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Analysis of the Influence of Strategic Leadership Capability on Performance of Research Institutions In Kenya

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Abstract: ***The purpose of the study was to analyse the influence of strategic leadership capability on performance of research institutions in Kenya. Every organization has unique corporate culture that determined its core values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and acceptable standards that demonstrate how things are done. In research methodology, stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample of population. Both closed and opened-ended questions were used to obtain data from respondents. In analysing the data, quantitative research design was used. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also used to analyse respondent characteristics and response rates. The findings of the research study indicated that there was a positive relationship between strategic leadership capability and performance of research institutions in Kenya. The importance of the study was to benefit the research institutions to have alternatives in decision making that would improve organization performance. In conclusion, research institutions need to have strategic leadership capability that emphasis integrity and transparency in distribution of available resources in an organization. The leadership capability need to have a clear strategic plans for the success and its implementations plan within required time frame. For successful change, it requires visionary leaders in respective organizations to achieve the set objectives.***

Keywords: Strategic leadership capability, performance, research institutions, corporate culture, organizations.

1. Introduction

The role of leadership is a key element in an organization as it influences thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of others. It visualizes what is to be achieved within required time frame (Quinn, 2005). Organizations invested in leadership for increased performers (Neal *et al*., 1999).Strategic leadership capability ensures that organizations have corporate culture that values collaboration and trust as a foundation for improved performance. Senior managers shared the same goal for instance improving performance at all levels of the organization (Karen *et al.,* 2008). It also emphasizes adoption, experience and insight to ensure that there is improved business performance and customers, and employees satisfactions (Kaplan, 2006, Kaplan and Reed, 2007). Strategic Leadership capability does not mean just having leaders at the top but it is about creating leaders throughout the organization particularly at the front line where people and core processes create value for customers (Hubbard *et al.,* 2007). On the other hand, corporate culture understand the economic, political and social as the environmental forces. Leaders learn the perspectives, tastes of customers, trend and technologies of many other cultures, work simultaneous within people from many cultures, to adopt to living and communicate to other cultures (Ader and Bartholomen, 1992). Leaders learn to relate to people from other culture from a position of equality rather than cultural superiority. Strategic leadership need to be skilled in creating trans-cultural visions (Ting-Tooney, 1999). It gives room to speak the language of strategy as well as the language of operations. Leaders need to develop, receive and interpret strategic plans and cascade them in a clear and understandable way for all employees within the organization. They are required to know when and how to manage resources and provide appropriate feedback. It also develop employees to know what is required from them by providing feedback on their performance and reward based on their results (Graeme, 2010). In Kenya context, the strategic leadership capability emphasis on the new constitution promulgated on 27th August, 2010 for instance in appointment to senior positions in the government requires one to have personal integrity, competence and suitability.

Performance needs to be measured by using agreed set objectives. Performance measurement should provide evidence of whether or not the intended result has been achieved and extend to which the job holder has produced the desired results (Armstrong, 2003). This will be the basis for generating feedback information for use not only by managers but also by individuals to monitor their performance. He further indicated that a balance scorecard is an instrument used to measure the outcome of the organization. Balance scorecard enables to get better results for both financial and operational measures, which gives managers a fast but comprehensive view of the business (Kaplan and Norton, 1992). They also recommend used of performance appraisal as a tool to rate individual performance in the organization.

1.1 Research Institutions in Kenya

Kenya is the leading country in East and Central Africa region in terms of research institutions with a growing demand for more industrial and academic outputs justifying

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the large numbers. Blueprint for economic, political and social development has put strategic leadership capability as the leading factor to realize the set goals in the three pillars (Kenya Vision 2030, 2007).In Kenya, research institutions which are under Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), KEFRI, KEMFRI, KEMRI, KIDRI and ILRI are mandated to develop business strategies beneficial to end users. The research institutions under KALRO have semi-autonomous institutions for instance Horticulture, Industrial Crops and Livestock Research Institutions respectively.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Government of Kenya (GOK) reports (2007) indicates that research institutions signed performance contracts annually to measure their research performance. The government has continuously improved its budgetary allocation towards research. Performance management is a strategic and integrated approach to delivering sustained success to the organizations by improving its performance (Armstrong and Baron, 1998). Performance is something that the person leaves behind and that exists apart from the purpose (Kane, 1996). Performance as the outcome of work because they provide the strongest linkage to the strategic goals of the organizations, customers' satisfaction and economic contributions (Bernadin*et al*., 1995). The rating evaluated by relevant Ministry for research institutions actually determined their corporate culture. Leadership affects the corporate culture rather than the management (Burman and Evans, 2008). They further suggested that corporate culture is something that is very hard to change and employees need time to get used to the new way of organizing. People are identified with visionary leaders (Schein, 1990). The fact that the government has increased budgetary allocation towards research and yet the research institutions do not achieve their desired results. The Chief Executive Officers of those State Corporations are normally appointed for two terms of three each years hence lacks that continuity in mentoring, coaching or inspiring others in service delivery. The strategic leadership capability in research institutions in Kenya have failed to give desired results in their performance. The study, therefore, sought to analyse the influence of strategic leadership capability on performance of research institutions in Kenya.

