

EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION PROCESS ON STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF NAKURU, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Although a good number of organizations have embraced strategic management, over 67% of formulated strategies fail at implementation. The Catholic Diocese of Nakuru (CDN) has implemented its strategic plans with a lot of difficulties with most of planned activities falling behind schedule. Literature suggests that process of communicating strategic plan is a critical determinant of implementation outcomes. It is in this light that this study sought to evaluate effect of communication process on strategic plan implementation at CDN. It utilized the descriptive design and targeted 948 CDN staff comprising of 131 secretariat staff, 348 parishes staff, and 469 institutions staff. From the target population, a sample of 168 staff was selected using the systematic random sampling method. Quantitative data was collected from parishes and institutions staff using structured questionnaires and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data was collected from secretariat staff using interview guides and analyzed using the thematic technique. Findings revealed that the strategic vision is widely shared among members of the organization and that CDN senior managers were effective in communicating the strategic goals and activities to stakeholders. On the other hand, results suggest that strategic plan is not communicated in a timely and effective manner. Overall, respondents rated the effectiveness of CDN strategic plan communication process at 72.8%. Findings also showed that communication process ($r^2 = .315$, $\beta = 0.470$, $p = .000$) had statistically significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation at CDN. The study recommended that to have a significant improvement in strategic plan implementation, CDN should create bottom-up communication channels where employees at the lower level of the organization can provide feedback to those above them in the organization hierarchy. The strategic plan communication process should also be simplified and done in a timely manner.

Keywords: Catholic Diocese, Strategic Plans, Communication Process, Nakuru, Kenya.

1. INTRODUCTION

The term strategy refers to a plan of action aimed at achieving long-term goals. It is a plan that fits in an organization's mission, main goals, policies, and actions. Strategy is important as it gives organizations a general direction regarding the desired future state and how to get there. Mintzberg (2008) noted that while most modern organizations formulate strategies, 90% fail at the implementation stage. Strategy can only have the desired impact on an organization if it is effectively implemented. Strategic plan implementation comes after the strategic plan formulation and entails putting into effects the activities and actions stipulated in the strategic plan and managing changes that are required in the process (Metz & Easterling, 2016). It is an iterative, complex, and dynamic process that encompasses a series of decisions and activities by many stakeholders geared towards actualizing strategic plans in order to achieve the objectives of the organization.

Strategic plan implementation has become an important subject in religious organizations arising from the fact that these organizations play a vital role in the development of societies. In many parts of the world, religious organizations take an active role in the provision of essential services such as healthcare, education, and housing among others (Apenda, 2016). They carry out an important role in tackling societal problems especially in the marginalized populations. Milotay (2018) noted that religious organizations can have more effective programs if proper strategic plans are formulated and implemented. In the United States, Dobson (2012) found that strategic plan implementation was not a high priority area for most religious organizations. Over 50% of the surveyed pastors said that their training did not prepare them on strategic management while 96.2% did not think that their ministries would be more effective if they had better strategic management skills.

In Europe, Kalyvas (2018) found that churches had strong organizational strategy that enabled them to connect grass-roots actors to a centralized direction. The strategic approach enabled them to coordinate and monopolize all forms of activity at the national, regional and diocesan level. Tottoli (2014) noted that due to privatization and decentralization of social services in Europe, the involvement of religious groups in provision of welfare services has increased. In Asia, Lim (2013) found that despite the zeal, dedication, prayers, and sacrifices, the church has not had a significant impact. In this region, Christianity falls behind other religions such as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Lim (2013) emphasized that besides spiritual factors, developing and implementing the right mission strategy will be vital in determining the success or failure of the church in spreading the gospel in this region.

In Kenya, Kitoo (2016) found that despite the fact that church managers were conversant with strategic planning ideas, they seldomly involve themselves with strategic planning. The study surveyed pastors from 70 churches in Kibera slums. In the study by Kagumu (2016) examining strategic plan implementation at the Anglican Church of Kenya Kirinyaga Diocese, 65.7% of the respondents stated that their church did not have a written strategic plan. These two studies suggest that strategic management is not a well-established practice among most Pentecostal churches in Kenya. Kinyoe (2012) examined challenges affecting strategic plan implementation at the Christian Health Association. Findings showed that one of the main challenges is insufficient funding owing to the organization's dependence on donor funding. Another challenge was staff motivation and retention where the organization reported difficulties attracting and retaining best talents.

