49**	**224**	**294**

3.5.2: Sampling Procedures

This study used both probability and non-probability sampling technique to select the respondents. The non-probability sampling was used to purposely select seventy (70) respondents which comprised three (3) top management and seven (7) middle level management from each of the seven selected institutions. On the other hand, the probability sampling used was proportionate random sampling which was used to select two hundred and twenty four (224) out of a target population of one thousand one hundred and eighty five (1185) lower level management staff.

There are seven TVET institutions in Rift Valley region and all of them were studied. Out of a total sample size of two hundred and ninety-four (294), twenty one (21) were

top management, forty nine (49) middle level management and two hundred twenty-four (224) lower management level staff.

In each institution, there were seven academic departments (middle level management), a Principal/Deputy principal, a registrar and a dean of students (top management). From each of the seven institutions, seven middle level management staff were purposively selected making a total of forty nine (49) respondents. Further, purposive sampling was employed to select twenty one twenty one (21) top management from the seven institutions. The rationale for using purposive sampling in selecting top management and middle level management was because they have a lot of information on the implementation of strategic plan and its' implications on the performance of public TVET institutions. Purposive sampling technique for this study was chosen as it enabled the researcher to select information-rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied. This technique was appropriate for this study because not everyone working at the institution was knowledgeable about strategic management and implementation thereof. Hence, the research participants were selected based on their knowledge ability of the situation at hand.

Proportionate random sampling was used to select the respondents from lower management level from the seven selected institutions. Proportionate sample based on 1185 participants was obtained from the institutions depending on the total number of staff in that institution. In this study, the proportion is calculated to be 18.90 percent. The uniform sampling proportion or fraction for this study is calculated by taking the 224 subjects in the random sample size and dividing by the 1,185 aggregate populations, which is equal to 18.90 percent. Each stratum sample size was then determined by multiplying stratum size by the sampling proportion as stated by

Pedhazur & Schmelkin, cited in Detmann, P.E (2014), as shown in table 3.3 above. Further, proportionate stratified random sample was used in each institution to ensure representation of both male and female staff.

Thus, total sample size based on the three strata, are top management 21, middle level management 49 and lower level management 224, totaling a proportionate sample size of 294.

According to Kothari (2013), if the population is heterogeneous, stratified random sampling is recommended due to its statistical representation and efficiencies and gives adequate data for analyzing sub-populations. Stratified random sampling ensured representation of all the groups, male and female staff proportionately. Simple random sampling was drawn from each group and then these sub-samples were joined to form the complete stratified samples. Thus, the ratio of females to males that existed in the various departments was maintained. Stratified random sampling guards against wild samples and ensure that no sub-population will be omitted from the sample (Orodho, 2005). This is further confirmed by Birchall, 2009 as cited in Abok, 2013 who asserts that proportionate stratification provides equal or better precision than a simple random sample of the same size, the gains in precision are greatest when values within strata are homogeneous and those gains in precision accrue to all survey measures.

3.6 Research Instruments

According to Abok, 2013, there are many methods of data collection. The choice of a tool and instrument depends mainly on the attributes of the subjects, research topic, problem question, objectives, design, expected data and results (Kothari, 2013). This study employed mixed instruments in which more than one instrument was used and

is referred to as triangulation. Triangulation was useful in this study as it brings together different methods where weakness of one method was complimented by another method. The study collected both primary and secondary data. The secondary sources such as articles, books, journals, newspapers, official publications, reports and seminar papers was used to gather secondary information which compliments primary data which was collected using interviews and questionnaires.

The objective of this study was to examine the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation and hence the instruments contained items that measured these variables (Appendices A and B). The instruments, which were used to facilitate collection of relevant data from this study, were questionnaires and interview schedules.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is an instrument used to gather data, which allows measurement for or against a particular viewpoint. It has the ability to collect a large amount of information in a quick space of time, inexpensive, efficient, and can be administered to a large sample (Creswell, 2015). According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), questionnaires can be used to cover a wide area and there is no bias on the side of the researcher and respondent. The instrument is an appropriate data collection method when relationships between variables such as correlations need to be established to answer the research questions (Kothari, 2013; Wilson, 2014).

A survey questionnaire was used to collect and measure data on the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation in public technical training

institutions. The quantitative portion of the instrument used a Likert- type scale to record responses.

Each item in the questionnaire was developed to address a specific objective of the study. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended questions. The closed ended questions provided data that was easy to compute. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A consists of the background information about the respondents, while sections B are questions meant to answer research objectives of the study. Questionnaires were administered to all two hundred and ninety four (294) staff that included top management, middle management and lower level management.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule

An interview guide (schedule) is a set of questions that an interviewer asks when interviewing respondents. An interview schedule makes it possible to obtain the data required to meet the specific objectives of the study (Orodho, 2005). Qualitative data were collected using interviews to supplement quantitative data which were collected using questionnaires. In this study, only 21 top management staff that filled questionnaires were further subjected to a follow up interview. The respondents' opinions were critical because they formulate, supervise and implement the strategic plans in their various institutions. Interview schedule enabled the researcher to encourage the respondents to express themselves more freely. Furthermore, it facilitated the researcher to probe the respondents and give explanations and clarifications where necessary as regards the issue under study (Rono, 2007). Also, the interview method enabled the researcher to stimulate perceptions from a theoretical point of view from elites in management and other managers, which cannot be easily accessed from other sources of data (Kothari, 2013; Creswell, 2015).

Moreover, this technique allowed the researcher to ask non-standardized questions, as well as the standardized ones. Semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to produce situated knowledge (Cohen, et.al., 2013; Gibson, 2017), which facilitates the understanding of contextual knowledge.

The interview results were crosschecked with the information received from questionnaires as regards the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation at the sample institutions. The qualitative interview with the top management was primarily meant to get their views on strategic plan implementation process in their institutions. The views and opinions of these people would help to show not only the extent to which individuals in an institution hold common or diverse perceptions on strategic plan implementation, but also the extent to which they have or lack ownership of the strategy. An interview schedule contained specific questions that were followed up with probes and list of topics and issues related to the objectives of the study. This sample group also provided useful information on the official government policies regarding strategic planning in public TVET institutions. The interview guide was developed in consultation with experts who are experienced in conducting interviews to review the questions and potential probes. Attention was placed on the logical and sequential flow of questions and on the ability of probes to elicit the information desired.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

3.7.1 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity refers to the "correctness, soundness of results of conclusion reached in a study" (Kothari, 2008). Also, according to Orodho (2005), validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the

phenomenon under investigation. The extent to which the results of research study can be interpreted accurately and with confidence defines internal validity. The extent to which research results are generalizable to a population and conditions defines external validity. Content validity deals with the representativeness of the items in a data instrument. It is the degree to which the instrument items or sample test signify the content that the instrument is designed for (Wilson, 2014). Face validity on the other hand is the extent to which a construct appears to measure what is supposed to measure. It is the degree to which an instrument seems to measure what it is supposed to measure (Sounders, et al., 2012).

To ensure validity of the data collection tools, colleagues, supervisors, and other research experts checked on content and validity. The feedback from the research expert was used to make the necessary corrections on the data collection tools by removing confusing items and other typographical errors that affect instrument validity. Also, content validity and face validity of the study was improved by the researcher by reading a wide range of literature on management practices and its' effect on strategic plan implementation.

Also, the researcher in this study used multiple sources of evidence. Data on particular aspects under investigation were gathered using more than one method so as to allow converging lines of inquiry. Such convergence of evidence forms an important aspect of data triangulation in the study. With triangulation, the potential problems of construct validity can be addressed, because the multiple sources of evidence essentially provides multiple measures of the same phenomenon (Yin, 1994).

External validity seeks to establish the extent to which results of research can be generalized to the study population. To enhance external validity there is need to be explicit rather than implicit about the population to generalize (Gibson, 2017). He further argued that to enhance generalization, we need to select that sample which has similar characteristics as much as possible to the population as a whole. This was ensured in this study by choosing institutions within a region which has majority of the profiles that typifies public TVET institutions and also by choosing all the institutions which prepared and implemented strategic plan as at 2008.

3.7.2: Piloting Testing

Bell (1993) emphasis the role of piloting in ascertains the validity of research instruments. Further Orodho (2005) argued that once the questionnaire has been constructed, it should be tried in the field to a selected sample, which is similar or identical to the actual sample to be used in the study. Piloting is important in that it enables the researcher to detect deficiencies in the questionnaire and correct before the actual study begin. One of the main reasons for conducting the pilot study is to determine the reliability and validity of instruments to be used in this study (Creswell, 2014; Gibson, 2017). Pilot testing mitigate any problems with the wording of the draft questionnaire, and also check on the layout to ensure it is neither confusing nor encouraging any particular response. It is also done to refine the questionnaire in the best way possible so that respondents in the main survey would have no problem in answering the questions and there would be no problem in recording the data (Cohen, et.al., 2013).

Mangione (1995) recommended that 10 or more subjects with similar characteristics to study population be used in any pilot-test. Further Isaac and Michael cited in

Dettmann (2004) advocated the use of between 10 and 30 individuals, which they deemed large enough to conduct statistical calculations. These pilot test participants will not be included in the study, but are similar in characteristics to the sample groups. The questionnaires and interview schedules in this study were pilot-tested among 13 participants that included top management, middle management and lower level management staffs of Keroka Technical Training Institute which is not part of the sample for the study.

3.7.3 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability refers to a measure of degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Kasomo, 2007). Reliability focuses on the degree to empirical indicators are consistent across two or more attempts to measure a concept. The reliability of the instruments is established by using test-retest method to estimate the degree to which the same results could be obtained with repeated measure of accuracy of the same concept in order to determine the reliability of the instruments. Test-retest technique of assessing the reliability of a research instrument involves administering the same instrument twice to the same group of subjects. It was assumed that responses to the two tests would be very similar because the latter reflects the same content for respondents. The degree of stability was determined by comparing results of repeated measurements. If the scores obtained by each respondent on the first and second test are quite close, then the instruments is of high quality. If on the other hand, results are not closely related, then the instruments are of low reliability.

The researcher administered the questionnaires and interviews to 13 participants that included top management, middle management and lower level management staffs of

Keroka Technical Training Institute which was not part of the sample for the study. The answered instruments were scored manually. The same questionnaire and interview was administered to the same group of subjects after a period of two weeks. A Pearson product moment formula for test-retest was employed to compute the correlation coefficient in order to establish the extent to which the contents of the instruments were consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument was administered. A correlation coefficient of 0.85 was obtained and thus was considered high enough to judge the instruments as reliable for the study. Therefore, the instruments for this study were reliable as Koul (1984) argued that a coefficient of 0.50 is the minimum reliability coefficient value required to judge an instrument reliable. Further, Orodho (2009) recommended that the instruments are reliable if the calculated coefficient is 0.75 or above.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Before conducting this research, an authorization letter from the Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies was sought. Thereafter a research permit was obtained from the office of the president through the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. Data were collected from lower level management, middle level management and top management). Open-ended interviews and Questionnaire were the chief mechanisms of collecting data for this study.

The data for this study was collected in phases using interviews and questionnaires. The first phase involved a reconnaissance visit to the sample institutions to familiarize with the research area and obtain relevant institutional-level data for refining the research instruments. During this period the researcher established rapport with

relevant authorities, select departments and respondents, and also sought consent from the administration concerning the research to be conducted with them. Apart from creating rapport, the researcher interacted with the potential respondents and sought for some more information related with the area of study. This phase lasted two weeks.

In the second phase, the researcher administered the questionnaires and interviews to the respondents in all the sample institutions. This phase lasted for two weeks.

3.9 Data Analysis

According to Orodho (2005), data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging interview transcript, field notes, data and other materials obtained from the field with the aim of increasing ones' understanding of them and presenting to others. It therefore implies that data analysis is the breaking down of data or refining them so as to facilitate making sense out of them. Gibson (2017) argues that, data analysis usually involves reducing accumulated data to a manageable size, developing summaries, looking for patterns, and applying statistical techniques.

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were used. The adoption of this strategy was to enhance the interpretation and understanding of the key research issues.

Qualitative data facilitated the answering of "how and why" questions by providing explanations to the variations captured in the quantitative data, thus providing a richer analysis. Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organizing available data into categories and indentifying themes as they emerge from the data (Leedy amd Ormrod, 2015). With regard to this study, it means analyzing content contained in

open-ended questions to identify themes or categories. The results from the interviews were transcribed and put in themes before being reported thematically.

Data editing, coding, classification, tabulation and percentage were applied to themes generated from qualitative data and presented using tables, diagrams, pie charts and cross- tabulations. Continuous reflections on insights gained during the data collection process facilitated interpretations of how management practices have affected strategic plan implementation in the TVET institutions. Quantitative data was subjected to preliminary processing through validation, coding, and editing and tabulated before in readiness for analysis with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) before interpretation and presentation of the findings. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics dealt with the study of the distribution of the variables of the study, such as profiles of respondents. After analysis, data were presented in tabular form using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, pie charts and cross-tabulations. Furthermore, data were analyzed using inferential statistics to facilitate understanding of relationships between variables. As for inferential statistics, this study used Pearson product correlation analysis, ANOVA and simple regression analysis.

