

The Influence of Organizational Resources on Successful Strategy Implementation in Religious Institutions: A Case of All Saints' Cathedral Church Nairobi

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Abstract

Despite all the efforts that All Saints Cathedral Church puts in the strategic planning process, implementation of the strategy has remained a challenge. The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of organization's resources on successful strategy implementation in religious institutions focussing on All Saints Cathedral Church Nairobi. The study employed correlational research design and targeted 100 employees of All Saints Cathedral Church as well as Parish Church Council members who were purposively selected. A sample size of 50 was selected using stratified random sampling method. Primary data was gathered using structured questionnaires containing open and close-ended questions. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The study revealed that organization's resources have a positive and a statistically significant influence on strategy implementation in religious institutions ($r^2 = .175$, $\beta = .406$, $p = .001$). The study also established that successful strategy implementation mostly depends on human resource and less on organization and systems related factors. The study concluded that organizations that allocate adequate human, physical, financial, and technological resources towards the strategy implementation process are more likely to succeed in realizing their strategic goals. The findings show that religious institutions should invest in human resources particularly in their continuous training and development. Additionally, employees should be incorporated in activities related to strategy implementation to encourage commitment and accountability. Religious institutions should also maintain proper budgets for strategy implementation. The findings of the study are useful to the management of the Cathedral as they can help them enhance the success of their Strategic Plan implementation. Other religious institutions and policy makers stand to benefit from the information gathered. The information has also contributed to the existing literature in the field of strategic management in religious sector.

Keywords: Strategy, Strategic Plan, Strategy Implementation, Strategic Goals, All Saints Cathedral Church Nairobi

Introduction

Strategic Plan is a set of choices and exercises which bring about the definition and execution of plans proposed to achieve the goals of an organization (Pearce & Robinson, 2011). It is an administration instrument utilized to change the goals of an organization into actionable tasks. It aims to provide guidance and course to an organization (David, 2014). On the other hand, strategic plan implementation involves effecting the strategies that have been selected and its appropriate execution results successful accomplishment of goals (Egelhoff, 2011). Wheelan and Hunger (2011) observed that the strategy execution is the sum total of activities and options needed so that the strategic plan can be realized.

All firms around the world are facing diverse and unique challenges in the implementation of their strategies. Hrebiniak (2013) points out that most managers know how to formulate strategic plans but do not know how to execute strategies. Both private and public sectors all over the world grapple with vital questions on how best they could accomplish their core mission, react to environmental and political changes, and provide service delivery to their clientele despite an uncertain social and business environment. Empirical literature globally reveals that that 50 percent and 80 percent of strategic plans that are not implemented successfully (Kulchitsky et al., 2010). Likewise, Carter and Pucko (2010) recorded that only 14% of the organizations implemented their strategies properly even though 80% of organizations' strategies are appropriately formulated. Deprived of effective strategy implementation, most organizations are more likely to fail in meeting their main objectives.

Traditionally, strategic management was viewed as a domain for commercial organizations. However, religious institutions have discovered the benefits of crafting strategies as well as strategically plan for the future (Meyer, 2013). All Saints' Cathedral Church (ASC) is one of the religious institutions that engage in strategic planning. ASC is the Provincial Cathedral of the Anglican Church of Kenya. It is situated on the outskirts of Uhuru Park and has been around for over a hundred years growing into a large church with an estimated 10,000 members (All Saints Cathedral, 2021). ASC has employed almost 100 people in the church section, Primary School section and Kindergarten section. The cathedral is currently under its third strategic plan (2017-2021) with the first one having been developed in 2007-2011 and second covering the 2012-2016 period. Being a church whose revenue entirely depends on the congregants, the strategic plan execution still poses challenges.

Despite all the efforts that All Saints Cathedral Church puts in the strategic process, implementation of the strategy has remained a challenge. This is indicated by the failure of the church to achieve some of the strategic objectives spelled out in its 2012-2016 strategic plan. For example, the strategic goal and objective of establishing a modern mass communication centre with the aim of setting up a TV/Radio station were not realized (All Siant's Cathedral, 2018). Being a national Cathedral, failure to implement Strategic Plans in their totality could impact on the negative the church's efficiency.

