

**CHALLENGES IN STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT THE
ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF KENYA (ECK)**

By

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**A Management Research Project Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Masters of Business
Administration, School of Business. The University of Nairobi**

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other University.

Signed..........Date.....20/11/2008.....

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To the Love of my life

Rose and Elizabeth

And

To my children who kept asking about my academic progress, Desmond and Victor, Vera 'nyar Otiende' and Peter 'owad gowour' who bothered to wake me for a lift to school

And

to my parents, Obara 'wuod Awiti' and Wida who taught me the art of hard work.

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To my lecturers who have imparted useful knowledge and made me more valuable to the society than before I undertook this course. I must mention my class mates who used to encourage me during class discussions.

If this research contains anything of value, I would like to share the credit with all the individuals and institutions mentioned above. The responsibility for any errors, omissions and distortions that the reader may find in this research work is my responsibility.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECK -	Electoral Commission of Kenya
DECS-	District Election Coordinators
KICC-	Kenyatta International Conference Center
IPPG-	Inter Party Parliamentary Group
IFES-	International Foundation for Election Systems
EALA-	East Africa Legislative Assembly
UNDP-	United Nations Development Programme
USAID-	United States Agency for International Development
PMU-	Project Management Unit
CIDA-	Canadian International Development Agency
DDDG-	Democratic Development Donor Groups
KANU-	Kenya African National Union
ODM-	Orange Democratic Movement
ICT-	Information and Communication Technology
SWOT-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

ABSTRACT

The study contained in this report investigated the challenges faced by Electoral Commission of Kenya in the Strategy Implementation. It also established the measures taken by the ECK to handle the challenges taking in to account that the process of strategy development started far back in 2004. The data used to analyze the report was obtained from the Commissioners, senior Managers, District Election Coordinators and Clerks. The analysis was per the content in the questionnaires. The secondary data also was obtained from the ECK pamphlets, similar booklets and were analyzed to conclude the report.

The result of the study indicated that the ECK has faced various challenges in its Strategy Implementation Process. The key areas of challenges are mainly organization structure which the study indicates are weak resulting in conflicting roles between the Commissioners and the Secretariat Staff. There are various gaps in the systems and procedures which impeded the efficiency of the Commission in processing the clientele. The same applies to culture and tradition and policies and rules. It was established from the study that the Commission in this day and age is not fully equipped technologically to handle its tasks efficiently and effectively. This was found to be very costly in terms of time and money because of the delays involved. The study also establishes that there are inadequacies in leadership to steer the process of Strategy Implementation. This according to study was compounded by lack of competent human resource equipped with skills to handle the challenges. Finally, the study also established that the ECK does not have in place reward and support systems to motivate personnel who are involved in one way or the other in realizing the strategy implementation process. The funding element which for so long has been pegged to the discretion of Treasury makes the Commission incapacitated whenever a project of this nature is being undertaken.

It was therefore revealed that a campaign to pass a bill that will make the ECK budget be passed by Parliament to make it obtain financial independence is paramount. In this regard, it is recommended that a further research be conducted in the Commission to bring out the necessary steps taken to implement strategic plans and the level of its progress. This should cover even other Constitutional Offices in Kenya and help in the comparison to establish their performance in the Strategy Implementation: Progress.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Successful strategy formulation does not guarantee successful strategy implementation. Mintzberg (1991) states that "Most of the time, strategists should not be formulating strategy at all, they should be getting on with implementing strategies they already have." "Fred (2003) put it "It is always more difficult to do something (strategy implementation) than to say you are going to do it (strategy formulation)". Strategy implementation therefore means translating formulated strategies into actions. It requires moving from the largely intellectual exercise of formulation to the concrete realities of tactical choices, trade-offs, conflicts obstructions, misunderstandings and even errors .Byars, Rue and Zahra (1996).

Strategy implementation affects an Organization from top to bottom; it affects all the functional and divisional areas of the Organization and therefore requires managing forces during the action. It focuses on efficiency and primarily it is an operational process. Strategy implementation requires special motivation and leadership skills as well as coordination among many individuals. Byars at el (1996) put it "Strategy implementation differs for different firms." It may involve any or all of the following: altering sales territories, additional new departments, closing facilities, hiring new employees, changing an Organization strategy, developing financial budgets and developing new employee benefits. It also may include establishing cost control procedures, changing advertising strategies, building new facilities, training new employees, transferring managers among divisions and building better management information systems.

1.1.1 Challenges of Strategy Implementation

Gerry, Kevan and Richard (2006) states that "Strategy is concern with long term direction of an organization". Tim (2002) put it that "Strategy consists of the decisions and actions used to formulate and implement strategies that will provide a competitively superior fit between the organization and its environment, to enable it to achieve organization

objectives.” This process of management is needed to move the organization from the current state to where it wants to be in the future. To align the direction with the aim is the most challenging thing to most managers. This is because managers when setting strategies assume the future outcomes which is uncertain. This is normally coupled by arrange of choices, volatility and dynamics of the environment. It includes all managers and every stakeholders of the organization.

The task of strategy implementation starts with formulating the organization vision and mission i.e the purpose, philosophy and goals. Conduct an analysis that reflect the firms internal conditions and capacities (Strength and weaknesses).Asses the Organization external environment (opportunities, threats) which are caused by competitors, legal and cultural factors, economy, technology and environmental factors and marching both internal and external environment. Management decides the most optimal decision by evaluating each option in light of the organization’s decision. A selection of a set of long term objectives and grand strategies that will achieve the most desirable option followed by developing annual objectives and short term strategies. Implementation of strategic choices by matching people with task, structure, culture and traditions, policies and rules, technology, funds, reward and support systems.

The process of strategy implementation has posed serious challenges to most Organizations. Freedman (2003) offered the following factors as key challenges to strategy implementation by most Managers: Strategic inertia, lack of shareholders commitment, strategic drift, strategic ‘dilution’ strategic isolation and failure to understand progress. Other challenges are initiative fatigue, impatience and not celebrating success. Normally, implementation challenges arose both from internal and external environments, Yabs (2007). To adapt to the challenges the organization faces will depend with the type of the organization, the strategy adapted and the circumstances prevailing at the time. This includes matching strategy developed with implementation plans to avoid unnecessary failures. Key stakeholders should be involved at the formulation, development and implementation stages to harmonize the process.

The internal challenges facing most organizations include issues such as behavior change which arises from employees refusing to work differently from the way they have been working. This can be minimized by, for example hiring external consultants to spearhead the change implementation, training of staff, proper communication mechanisms, rewarding systems, proper leadership, and involvement in strategy development particularly resisting members. Staff members who have refused to cooperate should be forced to comply as the last resort. Resistance is manifested by organized strikes, absenteeism from duty, failure to meet deadlines, poor performance and slow downs or resignations.

Organizations are normally faced with working capital problems which hinder their ability to acquire fixed and current assets for operations. Such organizations may not honour their obligations as they fall due. It may not be possible for them to hire required skills and competencies to work for their organizations. Proper resource evaluation and analysis enables accurate allocation of resources during strategy implementation. There are other main challenges in strategy implementation in many organizations and these rise from weak structures, fixed cultures and traditions, poor leadership, wrong policies, weak control systems and processes, reward and support systems. According to David (1999), Strategy implementation means 'change'. It is widely agreed that the real work begins after strategies are formulated. Successful strategy implementation requires support, discipline, motivation and hard work from all managers and employees. Good planning and control mechanisms are required to eliminate problems of inadequate systems of control. Procurement and supply systems of goods and services. This would improve service delivery, internal audit and accountability including strengthening operational planning and budgeting systems. The process requires setting up of monitoring and evaluation systems including follow up mechanisms and practicing an open culture that embraces change.

1.1.2 Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK)

Mbindyo (2001) states that "The colonial government in 1959, had granted Africans some guided and restricted constitutional rights. The Governor of then British colony and

protectorate appointed election officials who included the supervisor of African elections, registration and returning officers. The Governor fixed the constituency boundaries, registered voters and supervised elections." Most of the present constituencies and boundaries were derived from those established in 1963 by the Governor. The local government appointed councilors by the provincial administration. This continued even after the enactment of the African District Councils Ordinance in 1950, where the election of the councilors had to be approved by the provincial administration.

According to Nohlen, Krennerch and Thibaut (1999), elections have been held from Independence consistently in Kenya since 26th May 1963. In 1969 Parliamentary elections were conducted under *a de facto* single party electoral regulation. The system was abolished in December 1990 and by December 1991 the Multi-party system was reintroduced. The electoral laws were changed in 1992 by the Lobby groups, the National Convention Executive Council and later prepared by the Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG). To date Parliament has not passed the constitution of Kenya review commission Bill and constitution of Kenya Amendment Bill to prepare the way for extended democratic changes.

