

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to determine the influence of strategic planning systems, organizational learning and strategy implementation on performance of firms in the EPZ in Kenya. This study premised on the view that strategic planning systems influences performance both directly as well as through mediation and moderation effects. This study adopted a multi theoretical approach where an integration of the open systems theory, the resource based view, dynamic capabilities theory, 4i (Intuition, Interpretation, Integration, Institutionalization) framework of organizational learning and institutional theory formed the theoretical anchorage. The study adopted a positivistic orientation utilizing cross section research design. To achieve the objectives, five hypotheses were tested. Objective one was subdivided into four sub hypotheses focusing on planning resources, management participation and planning techniques and confirmed significant results only on non financial performance except planning resources. Similarly, objective two confirmed significant influence on non financial performance. Notably, the third and fourth objectives confirmed the mediation of organizational learning and moderation of strategy implementation while objective five which focused on joint influence confirmed significant results on both the financial and non financial performance measures. The findings of this study are partially consistent with past studies. These results supported the theoretical view that firms achieve superior performance through the configuration of resource bundles and transformation of learning and implementation processes into valuable dynamic capabilities. This study extends the knowledge frontiers in the field of strategic management through the discovery that strategic planning systems affect firm performance both directly and indirectly through mediation of organizational learning and moderation of strategy implementation. It supports the perspective that a firm's competitive advantage is a function of scarce, valuable and inimitable resources within the planning systems. The findings provide diverse implications on theory, policy and practice. Policy makers will utilize the findings from the study as a device of determining key success factors within EPZ firms. In essence, the policies informed by these findings will facilitate the achievement of the Vision 2030. Future studies need to focus on other planning techniques and moderating variables in different relationships.