In comparison to developed countries, Aldehayyat and Khattab (2013) suggest that little is known about strategy implementation challenges in developing countries. Bossidy et al. (2011) assert that other disciplines have no shortage of accumulated knowledge and literature, unlike strategy execution. Few studies such as Awino (2011) and Ochanda (2014) that have researched

on the difficulties of strategy execution have centred on state corporations, public entities and commercial organizations. Kakui (2010) completed an investigation on essential arranging rehearses at Christ is the Answer Ministries which is situated in Nairobi. In the end, Kakui suggested that further investigations be done on the importance of key anticipating churches just as on difficulties of technique execution. However, no specific study has been done on the factors affecting system execution in religious institutions zeroing in on All Saints' Cathedral Church, Nairobi. It is consequently that this study explored factors that impact the execution of strategy in religious institutions zeroing in on All Saints' Cathedral Church, Nairobi. The following hypothesis was tested:

H₀: Organization's resources have no statistically significant effect on the implementation of the strategies at All Saints Cathedral Church Nairobi.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The study was guided by resource-based view (RBV) theory. Proponents of the RBV Theory are Wernerfelt (1984s) and Prahalad and Hamel (1990s) who created it to be a commendation to the vision of the modern association. According to Peteraf and Barney (2013), the RBV is an instrument used to choose the assets available to firms in view of the rule that the benefit of a competitive organization lies in its inner resources instead of its situation in the outside environment.

The resources include physical assets as well as intangible effects (Pfeffer & Harvey, 2011). Physical assets are concrete, portable, and simple to recognize and self-distinguish including financial and physical resources distinguished and esteemed in an organization's financial reports, like capital, industry, machinery, equipment and land. Intangible assets are hard to measure and transfer. It includes skills, knowledge, relationships, inspiration, culture, innovation and abilities. As per Lev (2011), tangible resources are invested intangible assets (for example material knowledge) and in business (e.g., the researcher additionally clarifies that not all are similarly important or can possibly be a source of continuous competitive profit). This theory is comprised of ascribes abbreviated as VRIN (Peteraf & Barney, 2013).

RBV was relevant to the aims of this study, given the emphasis it places on the importance of internal resources to an organization. The resources explored were financial, physical, human and technological resources. This theory is anchored on the first objective on the effect of organization's resources since a firm's performance is determined by the resources it has at its disposal. Therefore, organization's resources such as physical and human resources are very significant for organization's performance which improves strategy implementation.

Empirical Review

Allocating adequate resources to a given strategy implementation leads to greater organizational performance therefore enhancing organizations' sustainability (Rajeskar, 2014). However, resource insufficiency is a common challenge in strategy implementation.

This is attributed to a number of factors such as overprotection of resources, too much emphasis on short-run financial criteria, organizational policies, vague strategy targets, reluctance in risk taking, and insufficient knowledge which often hinder effective resource allocation.

The study by Gebre (2021) concluded that availability and utilization of resources was one of the main factors affecting strategic plan implementation in the Addis Ababa City Administration Trade Bureau, Ethiopia. In particular, the study documented that implementation of strategic plan in this organization was hampered by shortage of competent human capital and technology. Rajasekar (2014) upholds the significance of HR in the execution of strategy in associations which explains that for the success of strategy execution, executives should dynamically check as well as audit advancement for the progress that the organization has made.

The study by Murage (2018) revealed that the absence, insufficiency or inaccessibility of resources hinders strategy execution within organization. Similarly, Mutiso (2017) in his study that delved into strategic implementation into religious organization, found that the three core strands that provide competitive advantage to religious organization include credibility or the commitment of the founders and the religious institutions received legitimacy; the ability of religious organization to secure resources that are rare and inimitable, and the ability of the organization to construct a differentiated strategy that enables the institution to tap into a unique clientele segment or apostolate. Rajasekar (2014) postulated that one of resources that are vital to the strategy implementation process is human resources. The author asserts that effective management of the human resources plays an important role in the effective implementation of strategic plans. Involving employees in key aspects such as decision making, which increases their competencies and commitment, should be part of the human resource management practices.

Mbithi (2016) adds that the success of strategy implementation is highly dependent on human resource and less on organization and systems related factors. This position is supported in the study by Harun et al. (2019), who examined elements that shape the implementation of strategies at the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Nairobi County. The author uncovered that resource allocation has significant positive effects on the implementation of strategies in PCEA churches in Nairobi County. He recommended that management of the PCEA church should ensure healthy allocation of adequate resources that will support the implementation of strategic plans.

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

- Organization's resources
 - Financial Resources
 - Human Resources
 - Physical Resources

Dependent Variable

- Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans
 - Membership growth
 - Asset growth
 - Members spiritual growth



Figure 1: Effect of Organization's resources on Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans in Religious Institutions

Source: Researcher (2021)

According to the above diagram, organization's resources affect strategy implementation because financial resources allow for availability of funds, human resources also contribute to the efficient functioning of the organization and physical resources allow for proper physical facilities for strategy implementation.