Strategic planning is however a well-established practice in the Catholic Church. Most dioceses and parishes have written strategic plans. The Catholic Diocese of Nakuru (CDN) developed its first strategic plan in the year 2002 indicating goals that the organization desired to achieve between 2003 and 2007. A second strategic plan was developed in 2010 covering the period 2010- 2015. Although strategic planning ought to be a continuous process, there is a gap of 3 years (2008-2010) when the diocese operated without a Strategic Plan in place. In addition, the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan heavily replicates the objectives and activities in the 2003-2007 plan indicating that the Diocese was not able to fully implement the 2003-2007 plan. A further check reveals that even the 2010-2015 plan has been implemented with a lot of difficulties with the realization of the goals stipulated in this plan taking longer than expected.

Poor implementation hampers the best of strategies. The organization's inability to implement its strategic plan may cause huge financial losses, wasting valuable time, slowing down the growth of the organization, and diminishing the morale of employees and other stakeholders. Poor execution of the objectives in the strategic plan amounts to the loss of opportunity to move the organization to the desired future state. One of the factors that have been closely linked to strategic plan implementation outcomes is communication. However, few studies have been conducted to examine how religious organizations communicate their strategic plan and how it affects the implementation process. It is in this regard that the study sought to assess the effect of communication process on strategic plan implementation at the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru, Kenya.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic management is essential for the long-term success of any business as it gives an organization a sense of direction. It allows organization to identify, prioritize, and exploit

opportunities while anticipating and mitigating future problems (Durmaz & Dusun, 2016). Strategic management has two major components: (1) strategy formulation, and (2) strategic plan implementation. Strategy formulation entails identifying the goals that an organization intends to achieve in the near future and devising courses of actions that the organization intends to take to realize these goals (Ugboro, Obeng, & Spann, 2010). On the other hand, strategic plan implementation entails executing the action identified in the strategic plan so as to realize the objectives. It involves turning the strategic decisions into actions (Metz & Easterling, 2016).

In their systematic literature review, Alharthy, Rashid, Pagliari, and Khan (2017) found that most studies on factors that affect strategic plan implementation are conducted in Western countries. Factors that the studies have associated with strategic plan implementation include poor and vague strategy, inadequate resources, monitoring and evaluation, governance, leadership, and risk management. In another systematic review, Li, Guohui, and Eppler (2010) identified nine recurring factors namely: strategy formulation process, strategy executors, organizational structure, communication process, the level of commitment towards the strategy, consensus regarding the strategy, the relationship among different departments and strategy levels, employed tactics, and the administrative system put in place.

In the context of strategic plan implementation, communication process refers to the sharing of information regarding strategic issues among organizational stakeholders (Ekeowa & Iloafu, 2016). For a strategy to be effectively implemented, all members of the organization must understand and support it. Having defined the strategy, it is vital for the management to communicate it to the rest of the organization. The leaders have to ensure that all key stakeholders are aware of the organization's vision and mission and understand it well (Metz & Easterling, 2016). The strategic vision and key strategic messages should be cascaded down the organization. Strategy communication process should also clarify what employees need to achieve as individuals and as teams for the strategic vision to be realized (Cocks, 2010). In doing so, the organization would be operationalizing the strategy by translating conceptual ideas into specific work and expectations.

According to Wairimu and Theuri (2014), more than 65% of organizations encounter situations where employees and other stakeholders do not understand their roles when a new strategic initiative is launched. Such a situation tends to increase resistance and reduce motivation, which at best increases the cost of strategic plan implementation and at worst, can lead to implementation failure. Not only should the management communicate its position and future strategy, but employees must also receive and accept. Danford (2014) argued that for strategies to be implemented effectively, the management should articulate goals in a way that has meaning

for employees and other key stakeholders. The communication process of the strategy should create a spark that generates resonance between the organization goals and that of key stakeholders.