1.3 General objective

The general objective of the study was to analyse the influence of strategic leadership capability on performance of research institutions in Kenya.

1.4 Hypothesis

The study was be guided by the following hypothesis;
H_o: There was no relationship between strategic leadership capability and performance of research institutions in Kenya.

2. Research Methodology

This sets out various stages, methods and procedures that was followed in executing the study. It aimed at providing a background and justification to the study design and methodology. Social scientists have the fundamental belief that the material world of tangible objects does not exist unperceived (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2008). The research study collected data from both quantitative variables in an attempt to interpret, understand and explain social life. They place high priority in identifying casual linkages between and amongst variables.

2.1 Research Design

Research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari, 2008). The study adopted quantitative research design. Research design identifies problems or justifies current conditions and practices (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). Research design helps to collect and analysis the data from the respondents (Kothari, 2008). The target population involved in the study were adequate since it covers more than one research institutions in Kenya.

2.2 Population

Population is defined as a larger collection of all subjects from where a sample is drawn (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). Population may also be referred to as a group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics. Population is the total collection of elements about which one wants to make inferences (Kothari, 2008).

Table 1: Population for research institutions in Kenya

NO	Name	Total population	30%Target population
1	KALRO	3439	1031
2	KEFRI	351	105
3	KEMRI	309	93
4	KEMFRI	269	81
5	KIDRI	301	90
6	ILRI	195	59
	Total	**4864**	**1459**

Source: 2015 HRM department of research institutions in Kenya

2.3 Sampling Frame

A sample frame as all items in any field of inquiry that constitute a "Universe" or "Population" (Kothari, 2008). The sampling frame of the study was selected from cadres of the target population which adds up to 1,459. The research institutions have branches in some parts of the country. The target population were the scientists, technical and administrators for research institutions in Kenya. At least 30% target of the population would be considered generally acceptable to achieve the desired results (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). This also allows for reliable levels of accuracy for testing significance of differences between estimates.

2.4 Sampling Techniques

The study adopted stratified sampling technique due to heterogeneity of the population. The study grouped the population into various strata according to the categories of

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various staff. The justification of the three groups chosen was that they are common categories of staff such as scientists, technical and administrative staff which the study sampled. The sample size of the population were derived from the following formula;

$$n = \frac{n}{1 + n(e)^2}$$

Where;
n= The desired sample size
1 = Constant
e = limit sampling error
Assuming a sample error is 0.05, this can be computed as show below;

$$n = \frac{1,459}{1 + 1,459\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{1,459}{4.64}$$

= 313

The sampling size were distributed in the research institutions based on the sample population. Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) observed that sample size of the population can be drawn from the study where it requires the sample to be broken into sub- groups. The following formula was used to get desired results from various research institutions in Kenya;

$$\frac{Xi \times n}{\sum i}$$

Where;
Xi = sample size of each research institution
n= Sample size
∑i = Target population of the research institutions

Example: $\frac{1031}{1459}$x 313 = **221 (**Sample population per institute**)**

Table 2: Distribution of sample size

Name of institution	Target population	Sample population
KALRO	1031	221
KEFRI	105	23
KEMRI	93	20
KEMFRI	81	17
KIDRI	90	19
ILRI	59	13
TOTAL	**1,459**	**313**

Table 3: List of Sample Population

Item	Scientists	Technical	Administrators	Sub-Total
KALRO	123	69	29	221
KEFRI	12	7	4	23
KEMRI	11	5	4	20
KEMFRI	6	7	5	18
KIDRI	9	7	3	19
ILRI	5	4	3	12
Total	**166**	**99**	**48**	**313**

Source 2015: HR departments of research institutions in Kenya

2.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments are the choices of a tool and instrument that depends mainly on the attributes of the subject, research topic, data and expected results. Primary data were collected through use of questionnaires while secondary data included published reports such as libraries, journals, internet, strategic plans and annual reports.