Research Methodology

The correlational research design was used in the study. The target population for this study was 100 employees of the All Saints Cathedral Church consisting of 25 Parish Church Council (PCC) members, 15 clergy and Pillar ministers, 30 Cathedral administrative staff and 30 primary school staff and teachers. A sample size of 50 individuals from staff and PCC members were selected from the target population using the stratified random sampling method. The sample size was arrived at based on Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) recommendation that sample that constitute 50% of the target population is sufficient enough to provide accurate data about the population. Consequently, the sample size was determined as:

$$\frac{50}{100} * 100 = 50 \text{ employees}$$

Table 1 presents the sampling frame.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

| Population Category | Population Number | Sample Size | Percentage |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Members of the PCC | 25 | 10 | 40% |
| 2. Clergy/Pillar Ministers | 15 | 10 | 66% |
| 3. Cathedral Administrative Staff | 30 | 15 | 50% |
| 4. Primary School Administrative Staff | 30 | 15 | 50% |
| Total | 100 | 50 | 50% |

The main tool for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. The researcher used subject matter specialists like university supervisors to evaluate the validity questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by conducting a pilot study and analysing the data using the Cronbach alpha method using the SPSS version 25 software. The analysis showed that the instrument was reliable and thus the researcher proceeded to the main data collection exercise.

After data collection, qualitative data was analysed using the thematic content analysis technique. Quantitative data was coded and entered into SPSS version 25 software. Percentages and frequencies were used to describe the existing situation at the All Saints Cathedral in regards

to organization’s resources, leadership style, communication, organizational culture, and strategy implementation. These descriptive statistics were also used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents. The Pearson correlation method was then used to assess the influence of each of the independent variable on strategy implementation.

Results

A total of 50 questionnaires were dispersed to the respondents, out of which 35 were successfully filled and returned. The main reason for non-response was other commitment by the members who kept on postponing the day of returning the questionnaire until the agreed period lapsed. This represented a response rate of 70% which is deemed acceptable.

Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans at All Saints Cathedral

The dependent variable of the study was successful implementation of strategic plans at All Saints Cathedral (ASC). This variable was measured using three variables namely; membership growth, asset growth and members’ spiritual growth. Respondents were presented with a set of 7 items related to the three parameters and asked to indicate their agreement with each. Table 3 presents the findings

Table 3: Respondents views on Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans at ASC

| Statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| The total number of members at ASC has increased since 2017 following the start of the implementation of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan | 0.0% | 6.8% | 17.6% | 41.9% | 33.8% |
| The number of active members at ASC has increased since 2017 due to the implementation of 2017-2021 Strategic Plan | 0.0% | 4.1% | 21.6% | 50.0% | 24.3% |
| ASC has put-up more buildings since 2017 in line with its 2017-2021 strategic plan | 0.0% | 8.1% | 25.7% | 37.8% | 28.4% |
| ASC motor vehicle fleet has expanded since 2017 in accordance with the church’s 2017-2021 strategic plan | 4.1% | 0.0% | 39.2% | 23.0% | 33.8% |
| ASC assortment of music and mission equipment has increased since 2017 in line with the 2017-2021 strategic plan | 17.6% | 6.8% | 18.9% | 25.7% | 31.1% |
| ASC furniture and fittings have increased since 2017 | 0.0% | 1.4% | 21.6% | 16.2% | 60.8% |
| ASC members adherence to Biblical doctrines such as tithing has improved since 2017 as envisioned in 2017-2021 strategic plan | 0.0% | 9.5% | 23.0% | 18.9% | 48.6% |
| ASC members prayer life has improved since 2017 as | 0.0% | 9.5% | 12.2% | 44.6% | 33.8% |

was intended in the 2017-2021 strategic plan

As Table 3 illustrates, 41.9 percent of the respondents agreed and another 33.8 percent strongly agreed with the claim that the number of respondents at ASC has increased since 2017 when the church started to implement the 2017-2021 strategic plan. Also 50.0% agreed and another 24.3% strongly agreed with the assertion the number of active members at ASC has increased since 2017. These findings imply that ASC has managed to grow its membership since 2017 as it had intended in 2017-2021 strategic plan. Consequently, the church has been successful in implementing this aspect of its strategic plan. The finding is consistent with the study by Harun et al. (2019), who found that 75% of respondents held the view that the PCEA churches in Nairobi County achieve the objectives stipulated in their strategic plans.