The electoral commission of Kenya was established in 1963 under section 41 of the Constitution of Kenya. Sections 42 and 42A spelt out main functions of the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK). Through constitutional amendments Electoral Commission has evolved over time particularly in its structure and functions to meet the administrative challenges. Following the repeal of Article 2 (A) of the Constitution and the re-introduction of multi-party politics in December 1991, the Electoral Commission of Kenya has faced many challenges ranging from lack of experience and knowledge gap to adequate legislation to enable it operate completely independence in its operations with regard to competitive multi-party politics.

While there has been a strong commitment by the Commission and the Government to ensure that electoral administration act independently, the process has been slowed by the stalemate in the current Constitutional review arising from differences within political parties. There has not been a common methodology available for the appointment of

Commissioners (currently at the discretion of the President), Financing election administration and proper legal regulation of political parties. According to the report by International Foundation for Elections systems,(2004) Electoral Commission of Kenya is facing both Internal and External Challenges which has to be strategically addressed in order to stay on course. The Internal challenges include improved professionalism, transparency and integrity in the electoral process, management of voter register, lack to enforce laws on conflict resolution within competing stakeholders, voting for Kenyans abroad, in Hospitals and in the jail. Other internal challenges include operational, communication and finally gender diversity.

On the other hand, the strength of the Commission mostly comes from the goodwill and trust they gained during the elections of the year,2002 and the referendum of the year 2005. The Kenyan public perceived the ECK as independent, credible and non-partisan body with infrastructure up to district level. The Commission has trained officials, proper network with partners and goodwill from international community. This is backed by adequate resources from the government.

The external challenges facing Electoral Commission of Kenya after the introduction of multi party democracy in 1991 are numerous. The commission has strived to ensure significant improvement in the electoral processes. This is reflected in the results of the general elections of 1992, 1997, 2002 and the referendum of 2005 which was declared generally by the stakeholder as free and fair. This was supported by intense negotiations by politicians through Inter Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) which negotiated the constitutional amendments including the fixing of two terms for the President and an additional ten commissioners, nominated by the opposition parties. This increased parity made Kenyans watch carefully the performance of ECK. The external environmental factors include political environment, legal and regulatory environment, institutional environment, economic/socio-cultural environment and technological environment.

Political environment has been very fluid for the ECK because the registration of many political parties makes it difficult to manage without a regulatory bill. This has been

compounded by lack of independent funding. To date the ECK is funded by the exchequer from the consolidated Fund. This is a limitation when it comes to independence with regard to political participation and interests. The unspecified general election dates, delay in the passage of election bill, delay in the registration of voters due to lack of identity cards and limited jurisdiction in the event that there is a need to create extra constituencies as need arises. The ECK has to seek parliamentary approval before creation of the constituencies. The regional political challenges are as a result of regional integration of countries in East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) coupled by proposed political federation. The federation may allow common passports, new guidelines for the region and the possibility of observation by regional parliament. Terrorism also hinders the movement of persons to certain areas.

The electoral malpractices such as bribery of voters, violence against opponents etc currently can not be handled by the ECK since they lack legal authority to apprehend and prosecute culprits. This is compounded by the constitutional reforms which the ECK has no control over. There is a need to have regulatory laws to curb Members of Parliament who cross to other parties without authority from their sponsoring parties. If such legislation was in place then it would be easy for the ECK to call for by-elections in their areas. Also there is the issue of insecurity and crime to women and special groups like the disabled who are yet to be protected by election laws.

Legal and regulatory environment has delayed the smooth operations of the ECK and as a result has failed to give a wider mandate to undertake functions such as conducting referendum, handle election complains and offences, manage election petitions and complains, appointment of Commissioners and funding of the commission.

It has also failed to address the issue of advanced voting for some categories of voters, regulation of political parties and fixing of election calendar for proper planning. The institutional influence also poses a challenge to the ECK. The institutions like Kenya police, local authorities and other Government departments and the civil society work in collaboration with ECK in the management of free and fair elections. Some times their

interest conflict for example the office of the President declaring new districts without consulting the ECK Local authorities in demarcation of electoral wards. The questions Kenyans are asking are, what policies and practices used in creating these institutions.

Economic and socio-cultural factors affect the operations of the ECK in that being a developing nation, a lot of basic needs are lacking such as food, shelter, water, health services and unemployment. This has made running free and fair elections very challenging because voters wait to be bribed by money or money equivalents for their votes. Thorough voter education is required to make Kenyans have informed choices. Development partners do assist in funding the process with some conditions. Population trends and historical clan considerations where electoral boundaries and polling stations are major concerned. Electoral malpractices such as violence, intimidation, abductions are normal practices during elections. The other factor which has posed a great challenge to the ECK is Technological advancement. Although ECK has computerized most of its departments at the headquarter, a lot needs to be done particularly in the areas such as Rapid changes in ICT,GIS/GPS in mapping, modern technology in media and communication centers and use of mobile communication devises.

1.2 The Research Problem

The General Elections of 2007 brought a lot of hue and cry on the credibility and the strategies which were implemented by the Electoral Commission to achieve free and fair results. The disputed parliamentary and presidential results left many wondering whether Electoral Strategies were adequate to produce credible free and fair election results. There was a communication laps between the returning officers at the constituencies and the Electoral Commission of Kenya headquarters where the final results were announced. The Commission therefore needs to change and strengthen the controls on receiving of results which are later announced to the public.

The ECK is a Constitutional office like Judiciary, the Public Service Commission and the Auditor general's office. The study will highlight the knowledge gap that is lacking in the strategy implementation as contained in their draft strategic plan document by IFES

(2007). If the election challenges are overcome, the country will produce good political leadership which eventually will contribute to the social economic development of Kenya, enhance peaceful co-existence amongst diverse communities and return Kenya to its right full place on the map of peace in Africa.

Many Scholars have conducted studies in strategy implementation in different industries/ areas of our economy. Among the key researchers in this area are Aosa (1992), Oloko (1999), Awino (2001), Koske (2003), Odadi (2002), Mumbua (2004), Olali (2006) and Mwangi (2006). Due to different environmental conditions affecting organizations studied, it would not be enough to say that by understanding the strategies in these organizations will explain conclusively the strategic challenges facing the ECK. Since no empirical study has been conducted on the ECK since its inception, the study would reveal the challenges facing strategy implementation for the proposed strategic plans for the year 2008-2013.

The study therefore will focus on the strategic implementation challenges faced by the ECK. The aim of the proposed study is to seek responses to the following questions.

- (i) The challenges the ECK is facing in the implementation of its strategic plan.
- (ii) Are there steps being taken currently to handle the challenges?

1.3 The Research Objectives

The research seeks to:

- (i) To determine the challenges faced by the Electoral Commission of Kenya in the strategy implementation.
- (ii) To find out measures taken by the Electoral Commission of Kenya to handle the challenges

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The results of this study will be useful to:

- (i) The ECK Commissioners and top management. This may be necessary

because they will know whether the current strategy should be fine tuned to march the future challenges.

(ii) The Kenyan people will gain confidence in that leaders declared winners in any election contests represent the choice of the people.

The stakeholders, particularly foreign agencies i.e the European Union, UNDP, African Union, IFES, USAID, IED, PMU etc will have confidence in Kenya and be able to do business with Kenya.

(iv) Other countries should take the ECK as a role model where their national elections will be bench marked.

(v) The study may add to the existing knowledge to the academic researchers who seek to establish the challenges faced in the implementation of strategic plans.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

According to Fred David (2003), Strategic Management allows organizations to be more proactive than reactive in shaping their own future. It makes an organization initiate and influence (rather than respond to) activities...to exert control over its own destiny. Organizations which successfully implement their strategies can reasonably expect improved performance in most areas of their operations. Managers at all levels interact, resulting in positive behavioral consequences. Strategy therefore provides organizations with consistency of actions. That means the process helps ensure that all organizational units are working towards the same objectives and purposes. The result therefore is beneficial to the organization. That is, the mental revelation that takes place as a result of engaging in the process by preparing managers to be proactive.

In reality, strategies are the end results which organizations strive to achieve. This included the activities, the methods and the decisions taken in order to achieve certain levels or points of success. Thompson and Strickerland (2003),Put it that strategies are at ends and these ends concern the purpose and objectives of the organization. According to Mintzberge and Quinn (1998), strategy is a plan, perspective, pattern and position. As a plan it's some sort of consciously intended course of action, a guideline to deal with a situation and a pattern which integrates organizational major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. As a position, it becomes a mediating force or match between the organizations as a position, it looks outside the organization seeking to locate the organization in the external environment and place it in a cohesive position. As perspective a strategy looks at the inside of the organization in this case it's a concept and a perspective being shared by the stakeholders through actions and intensions.