3.10 Research Variable

This section deals with the operationalization of independent and dependent variables of the conceptual framework. The independent variables include employees' perception, Communication, Employee involvement and Leadership practice, while the dependent variable is strategic plan implementation. The variables were operationalized as shown in table 3.4

Table 3. 4: *Operationalization of Variables*

Hypothesis	Variable	Indicator	Analytical tool	Level of significance
There is no statistically significant relationship between employee's perception and strategic plan implementation.	Independent variable Employees perception	Employees training Steering committee Relevancy of strategic plan	Correlation Simple regression ANOVA	p<0.05
There is no statistically significant effect of communication in the implementation of strategic plan	Independent variable Communication	Channels of communication Mode of communication	Correlation Simple regression ANOVA	p<0.05
There is no statistically significant effect of employee involvement in the implementation of strategic plan	Independent variable Employee involvement	Commitment Motivation Knowledge of strategic plan	Correlation Simple regression ANOVA	p<0.05
There is no statistically significant effect of leadership practice in the implementation of strategic plan.	Independent variable leadership	Level of support to employees Feedback mechanism Level of commitment	Correlation Simple regression ANOVA	p<0.05

3.11: Ethical Consideration

The respondents were assured of privacy and confidentiality of the information obtained from them. No information revealing the identity of any individual were included in the final report or in any other communication prepared in the course of the study. Data, results, methods and procedures were honestly reported. There were no fabrications, falsifications or misrepresentation of data. All data and data reports were presented only in a statistical format; hence an analysis of a particular institution was not possible.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1: Introduction

The study presents the findings and discussion on this study, which was set out to determine the effects of management practices on strategic plan implementation in Public Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Rift Valley region, Kenya:

The study was guided by the following specific objectives: Firstly, to investigate employees' perceptions on strategic plan implementation at public TVET institutions. Secondly, to examine the effectiveness of communication in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions. Thirdly, to analyze the level of employee involvement in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions and finally, to assess the role of leadership practice in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions.

The findings of the study are presented in this chapter in terms of percentages, graphs and tables with clear discussions of each by drawing comparison between the previous study results by other scholars and the results of the current study.

The chapter also presents results of data analysis of study variables using descriptive statistics which includes among others means and standard deviations. Also, Inferential statistics which includes Pearson correlation analysis, analysis of variance and simple regression analysis were used. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data.

4.2 Response Rate

Questionnaire return rate is the proportion of the sample that participated in the survey and returned their questionnaires as intended by the researcher. High response rate guarantees that the findings are representative of the target population. Emore cited in Sasaka, (2016) notes that response rate is the extent to which the collected data takes care of all the sample items, a ratio of actual respondents to anticipated number who responded to the questionnaire items of the study. Questionnaires were self-administered and the study population comprised of five Technical training institution and two National polytechnics whereby a total 294 questionnaires were given out by the researcher to the respondents. Two hundred and forty two (242) questionnaires were completely filled, returned and used for analysis in this study. This represents a response rate of 82 percent of the sample size. The response rate was considered adequate for further analysis because Wilson (2014) argues that, any response above 75% is categorized as best for provision of reliable information. Further, Gibson (2017) recommends that any response rate with 50% and above is sufficient and good to draw conclusion from the study. Further, Mugenda (2008) recommends a response rate of 60 percent and above as good and adequate for analysis. Zikmund *et.al*., (2010) note that a response rate of over fifty percent (50%) is adequate for analysis, sixty percent (60%) good while seventy percent (70%) and over to be very good enough. High response rate enhances validity and importance of the findings. Hence, since the overall response rate in this study was eighty two percent (82%), it was regarded excellent for reliable information and adequate for further analysis. The results further revealed a fair distribution based on the various sectors classified as public TVET institutions and thus making it a representative sample that eased generalizability of the research results.

The results on questionnaire return rate are presented in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1 *Response Rate*

Institution	Expected sample	Actual sample return	Percentage returned within each institution
Eldoret National Polytechnic	64	55	87
Rift Valley Technical Training Institute	40	33	83
Kitale National Polytechnic	38	32	83
Kaiboi Technical Training Institute	33	25	84
Ol'lessos Technical Training Institute	31	24	78
Masai Technical Training Institute	31	22	72
Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology (RVIST)	57	51	89
Total	**294**	**242**	**Average 82**

4.3   Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study was sought through gender of the respondent, respondents' Level of Education, respondents' teaching experience in Technical Training Institution, duration of the institution existence and respondents' level of management.

4.3.1 Respondents' Gender

The researcher first sought to know the gender of the respondents so as to establish whether the study was gender sensitive. Gender is an important cultural factor that affects implementation of strategies in organization (Eden and Ackermann, 2013). The results were shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 *Respondents' Gender*

Respondents' Gender	*Frequency*	Percent
Male	*138*	57.0
Female	*104*	43.0
Total	***242***	**100.0**

Tables 4.2 revealed that, majority 138 (57%) of the respondents interviewed were male while 104 (43%) were female. The difference between the male and female respondents is small. This shows that there was a gender balance in the distribution of respondents hence the likelihood of getting balanced responses.

4.3.2 Respondents' Level of Education

The study also sought to find out the levels of education of respondents in relation to their capabilities towards implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions. It was important to establish respondents' academic qualifications since they are the ones charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing strategies. In relation to this, scholars argue that there is a need for employees holding high level position to possess high qualifications (Mavhiki, 2012; George & Desmidt, 2014). Ferlie and Ongaro (2015) similarly contend that strategic plans are not simple, but rather complex, requiring people with high level logistical skills. The response was indicated in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 *Respondents' Level of Education*

Level of Education	Frequency	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	81	81	33.7
BA/BSC with PGDE	106	106	43.6
Masters	47	47	19.3
PhD	8	8	3.3
Total	**242**	**242**	**100.0**

The findings exhibited that most respondents' highest level of education was bachelor's degree as accounted for by 43.6 percent (106) of the respondents, with 33.7 percent (81) with diploma as the highest education level and only 19.3 percent (47) of the respondents with master's degree as the highest level of education. Only 3.3 percent (8) of the respondents accounted for respondents having a PhD degree.

Generally, most of the respondents' level of education was high with 66.3 percent reporting to have bachelors' degree and above. This meant that the respondents had adequate knowledge as far as strategy implementation was concerned and also have no problem in interpreting strategic plan for implementation.

4.3.3 Respondents' Teaching Experience in Technical Training Institution

The study wanted to establish the teaching experience of the respondents so as to determine if it had any influence on implementation of strategic plan. The findings were presented in table 4.4:

Table 4.4 *Respondents' Teaching Experience in Technical Training Institution*

Teaching experience	Frequency	Percent
1 - 5	55	22.7
6 - 10	72	29.8
11 - 15	66	27.3
16 and above	49	20.2
Total	**242**	**100.0**

The results in table 4.4 above show that 29.8% (72) of the respondents have worked in the technical training institution for 6 to 10 years, 27.3% (66) indicated that they have worked for a period of between 11 and 15 years while 22.7% (55) of the respondents indicated that they have worked for a period of between 1 and 5 years and 20.2% (49) have a teaching experience of 16 years and above.

The results indicate that majority of the respondents (77%) have worked in the technical training institution for over 5 year and therefore they have knowledge on the factors that affect implementation of strategic plans in the institutions. It also implies that the employees have observed implementation of strategic plans from the time they were roll out and thus are knowledgeable to provide valid and reliable information. Further, the findings demonstrated that employees had vast experience and knowledge on the implementation of strategic plans in their respective institution.

These findings reaffirmed Viseras et al., (2005) who asserted that strategy implementation success depends largely on people management. People who have been with the organization for an extended period of time continue to reinforce and perpetuate the current culture, they are empowered by it and go to considerable lengths to reinforce it as a key element in sustaining continued success. Further, Ghafoor (2013) argued that employees with long services translate into valuable experience in the execution of strategic plans.

4.3.4 Duration of the Institution Existence

The respondents were asked to indicate the duration of the institution existence. This was important for the study in that it determined the influence that the duration would have on the implementation of strategies in the institutions.

Table *4.5 Years of existence of the institution*

Number of Years	Frequency	Percent
0-20	0	0
21-40	2	30
41 and above	5	70
Total	**7**	**100**

The results in table 4.5 shows that all the institutions included in the study have been in existence for over 20 years. It shows that over 70% of the institutions sampled have been in existence for over 40 years, while over 30% for have been in existence for between 21-40 years. It therefore implies that the institutions have implemented strategic plan for 10 years since most of public institutions started implementing strategic plans in 2008 and therefore, they understood strategic plan implementation process in the institutions.

4.3.5 Respondents' Level of Management

 The researcher investigated level of management of the respondents. The results were as shown in table 4.6.

Table *4.6 Level of Management of the Respondents*

Level of Management	Frequency	Percent
lower level	175	72.3
Middle level	46	19.0
Top level	21	8.7
Total	**242**	**100.0**

From table 4.6, majority of the respondents were lower management staff 72.3%, Middle management staff 19 %, and Top management staff 8.7 %. The result depict that staff in all cadre were involved in the study hence findings represent the opinions

of employees of the organization pertaining the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation. The employees sampled were the right people with adequate information and relevant to this study as far as strategic plans implementation is concerned. The agreement among top, middle and lower level managers will result to successful implementation of the strategy

4.4 Data Analysis on Independent and Dependent Variables

This section presents descriptive and inferential analyses in relation to independent variables and dependent variables.

4.4.1 Strategic Plan Implementation

Implementing strategies successfully is important for any institution, either public or private. Without implementation, even the most superior strategy is useless. The development and implementation of strategies by institutions to chart the future path to be taken will enhance service delivery and competitiveness of such institutions.

The respondents were asked to indicate if the pace of strategic plan implementation in their institution was satisfactory. The responses were generated using the following key: **Yes**- Satisfactory pace of strategic plan implementation: **Not sure**- Insignificant level of strategic plan implementation and **No**- unsatisfactory pace of strategic plan implementation.

The results were as shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: *Pace of Strategic Plan Implementation*

	Frequency	**Percent**
No	78	32.2
Not sure	155	64.0
Yes	9	3.7
Total	**242**	**100.0**

The data presented in Table 4.6 displays the perception of 64% of respondents felt that there was insignificant level of strategic plan implementation and those who felt that the pace of implementation was not satisfactory was 32.2%. Employees who thought that strategic plan implementation was satisfactory were made up 3.7%. The results therefore indicated that the pace of implementation in the institutions is wanting because over 96% were categorical that the strategy implementation was not satisfactory or there was insignificant level of strategic plan implementation.

The respondents were further asked to give their opinion on the extent of success of strategic plan implementation in their institutions. The findings are presented in table 4.8:

Table 4. 8: *Strategic plan implementation success*

	Frequency	**Percent**
Not successful at all	46	19.0
Moderate success	194	80.2
Highly successful	2	0.8
Total	**242**	**100**

The results in table 4.8 indicate that 80% of the respondents noted that the public TVET institutions have succeeded in implementing their strategies to a moderate extent, 19% of the respondents noted that the institutions have not succeeded in the implementation of strategies and 0.8% of the respondents indicated that implementation of strategies have been highly successful implemented.

4.4.2 Employees' Perception on Strategic Plan Implementation

The first objective sought to investigate employees' perception on strategic plan implementation. The result was obtained using cross tabulation in SPSS. The findings were presented in table 4.9:

Table 4.9: *Employees' Perception on strategic plan implementation*

Statement	Level of management	Number and percentage			
		No	Not sure	Yes	Total
Employees training on strategic plan implementation?	Lower level	78(44.6%)	15(8.6%)	82(46.8%)	175
	Middle level	19(41.3%)	3(6.5%)	24(52.2%)	46
	Top level	4(19%)	0	17(81%)	21
Existence of steering committee	Lower level	30(17.2%)	17(9.7%)	128(73.1%)	175
	Middle level	10(21.7%)	7(15.2%)	29(63.1%)	46
	Top level	3(14.3%)	0	18(85.7%)	21
Satisfactory pace of strategic plan implementation	Lower level	47(26.9%)	120(68.6%)	8(4.4%)	175
	Middle level	16(34.8%)	29(63%)	1(2.2%)	46
	Top level	15(71.4%)	6(28.6%)	0	21
Relevancy of strategic plan implementation	Lower level	8(4.6%)	68(38.9%)	99(56.5%)	175
	Middle level	5(10.9%)	9(19.6%)	32(69.5%)	46
	Top level	1(4.7%)	3(14.3%)	17(81%)	21
Employees excitement about strategy implementation	Lower level	57(32.6%)	54(30.9%)	64(36.5%)	175
	Middle level	14(30.4%)	14(30.4%)	18(39.2%)	46
	Top level	8(38.1%)	12(57.1%)	1(4.8%)	21
Awareness about consequences of failure to implement strategy	Lower level	18(10.3%)	35(20%)	122(69.7%)	175
	Middle level	6(13%)	9(19.6%)	31(67.4%)	46
	Top level	1(4.7%)	4(19.1%)	16(76.2%)	21
Individual interest to implement strategy	Lower level	63(36%)	51(29.1%)	61(34.9%)	175
	Middle level	17(37%)	9(19.6%)	20(43.4%)	46
	Top level	4(19.1%)	1(4.7%)	16(76.2%)	21
Convinced that the strategy being implemented is the right one	Lower level	31(17.7%)	40(22.9%)	104(59.4%)	175
	Middle level	11(23.9%)	3(6.5%)	32(69.6%)	46
	Top level	1(4.7%)	2(9.5%)	18(85.8%)	21
Successful implementation of strategic plan	Lower level	34(19.4%)	139(79.4%)	2(1.2%)	175
	Middle level	10(21.7%)	36(78.2%)	0	46
	Top level	2(9.5%)	19(90.5%)	0	21

The findings on table 4.9 showed that majority of the employees from lower cadre (53.2%) have not been trained or were not satisfied with the training on strategic plan

implementation, while 47.8% and 19% were of the same opinion from middle level and top level management respectively. These results indicated that there were challenges in strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions because majority of the employees who are the key implementers haven't been capacity built or were not satisfied with the training offered to them. This may be a reflection that the lower level management staff in the institutions did not understand strategic management process.