In their study, Shimizu (2016) identified two types of communication process that are essential in strategic plan implementation. First is the communication process by senior managers of organization's strategic vision, goals, and activities among members of the organization. Second is the communication process by members at the lower level of the organization with upper managers regarding progress made in strategic plan implementation as well as the challenges encountered. Shimizu (2016) also found that effectiveness of communication process in the strategic plan implementation process can be undermined by senders' bias, which refers to the overestimation of the quality of communication process by the person communicating. Communication process is adversely affected when actors overestimate the quality of their communication process resulting in poor strategic plan implementation.

In another study examining role of communication process in strategic plan implementation in three UK hotel chains, Peng and Littlejohn (2010) found that communication process was instrumental to the strategic plan implementation process. The respondents however stress that communication process alone does not guarantee effective strategic plan implementation as this must go hand in hand with other organizational factors. Wuolanne (2010) explored CEOs perspective on the role of communication process in strategic plan implementation. Findings indicated that the communication process was an important function in strategic plan implementation. According to the surveyed CEOs, the main role of communication process is to simplify the fundamental ideas of organization's strategy and to make sure that the strategy is well understood by all interested parties (Wuolanne, 2010). The CEOs were also of the view that the effectiveness of communication process is often influenced by ability to find and breakdown the core ideas of the strategy, the channels of communication process used, and ability to determine what message to communicate.

In Kenya, Olang (2015) found that communication process was a key component of strategic plan implementation at African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD). About 46% of the respondents strongly agreed and another 46% simply agreed that the organization has an internal communication process unit that engages key stakeholders on strategic issues. In addition, 73% of the respondents expressed that communication process of strategic activities to stakeholders was done effectively and in a timely manner. About 62% of the respondents in Olang (2015) study expressed that communication process played a central role in supporting the implementation of strategic plans within the organization.

In another study, Ambani and Wanyoike (2012) examined how communication process affects strategic plan implementation success among commercial banks in Nakuru County. Results revealed ineffective communication process on the part of the banks with 72.1% of the employees reporting that there was inadequate communication of organization's mission, vision, and goals to all stakeholders. About 65.3% of respondents also reported that the executive leadership did not provide feedback regarding their performance in strategic plan implementation. Ineffective communication process was significantly and negatively associated with strategic plan implementation success ($r = -0.621$, $p=0.000$). Although this study provides a statistical examination of the relationship between communication process and strategic plan implementation, it was conducted in the banking sector and thus may not reflect the situation in religious institutions.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study made use of the descriptive design. The target population was 948 CDN employees comprising of the 131 staff working at the CDN headquarters/ secretariat, 348 staffs working at the parishes, 469 staff working in various institutions including schools and health facilities. The appropriate sample size was determined as 168 staff using the Taro Yamane formulae. The 168 respondents were proportionally distributed across the three groups of participants as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sampling Plan

Designation	Number of Staff	Proportion (%)	Sample Size
Management (Secretariat)	131	13.8	23
Parishes	348	36.7	62
Institutions	469	49.5	83
Total	948	100	168

The systematic sampling method was used to select the 168 respondents from the staff population where the researcher picked every 5th person in the list of staffs in each of the three staff categories until the desired sample size was attained. Two data collection instruments were used: (1) questionnaire for parishes, programmes and institutions staff, and (2) interview schedule for secretariat (management) staff.

The questionnaires comprised of closed-ended questions and focused on collecting quantitative data. It was divided into three sections. Section A elicited respondents background information, section B collected information regarding communication process of strategic issues, and section C gathered information relating to the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation at CDN.

Interview guide was used to collect in depth qualitative data from the secretariat staff. The guide was structured in nature meaning that it comprised of a uniform list of questions that were posed to the interviewees in the same exact order. A pilot study conducted at the Catholic Diocese of Nyahururu to assess the validity and reliability of instruments. It involved 16 respondents comprising of two staffs from the secretariat, six staffs from the parishes, and eight staffs from institutions.