In practice, strategic decisions will always affect operational decisions.

Wu et al, (2004), argues that implementing strategies successfully is vital for any organization. Without proper implementation, even the most superior strategy will be

useless. Implementation requires adequate structures, proper systems and procedures, policies and rules, technological advancements, good leadership, human resources, rewards and support systems, funding and good practices of culture and traditions. There has to be a link between overall strategy and operational aspects of the organization. Any strategy which is not in tandem with the overall strategy will result to failure. Secondly, the real strategy advantage is achieved at optimal operational level. This requires reasonable competencies at every level for it to make sense.

An organization should take a strategy which fits its operational conditions. The idea here is to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and results in better organizational performance. A strategy will fit the organization's situation if its properly matched to the service target and the level of service demanded by the consumers. This must be aligned to the organization's external environment and resources at its disposal which can be used to optimize the output. All in all a good strategy should be one which can be sustained for along time – long term direction. Noble (1999), clarifies the distinctions between structural and interpersonal process views on strategy implementation. The structural perspectives focuses on formal organizational structures and control mechanisms while the interpersonal process is about understanding issues like consensus, behavior, diffusion, leadership implementation and communication

2.2 Features of Strategic Decisions

In whatever strategy the organization undertakes to implement, the key guide should be the growth of the organization, the relative positioning and the impact it will create to the environment. A strategy is the cause of action to achieve targets; it therefore means planning what must be done from now in order to reach the long term objectives and goals. It can also be a systematic plan for achieving a specific goal or results. According to Drucker (2006), 'Choosing a strategy involve considering the overall plan of development'. In strategic planning concerned is with exploiting opportunities, determining the future shape, size and posture of the organization and developing overall objectives and strategies. It's a wider examination of what to do in order to operate efficiently and increase stakeholders' confidence. This includes examining the

organization strengthens and weaknesses included gap analysis to establish the current status and where to be in the future.

In practice, strategies can be planned but sometimes there are emergent strategies which arise from the decisions taken by the organization. At the point of strategy implementation both planned and emergent strategies supplement each other particularly where communicated, interpreted, adopted and enacted. According to Noble (1999), "Implementing strategies successfully is about matching the planned and the realized strategy, which together aim at reaching the organizational vision". The components of strategy implementation such as communication, interpretation, adoption and action are not successive and there cannot be declined from one another. Strategy development and implementation is a continuous process, never-ending, integrated process requiring continuous reassessment and reformation. An important element of being ahead of others depends on having the capacity to develop and implement strategic and structural changes. According to Wu et al (2004) "Organization which are effective at strategy implementation successfully manage the six strategic supporting factors of action planning organizational structure, human resources, annual business plan, monitoring and control and linkages".

According to Gerry. Kevan. and Richard,(2006), "The success of translating strategy into action depends on the extent to which people are committed to it "This normally raises many challenges within the organization. People in organizations face the danger of being captives in the collective experience rooted in the past success of the organizational and institutional strategy to action require breaking down cultural inertia and overcoming resistance to change – unfreeze the organization before a new strategy is put in place. Top management must challenge the prevailing paradigm so that inertial constraints on a new strategy are reduced. The process of change is embraced in the organization.

A change in the environment of the organization particularly in new technology, world economic order with increased demand for high quality goods and services may lead to an unfreezing mechanism. However, in the case where there is no clear and dramatic

external force for change there are alternative ways of achieving the unfreezing process, Thompson and Strickland (1989). Management normally exaggerate, external signs of problems or threats, structural changes, set up different control systems, retire old employees and bring new ones to signal change. Sometimes competing views surface about causes and remedies for the problems. Functional heads defend their boundaries and control resource under them sometimes politically. To chart the way forward, planned strategic direction should come from the top emphasizing commitment to a new strategy direction. In pursuit of this, management should also consider a “safety net” for the future so as to refreeze the process thus confirming the organizational validity on the new strategy.

2.3 Strategy Implementation Process

‘This is communication, interpretation, adoption and enactment of strategic plan’ Noble (1999). A successful strategy will require sound implementation guidelines in the following key areas: appropriate structures, Human resource, cultural change, policies and rules, financial resources, systems and procedures, sound leadership, good communication and incentives, and tools and techniques applied in the transition from strategy to action.

According to Pearce and Robinson (1997), Strategy implementation requires the best way to organize ourselves to accomplish the mission” by interrogating where should the leadership come from? What values should guide our activities each day? And how can we shape rewards that encourage appropriate action? The firm focuses on internal approach as well as the external focus. The organization structure should be looked into and how the activities of the business are conducted particularly looking at the market for customers, competition, and supplier distribution channels. This must be coupled by the internal assessment of the organization such as business processes, leadership and organization culture.

Just as has been mentioned strategy implementation embraces all of those actions that are necessary to put a strategy into practice. Thompson (2005) argues that crafting and

executing a strategy are the heart and soul of managing an enterprise. It is a five face managerial process, namely: developing a vision, setting objectives, crafting a strategy to achieve the desired outcomes, implementing and executing the chosen strategy efficiently and effectively and finally monitoring the developments and taking timely corrective actions. The steps should involve identification of the key tasks to be performed, assigning tasks to individuals, co-ordination of separate tasks, designing of appropriate information systems, drawing specific programme of action including time and operating budget or performance levels. It also involve setting up system and comparing actual performance with standards, design incentives, controls and penalties for deviations from performance. This broadly can be divided into leadership, organization and functional implementation.

The actualization process starts with first putting the right personnel in the right places to ensure high chances of success. Ensure adequate incentives to motivate senior managers to emphasis goal achievement. To allocate responsibilities, management should ensure that tasks are matched with the characteristics of the individual job holder. This is because, different people have different talents in handling tasks such as entrepreneurial skills, scientific management, conservative or democratic styles are appropriate to a particular strategic environment. Grant (1998), states that without effective implementation, the best laid strategies are of little use. Critical to the success are the effectiveness as a leader in terms of eagerness to make decisions, energy in implementing them, and effectiveness in demanding loyalty and commitment from subordinates. The choice of the person to handle the job must be followed by giving the right incentives to motivate the job holder such as good salary and other perks like car, bonus etc.

Adopting the right organization structure for the strategy is another step in the strategy implementation. The organization structure normally relates to strategy taken. Organization structure must therefore be adopted in that context other wise the focus may be lost. Turbulent environments is aligned to competition and changes in technology with “organic” organization structures, less formal and hierarchical compared to business with stable environment which leads to mechanistic structures formally established

within strict hierarchy. According to Chaulder (1962) 'Structure is determined by strategy, and correspondingly that the successful implementation of a strategy can be aided by the adoption of an appropriate organization structure. The recognition of the strategy-structure link should lead strategists to consider how best to structure the organization to ensure the implementation of strategy.

Strategy implementation also involve relating individual business units or functional policies to the corporate strategy by communicating the organization strategy to individual department or division of functional managers, ensuring their commitment to the strategy and backing this up with a formal set of objectives at the divisional / function level to which management salaries may in part be tied. Howe (1986). The strategy for growth will require the organization to communicate the sales target to Production and Finance departments to ensure common commitment to goal and coordinated action. Marketing strategists must change to reflect this in their Production and Finance requirements. There needs a paradigm shift from the previous strategies to the new organization strategy. The views of insiders and outsiders can only be accomplished as a result of continual communication between all the persons involved.

Once a strategy and its implementation programmes have been agreed, a clear target and objectives must be set. According to Bashir (1996), active participation in establishing annual objectives can lead to acceptance and commitment. *"If you want people to run the organization as if it is their own"*, then active participation becomes inevitable. Monitoring, and establishing the reward systems to managers for the achievement of the targets must be instituted. The major challenge in the strategy implementation process is that the executives are normally exhausted before they translate their strategy concept into specific functional support programmes. Implementation being an operational and administrative task, it involve the internal working as much as its relationship with the external environment. For example task notification; clarification, job assignment and routine stabilization are among the important component of strategic implementation. A complete change of attitudes from staff is required to enable strategy implementation succeed. Professional strategists' emphasizes the need to develop a much greater

attachment of everybody from the top to the bottom. The real important change in an organization is a process of psychological transformation which demands considerable organization development talents on the part of service management concerned.