Furthermore over 56% of employees from all cadres agreed that steering committee exists, strategic plan being implemented was relevant to the institutions, they were aware about consequences of failure to implement strategy and were convinced that the strategy being implemented is the right one for their institutions.

On the other hand, 26.9% of the lower cadre employees were not satisfied with the pace of strategic plan implementation and 68.6% were not sure. The implication of the findings is that lower level cadre of the employees, who are the executors of strategy implementation are not conversant with strategic plans of their institutions. These findings agree with the views of top level management whom 71.4% confirmed that the pace of strategic plan implement was not satisfactory. Only less than 4% of the employees of all cadres were satisfied with the pace of strategy implementation, These, findings paint a dark picture on the state of strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in rift valley region of Kenya.

Furthermore, 65.1% of the lower level management and 56.6% of the middle level management did not have personal interest to help implement institution strategic plan but 76.2% of the top management were personally interest to help implement institution strategic plan. If there is no understanding among them, it may create

obstacles to successful strategy implementation. The findings indicated a clash of ideas on the aspects of strategic plan implementation among the three levels, top, middle and lower level management. The agreement among top, middle and lower level managers would result to successful implementation of the strategy. Further analysis was undertaken to establish the nature of relationship between the variables using the following hypothesis:

HO_1: There is no statistically significant relationship between employees' perceptions and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions.

Correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between employee's perception and implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), Pearson correlation analysis indicates the strength, direction, and significance of bivariate relationship among the variables. The larger correlation coefficient, the stronger the level of association. Further, the correlation may be either positive or negative depending on the direction of the relationship between the variables (Hair et al., 2007). Table 4.10 presents the correlation coefficient benchmarks for making the decision on a variable.

Table 4.10: *Correlation coefficient benchmark*

Coefficient range	Strength of association
± 0.91 to ± 1.00	Very strong
± 0.71 to ± 0.90	High
± 0.41 to ± 0.70	Moderate
± 0.21 to ± 0.40	Small but definite relationship
± 0.01 to ± 0.20	Slight, almost negligible

Source: Hair et al (2007)

The results of Pearson correlation analysis on the relationship between employees' perception and strategic plan implementation is provided in table 4.11:

Table 4.11: *Correlation for Employees perception and strategic plan implementation*

		Strategic plan implementation	Employees perception
Strategic plan	Pearson Correlation	1	.972[**]
Implementation	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	242	242
Employees' perception	Pearson Correlation	.972[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	242	242

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

The results from table 4.11 shows that employees' perception was positively correlated to implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. The result showed a coefficient of r= 0.972 and P =0.000, which shows that the two constructs, employees perception and implementation of strategic plan were very strongly positively related with the p-value= 0.000 which was less than the threshold of 0.05 level of significance.

The strength of the relationship being clear allows the study to use other tests to test the significance of the relationship between employees' perception and strategic plan implementation. This study used simple regression analysis to establish the nature of the relationship between the study variables. Inferential statistics were also performed to test the null hypotheses of the study for possible rejection or acceptance. The null hypotheses were rejected if the *p*-value was less than 0.05 and accepted if the results showed it was greater than 0.05.

Table 4.12: *Employees' Perception and Strategic Plan implementation*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.972[a]	.945	.945	.78540

   a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees perception

The coefficient of determination R Square = .945 at significance level of 0.05 indicates that, 94.5% of the total variations in strategic plan implementation are influenced by employee's perception. This implies that, there is a positive contribution of employees' perception by 94.5% on influencing implementations of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in rift valley region and 6.5% is contributed by other factors. The result of the Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) is 0.972 and the result of the standard error of the estimate is .78540. This means that the variability in the prediction is .78540.

Further the results from Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were presented in table 4.13.

Table 4.13 *Analysis of Variance for Employees perception*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2565.033	1	2565.033	4158.233	.000[b]
Residual	148.046	240	.617		
Total	2713.079	241			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' perception

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results indicated in Table 4.13 confirmed that the model goodness of fit is appropriate for this data since F = 4158.233 and the p-value of 0.000 which was less than the significant level of 0.05 with df = 240. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was significant linear

relationship between employees' perception and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya

Table 4.14: *Coefficients of Employees' Perception and strategic plan implementation*
Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	3.392	.259		13.077	.000
Employees' perception	1.009	.016	.972	64.484	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation

The correlation in Table 4.14 displays the beta coefficient values, t-statistic values, and the significance values. The result of the p-value is .000, that ($p<0.001$). The result of the intercept ($_0$) is 3.392 while the result of ($_1$), that is, the model regression coefficient is 1.009. Other important results from Table 4.18 are the t statistic which is 64.484 greater than zero.

The result revealed that employees' perception have positive and significant effects on strategic plans implementation. The model of goodness of fit SPI = 3.392 + 1.009X1+e. The model implies that a unit change in employees' perception will influence implementation of strategic plan by the rate of 1.009 holding other factors constant, and even if employees' perception is non-existent, implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions is still positive at a rate of 3.392. This shows that there are other factors such as employees' perception of involvement strategy, employees' perception of communication strategy and employees' perception of strategic leadership which can influence implementation process of strategic plans even if the employees' perception is at a rate of zero in public TVET institutions.

The findings in this study were further affirmed by the top management who were interviewed to establish if the employees were motivated and satisfied on strategic plan implementation. One top manager said,

> "Employees are neither motivated nor satisfied with strategic plan implementation due to the fact that they rarely accomplished tasks assigned to them."

> Another top manager commented that,

> "Employees are driven by their self interest and if we fail to meet their interests, we can find ourselves in a mess with strategy implementation."

The results from the observations of top managers suggest that employees in public TVET institutions in rift valley region are more concern with their interests and when they are not met, they are unlikely to support strategy implementation.

The findings of the objective showed that there exists a gap between the perception of top managers, middle managers and lower level employees on their roles and on aspects enabling their strategic plan implantation. It therefore results in an implementation gap which can hinder the successful implementation of the institution strategy.

This finding agreed with the findings of Abok, 2013 who argued that the agreement among top, middle and lower level managers will result to successful implementation of the strategy and if there is no understanding among them, it may create obstacles to successful strategy implementation. Further, this finding was consistent with the views of Viseras et al., (2005) who found out that strategy implementation success depended crucially on the human or people side of project management, and less on organization and systems related factors. In fact, Abok, 2013 was of view that implementation failures occur at middle level and lower level management. In fact,

Abok, 2013 was of view that implementation failures occur at middle level and lower level management.

Furthermore, the findings corroborate with findings of Atreya (2007) who argued that whatever the management has decided on strategy does not mean that subordinates will follow and cooperate in its implementation. The fact that top management was interested to implement the strategy did not convince middle and lower level management to follow suit. Moreover, the findings also agreed with Alexander (1985) who argued that when involved employees have insufficient capabilities to perform their jobs, lower-level employees are inadequately trained, and departmental managers provide inadequate leadership and direction then implementation of strategic plans would be unsuccessful.

The strong relationship between employees' perception and implementation of strategic plan could be due to the fact employees from various cadre tend to agree on various statements on strategic plan implementation. Majority of respondents indicated that they were aware about the consequence of failure and that the strategy implemented was the right one and relevant to their institutions. Niculae, 2006, asserted that problems on strategy implementation appear when the perception differences are extreme and persistent, not when there are insignificant disagreements. It could also imply that employees across all cadres of management level in public TVET institutions might not have conceptualize the whole issue of strategy implementation. This was supported by the fact that more than 47% of the implementers that is middle and lower level management have not been trained or not satisfied with the level of training on strategic planning and strategic plan implementation.

Moreover, majority of the employees of all cadres were enthusiastic about strategic plan implementation. It is important for all institutions to sensitize employees of all cadres on strategic plan implementation and enhance level of interaction on issues relating to strategic plan implementation. Continuous communication across various cadres of employees helps to create positive perception of strategic plan implementation.

It was also found that the common organizational structure of the TVET institutions under investigation were bureaucratic in nature, whereby authority flows from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy as indicated by majority of the respondents alluding to the fact that communication was mostly from top to bottom. Supporting literature reveals that this type of structure stifles creativity with its inflexible rigid rules and standards. Managers who are bound by rigid controls cannot easily adapt to differing conditions in the institution (Mohammed, 2015). Moreover, it was also found out that lack of shared understanding results in an 'implementation gap' because the top managements are the ones who conceive strategies without sharing the information with the lower levels.

4.4.3 Communication and Implementation of Strategic Plan

The second objective of the study sought to examine the effectiveness of communication in the implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. The study used the following three sub-variables of communication practice: Flow of communication, Channel of communication, and communication process in the institutions.

The respondents were asked to indicate the flow of communication across all levels of management, that is, top level, middle level and lower level management in the institutions. The findings were presented in table 4.15.

Table 4.15: *Flow of Communication in the institution*

Mode	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Top-Down	136	56.2	56.2	56.2
Bottom –Up	9	3.7	3.7	59.9
Both-Top down and Bottom-Up	97	40.1	40.1	100.0
Total	242	100.0	100.0	

Results in table 4.15 revealed that 56.2% of the respondents indicated that top-down communication is used, 40.1% indicated that both top-down and bottom-up communication channel is used. Only 3.7% of the respondents confirmed usage of bottom up channel. This implies that the most common communication mode used is top-down as opposed to both top-down and bottom-up communication mode.

This study further sought to find out the channels of communication applied in the targeted institutions and indicate how disseminating and receiving of information on strategic objectives took place as shown in figure 2.
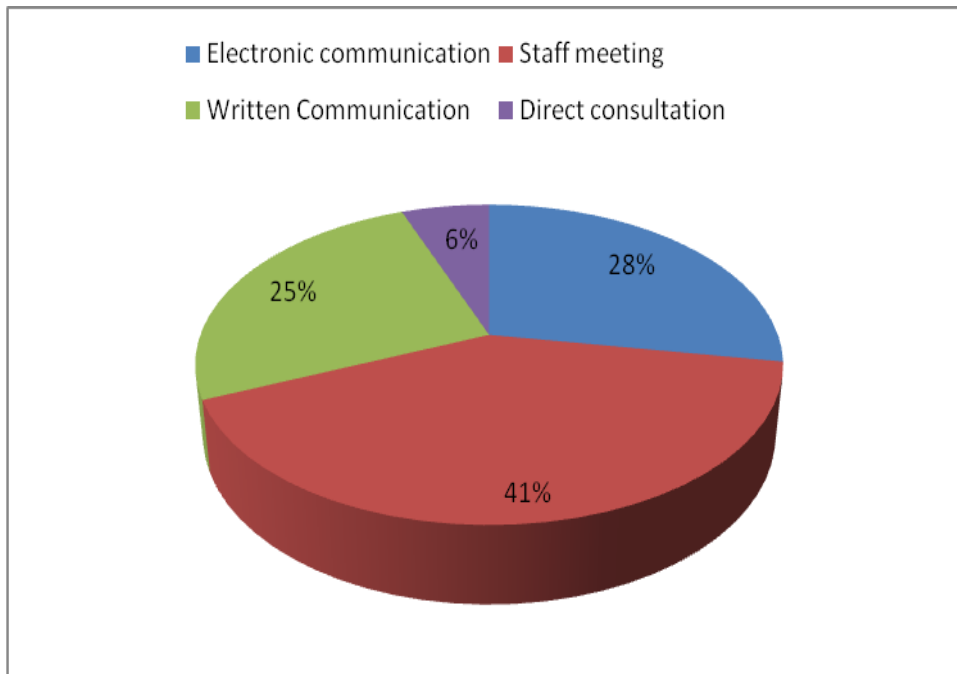
Figure 2: Channel of communication

The results indicated that a majority of the respondents cited meetings as the main channel of communication. The findings indicate that meetings form the main channel of communication with a cumulative percentage of 41% of the respondents staff meetings, 28% cited electronic communication, 25% indicated written communication, and 5% direct consultation. This finding agrees with the results in Figure 4 which indicate that the major flow of communication is top-down. Cumulatively electronic communication and written communication accounts for 53% of the respondents. While on the other hand a mixture of both bottom-up and top-down approach, that is staff meeting and direct consultation cumulatively accounts for 47% of the respondents.