Qualitative data collected through the interviews was analyzed using the thematic technique. Responses to the closed-ended questions were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 where they were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The simple linear regression method was used in the inferential analysis. The following model was formulated:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$$

Where, Y= strategic plan implementation at CDN, β_0 = constant, β_1 = Beta coefficient for communication process, X_1 = communication process, and e= error term.

4. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION

Out of the 168 individuals that the study had contacted, 135 were able to complete the study by either completing and returning a questionnaire or participating in an interview. This figure translates to a response rate of 80.4. Table 2 presents a breakdown of the response rate for the different category of staffs that were targeted in this study.

Table 2: Response Rate

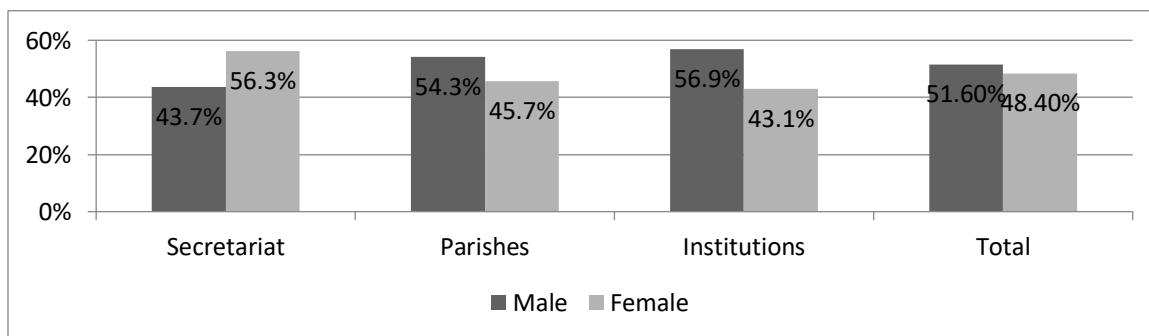
Designation	Expected Number	Actual Number	Response Rate
Management (Secretariat)	23	19	82.6%
Parishes	62	45	72.5%
Institutions	83	71	85.5%
Total	168	135	80.4%

Source: Field Data (2019)

Institutions had the highest response rate of 85.5% as 71 out of the 83 individuals who were given questionnaires were able to complete and return them to the researcher. The Parishes staff had the lowest response rate of 72.5%.

4.1 Demographic Information of the Respondents

The gender of respondents was assessed in terms of whether they were male or female. Results are presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

As Figure 1 shows, the majority (56.35) of the secretariat staff who participated in the interviews were female. However, in the majority of the respondents in the parishes (54.3%) and institutions (43.1%) were male. When considering the entire sample, male respondents were slightly more than their female counterpart with a representation of 51.6% against 48.4% for females. Although gender representation varied from one category of employee to the next, it is evident that both genders were adequately represented in the study sample.

In terms of age, the largest segment of respondents in the secretariat (57.95) and parishes (42.2%) were between the ages of 40 and 49 years. However, most of the respondents in the church institutions were younger with the largest segment (43.7%) being in the 30 to 39 age brackets. When considering the sample as whole, the largest segment of respondents (36.3%) were in the 40-49 years age bracket followed by those in the 30-39 years age brackets at 32.6%. This information is summarized in Table 3

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age Category

Age Category	Secretariat	Parishes	Institutions	Total
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
20-29 years	0 (0)	5 (11.1)	12 (16.9)	17 (12.6)
30-39 years	2 (10.5)	11 (24.4)	31 (43.7)	44 (32.6)
40-49 years	11 (57.9)	19 (42.2)	19 (26.8)	49 (36.3)
50-59 years	4 (21.1)	9 (20.1)	7 (9.9)	20 (14.8)
60 and above	2 (10.5)	1 (2.2)	2 (2.8)	5 (3.7)
Total	19 (100)	45 (100)	71 (100)	135 (100)

Source: Field Data (2019)