2.4 Challenges of Strategy Implementation

The development of multi – party politics globally has brought the need for conducting free and fair election as a basic democratic right of citizens. This makes a country appreciate the legitimacy of the government and the way the country is governed. The ECK needs to invest in value clarification and commitment amongst Staff, Commissioners and Stakeholders. Currently the organization is perceived by the general public as non – result oriented after the general election of 27th December, 2007; this is in contrast to the perception the public had after December, 2002 General Elections and the November 2005, referendum. A significant shift amongst the Commissioners and Staff in the manner elections are handled is required to restore the integrity of this very important institution and to make it accountable to its actions. The core values and the Electoral code of conduct needs to be reinforced through proper observation of Electoral laws.

Seminars and workshops conducted through hired professional consultants (IFES) have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation. For example weak management due to unclear roles between the Commissioners and the Secretariat staff, lack of proper funding and adequate structures to make it more efficient. Cultural changes which conforms to new political development in the county and lack of latest technological development in the voting systems, and process changes in conducting elections. Also the institution's lack of policy changes in the management of political parties is a big hindrance. These must be speedily addressed to overcome the above challenges. According to Alexander (1991), Giles (1999), Galpin (1998), Lare – Mankke (1994), Beer and Eisenstat (2000). The overwhelming majority of the literature has been on the formation side of the strategy and only lip service has been given to the other side of the coin, namely strategy implementation as a result of this, organizations still face major difficulties during the implementation process. It's evident that in future, there will be more skills required to handle tasks. Morgan (1988) stated that "For like surfers,

managers and their organizations do ride on a sea of change that can twist and turn with all the power of the ocean, Managers of the future would have to ride this turbulence with increase skill and many more competencies will be required”

In real life, strategy implementation is always as challenging as strategy choice. Abbass (2003) put it that a number of factors have to be considered which makes strategy implementation a success. Such are structures, systems and procedures, culture and traditions human resources, the capital, policies and rules, technology, leadership and reward and support systems. An organization may have a competitive advantage where its superior competencies in ideas are put into quick action. Normally, a numbers of changes do take place to alter the current state of things to the intended positions which includes programmes, policies, procedures and rules. Strategist or strategy developers transfer the ideas to operational levels where divisional and functional managers come into action to ensure effective implementation. Strategists usually continue to the implementation stage to ensure that it succeeds. The team will be able to predict the time and problems which implementation will face. Strategy developers have the commitment and attentions and possibly aware of the resources required. They have the basis to which the strategy was formulated and focus to the right direction.

According to Lynch (2000) “ Programmes for implementation of strategy may vary depending on the degree of uncertainty in predicting changes in the environment and size of the strategic change required” Full implementation programmes are employed where the organization had made a clear-cut, major change in strategic direction. Sometimes implementation programmes are gradual particularly where the future is not easily predictable; such like unpredictable market trends or unknown results of research and development. Sometimes where there is no clear way forward, selective implementation programmes may be applied. The ECK structure for example heavily depends on one person – The President. Despite the fact that multi – party politics is active globally, in Kenya, the president still appoint solely the Electoral Commissioners who therefore constitutes the secretariat staff. These together with the failure by parliament to enact

new laws to enable the Commission have teeth to bite the election offenders has made the ECK operations uncertain and ineffective because their fate lies with one individual.

There are many laws which the ECK has been unable to successfully enforce. For example, management barriers during the general elections, by – elections and the inability to influence parliament to pass laws to deal with election offences. This state of affairs has made it impossible for the ECK to handle political changes in the country. Alcantara (2001) Argues that effective strategy becomes difficult in cases where management experience problem which focus on activities dealing with routine and not new once, vision barriers which a rise when vision and strategies are not emphasized to employees and other stakeholders in a more comprehensive manner, resource barrier which means that resources are not purposefully deployed for the implementation of the of the strategy. For example the ECK budget wholly dependence on Treasury allocations which means the ECK cannot embark on a major strategy without the authority for funding from Treasury. To secure acceptance of change by management and employees is another barrier.

Multi – party democracy is sweeping the whole world and nations which are reluctant to embrace democracy are isolated by the rest of the world in terms of economic, social and political associations. Porter (1991) argues that organizations must be flexible to respond rapidly to competitive and market changes. In Kenya for example between the years 1992 to 2007, registered political parties are about 140 competing to form the Government during any General Election. This shows that there is serious challenge for parties to have a representation in parliament. The result to date is a coalition government and coalition opposition which is being muted in parliament by Members of Parliament who failed to get appointed in the cabinet. For parties in the coalition Government, they have been made to nurture some form of cohesiveness in order to stay relevant in politics and be a head of rivals.

Moreover the Kenyan multi-party politics has been very unstable and there has been increased competition for the upcoming political parties. There are internal factors that

have affected party's performance particularly those parties which were ill prepared to handle election activities such as recruitment of members, funding of the party operations including a strong secretariat, formation of regional networks to co-ordinate members and recruit strong candidates and sponsors to enable them compete effectively in the elections. Furthermore, the political parties bill has been delayed by parliament to the extent that it has become a big impediment to the progress of multi – party democracy in Kenya. More importantly, the level of voter awareness has increased significantly. Voters have the right of choice when voting for the candidate. The voter also expect some level of representation both in parliament and outside in return, hence change in voter attitude and the quality of representation.

The removal of section 2 A in 1991 opened the political arena in Kenya politics. The electoral laws were changed in 1992 by the lobby groups, the National Convention Executive Council and later prepared by the inter-party parliamentary groups (IPPG). This was composed of 36 opposition parties and 38 KANU legislators pending the review of the entire constitution in 1999. To date parliament has not passed the constitution of Kenya review commission bill and constitution of Kenya amendment bill to prepare the way for extended democratic changes. According to Nohlen et al (1999),“The constitution of Kenya of the 10th April, 1969 with amendments until April, 1998. National Assembly and Presidential Elections Act of 1969 (amended several times) and presidential and parliamentary election regulations” Most of the legal provisions regulating the elections are laid down in the constitution. This followed the principles of universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage which states that “all Kenyans citizens will fully possess civil and political rights and with a minimum age of 18 years are entitled to register as voters.

In order to encounter challenges and more the ECK still focuses on full implementation of its strategic plan whose aim is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of election process in Kenya. Through their consultants (IFES), they came up with strategic plan of 2004 – 2008 which was not fully implemented due to many logistical huddles. The same document has been revised and improved in the seminar conducted in the workshop of

18th June, 2007. The improved strategic plan if implemented will ensure that the ECK meets the stakeholders expectations, provides the ECK with a common language and clearly understood roles; guarantee satisfaction through free and fair, credible and professionally conducted elections. The theme “managing for value” and the strategies are based on four perspectives. First people secondly customers (stakeholders), thirdly Financial Funding and Risk; and finally Control. When the ECK focuses on these four perspectives, the key result will be satisfied stakeholders, delighted stakeholders, efficient and effective processes and peace and prosperity for the nation.

Most important in this regard is the Kenyan political stand in the regional economy. Peace in Kenya is paramount for the economic growth in the countries of East and Central African including Sudan, Somali and Ethiopia. This can be explained by the recent political disturbances in Kenya on the December 2007. Firstly, Mombassa oil refinery serves Uganda and Rwanda and the recent disturbances in Kenya adversely affected the supplies to these countries directly. Secondly in the past decades countries around Kenya had political problems which has destroyed the infrastructure already put in place (Somali, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda etc). This left Kenya as the only peaceful nation within the region. When they return to democracy, the ECK may be used by the neighboring countries to benchmark their electoral standards. This is where the ECK stands challenged. They need to come up with effective procedures and policies and take a leading role in advising these young democracies how to conduct proper elections.

The third aspect is in the development of Technological advancements which will enable Kenyans abroad, in hospitals and jails to vote and exercise their democratic rights. The ECK needs to have facilities for advance voting which includes all eligible voters. Innovations which provide fast class information Communication Technology – the ‘e – voting services’ is necessary. Fourthly, a free for all in the registration of political parties has made party members to move from one party to another without hindrance. This has made some political parties to become very weak because some operate in the brief cases of individual officials who transfer them to others like products for sale. (ODM and ODM-K case). If the trend is allowed to persist then the ECK may loose the necessary

control required on political parties. The creation of the office of registrar of political parties from 1st July, 2008 has given the ECK the mandate to regulate the existence of political parties. Also, the ECK should ensure prudent measures are taken to realign the policies and procedures for the registration and deregistration of political parties and party activist including civil society and human right bodies who incite members of the public against some institutions. Over delayance by Parliament to enact new laws and the reluctance by the Ministry of Justice, National Cohesion and Constitution Affairs has cause more harm than good to cushion cases of political violence and impunity experienced in Kenya politics.