Moreover, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed on various statements on communication process as applied by their institutions. From the responses mean and standard deviation were calculated. The responses were

generated on a five likert scale, 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4= Agree, and 5= Strongly agree. The scores of strongly disagree and disagree have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 0 to 2.4 on the continuous likert scale $0 \leq a \leq 2.4$. The scores of undecided have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous likert scale $2.5 \leq u \leq 3.4$ and the scores of both agree and strongly agree have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 on the continuous likert scale $3.5 \leq u \leq 5.0$. A standard deviation of ≥ 0.9 implies a significant difference on the influence of the variable among the respondents. The study findings are as shown in table 4.16.

Table 4.16: *Statements on Communication process in the TVET institutions*

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
Motivated due to effective communication	53 (21.9%)	136 (56.2%)	3 (1.2%)	39 (16.1)%	11 (4.5%)	2.2521	1.10754
Adequate communication in place	57 (23.6%)	142 (58.7%)	3 (1.2%)	33 (13.6%)	7 (2.9%)	2.1364	1.01952
Delayed Communication	15 (6.2%)	40 (16.5%)	5 (2.1%)	131 (54.1%)	51 (21.1%)	3.6736	1.16165
Lack of a two-way communication	17 (7.0%)	24 (9.9%)	16 (6.6%)	138 (57.0%)	47 (19.4%)	3.7190	1.10242
Lack of communications is harmful	13 (5.4%)	41 (16.9%)	5 (2.1%)	104 (43.0%)	79 (32.6%)	3.8058	1.21517
Need to communicate information change	4 (1.7%)	8 (3.3%)	6 (2.5%)	140 (57.9%)	84 (34.7%)	4.2066	.78277
An integrated communications plan must be developed	13 (5.4%)	11 (4.5%)	11 (4.5%)	140 (57.9%)	67 (27.7%)	3.9669	1.00152
Leaders evaluate strategy progress	61 (25.2%)	147 (60.7%)	4 (1.7%)	25 (10.3%)	5 (2.1%)	2.0331	.93288

The findings from table 4.15 demonstrated that it is essential both during and after change to communicate information about strategic plan implementation to all

employees in a timely fashion (mean of 4.2066 with a standard deviation of .78277) and an integrated communications plan must be developed at the institution to enhance strategy implementation (mean of 3.9669 with a standard deviation of 1.00152). Further respondents indicated that Lack of communications causes more harm as the employees are not told about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees as indicated by a mean of 3.8058 with standard deviation of 1.21517.

The findings also revealed that the institutions were faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy and strategy implementation with a mean and standard deviation of 3.7190 and 1.10242 respectively. Communication in the TVET institution is frequently delayed as indicated by a mean of 3.6736 and standard deviation of 1.16165. The respondents also indicated that they disagreed with the statement that there was adequate communication in place on institution process and procedures to all staff (mean 2.1364 and standard deviation of 1.01952), that they were motivated due to effective communication by top management (mean 2.2521 and standard deviation 1.10754), that Executive leadership evaluate strategy progress and give feedback on time (mean 2.0331, standard deviation 0.93288).

The study further sought to establish the relationship between communication strategy and strategic plan implementation by testing the hypothesis below:

HO_2: There is no statistically significant effect of communication in the implementation of strategic plan at public TVET institutions.

The Pearson correlation test was conducted on the communication practice to determine the significance of the communication practice factors (the independent variable) and how they impact strategy implementation (the dependent variable). The study required a P value of 0.01 and 0.05 for significant factors.

Table 4.17: *Correlation Coefficient for Communication and Strategic Plan Implementation*

		Strategic plan implementation	Communication practice
Strategic plan implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	.141[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028
	N	242	242
Communication	Pearson Correlation	.141[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	
	N	242	242

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings in table 4.17 indicated that the Pearson correlation (r) of communication practice on implementation of strategic plans was r=0.141 and $p < 0.05$. This implies that there is a weak positive correlation between communication practice and implementation of strategic plans. The strength of the relationship being clear, this allows the study to use other tests to test the significance of the relationship between communication practice and strategic plan implementation. This study used simple linear regression analysis to establish the nature of the relationship between the study variables. Inferential statistics were also performed to test the null hypotheses of the study for possible rejection or acceptance. The null hypotheses were rejected if the *p*-value was less than 0.05 and accepted if the results showed it was greater than 0.05.

Table 4.18: *Model Summary for Communication*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.141[a]	.020	.016	3.32868

    a. Predictors: (Constant), communication practice

The coefficient of determination R Square = 0.02 at significance level of 0.05 indicates that, 2% of the total variations in strategic plan implementation are influenced by communication practice. This implies that, there is a positive contribution of communication practice by 2% on influencing implementations of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in rift valley region and 98% is contributed by other factors. The result of the Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) is 0.141 and the result of the standard error of the estimate is 3.32868. This means that the variability in the prediction is 3.32868.

Further, the result from the Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is presented in table 4.19.

Table 4.19: **A***nalysis of Variance for Communication*

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	53.846	1	53.846	4.860	.028[b]
Residual	2659.233	240	11.080		
Total	**2713.079**	**241**			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Communication practice

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results indicated in Table 4.19 confirmed that the model goodness of fit is appropriate for this data since F = 4.860 and the p-value of 0.028 is less than significant level of 0.05 with df = 240. Hence, the null hypothesis that there was no statistically significant difference between employees' perception of

communication strategy and implementation of strategic plan was therefore rejected and concluded that there was a significant relationship between communication strategy and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya.

Table 4.20: *Coefficients of Communication and Strategic Plan Implementation Coefficients[a]*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	16.613	1.460		11.376	.000
Communication strategy	.107	.049	.141	2.204	.028

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation

The results further revealed that employees' communication strategy have positive and significant effects on strategic plans implementation as indicated in Table 4.20. The model of goodness of fit SPI = 16.613 + 0.107 $X2$+e. The model implies that a unit change in employees' communication strategy will influence implementation of strategic plan by the rate of 0.107 holding other factors constant, and even if employees' communication strategy was non-existent, implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions was still positive at a rate of 16.613. This shows that there were other factors such as employees' perception, employees' perception of involvement strategy and employees' perception of strategic leadership which can influence implementation process of strategic plans even if the employees' communication strategy was at a rate of zero in public TVET institutions.

The study findings from the above analyses showed that most public TVET institutions had challenges on the use multidirectional communication flow of communication. In fact, majority (56.2%) indicated that top-down mode of communication was being used as opposed to multidirectional communication flow.

This was in agreement with many scholars including, Burnes (2004), Mulube (2009) and Letting (2009) have concluded that lack of clear multi-directional flow of communication was a hindering factor in implementing strategic plans. The implementation of strategic plan implementation hiccups experienced in public TVET institutions could therefore be associated with channels of communication in the institutions. According to Lamb and McKee cited in Abok (2013), communication helps employees to understand the institution's overall strategy, and how they contribute to achieving key institution objectives. It also helps in sharing information with employees on both how the institution is doing and how an employee's own department is doing, relative to strategic institution objectives. The findings of this study are therefore in line with these past studies since it shows that the use of both top-down and multidirectional communication channels would positively influence effective implementation of strategic plans.

The findings also demonstrated agreement with other scholars' findings including Kandie (2004), and Robinson and Pearce (2004), who concluded that effective strategic plan implementation require clear channels of communication inculcated into the culture of the organization. Further, the findings were consistent with Abok (2013) who argued that Communication should be a regular rather than a one-off exercise and should be pursued through various channels that management deem fit to access the employees of an organization. Moreover, the results in this study agreed with Rapert and Wren cited in Nyakeriga (2015) who stated that organizations where employees have easy access to management through open and supportive communication channels outperform those with more restrictive communication environments. The findings demonstrated that regular and effective communication channels enhance strategic plan implementations. If employees do not understand

what has to be done, then they cannot own the process and subsequently will not be able to deliver since they cannot apply what did not properly understand (sterling 2003).

The findings in this study showed that effective communication in the public TVET institutions between the top level management and the lower level management is lacking and thus affects implementation of strategies as there is no communication of the strategy to be implemented. It was revealed that the reaction of employees can give a guideline and also serves as a feedback mechanism. Communication need to be encouraged in the organization as a strategic management tool. Also, the study findings revealed that executive leadership does not evaluate strategy progress and give feedback on time to employees after evaluating strategy progress. Organizational communication plays an important role in training, knowledge dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation.

It can be concluded that effective communication in public TVET institutions between the employees of various cadres is lacking and this affects implementation of strategies as there is no communication of the strategy to be implemented. Lehner, 2004 stated that if members of the institution are not aware of the same information, or if information passes through different layers in an organization, a lower level of consensus may result and thus leading to lack of shared understanding which may create obstacles to successful strategy implementation. This finding was also in line with findings from previous studies that showed that clarity in communication is vital for effective implementation processes. Burnes (2004) asserted that the interpretation of communication plays a vital role which requires managers to enforce a strong culture that embrace clear understanding of communications. He adds that this means

that managers must be aware of people's beliefs, attitudes, behavior, demands and arguments in order to communicate effectively the message of strategic plan implementation to the employees. On the other hand, George (2017) argued that communicating poorly has negative effects on an organization's ability to implement and refine its strategy. The study further found out that communication within the institutions plays a key role in facilitating flow of information between various levels of management for efficient service delivery. It promotes knowledge dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation which is consistent with the finding of Peng and Littleljohn (2001) who established that communication enables the utilization of different components of resources in an organization for efficient service delivery. They argue that communication within an organization facilitates transfer of knowledge for efficient service delivery and learning during the process of strategy implementation.

The respondents in this study further reiterated the fact that communication on the strategic direction and the objectives needs to be done adequately and in a timely manner. Most of them agreed that communication was inadequate and sometimes fails to reach everyone as should be the case. Furthermore, the respondents argued that their views were not valued by the institutions and that they did not have clear, common understanding of issues on strategic plan implementation. They stressed that communication is critical in the strategic plan implementation noting that it should be multidirectional in order to allow management to monitor the implementation process and determine whether changes to the process are needed. The findings were consistent with those of Okumus (2003) who proposes that multi modes of communication should be used to send out both formal and informal messages about the strategy to be implemented.

The study further found out that there was a weak level of significance between communication strategy and strategic plan implementation. This finding raised the question of whether communication has an impact or influence on the implementation of strategic plan. The study showed that a unit change in employees' communication strategy influence implementation of strategic plan by a small rate of 0.107. Other scholars (Robbins & Coulter, 2003; Wambui, 2003; Amulyoto, 2004) gave a possible explanation to conform to the findings by stating that communication alone cannot drive implementation of strategic plans especially in a situation where there are limited opportunities for group or even one on one communication. The findings of the study showed that institutions should employ better communication and feedback systems that will be instrumental in information sharing within the institutions on the implementation process. Further, the institutions should promote open information sharing as this will reduce bureaucracy in the institutions.

4.4.4 Employees Involvement and Strategic Plan Implementation

The third objective of the study sought to assess the level of employees' involvement in the implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. Successful strategy implementation requires the involvement and commitment of top management and employees on all levels. A failure to involve key people often results in implementation failure. Top management may develop the strategy but needs to spend significant amounts of time discussing it with middle management and employees at lower levels within the organization.

The study sought to establish views of employees on whether or not their involvement motivates them to put more effort into achieving strategic plan implementation targets set for their institution. The findings are presented in table 4.21.

Table 4.21   *Views of Employees on whether their involvement motivates them*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	54	22.3	22.3	22.3
Not sure	4	1.7	1.7	24.0
Yes	184	76.0	76.0	100.0
Total	**242**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

The findings illustrated that majority of the respondents (76%) felt their involvement

motivated them to put more effort into achieving strategic plan implementation targets

set for their institution. On the other hand, 22.3% and 1.7% of the respondents felt

that they were not involved or were not sure about their involvement respectively.

Further, respondents were asked to indicate their perceived level of commitment and

ownership of strategic plan in their institutions by the principal, registrars, deans,

HODs and lecturers. The findings are shown in table 4.22.

Table 4.22: *Commitment and Ownership of the Strategic Plan Implementation*

Commitment and ownership of the strategic plan implementation	Principal	Registrar	Dean	Heads of department	Lecturers
No commitment	(100) 41.3%	(160) 66.1%	(141) 58.3%	(159) 65.7%	(198) 81.8%
Very committed	(142) 58.7%	(82) 33.9%	(101) 41.7%	(83) 4.3%	(44) 18.2%

The results in table 4.22 indicated that majority of lecturers (81.8%) who constituted

lower level management in the institutions were not committed to strategic plan

implementation. This implied that they did not own strategic plans in their

institutions. Over 58% of Deans, heads of department and registrars were not

committed to strategic plan implementations. On the other hand, majority of

principals (58.7%) were committed to strategic plan implementation. These findings

could be attributed to poor communication and delay in giving feedback to employees

by the top management. The principals' commitment to strategic plan implementation could be because of the fact that strategic plan implementation is a ministerial requirement and all principals should ensure its success.