2.6 Data Collection procedure

The study formulated a procedure of selecting the subjects or cases to be included in the sample. Subjects or cases selected from the sampling frame form the units of observation in the study. The study distributed questionnaires using stratified random sampling to the target population. It involves getting consent from the participants and their express willingness to provide required information (Dawson, 2002). .

2.7 Data Analysis

This involved interpretation of data collected from the respondents. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse quantitative data. A linear regression analysis was used to describe the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable using the following model; $Y = b_0 + b_1 x_1 + e$
Where;
Y= Performance
b0 = Constant variable
x1 = Strategic leadership
capability variable e = error

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyse respondents' characteristics, response rate and category of employees. Analysis of variance is useful because it makes use of the test in terms of sum of squares effected over sums of squares residual (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). F-test was used to test the significance of independent variables with dependent variable at 5% level of significance.

2.8 Data Presentation

Data can be presented using statistical techniques, graphical techniques or a combination of both in order to come up with comprehensive conclusions (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). Quantitative data was, therefore, presented in the form of tables. The main objective of statistics was to simplify the complexity of the quantitative data and to make them easily intelligible.

2.9 Pre-testing of the instrument

A total of fourteen questionnaires were randomly distributed to the sample population. The Cronbach's alpha results need to range from 0.7 and above correlative for each content to be acceptable. Pre-testing of the instrument was accepted since it was above 0.7.

Table 3: Pre-testing of instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
0.967	67

3. Discussions

It presented the results to achieve the objective of the study. The study sought to establish the influence of strategic leadership capability on performance of research institutions

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in Kenya. This involved the interpretation and presentation of findings obtained from the research study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to present and interpret the findings of the study.

Table 4: Category of Employees

Employee Category	*Response rate*	*Percentage (%)*
Scientists	78	35.0
Technical	72	32.3
Administrators	73	32.7
Total	**223**	**100**

The above information showed that the scientists were the highest number of 78 representing 35.0%. This was closely followed by the administrators at 73 representing 32.7% while the technical staff were 72 representing 32.3%.

3.1 Results of pilot testing of strategic leadership capability and performance

A pilot study of the sample population was conducted in order to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instrument. For the purpose of this research study, Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of measures in the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha results need to range from 0.7 and above correlative for each content to be acceptable. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement and that the closer is the coefficient to 1, the greater the consistency of the items in a scale
(Gliem and Gliem, 2003). The results of the pilot study was as shown below;

Table 5: Reliability Coefficient of strategic leadership capabilityand performance

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Strategic leadership capability	0.834	13
Performance	0.912	12

3.2 Factor analysis of strategic leadership capability

Factor analysis attempts to identify underlying variables, or factors**,** that explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables. Factor analysis is often used in data reduction to identify a small number of factors that explain most of the variance that is observed in a much larger number of manifest variables. Factor analysis can also be used to generate hypotheses regarding causal mechanisms or to screen variables for subsequent analysis (for example, to identify collinearity prior to performing a linear regression analysis.Strategic leadership capability as an independent variable has a total of thirteen (13) items. Items in the variable were confirmed valid except those factor loading value more than 0.4. The same information is presentedin Table 6 below;

Table 6: Component Matrix for Strategic Leadership capability

ITEMS	Extraction
There is clear leadership in the organization	0.698
There is good succession plans in the organization	0.547
The induction programs are provided to new staff in the organization	0.637
There is proper utilization of the resources in all areas.	0.41
New innovation and creativity are made aware to all staff.	0.493
The employees appreciate the leadership adopted in the organization.	0.494
The organization is the best in performance management.	0.564
The policies and procedures formulated in the organization are fully implemented.	0.45
The organization demonstrates its values, beliefs, altitudes as a practice.	0.563
There is clear feedback for issues facing organization	0.549

3.3 Strategic Leadership capability and performance Pearson correlation computation

Based on the results above, the correlation coefficient (P) between strategic leadership capability and performance was found to be 0.577 at (P=0.000). These results indicated that there was a highly significant linear correlation between the two variables (Strategic leadership capability and performance). This implies that the relationship between the two variables was very close. There is nature of the relationship between leadership and organizational performance (Lory, 2003). The results of the findings indicated that leadership style of immediate supervisors was significantly related to organizational performance. The current models of organizational performance and change suggests that leadership and performance are central explanatory constructs (Schein, 1992). For competitive edge, it requires development of more flexible, high involvement work cultures and creation of a new kind of leadership that can provide continuity in the midst of ongoing innovation and adaptation that enhance performance (Vanderbeg*et al*, 1999).