2.5 Successful Strategy Implementation

Wu et al (2004) stated that “Implementing strategy successfully is vital for any organization”. without proper implementation, even the most superior strategy will not create impact” Implementation involve adequate resources such as Finance, Human Resources, proper allocated time, adequate Technological advancement and focus. Establish a chain of command which guide people how they relate to each functional team and what to do with whom when a decision has to be made. The functional structures lead to the assignment of responsibilities/tasks to identified individual team heads or groups. The management of the process includes close monitoring of results to ensure that things are moving as per plan. This includes comparing benchmarks or standards of best practices, evaluation of the efficiency of the process, identifying and timely controlling of variances by taking corrective actions.

Once the strategy has been designed, the managers focus on six components to ensure effective execution: structure, systems, shared values (culture), skills, style and staff. According to Pierce and Robinson (1999). ‘The structure refers to the shape of the organization’. It is described in terms of height, the width and the complexity. The ECK has well spread structure headed by the Commission Chairman, with a networked of 71 districts in Kenya. The bulk of staff hired by the ECK is from public sector which needs to be blended with private sector recruits. These calibers of staff see changes in a routine perspective and are reluctant to embrace new approach to change management.

Currently, the Commission has started the process of recruiting from private sector. This will put in place required skills necessary to steer the organization through the strategic plan. The Commission endeavor to have well-trained, professionally competent and self confident staff, dedicated to the delivery of credible elections. IFES,(2007).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The proposed research was a case study. This is because the objective of the study was to establish the challenges facing the ECK in strategy implementation already in place. The case study aimed at providing a detailed understanding of how organizations prepare themselves to successfully implement strategic plans so as to fulfill their intended goals.

3.2 Data Collection

A personal interaction with employees through questionnaire was used to collect the primary and secondary data on the challenges faced. The interviewees were composed of commissioners and the Secretariat staff. This included senior and middle level staff. In the questionnaire guides, there was a section requiring the interviewees to state the steps taken to improve on the challenges facing the strategy implementation in the organization. Currently, the structure of the ECK is composed of the chairman and the Commissioners, the Commission Secretary with two deputies (Electoral Process and Corporate Services) supported by several heads of departments and their staff. The interview focused on these officers. This enabled a clarification of doubts and included findings from other professionals participating in the strategic plans.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data obtained was analyzed as per content based on the information collected from questionnaires and other reports such as proposed strategic plan of 2008-2013 including booklets. The method analyzed data as per transcribed interview extracted from information contained in the questionnaire forms pre-designed for the interviewee. Questionnaires were circulated to the Chairman of the ECK, the Commission Secretary and his two Deputies, Nine District Election coordinator and Seven Clerical Officers of the Electoral Commission of Kenya-Head Office and Districts and the response will be analyzed as per content.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The research findings are analyzed from the questionnaires circulated to Commissioners and staff members. The questionnaires were divided in two parts. Part A required personal details while part B requires challenges faced in the strategy implementation process. The main challenges faced in the strategy implementation includes amongst others: structure, systems and procedures, culture and traditions, policies and rules' technology, leadership, human resources, funding, reward and support systems. The summarized data reflect the response from Commissioners, Managers and Staff both from head quarters and various districts in the country.

4.2 Awareness of the Strategic Plan Currently in Place at the ECK

The respondents were aware of the strategic plan taking place at the ECK. The Ad Hoc Committee was formed early in 2004 to develop strategic plans and together with the International Foundation on Electoral Systems (IFES), several workshops have been conducted to sensitize Commissioners and top Management on the strategic plan. The first strategic plan was developed to cover five years; 2004-2008. It was prepared in a highly participatory manner through workshops with Commissioners, Management, and Staff. They analyzed the internal and external environments, developed priority areas, determined indicators and developed an 18 months operation plan. This was followed by an annual review conducted at Sarova Salt Lick on June 18-20, 2007. It was conducted by IFES and co-funded by the ECK. In attendance were the ECK Commissioners, Senior Managers and the development partners.

Overall the workshop objectives were to review the vision, mission and core values of the ECK. They examined the internal and external environments and the impact on the strategic plan and how to address the emerging issues and conducted SWOT analysis. The workshop also reviewed policies and systems, structure and strategic fit in the current strategic plan. Finally an action plan was developed to guide the preparation of the next strategic plan of 2008-2013. It emerged from the respondents that a lot of

training has been done at the top level management but the lower level staff has not been prepared on the impending strategy implementation. The difficulty therefore is that management are unable to operationalize the strategic plans. They sight inadequacies in staff and finances to hire experts as the main reason why they are unable to implement the strategic plan.

4.3.0 CHALLENGES IN STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

4.3.1 Challenges in Structure

Most respondents agreed that structure has posed a serious challenge to the organization. Mainly, the challenge has been separation of duties between the commissioners and the secretariat staff which is not clearly defined and in practice has resulted in overlapping roles and conflict of interest. Strategy implementation has been frustrated as a result of this and the table below explains the respondents review regarding the structure.

Table 1:- Challenges of Structure in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(3) 75%	(1) 25%
DECs	9	(6) 67%	(3) 33%
Sup & Clerks	7	(5) 71%	(2) 29%
Total	20	(14) 70%	(6) 30%

As indicated in the table above, it's overwhelming that 70 per cent of the respondents concur that structure as it is currently is a challenge to strategy implementation at the ECK. Only a few respondents that are 30 per cent disagreed. The respondents agree that with a confused structure, there are overlapping roles by Committees, poor coordination of activities, lack of accountability by respective officers and a waste of resources.

The respondents have stated that the ECK has taken necessary steps to overcome challenges by inviting stake holders to attend seminars, workshops and meetings conducted by hired consultants. They have also organized in-house seminars where most of these problems have been discussed between the commissioners and staff. The same has been taken to regional and international meetings and an agreement has been reached that a new structure be put in place which will eliminate the confusion. This includes a professional Secretariat headed by a Commission Secretary. The position should be at the level of Permanent Secretary in the civil service. Below him/her are two deputies and other heads of departments who should be able to implement the strategic plans.

4.3.2 Challenges in Systems and Procedures

The respondents stated that the ECK systems and procedures have posed a problem resulting in conflicting roles between the commissioner and staff. This has slowed the strategy implementation process because of the bureaucracy and lack of controls and monitoring of progress. The table below shows respondents view on the systems and procedures.

Table 2:- Challenges of Systems and Procedures in the Strategy Implementation process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(4) 100%	(0) 0
DECs	9	(7) 78%	(2) 22%
Sup & Clerks	7	(6) 86%	(1) 14%
Total	20	(17) 85%	(3) 15%

As can be observed from the table above, 85 per cent of the respondents agree that systems and procedures is a challenge to strategy implementation process, only 15 per cent

disagree. Due to ineffective systems and procedures, strategic plan implementation cannot be fully achieved hence performance targets are not met.

The ECK has embarked on the improvement of systems, processes and practices. This will soon increase efficiency and effectiveness both internal and external to the organization. Seminars workshops and meetings are being conducted to educate people including suggestions are also floated on the decentralization of ECK operations to provincial levels. During major exercises, ECK has all ways lined professionals to come in and assist in the speeding up of the tasks. With the enactment of the Political Parties bill, effective 1st July 2008, and envisaged constitutional amendment a lot of improvements are expected to improve systems and procedures in the delivery of the services to the stake holders. The ECK has also formed the election peace committees, national and international observers. They have also given media houses freedom to report during elections. The announcement of results as the polling stations has improved the Electoral procedures. Mass registration of voters and the introduction of voter register inspection and civic education of voters has improved the systems and procedures of electoral process.

4.3.3: Challenges in Culture and Traditions

The respondents mostly agreed that culture and traditions have stifled ECK strategy implementation processes. This is mainly due to the way ECK was formed. It's understood that the bulk of current staff members were transferred from various Ministries to form the ECK. That brought in pure civil service caliber of staff who maintains a particular work ethics. The challenges posed by this is because the political environment has dramatically changed with citizens and other stakeholders demanding high service level commensurate to value for their money but unfortunately this has not been achieved since there is a variance between staff and commissioners in terms of work style. The table below shows the views from the respondents regarding culture and traditions.

Table 3:-Challenges of Culture and Traditions in the Strategy Implementation Process.

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners And Mgt	4	(3) 75%	(1) 25%
DECs	9	(9) 100%	(0)
Sup & Clerks	7	(5) 71%	(2) 29%
Total	20	(17) 85%	(3) 15%

As illustrated above, 85 per cent of the respondents concur that culture and traditions are a challenge to strategy implementation process. Those who do not agree with this are 29 per cent. The existence of culture and tradition as a challenge has resulted in resistance to change and old approach to work, lack of modern skills, collective responsibility and delay in the systems and procedures of work hence strategic plans are not timely implemented. Employees are trained at high cost but this goes to the drain. As a result of this there is staff de-motivation and lack of succession plan. It has also deterred innovation. Sometimes culture and traditions has caused delays in provision of services and resulted in clashing of programmes.