Moreover, the respondents were asked to give their views on the extent of their involvement on strategic plan implementation based on a 5-likert point: 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree. The results were illustrated in table 4.23:

Table 4.23 showed that majority of the respondents (84.7%) agreed that Involvement of employees was essential to ensure employees were focused on targets set by the institution. However, a great proportion of employees (over 80%) indicated that they were not involved in all activities or decision making relating to strategic plan implementation. Furthermore over 78% of the respondents argued that their views were not valued by the institutions and that they did not have clear, common understanding of issues on strategic plan implementation. These findings demonstrated that employees in public TVET institutions under the study were not committed and were more likely to resist the implementation of the strategy.

Table 4.23: *Extent of employee involvement on strategic plan implementation*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
Involvement is essential to ensure employees are focused on targets	17 (7.0%)	11 (4.5%)	9 (3.7%)	93 (38.4%)	112 (46.3%)	4.1116	1.14867
I am involved in all activities relating to strategic plan implementation	49 (20.2%)	147 (60.7%)	7 (2.9%)	30 (12.4%)	9 (3.7%)	2.1860	1.01571
I am involved in decision making on strategy implementation	58 (24.0%)	151 (62.4%)	4 (1.7%)	25 (10.3%)	4 (1.7%)	2.0331	.90580
The institution value my contributions on strategic plan implementation	69 (28.5%)	133 (55.0%)	6 (2.5%)	29 (12.0%)	5 (2.1%)	2.0537	.99439
I have clear, common understanding of issues on strategic plan implementation	74 (30.6%)	115 (47.5%)	6 (2.5%)	43 (17.8%)	4 (1.7%)	2.1240	1.08609

The study further sought to establish the effect of employees' involvement practice on strategic plan implementation by testing the hypothesis below:

HO$_3$: There is no statistically significant effect of employee involvement on strategic plan implementation at public TVET institutions.

The Pearson correlation test was conducted on employee involvement strategy to determine the significance of the involvement strategy factors (the independent variables) and how they impact strategy implementation (the dependent variable). The study required a P value of 0.01 and 0.05 for significant factors.

Table 4.24: *Pearson correlation for employees' involvement and strategic plan implementation*

		Strategic plan implementation	Involvement Practice
Strategic plan implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	.170**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008
	N	242	242
Involvement strategy	Pearson Correlation	.170**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	
	N	242	242

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings in table 4.24 indicated that the Pearson correlation (r) of employees' involvement practice on implementation of strategic plans was r=0.170 and p < 0.05. This implies that there is a weak positive correlation between employees' involvement strategy and implementation of strategic plans. The strength of the relationship being clear, this allows the study to use other tests to test the significance of the relationship. This study used simple linear regression analysis to establish the nature of the relationship between the study variables. Inferential statistics were performed to test the null hypotheses of the study for possible rejection or acceptance. The null hypotheses were rejected if the *p*-value was less than 0.05 and accepted if the results showed it was greater than 0.05.

Table 4.25 *Model Summary for Employees' Involvement*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.170[a]	.029	.025	3.31313

a. Predictors: (Constant), Involvement strategy

The coefficient of determination R Square = 0.029 at significance level of 0.05 indicates that, 2.9% of the total variations in strategic plan implementation are influenced by employees' involvement strategy. This implies that, there is a positive contribution of employees' involvement strategy by 2.9% on influencing implementations of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in rift valley region and 97.1% is contributed by other factors.

Further the Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is presented in table 4.25.

Table 4.26: *Analysis of Variance for Employees' Involvement*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	78.646	1	78.646	7.165	.008[b]
Residual	2634.433	240	10.977		
Total	**2713.079**	**241**			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' involvement

The ANOVA results indicated in Table 4.26 above confirmed that the model goodness of fit is appropriate for this data since F = 7.165 and the p-value of 0.008 is less than significant level of 0.05 with df = 240. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and concludes that there is a significant linear relationship between employee's involvement strategy and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya.

Table 4.27: *Coefficients of Employees' involvement and Strategic plan implementation*
Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	17.777	.784		22.667	.000
Involvement strategy	.162	.060	.170	2.677	.008

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation

The results revealed that employees' involvement strategy have positive and significant effects on strategic plans implementation as indicated in Table 4.26. The model of goodness of fit SPI = 17.777 + 0.162 $X3$+e. The model implies that a unit change in employees' involvement strategy will influence implementation of strategic plan by the rate of 0.162 holding other factors constant, and even if employees' involvement strategy is non-existent, implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions is still positive at a rate of 17.777. This shows that there are other factors such as employees' perception based on their level of management, employees' perception of communication strategy and employees' perception of strategic leadership which can influence implementation process of strategic plans even if the employee's involvement strategy is at a rate of zero in public TVET institutions.

The findings in this study were further affirmed by the top management who were interviewed to establish if the employee's involvement influence strategic plan implementation. One top manager said that the lecturers were not involve in formulation process and therefore had a lot of apathy during implementation stage. He further suggested that institutions should hold regular meetings to talk about the

progress of strategy implementation and get feedback for the entire department. This statement confirmed the fact 81.8% of the lecturers were not committed nor own strategic plan implementation in their institutions.

The results from the interview agreed with the findings of the respondents on the questionnaire. Most of the top management said that strategic plan implementation in their institutions have not improve the motivation and job satisfaction among the employees because they are not adequately involved in the whole process of strategy.

Findings of the study indicated that majority of the employees support their involvement on issues of strategic plan implementation. Their involvement promotes clear and common understanding of issues relating to strategic plan implementation.

The study result indicated that there was a significant linear relationship between employee's involvement strategy and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya. This is in line with the past study's findings that the involvement of employees positively influences implementation of strategic plans. Guth and McMillan (1986) also had a similar observation that involvement of middle level manager's enhanced success in implementing strategy noting that employees' involvement was essential for organizations to achieve the planned implementation.

The result further corroborates what other scholars who include Cummings and Doh (2000), Arasa (2008) and Pearce and Robinson (2004) who found out that employees' involvement cannot be overlooked especially during the implementation stage of a strategy. Further, Foudraine J. (2015) argued that an employee involvement practice is critical in that it concerns locating decisions at the lowest level in the organizations. It requires an institution to be designed in a way that employees can take control over

decisions. This implies that employees need to be consulted from the early stages of strategic plans implementation.

The findings also show that for public TVET institutions the more involvement of employees, the more the effectiveness of implementation of strategic plans. Public TVET institutions thus have more positively influencing employees than negatively influencing employees. According to Abok (2013) employees are very influential individuals and groups who are vitally interested in the actions of an organization looking back into the past, present and future operations plus the environment of the organization. The study established that the level of participation and involvement of employees affect strategy implementation by determining the commitment and understanding of the strategy implementation which is in agreement with the finding of Chimanzi and Morgan's (2005) who argued that involvement of staff smoothens the strategy implementation process by eliminating bottlenecks of resistance during implementation.

The findings were also in line with Mohammed (2011) who asserted that participatory approach should involve individuals from different levels of the organization in order to provide them with the chance to become familiar with the strategic goals in order to be more capable of implementing them. Furthermore, the findings agreed with Theodosia (2010) who asserted that non-involvement of employees in decision-making means that vital input from employees is often not factored into decisions made. This gives rise to the problems that are experienced in organizations when it comes to the acceptance of these decisions and its implementation because employees feel slighted and of no importance because their views were not sought. Employees' involvement in all matters relating to strategic plan implementation would dispel the

perception that the strategic plan is a document created by those in charge and thrust upon them to implement.

From these findings it is important to get everyone to work according to the new strategy and not fall back on previous ways of doing things in the implementation stage. Informal participation is a great way to involve employees in this process. If employees struggle with some parts of the strategy, they can tell their managers and get help. Allowing employees to help each other, provide answers to questions will really help in the implementation phase. Monitoring this process is also important to see if the new strategy results in achieving the objectives, set in the formulation phase. In order to monitor the progress employee involvement teams can be formed, to check if objectives are achieved. For every objective a separate employee involvement team can be formed. Representative participation can be used to let employee's thoughts on the new strategy be discussed with the top management. The job of management is to prepare the individuals or teams to function in an autonomous manner. Management is an enabler, culture setter, and supporter rather than a director of employee action. These practices make sure that employees are taken care of in the implementation stage and subsequently lead to successful strategy implementation.

4.4.5: leadership Practice and Strategic Plan Implementation

The fourth objective of this study sought to determine effect of leadership practice on the implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. Leadership of an institution can enhance commitment of employees across all levels of management and thus generates ownership of the new strategy and in turn boost pace and level of employees' support of the implementation of strategic plan.

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on statements regarding level of support they received from top management as they execute strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions. From the responses mean and standard deviation were calculated. The responses were generated on a five likert scale, 1= Not at all, 2= To slight extent 3= To reasonable extent, 4= To high extent, and 5= To very high. The scores of Not at all and to slight extent have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 0 to 2.4 on the continuous likert scale $0 \leq n \leq 2.4$. The scores of to reasonable extent have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous likert scale $2.5 \leq r \leq 3.4$ and the scores of both To high extent and To very high have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 on the continuous likert scale $3.5 \leq h \leq 5.0$. A standard deviation of ≥ 0.9 implies a significant difference on the influence of the variable among the respondents. The findings were illustrated in table 4.28.

Table 4.28: *Extent of support from top management on strategic plan implementation*

Extent of support from top management on strategic plan implementation	Mean	Standard deviation
Develop budget to steer resources into activities that are critical to success of strategy implementation	2.2893	1.03015
Provide good leadership and direction skills	2.3884	1.11103
Provides Appropriate structure to incorporate change	2.3471	.90834
Provides adequate feedback	2.4793	.96063
Provide a compelling vision	2.7438	1.19493
Provide motivation and inspiration for all that is involved	2.3140	1.16329
Respond effectively to resistance to change	2.3967	1.07386
Sustain effective organizational cultures	2.5000	1.19560

The findings illustrated that majority of respondents disagreed with the statement that top management develop budget to steer resources into those activities that are critical to success of strategy implementation (mean =2.2893, SD=1.03015), Provides good leadership and direction skills (mean = 2.3884, SD=1.11103) and that they provide

motivation and inspiration for all that is involved (mean= 2.3471, SD=.90834). Furthermore, as to whether leaders provide motivation and inspiration for all that is involved and respond effectively to resistance to change, respondents disagreed as indicated by a mean of 2.3140 and 2.3967 respectively. Respondents agreed to a reasonable extent that top management provide a compelling vision (mean 2.7438) and sustain effective organizational cultures (mean 2.5000).

Respondents were further asked to indicate their level of agreement of statements on the evaluation of top management leadership practices regarding strategic plan implementation. From the responses mean and standard deviation were calculated. The responses were generated on a five likert scale, 1= Very weak, 2= Weak, 3= Fair, 4= Strong, and 5= Very strong. The scores of Very weak and weak have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 0 to 2.5 on the continuous likert scale $0 \leq w \leq 2.4$. The scores of fair have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous likert scale $2.5 \leq f \leq 3.4$ and the scores of both Strong and Very strong have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 on the continuous likert scale $3.5 \leq s \leq 5.0$. A standard deviation of ≥ 0.9 implies a significant difference on the influence of the variable among the respondents. The study findings are as shown in table 4.29.

Table 4.29: *Evaluation of leadership practices*

Evaluation of top management leadership on strategic plan implementation	Mean	Standard deviation
Built an organization with competencies, capabilities, and resource strengths	2.5207	1.13488
Establishes effective strategy supportive policies and procedures	2.4339	1.13679
Communicate vision and direction	2.3678	1.15279
Instill the correct organization culture	2.3512	1.09534
Has common understanding to issues on strategic plan implementation	2.4835	1.28256
Involves implementers of strategic plan in decision making	2.3967	.90163
Manage conflict arising from strategic plan implementation	2.3967	.93772

Table 4.29 illustrated that majority of the respondents (over 60%) felt that top management did not built an organization with competencies, capabilities, and resource strengths nor established effective strategy supportive policies and procedures. Majority of the respondents (over 60%) further as indicated that top management was weak in communicating vision and direction, instilling the correct organization culture, involving implementers of strategic plan in decision making and managing conflict arising from strategic plan implementation. These findings seem to suggest that there was a problem with those in leadership position in public TVET institutions on matters relating to strategic plan implementation. Despite of the fact majority of the top management level employees have undergone training on strategic plan implementation they seemed not to be committed to strategic plan implementation as depicted by their failure to involve employees on decision making and their slow pace in communicating vision and direction to employees. This was

confirmed by the fact that 60% of the respondents rated top management as weak and very weak on understanding issues on strategic plan implementation.

Moreover, the study asked the respondents to indicate their level of agreement on the following statements in relation to the effect of level of commitment of institutional leadership strategic plan implementation. The responses were generated on a five likert scale, 1= Strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= Neither agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, and 5= Strongly agree. The scores of strongly disagree and disagree have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 0 to 2.4 on the continuous likert scale $0 \leq a \leq 2.4$. The scores of Neither agree nor Disagree, have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous likert scale $2.5 \leq n \leq 3.4$ and the scores of both agree and Strongly agree have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 on the continuous likert scale $3.5 \leq s \leq 5.0$. A standard deviation of ≥ 0.9 implies a significant difference on the influence of the variable among the respondents. The study findings are as shown in table 4.30.