Table 3 also shows that 37.8% of the respondents agreed and another 28.4% strongly agreed with the statement that ASC has put-up more buildings since 2017. In addition, 23% agreed and another 33.8% strongly agreed that ASC motor vehicle fleet has expanded since 2017. Moreover, 25.7% of the respondents agreed and another 31.1% strongly agreed that ASC assortment of music instrument and mission equipment has increased since 2017. Likewise, about 77% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that ASC furniture and fittings have increased since 2017. These findings imply that ASC assets have grown since 2017 in line with what was intended in the church's 2017-2021 strategic plan. The findings indicate that the church has also been successful in implementing this aspect of the strategic plan. These findings are consistent with the study by Matini, Gesimba, and Mwangi (2019), who observed that the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru was successful in implementing various aspects of its strategic plan including mainstreaming research and development activities in various institutions belonging to the church so as to enhance service delivery.

Regarding members spiritual growth, Table 4.5 exemplifies that more than two-thirds of the respondents (67.5%) either agreed or strongly agreed that ASC member's adherence to Biblical doctrines such as tithing has increased since 2017. Furthermore, 78.4% either agreed or strongly agreed with the claim that ASC members' prayer life has improved since 2017. These findings imply that ASC members have grown spiritually since 2017 as envisioned in the church's strategic plan. The findings signify that the church has been successful in realizing this strategic goal. The findings are also in line with Matini *et al.* (2019), who found that the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru had been successful in implementing activities detailed in the strategic plan that were aimed at promoting church growth including increasing activities in mission territories and increasing number of committed Christians.

Organization's Resources for Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans at ASC

The independent variable was organization's resources. Respondents were presented with a set of six statements that assessed human and financial resources at ASC and asked to indicate their agreement on five-point scale. Table 4 summarizes the findings:

Table 4: Organization’s Resources influence on Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans

| Statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| The human resource constituent greatly contributes to the design and the execution of strategic plans at All Saints’ Cathedral | 2.9% | 8.6% | 2.9% | 57.1% | 28.6% |
| ASC in the implementation of its strategic plan utilizes financial, physical, human, and technological resources to accomplish its ideal goals. | 5.7% | 8.6% | 11.4% | 28.6% | 45.7% |
| As a religious organization, ASC utilizes various techniques in executing its strategic plan. It is upon the directors to decide the most beneficial management of the resources available to them. | 2.9% | 5.8% | 14.3% | 42.9% | 34.3% |
| Effective management of the human resources at ASC significantly contributes to its successful strategic plan implementation. | 0% | 14.3% | 11.4% | 48.6% | 25.7% |
| The realization of strategy execution at ASC is exceptionally subject to human resource and less on factors related to organization and systems. | 2.9% | 25.7% | 28.6% | 34.3% | 8.6% |
| Designating sufficient resources to a given strategy execution results in greater organizational performance at ASC hence enhancing the sustainability of the organizations’. | 0% | 8.6% | 8.6% | 51.4% | 31.4% |

According to the findings in Table 4, majority (85.7) of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the human resource constituent greatly contributes to the design and the execution of strategic plans at All Saints’ Cathedral. This study findings indicates that the human resource constituent greatly contributes to the design and the execution of strategic plans at All Saints Cathedral. Similarly, about 74% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that ASC in the implementation of its strategic plan utilizes financial, physical, human, and technological resources to accomplish its ideal goals. These statistics show that ASC in the implementation of its strategic plan utilizes financial, physical, human, and technological resources to accomplish its ideal goals. This is in line with (Mbithi 2016) findings in the literature review that the accomplishment of procedure execution is exceptionally reliant on human asset and that undeniable degree of human resources positively affects the sustainability of the organization. This view is also reinforced by qualitative data where respondents expressed that human resource influence strategy implementation at ASC by promoting the plan and ensuring proper coordination.

In addition, about 77% of the respondents agreed that as a religious organization, ASC utilizes various techniques in executing its strategic plan and it is upon the council to decide the most beneficial management of the resources available to them. Also, approximately 74% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that effective management of the human resources at ASC significantly contributes to its successful strategic plan implementation. These findings reveal that as a religious organization, ASC utilizes various techniques in executing its strategic plan and it is upon the directors to decide the most beneficial management of the resources available to them. This supports (Peteraf & Barney., 2013), from the literature review that it isn't the asset type as with the end goal that is important yet how the asset is utilized. Assets may have various capacities, which may empower them to be utilized across various conditions and it is the chiefs who should decide the most beneficial utilization for the assets available to them.