The study also sought to determine the respondents' highest level of education. Majority of the respondents across three groups of staff had a bachelors' level of education. About 52.6% of secretariat staff, 55.5% of parishes' staff, and 52.1% of institutions staff had the bachelor's level of education. Secretariat staff were the most educated lot with 36.9% of the respondents in this category have attained a masters' degree and above. This information is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Highest Level of Education

Level of Education	Secretariat	Parishes	Institutions	Total
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Diploma	2 (10.5)	17 (37.8)	31 (43.7)	50 (37.0)
Bachelors	10 (52.6)	25 (55.5)	37 (52.1)	72 (53.3)
Masters and above	7 (36.9)	3 (6.7)	3 (4.2)	13 (9.7)
Total	19 (100)	45 (100)	71 (100)	135 (100)

Source: Field Data (2019)

4.2. Descriptive and Qualitative Analysis of Strategic Plan Communication Process at CDN

The independent variable of the study was strategic plan communication process. To assess this variable, respondents were presented with a set of seven statements and asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each on a five point scale ranging from 1 (to no extent) to 5 (to a very great extent). Results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Respondents views on various aspects of SP Communication Process

S/No.	Statement	N	Mean	S.D
SC1	The strategic vision and goals have been adequately shared by among all members of the organization	116	4.02	.475
SC2	Senior managers at CDN are very effective at explaining the fundamental ideas in the organization's strategy	116	4.00	.560
SC3	Each member of CDN understands what role he or she needs play for the organization's strategic goals to be realized	116	3.47	.625
SC4	The channels use to communicate strategic vision and goals are effective in creating a shared understanding among all members of the organization	116	3.62	.554
SC5	Strategic vision, goals and activities are communicated to all members of an organization on a regular basis	116	3.67	.571
SC6	Employees at lower level of the organization also communicate the progress made in strategic plan implementation to senior managers	116	3.07	.743
SC7	Strategic issues are communicated in such a way that inspires and create a sense of ownership among all members of the organization	114	3.70	.563
Aggregate Communication Process Score		116	25.48	3.194

Source: Field Data (2019)

As shown in Table 5, statement SC1 had the highest mean score of 4.02. This mean indicates that on average respondents agreed to a great extent with the claim that the strategic vision and goals have been adequately shared by among all members of the organization. This finding is in line with Metz and Easterling (2016), who insisted that for a strategy to be effectively implemented; all members of the organization must understand and support it. Leaders have to ensure that all key stakeholders are aware of the organization's vision and mission and understand it well. Questionnaire respondents' position on the effectiveness of communication of the strategic vision was however contradicted by the qualitative data collected during the interview with

secretariat staff, most of them claimed that the strategic plan is not effectively communicated. SS1 expressed that:

"Sometimes strategies are not understood by all. Failure to involve all stakeholders in planning makes them not own the strategy," (SS1, Interview, 2019).

SS17 also added that:

"Most of the strategic issues take too long to be understood since the strategy is communicated in abstract form. Sometimes there is a disconnect between the actual and the perceived message. This slows down the strategic plan implementation process as it takes longer to authenticate issues. The delays cause anxiety and strain relationship with donors who require timely reports," (SS17, Interview, 2019).

Again, questionnaire respondents agreed to a great extent with statement SC2 (mean=4.00), which stated that senior managers at CDN are very effective at explaining the fundamental ideas in the organization's strategy. They also agreed with statement SC7, which read that Strategic issues are communicated in such a way that inspires and create a sense of ownership among all members of the organization. These findings suggesting that the management (secretariat staff) had a different view regarding the effectiveness of strategic plan communication process from that held by staff at the parishes and institutions. The secretariat staffs also have a different perspective regarding the level of understanding of the strategic plan by the grassroots staffs. When asked to describe some of the methods that the management use to communicate strategic plan, the interview participants mentioned that meetings, circulars, memos and emails, and workshops/ seminars were the most common channels. One of the respondents, SS8 also mentioned the use of mass media (Radio Amani).