Table 4.30: *Statements on the commitment of institutional leadership on strategic plan implementation*

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
The top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor	4.0826	.78457
Top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed	4.0207	.84209
Top managers need to seek views from employees for strategy implementation to be effective.	3.9628	.77477
Lack of top management backing is the main inhibiting factors	3.7066	.95581
Lack of manager's commitment leads to employees missing support and guidance on strategy implementation	3.7934	.84889

The findings from table 4.30 demonstrated that majority of the respondent were in agreement that top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor (mean 4.0826) and that top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed (mean 4.0207). The results further indicated that top managers need to seek views from employees for strategy implementation to be effective (mean 3.9628) and lack of manager's commitment leads to employees missing support and guidance on strategy implementation (3.7934). Lack of top management backing was cited by the respondents as the main inhibiting factor on strategic plan implementation (mean 3.7066). These findings demonstrated that institutional leadership commitment is critical in ensuring success on strategic plan implementation.

The study further sought to establish the relationship between leadership practice and strategic plan implementation by testing the hypothesis below:

HO$_{4:}$ There is no statistically significant effect of leadership practice on strategic plan implementation at public TVET institutions.

The Pearson correlation test was conducted to determine the effect of leadership practice on strategy implementation. The study required a P value of 0.01 and 0.05 for significant factors.

Table 4.31: *Pearson correlation of leadership Practice and Strategic plan implementation*

		Strategic plan implementation	Leadership Practice
Strategic plan implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	.253[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	242	242
Leadership strategy	Pearson Correlation	.253[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	242	242

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings in table 4.30 indicated that the Pearson correlation (r) of leadership strategy on strategic plan implementation, Pearson correlation r was 0.253 and $p <$ 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is a weak positive correlation between leadership practice and strategic plan implementation. The strength of the relationship being clear, this allows the study to use other tests to test the significance of the relationship. This study used multiple linear regression analysis to establish the nature of the relationship between the study variables. Inferential statistics were performed to test the null hypotheses of the study for possible rejection or acceptance. The null hypotheses were rejected if the *p*-value was less than 0.05 and accepted if the results showed it was greater than 0.05.

Table 4.32: *Model Summary for leadership practice*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.253[a]	.064	.060	3.25316

    a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership practice

The coefficient of determination R Square = 0. .064 at significance level of 0.05 indicates that, 6.4% of the total variations in strategic plan implementation are influenced by leadership practice. This implies that, there is a positive contribution of leadership practice by 6.4% on influencing implementations of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in rift valley region and 93.6% is contributed by other factors.

Further, the result of the Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is presented in table 4.32.

Table 4.33: *Analysis of Variance for Leadership practice*

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	173.144	1	173.144	16.360	.000[b]
Residual	2539.935	240	10.583		
Total	2713.079	241			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership practice

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results indicated in Table 4.33 above confirmed that the model goodness of fit is appropriate for this data since F = 16.360 and the p-value of 0.000 is less than significant level of 0.05 with df = 240. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was a significant linear relationship between leadership practice and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in Kenya. The findings show that in public TVET institutions the more leadership strategy employed, the more the effectiveness of implementation of

strategic plans. The study established that there is need for top leadership to seek views from employees for strategy implementation to be effective and provide support and guidance to all employees on strategy implementation. It is important for leaders to instill correct organization culture, involve implementers of strategic plan in decision making and manage conflict arising in order to realize fruitful implementation of strategic plan.

Table 4.34: *Coefficients of leadership practice and strategic plan implementation* Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.565	1.067		14.586	.000
Leadership strategy	.076	.019	.253	4.045	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation

Moreover, the results revealed that leadership strategy have positive and significant effects on strategic plans implementation as indicated in Table 4.33 above. The model of goodness of fit SPI = 15.983 + 0.076X4+e. The model implies that a unit change in leadership strategy will influence implementation of strategic plan by the rate of 0.076 holding other factors constant, and even if leadership strategy is non-existent, implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions is still positive at a rate of 15.983. This shows that there are other factors such as employees' perception, employees' perception of communication strategy and employees' perception of

involvement strategy which can influence implementation process of strategic plans even if leadership strategy is at a rate of zero in public TVET institutions.

The findings from the interview with the top management confirmed that top management leadership affects strategic plan implementation. However, they felt that they sometime withhold certain information on the challenges of strategy implementation for longer period than necessary especially issues relating to finances.

The findings in this study further demonstrated that majority of the respondent were of the view that top management's commitment to the strategic direction is important and that they must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed. This finding conforms to what has been said by different scholars who described leadership as critical determinant for effective strategic plan implementation (Kaplan and Norton 2004: Pearce and Robinson, 2007). According to Atreya (2007), internal leadership is needed to drive strategy implementation process towards the right direction. These study findings also agreed with other scholars who included Mwaikali (2016) and Nyakeriga (2015) who asserted that lack of strategic leadership by the top managers of the organization was one of the major barriers to the effective implementation of strategy.

The study found a weak positive correlation between leadership strategy and strategic plan implementation and this agree with the findings of Schaap (2006) who also found out that there was a weak relationship between strategic leadership and strategic plan implementation. The finding reaffirms the concept that senior-level leaders who have been trained in strategic planning and implementation are more likely to meet the set targets than are those without training in the field.

The study also found out that adequate leadership is needed for effective implementation of strategy as this will ensure all organizational effort is united and directed towards achievement of organizational goals. This finding concurs with that of Beer and Eisenstat (2000) who identified leadership as a key ingredient in strategy implementation and for any strategy to be effectively implemented, the strategy must emphasize the various interfaces within the organization.

The findings in this study also indicated that there was a problem with those in leadership position in public TVET institutions on matters relating to strategic plan implementation. This was illustrated by the fact that 60% of the respondents rated top management as weak and very weak on understanding issues on strategic plan implementation. Further, the findings indicated that top management were not committed to strategic plan implementation as depicted by their failure to involve employees on decision making and their slow pace in communicating vision and direction to employees. These findings agreed with Curtin cited in Abok (2013) who argued that strategic leadership involves encouraging employees to perform better by communicating the values of stretched targets providing a scope for individual and team contributions. Further, Hill and Jones cited in Mwangi (2014) argued that the right managers must be in the right positions for effective implementation of a strategy since the top management goodwill and ownership to drive the process is critical to effective implementation of strategy. She also noted that Noble and Mokwa (2009) found out that there is no relationship between top manages commitment and successful strategy implementation as an individual manager will not influence the overall success of the implementation effort. Moreover, Freedman &Tregoe 2003 added that successful transition from strategy formulation to the implementation of strategy depends on the strategic leaders of the organization. Strategic leadership

reluctance or incompetence in crafting the process for implementing strategic change is a great predictor of its failure.

The results of this study revealed that there was a weak positive correlation between leadership strategy and strategic plan implementation. The findings of the current study are inconsistent with the study by Abok (2013) which studied factors influencing implementation of strategic plans Tanzania's Executive Agencies and established that, there is a statistically significant strong positive relationship between top management support and implementation of strategic plans. The top management of the public TVET institutions must realize that action of individuals and inherent characteristics of people can lead to failure of organizational endeavors.

4.5   Combined Effect of independent variables on strategic plan implementation

The study further analyzed the combined effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. The individual effect of each independent variable: Influence of employees' perception, effect of communication practice, effect of involvement practice and effect of leadership practice on the dependent variable, strategic plan implementation using different tests. Various tests such as correlation coefficient (R), coefficient of determination (R-squared), F-test, and P-value were used to determine the significant relationship of variables and establish the goodness of fit of the dependent variable on various independent variables.

4.5.1 Multiple Linear Regressions for All Variables

The results in Table 4.34 indicate the Pearson correlation (R) of joint effect of all independent variables on implementation of strategic plans is 0.975 at p-value < 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is a statistically strong positive

correlation between the joint effect of all independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 4.35: *Model Summary for Combined Effect*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.975[a]	951	.951	.74587

    a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Perception. Communication Strategy, involvement strategy and Leadership strategy

The model $Y=\beta 0+\beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2+ \beta 3X3+\beta 4X4+\mathcal{E}$ explained by R Square = 0.951 indicated in Table 4.34, implies that 95.1% of the variations in implementation of strategic plans are influenced by the independent variables (leadership strategy, Influence of level of management, involvement strategy, Communication Strategy) in public TVET institutions in Kenya. This means that other factors not studied in this research contribute about 4.9% on implementation of strategic plans.

Table 4.36: *Analysis of Variance for Combined effect of Independent variables*

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2581.232	4	645.308	1159.968	.000[b]
Residual	131.847	237	.556		
Total	2713.079	241			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Perception. Communication practice, involvement practice and Leadership practice

The results in Table 4.35 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) which indicates that the model goodness of fit is significant at P - values = 0.000 which is less than significant level of 0.05, F = 1159.968 with 237 degrees of freedom. Hence, the findings indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between combined effect of employees' perception, leadership strategy, involvement strategy, communication strategy and strategic plan implementation at significance level of 5%.

Table 4. 35: *Coefficients of Combined Variables*
Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	2.155	.404		5.339	.000
Employee perception	1.010	.015	.974	65.568	.000
Communication practice	.051	.012	.067	4.415	.000
Involvement practice	.043	.016	.045	2.759	.006
Leadership practice	-.015	.005	-.051	-2.902	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic plan implementation

Further, the joint effect model as reflected in Table 4.36 indicates that all predictors (Leadership strategy, Level of management, Communication strategy, involvement Strategy) were statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. The fitted model then was:

$$SPI = 2.155 + 1.010X1 + .051X2 + .043X3 - .015X4 + \varepsilon$$

where SPI = Strategic Plans implementation, X1 = Employees' perception, X2 = Communication practice, X3 = involvement practice, X4 = Leadership practice, ε = error term which means all variables which influence implementation of strategic plans but are not considered in this study. Therefore, even if the four variables contributed at a rate of zero still the model is positive at a rate of 2.155, although practically this cannot easily happen or is a practically impossible assumption in real practice.

Moreover, employees' perception has large contributions on influencing implementation of strategic plans at a rate of 1.010, with levels of significances 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The variable, employees' perception significantly influences the implementation of strategic plans positively. This implies that a unit increased in

employees' perception when combined with other variable increases implementation of strategic plans at a rate of 1.010. Further, leadership practice has small contributions at a rate of -.015 with level of significances 0.004. This implies that a unit increased in leadership practice when combined with other variable decreases implementation of strategic plans at a rate of -.015 and significantly influence the implementation of strategic plans positively. Communication practice and involvement strategy on the other hand contributes a rate .051 and .043 with level of significance 0.000 and 0.006 respectively.

Furthermore, the study used **t**-test and **F**-test to measure if individually and collectively independent variable(s) influence implementation of strategic plans.

Firstly, in respect to employees' perception the study sought to measure its influence on implementations of strategic plans, was guided by the following null hypothesis: $HO_{1:}$ There is no significant relationship between employee's perception and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions; at alpha = 0.05. The findings in Table 4.36 of combined variables indicated that **t** = 65.568 and the p-value = 0.000 < 0.05. This implies that the null hypothesis was rejected and concludes that individually employee's perception influences the implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions at a significance level of 0.05.

Secondly, for the case of communication practice the study sought to measure its effect on implementations of strategic plans was guided by the following null hypothesis: HO_2: There is no significant effect of communication practice on strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions; at alpha = 0.05. The results in Table 4.36 of combined coefficients indicate that, t = 4.415 and the p-value = 0.000 < 0.05. This implies that the null hypothesis was rejected and concludes that individually

communication practice affects implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions at a significance level of 0.05.

Thirdly, in regard to the involvement strategy the study wanted to determine how employees' involvement practice affects implementations of strategic plans. This was guided by the following null hypothesis: HO_3**:** There is no significant effect of employee involvement practice on strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions; at alpha = 0.05. The findings in Table 4.36 of combined variables revealed that, **t** = 2.759 and p-value = 0.006 < 0.05. This implies that the null hypothesis was rejected and concludes that individually involvement practice affects implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions.

Fourthly, regarding the effect of leadership practice, the study sought to establish the effects of leadership towards implementations of strategic plans in respect to the following null hypothesis: HO_4: There is no significant effect of leadership practice on strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions.; at alpha = 0.05. The findings in Table 4.36 of combined variables revealed that, **t** = -2.902 and p-value = 0.004 < 0.05. This implies that, the study rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that when combined with other variable leadership practice individually does significantly affects implementation of strategic plans in a decreasing manner.

Moreover, Pearson correlation was used to test relationship between combined independent variables and the dependent variable as shown in table 4.37.