Table 7: Strategic Leadership capability and performance correlations

		Leadership Culture	*Performance*
Strategic Leadership Capability Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.577**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	223	223
	Pearson Correlation	.577**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	223	223

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

3.4 Results of the regression analysis on strategic Leadership Capability

The model equation $y = B_2 x_2 + \varepsilon$ explained 48.1 % as measured by the goodness of fit as shown in Table 8. This showed that strategic leadership Capability explained 48.1 % of the variation in performance. This indicate a moderate relationship since it is above the recommended 30% (Sekaran, 2003). There exist a relationship between

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strategic leadership capability and organizational performance (Athena and Maria, 2006). The findings indicated that achievement and adaptive orientation has effect on performance. Other researchers also noted that strategic leadership capability have a positive relationship on organizational performance (Cooke and Sazumal, 2000). This is relevant to research institutions in Kenya where those in management level are required to have good leadership styles to enhance performance of the enterprises.

Table 8: Model summary of regression analysis between Strategic Leadership Capability and Performance

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.695[a]	.483	.481	2.6799330

The ANOVA results indicated that the model of performance with strategic leadership capability at F-value 206.741, p=0.000 explained the variance on performance of research institutions in Kenya. The results of ANOVA was presented in the Table 9 below;

Table 9: ANOAVA results for Strategic leadership Capability and performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1476.906	1	1497.544		.000[b]
Residual	1580.049	221	7.244		
Total	3056.955	222			

According to the results of the regression, strategic leadership capability was found to have a positive influence on research institutions' performance. This is illustrated by the regression results at 95% confidence interval with unstandardized beta coefficient of 9.344 and t-value of 7.295 with a P-Value of 0.000.

Table 10: Coefficient for regression between Strategic Leadership Capability and Performance

Model	*Unstandardized Coefficients*		*Standardized Coefficients*	*t*	*Sig.*
	B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
(Constant)	9.344	1.281		7.295	.000
Strategic leadership capability	2.081	.145	.695	14.378	.000

In supporting the findings of the study, previous studies conducted illustrated that strategic leadership capability is associated with the presence of collective values in work groups and a heightened sense of community (Pillai and Meindi, 1998). There is a reciprocal causation between strategic leadership capability and organizational performance (Waldman and Yammarino, 1999).

Hypothesis

The study accepted the alternative hypothesis that there was a positive relationship between strategic leadership capability and performance.

Table 11: Comparison between strategic Leadership Capability and Performance

	B	*t*	*t- critical*
Constant	9.344	7.295	
Leadership culture	2.081	14.378	1.96

Since the calculated t=14.378 is greater than critical t $(_{123-1})$ $(_{0.05})$ as shown above, the study rejected the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between strategic leadership capability and performance in research institutions in Kenya. Therefore, the study accepted the alternative hypothesis that there was apostive relationship between strategic leadership capability and performance of research institutions in Kenya.

Factor analysis for Performance

Performance as a dependent variable has a total of twelve (12) items. All the items in the variable were confirmed valid since factor loading values were more than 0.4. They were, therefore, retained for subsequent analysis.

Table 12: Component Matrix of performance

Statements	*Extraction*
The organization practice performance contracting.	.718
The employees realized the set targets.	.514
The organization output is high.	.638
There is mechanism to measure the organization performance	.530
There is team work in the organization.	.525
The organization sets targets that are achievable.	.601
There is high performance after training.	.502
There is good relation between the employee and the employer.	.566
Participation process helps to achieve high performance.	.625
Employees are communicated their results output.	.428
There is retention of staff.	.664
There is high profitability or surplus in the organization.	.769