Statement SC6 had the lowest mean of 3.07, which indicates that on average respondents agreed to a moderate extent with the claim that employees at lower level of the organization also communicate the progress made in strategic plan implementation to senior managers. This finding implies that respondents were not certain that feedback communication process existed between players at the grassroots who are directly involved in the implementation of the strategic plan and those at the secretariat level who formulate the plan. This situation was best captured by SS2 during the interview, where he narrated that:

"The communication process has not been effective to ensure that each stakeholder reads from the same page. There are actors at the grassroots who do not know what the SP is and its objectives. Due to the hierarchical structure of the organization, communication is usually top-down.....There is broken communication since there is no constant review and feedback from stakeholders," (SS2, Interview, 2019).

To arrive at overall conclusion regarding the effectiveness of the strategic plan communication process, an aggregate score was computed by summing up scores on individual items with the Likert scale. As displayed in Table 5, the mean aggregate SP communication score was 25.48 out of 35. When converted into percentage, this score translates to 72.8. This means that as per the respondents, CDN's strategic plan communication process was 72.8% effective in supporting implementation activities.

4.3 Strategic Plan Implementation at CDN

Strategic plan implementation was the dependent variable of the study. To assess this variable, respondents were presented with a list of 15 statements relating to strategic plan implementation and asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a five point scale. Results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Respondents views on various aspects of Strategic Plan Implementation

S/No.	Statement	N	Mean	S.D
IM1	Management has put in place councils and boards to enhance corporate management in all institutions and programs.	116	4.78	.529
IM2	Management has strengthened existing leadership structure	116	4.78	.529
IM3	Management has developed and maintained competent HR for effective delivery of services.	116	2.74	.712
IM4	Management has embraced appropriate ICT and mainstreamed research and development.	116	2.49	.626
IM5	Management has increased activities in mission territories such as East Pokot.	116	4.26	.577
IM6	Management has increased the number of committed Christians.	116	4.40	.644
IM7	Management has reduced exodus of Catholic Christians to other denomination and secrets.	116	4.34	.735

IM8	Management has increased the number of shows, sports, festivals and other events aimed at promoting and utilizing talent in the parishes.	116	4.28	.667
IM9	Management has increased the number of Christians participating in church.	116	4.47	.652
IM10	Management has increased the level of participation in church activities	116	4.52	.653
IM11	Management has improved the quality of healthcare services offered to community.	116	4.50	.597
IM12	Management has improved efficiency in the management of its learning institutions.	116	4.47	.625
IM13	Management has improved lives of vulnerable and marginalized persons.	116	3.95	.630
IM14	Management has increased level of environmental awareness in the community.	116	3.45	.595
IM15	Management has improved its participation in environmental conservation activities.	116	3.52	.567
Aggregate Strategic Plan Implementation Score		116	60.93	5.796

Source: Field Data (2019)

As Table 6 illustrates, statements IM1 and IM2 had the highest mean scores of 4.78. These scores indicate that on average respondents agreed to a very great extent with the claim that the management at CDN has put in place councils and board to enhance corporate management in all institutions and programs, as well as, the statement that management has strengthened existing leadership structure. The two statements (IM1 and IM2) sought to assess CDN's success in improving governance, which was the first goal in their strategic plan. The findings, therefore, suggests that CDN has been successful in realizing this strategic goal. Improvement in governance was also captured during the interview. SS2 narrated that:

"CDN governance has improved. Sound structures have been put in place and existing leadership strengthened," (SS2, Interview, 2019).

SS11 added that:

"There is improved governance at the parish, institutional, and diocesan levels. Proper working structures have been put in place. Leaders have also

understood and taken up their roles leading to greater transparency. There is also improved self-reliance at the parishes," (SS11, Interview, 2019).

Statement IM11 had the second highest mean of 4.50, which indicates that respondents agreed to a very great extent with the assertion that CDN management has improved the quality of healthcare services offered to community. This statement was in line with CDN strategic objective that sought to improve the provision of services to communities. Improvement in health services was also supported during the interview. When asked to list strategic objectives that CDN has managed to achieve, 15 out of the 19 interviewees (78.9%) mentioned improvement in the provision of health services as one of the accomplished objectives. SS7 narrated that:

"CDN has achieved to a greater extent improvement in health services. The organization has increased the number of hospitals, dispensaries, and other health facilities resulting in greater access to quality and affordable healthcare services to communities," (SS7, Interview, 2019).