Table 4.38: *Correlation Matrix of Combined Variables*

		SPI	EPSPI	COM	INVS	LST
SPI	Pearson Correlation	1	. 972**	.141*	.170**	.253**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000	.028	.008	.000
	N	242	242	242	242	242
EPSPI	Pearson Correlation	.972**	1	. 083	.138*	. .266**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.200	.031	.000
	N	242	242	242	242	242
COM	Pearson Correlation	.141*	. 083	1	.221**	.334**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	.200		.001	.000
	N	242	242	242	242	242
INVS	Pearson Correlation	.170**	.138*	.221**	1	.488**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.031	.001		.000
	N	242	242	242	242	242
LST	Pearson Correlation	.253**	.266**	.334**	.488**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	242	242	242	242	242

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation matrix of all variables in Table 4.37 indicates that employees' perception had the highest positive significant correlation a correlation coefficient (R) of .972 with P-value = 0.000 $<\alpha = 0.01$ and followed by leadership strategy with significant weak positive correlation with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.253 with P-value = 0.000 $<\alpha = 0.01$. While on the other hand involvement strategy and communication strategy had a weak positive correlation coefficient of 0.170 and 0.141 with P-value = 0.008$<\alpha = 0.01$ and P-value = 0.028$<\alpha = 0.05$ respectively. Therefore, the study indicates all independent variables have a positive correlation with dependent variable and are statistically significant at $\alpha=01$ and $\alpha= 0.05$.

Thus, all the independent variables were positively related with implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions. This is an indication that all the dependent variables have a positive influence on the dependent variables and therefore changing any of the independent variables would affect the independent variables. These results agree with the ANOVA results for all the variables.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a summary of findings with respect to the key research hypotheses of this study, followed by a conclusion and recommendations for enhancing the effective implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in Kenya. The chapter further suggests the contribution of the study to existing knowledge, theory and practice as well as areas that need further research as far as strategic plan implementation is concerned.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This section highlights the key findings from the study. The overall objective of this study was to examine the effect of management practices on the implementation of strategic plans in Public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region, Kenya. The specific objectives which guided this study were: firstly, investigate employees' perception on the strategic plan implementation; secondly, to examine the effect of communication practice on strategic plan implementation; thirdly, to assess the effect of employees' involvement practice on the strategic plan implementation and fourthly, to determine the effect of leadership practice on the strategic plan implementation.

5.2.1 Employees' Perceptions and Strategic Plan Implementation

The study in this variable sought to investigate the influence of employees' perceptions on Strategic plan implementation in Public TVET institutions in Rift region, Kenya**.** The results show that employees' perception affects implementation of strategies in the public TVET institutions and that strategy needs to be explained and

understood by all employees of various cadres or level of management throughout the whole organization. The findings further revealed that employees' perception based on their level of management and implementation of strategic plan were strongly positively related and significant. Employee's perception based on their level of management accounted for 94.5% of the total variations in strategic plan implementation.

The main findings of the research showed that there exists a gap between the perception of top managers, middle managers and lower level employees on their roles and on aspects enabling their strategic plan implantation thus resulting in an implementation gap which can hinder the successful implementation of the institution strategy. The findings indicated a clash of ideas on the aspects of strategic plan implementation among the three levels, top, middle and lower level management. From the findings, it was noted that there was role ambiguity among the various cadres of management in the institutions. This role ambiguity causes middle managers and lower level employees to be confused in terms of what is required of them within the role. This confusion leads to top management blaming middle managers who in turn blames lower level employees for holding back the institution from attaining its objectives. Because of this vagueness about roles, problems often lead to uncertainty and confusion at the top management level (Dance, 2011) and thus lead to failure in strategic plan implementation.

Therefore, the result confirms that employees' perception based on their level of management is very fundamental for effective implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions.

5.2.2 Communication and Strategic Plan Implementation

The study sought to examine the effect of communication strategy on the implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. The findings indicated that there is a challenge in communication strategy in public TVET institutions. Most of the employees felt less motivated to implement the strategy due to lack of effective clear communication channels and procedures in the institutions. Research findings further demonstrated that top leadership does not evaluate strategy progress and give feedback on time to employees after evaluating strategy progress. The findings also revealed that the institutions were faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy and strategy implementation.

The findings revealed that, the majority agreed on the influence of communication strategy towards fostering implementation of strategic plans. The study further found out that communication within the institutions plays a key role in facilitating flow of information between various levels of management for efficient service delivery. It promotes knowledge dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation. Moreover, the results demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between employees' communication strategy and implementation of strategic plans. Therefore, the findings revealed that employees' communication strategy have weak positive and significant effects on strategic plans implementation in public TVET institutions.

5.2.3 Employees' Involvement and Strategic plan implementation

The study endeavored to assess the effect of employees' involvement practice on the strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions. The findings illustrated that majority of the respondents felt their involvement motivated them to put more effort into achieving strategic plan implementation targets set for their institution. The results further indicated that majority of lower level and middle level management in the institutions were not committed to strategic plan implementation. This implied that they did not own strategic plans in their institutions. They argued that their views were not valued by the institutions and that they did not have clear, common understanding of issues on strategic plan implementation.

The findings also indicated that the Pearson correlation coefficient of employees' involvement strategy and implementation of strategic plans was a weak positive correlation and had significant contribution towards influencing implementations of strategic plans in public TVET institutions.

5.2.4 Leadership Practice and Strategic Plan Implementation

The study sought to determine the influence of employees' perception of strategic leadership on the implementation of strategic plan in public TVET institutions. The result implied that the majority of respondents generally agreed on the influence of leadership practice on strategic plan implementation. The findings demonstrated that majority of the respondent were in agreement that top management's commitment to the strategic direction was the most important factor and that top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.

The study further established there was need for top leadership to seek views from employees for strategy implementation to be effective and provide support and guidance to all employees on strategy implementation. It is important for leaders to instill correct organization culture, involve implementers of strategic plan in decision making and manage conflict arising in order to realize fruitful implementation of strategic plan.

The findings further revealed that despite of the fact majority of the top management level employees have undergone training on strategic plan implementation they seemed not to be committed to strategic plan implementation as depicted by their weak level of employees' involvement on decision making, slow pace in communicating vision and direction and failure to instill correct organization culture in public TVET institutions.

Moreover, results illustrated that majority of the respondents felt that the leadership in public TVET institutions did not built an organization with competencies, capabilities, and resource strengths nor established effective strategy supportive policies and procedures.

The study also found out that there was a weak positive and significant correlation between leadership practice and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions. There was a positive contribution of leadership practice on influencing implementations of strategic plans.

The study revealed that, the variations in implementation of strategic plans were influenced individually and collectively by the independent variables in public TVET institutions.

Moreover, the findings showed that 95.1% of the variations in implementation of strategic plans were influenced jointly and individually by the independent variables (employees' perception, Communication practice, Employees' involvement practice and leadership practice).

Further, the joint effect model indicated that all predictors (Employees' perception, Communication practice, Employees' involvement practice and leadership practice) were statistically significant. However, their contributions towards influencing strategic plan implementation vary. The highest contribution was from employees' perception, followed by communication practice, then employees' involvement practice and the least contribution was from leadership practice. Moreover, the joint contributions were significant for all the independent variables except leadership practice whose contribution was negative despite having a weak positive correlation with strategic plan implementation.

5.3 Conclusions

From the study findings, it could be concluded that employees' level of management influence implementation of strategic plans and is contributed by timely decision making, involving, empowering employees in the process of implementing strategic plans. This variable has strong positive relationship with implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions. It is further concluded that, less efforts are made by the public TVET institutions to sensitize junior staff members on the process of formulation and implementation of the strategic plan, especially employees at lower levels.

Further from the research findings it can be concluded that there was uncertainty among the lower level management staff on whether the top management was

concerned with strategic plan implementation. The lower level management staff felt that the institution did not employ motivational leadership which is critical towards successful strategic plan implementation but on the other hand the top management demonstrated satisfaction on the implementation process. This diversity in opinion between the top management and lower management on strategic plan implementation process cast aspersion on whether employees in public TVET institutions really understands the whole idea of strategic management process or they are just implementing it because it is a ministerial requirement. People should be able to understand the strategic plan and relate to it in terms of their own activities. There is need therefore to ensure that all employees of cadres understand the strategy implementation process.

The result determined that, individually communication affect implementation of strategic plans and is contributed by aspects such as mode of communication between employees of different level of management, communication channels and views of employees on the communication process in the institution. This variable has weak positive relationship with implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions in Rift valley region, Kenya. The study also concluded that flow of communication within organizations influence the degree of effectiveness of strategic plans implementation. Strategy must be communicated to all employees in a timely fashion before implementation. Another important conclusion was that implementation of strategies in public TVET institutions was dependent on awareness and better understanding by the various employees having commonness of goal and direction at all stages of strategic plan. It became evident that staff members at low ranking positions have less exposure to the process, hence could not provide more information about the process. This, according to the respondents, will discourage

them from making positive contribution towards the attainment of the institution's goals. The top leadership should regularly evaluate strategy progress and give feedback on time for corrective action to be made. The study established that there was weak and significant level of the relationship between communication practice and strategic plan implementation. The implication communication is that communication has impact on the implementation of strategies as articulated by other scholars. It is therefore conclusive that communication is a factor that needs to be enhanced to ascertain its full impact or effect in implementation of strategic plans in Public TVET institutions in Kenya.

The findings indicated that individually, employees' involvement practice do influences implementation of strategic plans and is contributed by employees' level of motivation, varying interests, level of commitment and ownership, and the extent to which they are involved on strategy process. It is further concluded that, less efforts is made by the top management in public TVET institutions to sensitize and involve middle level and lower level staff on the process of the implementation of the strategic plan. Moreover, from the findings on the involvement of employees in strategic plan implementation process, the study concluded that middle level managers and lower level employees have less exposure to the process, hence could not provide more information about the process. This, according to the respondents, will discourage them from making positive contribution towards the attainment of the institutions targets and goals in the strategy process. It can also be deduced from the findings that the morale and attitudes of employees towards the strategic plan implementation process is attributed to the non-involvement of employees, especially lower level management staff. Hence, they could not take ownership of the strategic planning process in public TVET institutions. The study established that there was a

weak positive relationship between employees' involvement practice and the implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions. The fact that employees' involvement strategy showed weak relationship with strategic plan implementation calls for more attention by management to this aspect so that it does not negatively influence strategic plan implementation. Moreover, when it comes to the morale and attitudes of employees towards the strategic planning process, the non-involvement of staff members, especially junior staff members have led to some staff members not taking ownership of the strategic planning process. From this study, a conclusion is reached that, for any organization to succeed in the execution of its mandate, it needs to have a strategy that serves as a roadmap toward the realization of its objectives. This strategy must be effectively communicated and explained to all staff members in the organization.

The result indicated that individually leadership practice does influences implementation of strategic plans and is contributed by the level of support top leadership provide to lower level employees, employees' evaluation of leadership practices, and employees' perceptions of leadership commitment to strategy implementation process. Moreover, the findings demonstrated that the leadership in public TVET institutions did not neither built an organization with competencies, capabilities, and resource strengths nor established effective strategy supportive policies and procedures. Further it can be concluded that that adequate leadership is needed for effective implementation of strategy as this will ensure all organizational effort is united and directed towards achievement of organizational goals. The research findings also pointed out that top management or leaders of various institutions need to provide leadership, direction and create forums where employees from different levels of management can exchange views and ideas on matters

relating to strategy implementation. The study findings also revealed that there was a weak positive and significant correlation between strategic leadership strategy and strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions. The fact that strategic leadership showed weak relationship with strategic plan implementation calls for more attention to this aspect so that it does not negatively influence strategic plan implementation.

The findings further revealed that jointly the independent variables greatly influence strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions. The highest contribution was from employees' perception, followed by communication practice, then employees' involvement practice and the least contribution was from leadership practice. Moreover, the joint contributions were significant for all the independent variables but the contribution leadership strategy was negative despite showing a positive correlation with strategic plan implementation. It implied that their contribution towards strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions was at a decreasing rate.

5.4   Recommendations of the Study

The findings of this study derived the following recommendations as far as implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions is concerned:

Firstly, the diversity in opinion between the top management and lower management on strategic plan implementation calls for the need for institutions to ensure that all employees of various cadres understand the strategy implementation process. The best strategy is to involve all employees in the whole process of strategic plan implementation in order to ease employees understanding and participation.

Secondly, the fact that there was a weak positive correlation between the variables: communication practice, employees' involvement practice and leadership practice call for a closer attention to this aspect by the management in order to strengthen their relationships with the implementation of strategic plans.

Thirdly, the top leadership of the institutions should take care of the interest of all employees during formulations for successful implementation of strategies. Involving all key stakeholders during formulation and implementation of strategic plans will avoid unforeseen conflicts and sabotage from employees which can jeopardize the entire process of implementation.

Fourthly, the institutions need to establish effective monitoring and evaluations framework which will be able to track progress of planned activities against the actual implemented activities and hence identify any discrepancies which need immediate actions. This will help to respond to the challenges in a timely manner for successful implementation of the entire process. The action plan should be widely known to all employees rather than simply those in management or those responsible for its

implementation. This will help the stakeholders to be well informed about what has to be done and what they should do.

Fifthly, there is need to develop a legal framework and policies that will concretize the culture of strategic planning in public TVET institutions.

5.5 Contribution of the Study to Policy, Theory and Practice

This study has contributed to body of knowledge, theory and practice. The study adopted mixed method approach and utilize both questionnaires and interview schedule to collect data. However, as opposed to other studies where respondents who filled the questionnaire were not interviewed and vice versa: in this study top level management who filled the questionnaires were also interviewed in order to supplement information not exhaustively covered in the questionnaire. In this regard, the study utilize a technique refer to as sequential questionnaire – interview data collection technique.