In order to overcome the challenges, ECK has tried to enforce the code of conduct and develop shared values and expectations to harmonize culture and traditions. A lot of workshops, training and meetings have been organized. This included Commissioners and Management staff members who are being facilitated by the outside consultants. These meetings have emphasized affirmative action, particularly in the recruitment of staff.

4.3.4 Challenges in Policies and Rules

The respondents agree that the ECK policies and rules have been a challenge in the strategy implementation. There are recommendations for the development of new policies and rules but the implementation has not been effected. The rules enforced have been selectively applied at individual's discretion. To some extent the policies and rules are not clearly defined and explained to staff so that they may understand and obey them. This has made coordination across the organization for example such from Headquarters to the Districts and between departments difficult. The table below analyses the respondents view on the policies and rules.

Table: 4 Challenges of Policies and Rules in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(4) 100%	(0)
DECS	9	(7) 78%	(2) 22%
Sup & Clerks	7	(5) 71%	(2) 29%
Total	20	(16) 80%	(4) 20%

From the table above 85 per cent of the respondents are in agreement that policies and rules is a challenge to strategy implantation, only 20 per cent disagree. Policies and rules have been a challenge in many ways for example, in many occasion, the ECK has been called a toothless dog in cases where some of the electoral policies and rules cannot be enforced since they are not anchored in the constitution. Also, the coordination of departmental functions mostly is impaired to the extent that unity of purpose is compromised. Departmental Managers operate at their discretion and mostly serve their personal interest. This result in non achievement of result for the overall organization goal

The ECK has tried to overcome these challenges by reviewing of the non-complainant policies and rules and tried to harmonize them to strategic plans. This has been through Seminars, workshops and meetings. Circulars and Memos are regularly issued by the Commission Secretary and Heads of Departments to remind employees of the Commission about the adherence to the policies and rules. There has been constant reminder by the Commission to the Parliamentarians to enact laws which will reinforce certain policies and rules and encourage autonomy of funding to enable them implement strategic plans.

4.3.5 Challenges in Technology

The respondents agree that technology has been a challenge to strategy implementation. Most processing systems are still manual, thus making it difficult to meet the required efficiency in terms of results. Some field officers and staff are not trained to work with computers that make it difficult to achieve accurate reports from them. Some even lack the requisite capacity to handle computers. Coordination between Headquarters and District Offices during normal working period is not net worked thus making it difficult to achieve timely reports. The Election results are still relayed manually or transported physically to Nairobi to the tallying center before officially announced. The voters register has errors and mostly gives duplicated names. Sometimes names miss or registered in different polling stations. The table below explains the respondents view about technology.

Table 5: - Challenges of Technology in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(3) 75%	(1) 25%
DECs	9	(7) 78%	(2) 22%
Sup & Clerks	7	(5) 71%	(2) 29%
Total	20	(15) 75%	(5) 25%

The table above indicates that 75 per cent of the respondents agree that technology is a challenge to the strategy implementation. On the other hand 25 per cent of the respondents say that technology is not a challenge. In that case, technology has posed challenges such as on-line registration of voters, voting outside the Country, in hospitals and jail also it caused loss of data and poor record keeping. In most cases, certain strategic decision cannot be implemented without information technology applications. The existing systems are not configured to the desired levels and the resulting direct outcomes cannot be achieved. Since majority of staff are not computer compliance, this might render the available ICT systems underutilized and have no impact to ECK strategic plan.

To overcome the challenges, ECK has developed ICT policy to be implemented soon. Staff training has started with recent hiring of more personnel to assist in bolstering the process. District offices have been supplied with desktops, laptops, fax machines and generators. The upgrading of existing systems for better result is incorporated in the revised strategic plan to be implemented soon. This will involve net working of all district offices to Head quarters.

4.3.6 Challenges in Leadership

The respondents agree that in most cases leadership to steer strategy implementation has been a challenge. Top management sight the level of exposure of Mangers as not adequate to enable the implementation of strategic plans. Uniformity in the approach is lacking where managers pull in different directions. One group is experienced while the other group is inexperienced. The younger employees feel left out of decisions. This is compounded by the way the Commission was constituted. The constitution states that once a Commissioner is appointed they acquire tenure of office which makes them independent to any office or person. The table below shows the respondents perception about leadership.

Table 6:-Challenges of Leadership in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(4) 100%	(0) 0%
DECs	9	(5) 56%	(4) 44%
Sup & Clerks	7	(3) 43%	(4) 57%
Total	20	(12) 60%	(8) 40%

The table above indicates that 60 per cent of the respondents concur that leadership is a challenge to strategy implementation process. On the other hand 40 per cent does not hold the same view. The main challenge with leadership has been sighted as disunity and inadequate knowledge and understanding of what strategy implementation is all about. This has led to dischantment and non-commitment. It has slowed the implementation of the strategic plans due to bureaucracies. People develop cold feet to each other which result to last minute decisions which sometimes are difficult to implement. Resources are wasted due to poor coordination and decisions.

The management has organized workshops, meetings and seminars where collective responsibility of managers towards the organization goal has been emphasized. Recruitment of staff has been targeted to open market where different talents have been sort to blend the old government staff inherited at the inception of the Commission. There has also been transparent and involvement of stakeholders in most decisions being taken by ECK regarding the electoral processes. In some cases, top leadership of the Commission has made their demands public including demanding the enactment of laws which will allow the ECK to operate with some independence such as the law regulating political parties and demarcation of electoral boundaries.

4.3.7 Challenges in Human Resource

The respondents agreed that the currently the staff to handle strategic changes at the ECK is a challenge. The current labour force lacks the capacity to implement the recommendations in the strategic plan without the assistance of outside consultations. This is because they lack relevant training and skills which can motivate them to take new tasks. The table below explains the respondents view on human Resource challenges.

Table 7: Challenges of Human Resource in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(3) 75%	(1) 25%
DECs	9	(5) 56%	(4) 44%
Sup & Clerks	7	(5) 71%	(2) 29%
Total	20	(13) 65%	(7) 35%

The table above indicates that 65 per cent of the respondents agree that Human Resources is challenge to strategy implementation, 35 per cent of the respondents do not concur.

However the respondents feel that the human resource available can be empowered through training and will be able to handle strategic challenges facing the organization. The impact of inadequate human resource has slowed implementation of strategic plan due to lack of appropriate skills. This has resulted in poor service to the stakeholders arising from confused management styles and wrong decisions coupled with haphazard coordination and implementation of strategic plans.

Currently the ECK has proposed new structure which will reinforce the current one and bring in new with more skilled staff to build and strengthen capacity. Further more, training as a way of developing personnel is being undertaken at all levels of the establishment. The emphasis at the moment is to recruit professionally qualified staff. The performance contracts are also being introduced to monitor the achievements at bench mark levels.

4.3.8 Challenges in Reward and Support Systems

Generally the respondents agreed that no rewards have been developed by the organization to recognize the efforts of workers when they achieve outstanding performance. The same applies to District Election Coordinators but the supervisors and clerks have a different view. Majority believed that their efforts are adequately being rewarded. The table below explains the views as collected from the respondents.

Table 8: -Challenges of Reward and Support Systems in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(4) 100%	(0) 0%
DECs	9	(6) 67%	(3) 33%
Sup & Clerk	7	(3) 43%	(4) 57%
Total	20	(13) 65%	(7) 35%

The overall response from the above table indicates that 65 per cent agree that no rewards and support systems are in place to compensate employees. 35 per cent are satisfied that the organization has adequate reward and support systems in place. Due to the absence of this incentive in a wider scale the organization face challenges in the implementation of strategic plans. The challenges range from staff de-motivated, performance below average due to lack of commitment, lack of proper procedure which contribute to the haphazard promotion of staff who are good in lobbying. The other challenge is that when a strategic plan is implemented, employees are not sure whether their jobs will be secure because new changes will take place.

The ECK has been commending staff for outstanding performance and has come up with a reward strategy / policy to be implemented soon. This includes identification of outstanding performer for promotion, trainings and proper job placement. Increased packages such as medical schemes and car loans have been implemented to motivate and retain workers who may choose to leave the organization for better terms elsewhere. Also the allowance known as honoraria has been introduced to reward exceptional achievement under extraneous conditions.