3.5 Normality of Performance in research institutions in Kenya

Following the descriptive analysis, normality of the dependent variable was conducted. For inferential analysis to be done such as correlation, regression or related linear techniques, the dependent variable should have a normal distribution. In case the dependent variable is not normally distributed, then normality has to be sought for before proceeding with any further analysis (Alan *et al*. 2003). Thus, performance was subjected to normality test to check if the data was normally distributed or not. The testing of normality of performance in this study was conducted using one-sample Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The test was done such that given H_0 and H_1, with α=0.05, the rule of thumb according to (David*et al*, 2012: Rencher, 2002) is that reject H_0 if p-value is less than α or else fail to reject H_0: where;

H_0: The data is not normal

H_1: The data is normal

Table 13: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Performance
N		223
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	27.578475
	Std. Deviation	3.7358602
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.125
	Positive	0.095
	Negative	-0.125
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.86
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.002

a. Test distribution is Normal.

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b. Calculated from data.

The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test procedure compares the observed cumulative distribution function for a variable with a specified theoretical distribution, which may be normal, uniform, Poisson, or exponential. Many parametric tests require normally distributed variables. The one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test can be used to test that a variable is normally distributed. In this case non-significant of the variable shows its normality.

4. Findings

The findings of the study indicated that despite the fact that there was clear leadership in the organization, it requires more improvement to sustain the business in competitive environment. It also indicated that there was no good succession plans in research institutions and this requires the top management to take initiative to avoid skill inventory gaps in future. Strategic leadership capability influence the direction of the organization for instance succession planning (Lory, 2003). Leaders are required to mentor, inspire and coach others of the enterprise. Other investigations revealed that there is a growing interest to recognize leadership not simply a rational or technical activity, but that involves the management of people and the development of a sense of community within the organization (Brown, 1992). The study also found that the resources were not been properly utilized in all areas of research institutions. It also indicated that there was no clear feedback for issues facing organization. On Pearson correlations, it showed that there was positive relationship between strategic leadership capability and performance while on the model summary, it showed that relationship between leadership and performance culture was at 48.1%. In hypothesis testing, it was revealed that there was no relationship between leadership and performance culture in research institutions in Kenya while alternative testing was accepted. One study was done on the effects on the management of women groups in micro and small enterprises in Kakamega District, Kenya (Nelson and Fredrick, 2009). The study found out that the strategic leadership capability is a prerequisite to the success of the enterprise. The findings indicated that 54% of the respondents were of opinion that leaders of such groups have no professional trainings, 38 % and 7% had limited project management and technical knowledge respectively. With introduction of performance contracting in the Kenya Government Agencies, the research institutions for profit and non- profit firms are now forced to perform their mandate within its required timeframe (Ahmed, 2012).

5. Conclusion

The study aimed at establishing the influence of strategic leadership capability on performance of research institutions in Kenya. Strategic Leadership capability is the basic organization practices that help to achieve its mission, vision, values and goals. Effectiveness and efficiency of these practices eventually influence performance of organizations. Although the correlation coefficient between the independent variables and dependent variable (performance) was found to be positive significant, the regression analysis summary for the variable indicated that strategic leadership capability have influence on performance of research institutions in Kenya. This requires research institutions to have strategic leadership capability that emphasis integrity and transparency in distribution of scare resources. Therefore, research institutions need to maintain strategic leadership to embrace emerging technologies in the field of research and development. Research institutions should have clear strategic plans that are achievable within required time frame. From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that strategic leadership need to prioritize activities and maintained competency level in respective organizations in Kenya.

6. Recommendations

The research institutions needs to maintain good strategic leadership capability in order to achieve their mandate. The current trends in strategic leadership capability requires that they adapt open door policy in the organization where the employees will access employer when need arises. They should be the change agent by ensuring that they involve all stakeholders of the organization. This will avoid any kind of resistance in implementation stage. In labour turnover, scientist employees are usually poached by competitors in the same industry.The research institutions should ensure that they have leaders who can coach, mentor, inspire and lead others in the most professional way and abide to the current labour laws to avoid disharmony among the employees. The strategic leadership capability ensures that the research institutions remain competitive in the business environment. Those in management level should enforced performance contracting to all the employees to ensure each individual employee has an output in the enterprise.

7. Further Research

There is need for future researchers to consider undertaking the same study by looking at strategic leadership capability in other areas of the organizations including the private firms, non-government organizations (NGOs) and determined the type of leadership styles that best suit the enterprises in a competitive environment.

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