Statement IM4 had the lowest mean score of 2.49. This score implies that respondents on average agreed to a little extent with the claim that CDN management has embraced appropriate ICT and mainstreamed research and development. Incorporation of ICT and mainstreaming of research and development was one of critical success factors identified in CDN's 2010- 2015 strategic plan. From these findings, it is evident that the organization has not achieved much success in terms of fulfilling this goal. Statement IM3 had the second lowest mean score of 2.74, suggesting that respondents agreed to a moderate extent with the statement that management has developed and maintained competent HR for effective delivery of services. This finding suggests that CDN has not been so successful in terms of developing and maintaining a competent HR, which was also part of its strategic objectives. This issue was also captured during the interview where SS11 expressed that:

"Most people who come to work at CDN view this organization as a training ground. They work for a short period of time, gain the experience they need, and then move on to other organizations. There is a very high turnover of staff," (SS11, Interview, 2019).

To obtain an overall impression regarding CDN success in implementing its 2010-2015 strategic plan, an aggregate strategic plan implementation score was obtained by summing up the scores of all the 15 indicators. As Table 6 reveals, the aggregate score was 60.93 out of a highest possible score of 75 (15 items in the Likert scale * 5 highest score in the Likert scale). When

converted into percentage, this score translates to 81.2%. Therefore, according to the respondents, CDN has been 81.2% successful in implementing its 2010-2015 strategic plan.

4.4 Communication Process effect on Strategic Plan Implementation

Simple regression analysis was conducted with the view of testing the effect of communication process on strategic plan implementation at CDN. Results are summarized in Table 7

Table 7: Regression Analysis Results

Variable		r	r ²	Constant	F	P
Dependent	Strategic plan implementation	.561	.315	5.413	52.481*	.000
Independent	Communication process	Beta	Standardized Beta		t	
		.470*	.561		7.244*	.000

The r-square for SP communication process was 0.315. This means that the model comprising SP communication process as the predictor explained 31.5% of the variances observed in strategic plan implementation at CDN. According to Ferguson (2009), a model for predicting social phenomena should be considered to be substantial and satisfactory if the r-square is greater than 0.10. Therefore, this model was considered adequate. The F-value for the effect of communication process was 52.481 while the p-value was less than 0.001, which implies that the effect of communication process on strategic plan implementation is statistically significant. This finding is consistent with the study by Peng and Littlejohn (2010) that examined the role of communication process on strategic plan implementation in three UK hotel chains. From the findings, 76% of the respondents expressed that communication process was instrumental to the strategic plan implementation process. Olang (2015) also found that communication process was a key component of strategic plan implementation at AWARD and played a central role in supporting the implementation of strategic plans within the organization.

The beta coefficient for the effect of communication process is 0.470. The value is positive and thus signifies that the effect of communication process on strategic plan implementation is

positive. Specifically, the coefficient value means that if the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan communication process is increased by 1 unit, the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation at CDN would increase by 0.470. The t-value for the effect of communication process was 7.244 while the p-value was less than 0.001, which indicates that the beta coefficient for communication process is significantly greater than zero and thus this variable has a statistically significant effect on strategic plan implementation. These results led to the conclusion that communication process has a statistically significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation at CDN.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on findings, the study concludes that communication process has a statistically and positive effect on strategic plan implementation at CDN. To improve the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation, CDN should consider improving the effectiveness of the strategic plan implementation process. The study established that CDN is characterized by a top-down asymmetric communication process where information only flows from senior managers downwards to employees at the lower level. To enhance strategic plan communication, CDN should also create bottom-up communication channels where employees at the lower level of the organization can provide feedback to those above them in the organizational hierarchy. The strategic plan communication process should also be simplified and done in a timely manner. The present study was limited to strategic plan implementation at the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru. Future studies should consider replicating this study in other Catholic dioceses so as to enhance the generalizability of findings.

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