4.3.9 Challenges in Funding

The respondents from commissioners and management agree that funding of the ECK functions have been a challenge. Every time ECK has a project to undertaking, approval must be obtained from Treasury. This has created impediments in the implementation of strategic plans. Sometimes funds are inadequate to cutter for projects as planed. Good strategic plans are put on hold or are often reviewed or shelved completely because of lack of funds. This has impacted negatively on the performance of the Commission. The District Election Coordinators are very much concerned about the inadequate funding. This has made them not conduct their key functions satisfactorily particularly during registration of voters. This is a key function which has been conducted peace meal every time due to inadequate funding. The supervisors and clerks also have the same feeling. This is explained in the table below

Table 9:-Challenges of Funding in Strategy Implementation Process

Category	Number	Percentages	
		Yes	No
Commissioners and Mgt	4	(3) 75%	(1) 25%
DECs	9	(9) 100%	(0) 0%
Sup & Clerk	7	(5) 71%	(2) 29%
Total	20	(17) 85%	(3) 15%

As indicated above, 85 per cent of the respondents agree that funding pose a serious challenge. Only 15 percent does say that funds are sufficient to carry out the ECK strategic plans. Other challenges caused by inadequate funding are underemployment of required personnel to carry out tasks, purchase of required equipments to conduct core functions such as vehicles, office equipments etc. Hiring of skilled man power, delays in projects etc. finally the organization is seen as a non-performer to the stakeholders.

Arising from this situation, the ECK has in the past been seeking funds from the donor community and other development partners such as UNDP, USAID, CIDA, Democratic Development Donor Groups (DDDG) and others. The ECK has also scaled down its activities by prioritizing them, creating a good working relationship with different Government departments such as Central Government and local authorities. They have also embarked on the efficient management of available resources i.e capital items and also strictly working on approved budget allocations. There has also been a campaign to pass a bill that will make the ECK budget passed by Parliament and obtain finances through consolidated fund.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary, Discussions and Conclusions

The study seeks to determine the challenges faced by the Electoral Commission of Kenya in the strategy implementation process. It finds out measures or steps put in place by the ECK to handle the challenges encountered since the inception.

5.1.1 Strategy Implementation at the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK)

The challenges facing the ECK arose from the Constitution adopted at the Independence and used to conduct the first General Elections of 26th May, 1963. The subsequent struggle for power amongst political leaders at that time made the Constitution be amended several times to enable the Government of the day run a de facto single party electoral regulations. During that period, the elections were organized and supervised by the Provincial Administration. This continued up to December, 1990 when Multi-Party politics was re-introduced. Kenyans were eager for political change and in 1992 the Lobby groups, the National Convention executive Council and later Inter-Party Parliamentary Groups (IPPG) met and amended some sections [Article 2(A)] of the Constitution to allow the first Multi-Party elections of December, 1992.

These groups made proposals in the amendments of the Constitution and prepared the Constitution of Kenya review Commission bill which to date has not been passed by Parliament. The ECK office was hurriedly re-constituted under Sections 41, 42 and 42 A with 22 Commissioners including the Chairman. A secretariat staff was constituted mainly with Members from different Ministries. These groups started the organization and conducted the elections. Since then, elections have been conducted from the years 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007 with same laws. The ECK also conducted the referendum of November, 2005 to determine whether Kenyans agreed with the implementation of the new Constitution. Whereas the results from the respondents agree that they are aware of the impending strategy implementation at the ECK, majority concur that there are challenges faced in the following areas in strategy implementation as briefly discussed below:

5.1.2 Structure

The majority of respondents agree that structure at the ECK currently is confusing with Commissioners and Secretariat staff having conflicting roles. The management of the Commission should do the following to correct the situation:

- I. Come up with a clear structure separating roles of Commissioners and Secretariat
- II. Write new job descriptions for each Secretariat staff of the Commission
- III. Develop performance contracts for Senior Management.
- IV. Bench mark the job descriptions so that each employees' performance is measured using set targets.
- V. Set up job evaluation Committee to give recommendations on the overall performance of individual employee

5.1.3 Systems and Procedures

The study shows that lack of systems and procedures has slowed the strategy implementation process. Management should eliminate the bureaucracies which are experienced whenever a service is required by stakeholders. The ineffective systems and procedures have hindered the achievement of performance targets. Changed practices are required to enable processing of clientele both Internal and External to the organization efficient. The running of elections which is a process beginning with voter registration, civic education, voting arrangements and announcement of results, should be made as efficient and as transparent as possible to avoid fighting for the outcome.

5.1.4 Culture and Traditions

This is an impediment to strategy implementation as revealed by the study. Most employees were transferred from civil service and incorporated in run the ECK Management. These calibers of staff have certain levels of work ethics which is purely civil service. It is not easy to transform their working mentality to conform to changes in management of competitive electoral process required in Kenya today. The study revealed resistance to change, lack of skills to handle modern work challenges, lack of collective responsibility amongst Managers which has hindered the strategy implementation. As a result of this, Management has embarked on recruitment of staff outside the main civil service to blend the current human resources. Training, workshops and meeting are being organized to educate staff on the need to embrace strategic plans as a way of serving stakeholders better. Involvement of outside Consultants particularly in strategy implantation and embracing affirmative action are the latest steps being implemented.

5.1.5 Policies and Rules

Policies and Rules practiced at the ECK are a challenge to the strategy implementation as revealed by the study. The Organization does not have clear policies and rules governing its management plans. This has brought conflicts between Commissioners and Managers where each group accuses each other of interfering in their roles. Sometimes decisions are made at Plenary and not implemented because Managers do not have clear policies and rules to follow. This has resulted in non achievement of results which is most needed by the ECK. Currently, Management has embarked on the development of code of conduct which includes new policies and rules. The human resources department has produced this document and implemented it beginning September, 2008 to guide employees on the overall expected employment guidelines. All these steps should shape the organization in one direction.

5.1.6 Technology

The study indicates that technology is a challenge at the ECK. This has retarded strategy implementation which is needed to improve the efficiency of the organization. It has been

observed that with the current demand for service from the ECK by stakeholders, the absence of adequate technology to facilitate the operations of departments particularly Elections, Finance, Procurement and Supplies, Public Relations and Human Resources will render the ECK thoroughly ineffective. This was experienced during the previous elections where results from constituencies were to be transferred manually to the tallying centers at KICC for announcement. Stakeholders seriously complained that some scrupulous Returning Officers had tempered with the results in favour of certain candidates. This resulted in National protests and death. It is observed that the ECK has embarked on comprehensive programmes to upgrade the existing ICT systems to include all areas of the organization plus networking District Offices. There are also proposals to have the ECK offices at every Provincial Head Quarters or Constituencies to improve efficiency in serving the Public.

5.1.7 Leadership

Leadership is the ability to influence people to follow you. The follow ship should be voluntary not forced. The ECK has faced challenge according to the respondents. Majority of Managers lack the necessary exposure to influence other employees to undertake strategic plans in the organization. There are several barriers in leadership at the ECK which includes age, Level of exposure, level of education and quality of staff amongst others. In the past, Commissioners were being appointed based on their political affiliations; this was carried to recruitment of staff. It has led to people in the organization having their loyalty to individual Commissioners other than the Commission. As a result of this, employees of the Commission have been pulling in different directions. It has further been observed that disciplinary cases are difficult to handle because of the staff relationship with individual Commissioners. This kind of culture has made leadership difficult particularly with the current blend of Commissioners. The Commission has embarked on the recruitment of staff from the open market conducted through competitive interviews. This will bring in new ideas in the ECK Management As a result strategy implementation will be effected without much hi-cup as it is today.

5.1.8 Human Resources

The ECK as is constituted currently lacks the pre-requisite man power required to serve as a modern organization. The study indicates that to implement a strategy, external Consultants must be involved to steer the process. This is the reason why from 2004, after the first development of the strategic plan, no steps have been taken to implement the programme. The Management has embarked on the training and policy formulation which will see new recruitment targeting private sector employees to blend the current professional civil servants who started the ECK. The proposed new structure if fully implemented will see the organization implement its strategic plans without a hindrance. The performance contracts are being developed and each Manager will be bench Marked on the expected deliverables. This would therefore see the ECK performance improve.

5.1.9 Reward and Support Systems

The respondents see the ECK as a pure extension of the Government department where the only reward is basic salary slightly above the civil service. When it comes to strategy implementation, employees expect much more than just salary. For example they expect job security, new packages, prospect for future growth which includes promotions. They also expect that people who cannot cooperate with new challenges will be guaranteed good exit packages. In the absence of these as is the case currently, the ECK is unable to implement its strategic plans on time. There is lack of commitment by management. This has led to lobbying by staff to get fixed in positions which are available. The ECK has realized the loophole and has embarked on introducing packages such as Car Loans, Trainings both locally and overseas. There is also the proposed performance contracts which if implemented will measure performance and reward according to outstanding achievements.

5.1.10 Funding

The study revealed that the ECK operations have been hindered by restrictions from the Ministry of Finance-The Treasury because of the control of the ECK budget. Unlike the ECK, other government departments' particularly Constitutional offices draw their funds from the Consolidated Fund after the budget is passed by Parliament. Proposals have

been made to change and have the ECK be treated the same but because of political interests, the Constitution has not been amended to recognize this very important legislation. The challenge posed by this include, hiring of competent staff, purchase of necessary assets and undertaking needed projects to transform this very important organization. The Management has realized this problem and has occasionally sought assistance from the Donor Community which has responded positively. There has also been a push that this bill is passed as soon as practicable to allow the ECK financial independence to operate effectively.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

The study faced numerous challenges. These challenges include issues which are quantitative in nature of the research. The data obtained from the study was analyzed as per content which made it impossible to infer results to other similar organizations such as the Judiciary, the Attorney Generals Office and the Auditor General Office. It is also important to point that the time taken to carry out the study was not enough taking in to account that the political environment including the Public were pointing fingers at the ECK because of their poor performance in the last general elections. This could not give interviewees ample time to concentrate and give the most informed answers in the questionnaires.

The other limitation would be the focus on challenges of strategy implementation. This was in disregard to other important areas like efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of strategy implementation. Further more, in practice, case studies have limitations of subjectivity based on the way the researcher interprets the information given by the respondents. Sometimes the inherent danger of false generalization is due to lack of standard rules and policies to follow when collecting information from the respondents. Its further compounded by the sample size which could be very small and unrealistic when looked at in a broader picture. This includes the assumptions made by the researcher which may not turn out to be realistic.

The focus of study was strategy implementation which ignored other aspects of strategy as is practiced. This ignored strategy processes, a whole range of activities which would have brought to light several important information useful to the research. This means therefore, the research was limited to a small scale since the entire strategy process was ignored. It can therefore be concluded that the study can act as a panacea to challenges of strategy implementation at the ECK.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

The ECK was recently constituted under intense political lobbying and subsequent Constitutional amendments to anchor it in the Constitution. It has not had any study of this nature to bring out challenges that it is facing in various areas of its' operations. It is therefore advisable to conduct more research in this organization to bring out the necessary steps they have taken to implement strategic plans and how it is progressing.

This should cover even other Constitutional Offices in Kenya which may face similar challenges and comparison be made to determine which organizations are improving in this area.

5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

A lot more needs to be done at the ECK in the areas of Training both on the job and collages, particularly in strategy making and implementation. Training should focus on the Commissioners, Commission Secretary, the two deputies and heads of departments plus their deputies. This is because; they are the once charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing strategies at the ECK. Managers with specialization skills in this area should be given a leading role to play. This would improve the performance of the Commission and make it fit in the level of modern organization. Top management should negotiate with the relevant authorities on the issue of independent funding. Financing from the Consolidated Fund would allow the ECK to undertake its' projects without influence or obstruction from Treasury.

It is evident from the study that the ECK strategies have been discussed and formulated since 2004 by Commissioners and Senior Staff. The process has not been introduced to

middle and lower level staff. This boardroom approach should be stopped and the whole process taken to the next level of implementation. Top management should take the lead and ensure that strategies are implemented. This will make them take control of the process and not lose track of what they wanted to do. It will also address the issue of emerging strategies and its' timely implementation. Most people who take part in this kind of process would want to identify themselves with it. This should be encouraged for commitment and outstanding performance. The employees who are unable to cooperate with the requirements of the strategy implementation should be allowed to exit the organization and give room for the process to take the direction it was intended to take.

An elaborate mode of communication across the organization must be developed and practiced so that every step taken by management to improve the strategy is clearly understood. The information flow should be up –down and down-up the organization. It should also include other stakeholders who are not directly involved in the daily operations of the organization such as external to the organization. Regular meetings with stakeholders including staff are encouraged. Clear discussions and way forward must be given in such forums. External Consultants are recommended where the ECK staff does not have the required skills to make the process succeed. All these should be undertaken with a view to considering the organization vision and mission statements in light of challenges emerging in the process.

Appendix 1

The questionnaire

PART A: PERSONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL DETAILS.

1. Name of the respondent (optional) -----

2. What is your current position in ECK? -----

3. How many years have you been with ECK?

(a) Below 5 years (-----)

(b) 5-10 years (-----)

(c) 11-15 years (-----)

(d) Over 15 years (-----)

4. Which department are you stationed currently? -----

5. What is your department's main role within the Commission?

6. Do you understand the meaning of strategic plan? Please tick one:

(a) Yes (----)

(b) No. (-----)

7. Are you aware of strategic plan currently in place at the ECK? Please tick one:

(a) Yes (-----)

(b) No (-----)

8. Who is responsible for developing strategic plan at ECK?

9. Would you say that the Commission has the skills required to implement strategic plans currently undertaken by ECK?

(a) Yes (-----)

(b) No (-----)

10. Does staff receive objective and adequate training geared towards

equipping them to understand the concept of strategic plan and its implementation?

Please tick one

- (a) Yes (----)
- (b) No.(-----)

To successfully implement strategies

- (a) Why
- (b) Why not.....

Who conducted the training?

.....
.....

**PART B:
CHALLENGES FACED IN STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.**

11 .What challenges have your department encountered while implementing the strategic plan. Kindly explain in details in the space provided below and as per the guidelines given.

(a) **Structure:**

Has structure posed any challenged in strategy implementation? Please tick one.

- (i) Yes (----)
- (ii) No. (----)

(iii) Why has structure been a challenge?

.....
.....

(iv) What challenges has it posed?

.....
.....

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of structure?

.....
.....

.....
.....

(b) Organizations systems and procedures:

Has systems and procedures posed any challenge in strategy implementation? Please tick one.

- (i) Yes (----)
- (ii) No. (-----)
- (iii) Why has systems and procedures been a challenge?

(iv) What challenges has it posed?

(V) How has The ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of systems and procedures?

(c) Culture and Traditions:

Has culture posed any challenge in strategy implementation? Please tick one.

- (i) Yes (----)
- (ii) No. (----)
- (iii) Why has culture been a challenge?

(iv). What challenges has it posed?

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenge of

Culture and Traditions?

(d) Policies and Rules:

Has policies and rules posed any challenge in strategy implementation? Please tick one.

- (i) Yes (---)
- (ii) No. (---)

(iii) Why has policies and rules been a challenge?

(iv) What challenges has it posed?

(V) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of policies and rules?

(e) Technology:

Has Technology posed any challenge in strategy implementation?
Please tick one.

- (i) Yes (----)
- (ii) No. (----)

(iii) Why has Technology been a challenge?

(iv) What challenges has it posed ?

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of Technology?

(f) Leadership:

Has leadership posed any challenge in Strategy implementation?
Please tick one.

(i) Yes (----)

(ii) No. (----)

(iii) Why has leadership been a challenge?

(iv) What challenges has it posed

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of Leadership?

(g) Human Resource:

Has Human Resource posed any challenge in strategy implementation? Please tick one.

(i) Yes (---)

(ii) No. (---)

(iii) Why has HR been a challenge?

(iv) What challenges has it posed?

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of HR.?

(h) Reward and support systems:

Has reward and support systems posed a challenge in strategy implementation?
Please tick one.

(i) Yes (---)

(ii) No. (---)

(iii) Why has reward been a challenge?

(iv) What challenge has it posed?

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of reward and support systems?

(i) Funding:

Has funding posed a challenge in strategy implementation? Please tick one.

- (i) Yes (---)
- (ii) No. (---)

(iii) Why has funding been a challenge?

(iv) What challenges has it posed?

(v) How has the ECK tried to overcome or cope with challenges of funding?

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Appendix 2

P. O. BOX 64910-00620,
MOBILE PLAZA,
NAIROBI.

30th July, 2008

The Commission Secretary,
The Electoral Commission of Kenya,
P.O. Box 45371,
Anniversary Towers,
NAIROBI.

Dear Sir,

RE: An Investigation on Challenges in Strategy Implementation at the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK).

I'm taking a post graduate research program at the University of Nairobi, school of business. The topic of my study is '*Challenges of Strategy implementation at the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK)*'.

I intend to conduct a consultative Survey and ensure that it is not disruptive to your schedule of activities. Kindly, I request you to authorize me to collect this information both from the commissioners and staff through the attached questionnaire. The information required is purely for academic purposes and will be treated strictly so.

A copy of this research project will be available to you or the Commission staff upon request for future reference. Your corporation in this academic exercise will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Obara George Omollo