Lastly, majority (82%) of the respondents were in agreement that designating sufficient resources to a given strategy execution results in greater organizational performance at ASC hence enhancing the sustainability of the organizations. This corresponds with Peteraf and Barney (2013), who also discovered that the resources owned by organizations are great contributors to firms' superior performance.

Influence of Organization's resources on Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans

The Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the magnitude and direction of the influence of organization's resources on strategy implementation at ASC. Table 5 presents a summary of the model.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis of Organization's resources and Successful Implementation of Strategic Plans

| | | Successful implementation of strategic plans |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Organization's resources | Pearson Correlation | .418* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .021 |
| | N | 35 |

Table 5 shows that the correlation coefficient for the relationship between organization's resources and strategic implementation is 0.418. This coefficient implies that there is a positive and moderate association between organization's resources and strategy implementation. The p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance (p=.021) suggesting that the association between organization's resources and strategy implementation is statistically significant. To further assess this relationship, the data on organizational resources was regressed against the data on strategy implementation at ASC. A simple linear regression model comprising of organization's resources as the predictor and strategy implementation as the dependent variables was formulated. Table 6 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 6: Regression Statistics

| | R | R Square | Adjusted R-Square | Standard Error | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------|
| | 0.418 | 0.175 | 0.172 | .41223 | | |
| ANOVA | | | | | | |
| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | |
| Regression | 13.719 | 1 | 13.719 | 25.126 | .000 ^b | |
| Residual | 18.027 | 33 | .546 | | | |
| Total | 31.746 | 34 | | | | |
| Regression Coefficients | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.405 | .122 | | 11.516 | .000 |
| | Organization's resources | .406 | .101 | .418 | 4.020 | .001 |

Table 6 shows that the model had a correlation coefficient (*r*) of 0.418 and coefficient of determination (*r*²) of 0.175. The r-square implies that organization resources explain 17.5 of the variances in strategy implementation success at ASC. According to Moore et al. (2013), a model with an R-square of less than 0.2 has a weak effect size. Nonetheless, the ANOVA statistics indicate that the effect of organization resource on strategy implementation is statistically significant; $F(1, 33) = 25.126, p < .001$. In addition, the regression coefficient shows that organization's resources had a beta coefficient of 0.406. This implies that if organization resources are improved by 1 unit, strategy implementation success would increase by 0.406. The t-statistics show that the change that would be observed on strategy implementation as a result of a unit change in organization's resources is statistically significant; $t=4.020, p = .001$.

From these findings, the null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion that that organization's resources have a positive and statistically significant influence on strategy implementation of religious institutions was made. These findings are consistent with Harun et al. (2019), who observed that allocation of asset has major impact on the implementation of strategies at Presbyterian Church of East African chapels in Nairobi County.

Qualitative findings indicated that the human resource promotes the strategy implementation process by promoting the strategic plan and gaining support from stakeholders. It also established that ASC allocates financial, physical and technological resources to support the

realization of its strategic goals. The majority of the respondents were in agreement that designating sufficient resources to a given strategy execution resulted in a greater organizational performance at ASC hence enhancing the sustainability of the organizations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Results of the study lead to the conclusion that organization's resources have a positive and statistically significant influence on strategy implementation in religious institutions. Strategy execution is exceptionally subject to human resource and less on factors related to organization systems. Thus, the study concludes that organizations that allocate adequate human, physical, financial, and technological resources towards the strategy implementation process are more likely to be successful in realizing their strategic goals.

The study recommends that ASC should invest in human resource for effective strategy implementation by continuously involving them in the process and developing them through training in order to acquire more knowledge. Employees should be fully be incorporated in activities related to strategy execution to encourage commitment and accountability since strategy execution is exceptionally subject to human resource and less on factors related to organization and systems. The church should also continually maintain a proper budget in order to ensure that resources are available for strategy implementation.

The findings of this study could be enhanced by other scholars who will be interested in undertaking studies on the factors that contribute to the implementation of strategies in religious institutions. The study could also be extended and stretched to cover other faith based organizations for comparison and to enhance the generalizability of findings.

Future studies should also examine how other factors such as organizational structure and organizational systems influence strategy implementation in religious institution. They should also examine how factors such as size of the church and setting (rural versus urban) moderate how leadership style, organization's resources, communication, and organizational culture influence strategy implementation in religious institutions.

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