The study also established that, communication practice, involvement practice and leadership practice have a weak positive correlation with implementation of strategic plans, in comparison with the other predictor, employees' perception based on their level of management which had a strong positive correlation. The results bring more attention to the management of public TVET institutions on how to deal with these three weak variables so that they cannot negatively influence implementation of strategic plans.

The diversity in opinion between the top management and lower management on strategic plan implementation calls for the management of the institutions to ensure

that all employees of various cadres understand the strategy implementation process and are properly trained on all matters relating to strategic plan.

This study has contributed in the area regarding effect of management practices on implementation of strategic plans in public TVET institutions. The study determined that the strength of the relationship of communication strategy, involvement strategy and leadership strategy in public TVET institutions was weak and positively correlated, unlike what was found by Abok (2013) where the strength of relationship between variables and implementation of strategic plans was strongly positively correlated in Kenya's NGOs. It is clear from the findings that the employees in public TVET institutions are driven by interest and benefits which mostly serve them.

The public sector especially public TVET institutions could use the study to benefit them by understanding management practices and their influence on strategic plan implementation. The study could assist TVET institutions and ministry of education in general to counter the challenges of ever-changing operative environment on strategy implementation.

Though the variables of communication strategy, involvement strategy and leadership strategy are weakly correlated with implementation of strategic plans, they still make a significant contribution and therefore, management should ensure they are managed well in order to strengthen their relationships with implementation of strategic plans.

The academicians and scholars could use the findings as a basis upon which further studies on management practices and strategic plan implementation could be researched. The findings contribute to professional extension of existing knowledge in

strategic plan implementation by providing literature on the same in organizations and institutions.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

The overall objective of this study was to examine the effect of management practices on the implementation of strategic plans in Public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region, Kenya. The study concentrated on public TVET institutions within rift valley region and not the entire TVET institutions in Kenya, hence other public TVET institutions outside rift valley region should also be studied to establish how management practices affect the implementation of the strategic plans.

The findings revealed that jointly the four independent variables contributed 95.1% of the variation in strategic plan implementation in public TVET institutions in rift valley region. It is therefore recommended that further studies on other aspects of management practices which were not included in this study which include monitoring and evaluation among others need to be considered.

It is further proposed that a study be done to establish the effect of management practices on strategic plan implementation in private TVET institutions in Kenya.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LECTURES, HEADS OF DEPARTMENT, REGISTRARS, DEANS OF STUDENTS AND PRINCIPALS QUESTIONNAIRES

This questionnaire focuses on the strategic plan implementation within the public TVET institutions in Rift Valley region. Please answer this questionnaire from your institutions point of view. Do not indicate your name on the questionnaire. I would like also to confirm that the results of this questionnaire are subject to data privacy and will be treated in the strictest confidence. They will be used exclusively for the research purpose of my doctoral degree thesis. All data and data reports will be presented only in a statistical format, hence an analysis of a particular institution is not possible.

Name: Kipkirui Joseph Rono

SECTION A: **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC INFORMATION**

1. Indicate your department: ---
2. Indicate your gender (by ticking appropriately)
    [ ] Male   [ ] Female

3. Please indicate your qualifications? (tick appropriately)
    [   ] Diploma in Education   [   ] BA/BSC with PGDE

    [   ] M.PHIL/ M.ED/MA/MSC   [   ] PHD

    [   ] Other (specify) _____
4. Indicate your teaching experience in technical training institution in years
    [   ] 1-5   [   ] 6-10

    [   ] 11-15   [   ] 16 and above

5. How old is your institution (years)
    [   ] 0-20   [   ] 21-40   [   ] 41 and above

6. Please indicate your level of management in your institution

    lower level   (   )   Middle level   (   )   Top level (   )

SECTION B

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Is the pace of strategic plan implementation in your institution satisfactory?

Use the following key: **Yes**- Satisfactory pace of strategic plan implementation.

Not sure- Insignificant level of strategic plan implementation

No- unsatisfactory pace of strategic plan implementation

No [   ]   Not sure [   ]   Yes [   ]

8. Is the strategic plan implementation in your institution successfully implemented?

No [   ]   Not sure [   ]   Yes [   ]

SECTION C

EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION AND STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

9. Have you undertaken training on strategic planning and strategic plan implementation?

No [   ]   Not sure [   ]   Yes [   ]

10. Is there a steering committee that monitors the implementation of the strategic plan?

No [   ]   Not sure [   ]   Yes [   ]

11. Is the strategic plan implementation relevant to your institution's overall performance?

No [   ]   Not sure [   ]   Yes [   ]

12. Rate your support of the institution strategy implementation? Use the key below:

Key: No [   ]   Not sure [   ]   Yes [   ]

Level of support of strategy implementation	1	2	3
Iam personally excited about implementing our strategy			
I recognize the difficulties we will face if we fail to implement this strategy			
It is in my personal interest to help implement our strategy			
Iam personally convinced that this strategy is the right one for our institution			

SECTION C

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

13. How does communication between senior management and the academic staff occur during strategic plan implementation in your institution?

(a) Top –down (through directives and memos from top management   [   ]
(b) Bottom – up (participation through representatives)   [   ]

(c) Both Top- down and bottom-up [mix of (a) and (b)   [   ]

(d) Any other (please specify) --

14. Please indicate the communication channel used regarding strategic plan implementation in your institution by ticking appropriately.

Electronic communication ( )   Staff meeting ( ) Written Communication ( )

Direct consultation ( )

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements that relate to communication process in strategy implementation in your institution? Use the key below

1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Undecided   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

Influence of Communication on strategy implementation	1	2	3	4	5
I am motivated due to effective communication by top management					
There is adequate communication in place on institution process and procedures to all staff					
Communication in my institution is frequently delayed until changes have already crystallized					
The institution is faced with the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy					
Lack of communications causes more harm as the employees are not told about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees					
It is essential both during and after change to communicate information about institutional developments to all employees in a timely fashion					
An integrated communications plan must be developed at the institution to enhance strategy implementation					
Executive leadership evaluate strategy progress and give feedback on time					

SECTION D: EMPLOYEES INVOLVEMENT AND STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

16. In your opinion, do you feel your involvement motivates you to put more effort into achieving strategic plan implementation targets set for your institution?

1. No [ ]   2. Not sure [   ]   3. Yes   [ ]

17. Rate the level of commitment and ownership of the strategic plan implementation by the following staff in your institution.

Key: 1. No commitment   2. Very committed

Level of commitment and ownership of the strategic plan implementation	1	2
Principal		
Registrar		
Dean		
Heads of Department		
Lecturers		

18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements that relate to the extent of employee involvement in strategy implementation in your institution? Use the key below

1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

Extent of employee involvement	1	2	3	4	5
Involvement is essential to ensure that people across the organization know what to do and to ensure that they stay focused on the key targets under the everyday pressures					
I am involved in all activities relating to strategic plan implementation in the institution					
I am involved in decision making that influence organization practices, policies and directions					
The institution values my contributions on matters relating to strategic plan implementation					
I have clear, common understanding of issues on strategic plan implementation					

SECTION E: **LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

19. Please indicate the level of support you receive from management in respect to the implementation of the strategic plan in your institution based on the five- point likert scale: 1.Not at all   2. To a slight extent 3. To reasonable extent 4 To high extent 5. To a very high extent

level of Support from Top Management	1	2	3	4	5
a) Develop budget to steer resources into those activities that are critical to success of strategy implementation					
b) Provides good leadership and direction skills					
f) Provides motivation and inspiration for all that is involved					
c)Provides Appropriate structure to incorporate change					
d)Provides adequate feedback					
e) Provides a compelling vision					
g) Responds effectively to resistance to change					
h) Sustain an effective organizational cultures					

20. Please give an evaluation of top management leadership practices regarding strategic plan implementation in your institution.

 1. Very weak 2. Weak 3. Fair 4. Strong 5. Very strong

Evaluation of Management leadership practices	1	2	3	4	5
Top management leadership built an organization with competencies, capabilities, and resource strengths to carry out the strategy successfully					
Top management leadership establishes effective strategy supportive policies and procedures					
Top management leadership Communicate vision and direction					
Top management leadership Instill the correct organization culture					
Top management leadership has common understanding to issues on strategic plan					
Top management leadership Involves implementers of strategic plan in decision making					
Top management leadership manage conflict arising from strategic plan implementation					

21. What is your level of agreement with the following statements that relate to the effect of commitment of the institutional leadership on strategy implementation? Use the key below

1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

Effect of level of commitment of institution leadership on the strategic implementation	1	2	3	4	5
The top management's commitment to the strategic direction itself is the most important factor.					
The top managers must demonstrate their willingness to give energy and loyalty to the implementation process for it to succeed.					
The managers must not spare any effort to persuade the employees of their ideas for strategy implementation to be effective.					
Lack of top management backing is the main inhibiting factors					
Lack of manager's commitment to performing their roles leads to the lower ranks of employees missing support and guidance on strategy implementation					

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPAL, REGISTRAR AND DEAN OF STUDENTS

1. From your experience and knowledge, do you think strategic planning assist you and your staff in making decision pertaining to your institution?----------------

 Briefly highlight the kind of decisions you believe the planning has assisted you?

----

2. How do you undertake communication between you and the academic staff on matters relating to strategic plan implementation? Is it through directives and memos (Top-down process)? , or you engage them through representatives (Bottom- up process),or a mixed up of top-down and bottom- up?

----
3. In your opinion, do you think strategic plan implementation has improve the motivation and job satisfaction among the academic staff in your institution? If so how? and if not, what could be the reason?
----
4. Basing on your experience and point of view, how has strategic plan implementation affected the following areas?
a) Dealing with funding agencies

b) Allocating and utilization of teaching and learning resources
c) Anticipating improvement or changes in the curriculum
d) Planning for the changes in the enrollment of students and teaching staff turnover
e) Improving the quality of teaching and learning
f) Internal efficiency (issues of drop out, repetion, pass rates , enrollment.
(Researcher to request for copies of the relevant documents).

5.(a) In your opinion do you think the level of employees involvement affect strategic plan implementation in your institution? Yes ( )   No ( )

   (b) if yes in (a) above, how has it affected strategic plan implementation in your institution? Explain ---
----

6.(a) In your opinion do you think communication strategy affect strategic plan implementation? Yes ( ) No ( )

   (b) If yes in (a) above, how has it affected strategic plan implementation in your institution? Explain.---
----

---

7.(a) In your opinion do you think top management leadership affect strategic plan implementation in your institution? Yes ( )   No ( )

(b) if yes in (a) above, how has it affected strategic plan implementation in your institution? Explain ---
----

----

8. Do you experience any challenge when implementing strategic plan in your institution? --
----

If yes, which challenges do you experience and how do you overcome them?

APPENDIX III: UNIVERSITY RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
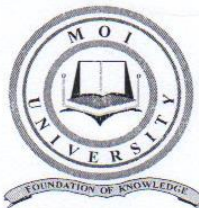
MOI UNIVERSITY
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P.O. Box 3900
Eldoret, Kenya

REF: EDU/D.PHIL.A/06/09   **DATE:** 1st April, 2019

The Executive Secretary
National Council for Science and Technology
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: **RESEARCH PERMIT IN RESPECT OF KIPKIRUI JOSEPH RONO – (EDU/DPHIL.A/06/09)**

The above named is a 2nd year Postgraduate Higher Degree (PhD) student at Moi University, School of Education, Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies.

It is a requirement of his PhD Studies that he conducts research and produces a dissertation. His research is entitled:

"Influence of Employees Perception of Management Practices on Strategic Plan Implementation in Public Technical Training Institutions in Kenya."

Any assistance given to enable him conduct research successfully will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

1/4/2019

PROF. J. K. CHANG'ACH
DEAN, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

APPENDIX IV: NACOSTI RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone:+254-20-2213471,
2241349,3310571,2219420
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Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website : www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/19/42910/29463**

Date: **25th April, 2019**

Kipkirui Joseph Rono
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of employees perception of management practices on strategic plan implementation in Public Technical Training Institutions in Kenya"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **selected Counties** for the period ending **23rd April, 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioners and the County Directors of Education of the selected Counties** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioners
Selected Counties.

The County Directors of Education
Selected Counties.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO9001:2008 Certified

APPENDIX V: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.
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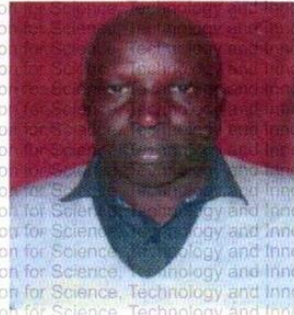Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH LICENSE

Serial No.A 24302

CONDITIONS: see back page

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. KIPKIRUI JOSEPH RONO
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 22-20400
BOMET, has been permitted to conduct research in *Kajiado , Nakuru , Nandi , Transnzoia , Uasin-Gishu Counties*

on the topic: *INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN PUBLIC TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA*

for the period ending:
23rd April,2020

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/19/42910/29463
Date Of Issue : 25th April,2019
Fee Recieved :Ksh 2000

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Applicant's Signature

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Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation