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# Strategy Implementation: Does Hierarchy Culture Matter in Licensed Professional Societies in East Africa

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**Purpose:** This study is aimed at establishing hierarchy and strategy relationship in registered professional bodies in Kenya.

**Design/Method/Approach:** The dependent variable was measured through policy implementation, resource assessment and motivation. Hierarchy culture as an independent variable was measured through dominant characteristic and management of employees. Using a descriptive design approach, the study collected a return of 132 responses from a target of 168 in professional bodies of Kenya. The study set up a null hypothesis to be tested using a linear regression model to establish the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

**Findings:** For hierarchy constructs, it was established that there was a significant correlation between strategy implementation and dominant characteristics  $r = .316, p < .05$  with the management of employees  $r = .288, p < .05$ .

**Theoretical Implications:** This paper expanded the body of research on organizational culture by showing that there is a significant relationship between the hierarchy culture and strategy implementation with both dominant characteristics and management of employees showing positive effects for the relationship.

**Originality/Value:** This research shows that the organizations that are most successful in the market have a strong hierarchy culture within their environment. Therefore, professional bodies must at least have a mechanism of ensuring hierarchy culture within the organization.

**Research Limitations/Future Research:** The study only looked at the association between hierarchy culture and strategy implementation. Future studies should investigate the relationship between strategy implementation and other dimensions of an organizational culture.

**Paper type:** Empirical

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## Реалізація стратегії: чи має значення ієрархічна культура в ліцензованих професійних товариствах в Східній Африці

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**Мета роботи:** Дане дослідження спрямоване на встановлення ієрархії і стратегічних взаємин в зареєстрованих професійних організаціях в Кенії.

**Дизайн/Метод/Підхід дослідження:** Залежна змінна вимірювалася за допомогою реалізації політики, оцінки ресурсів і мотивації. Культура ієрархії як незалежна змінна вимірювалася через домінуючі характеристики і управління співробітниками. Використовуючи підхід описового дизайну, в дослідженні було отримано 132 відповіді з цільових 168 в професійних організаціях Кенії. У дослідженні була створена нульова гіпотеза для перевірки з використанням моделі лінійної регресії для встановлення взаємозв'язку між залежними і незалежними змінними.

**Результати дослідження:** Для ієрархічних побудов було встановлено, що існує значуща кореляція між реалізацією стратегії і домінуючими характеристиками  $r = 0,316$ ,  $p < 0,05$  з керуванням співробітниками  $r = 0,288$ ,  $p < 0,05$ .

**Теоретична цінність дослідження:** Ця стаття розширила обсяг досліджень організаційної культури, показавши, що існує значний взаємозв'язок між культурою ієрархії і реалізацією стратегії, причому як домінуючі характеристики, так і управління співробітниками демонструють позитивний вплив на ці відносини.

**Оригінальність/Цінність дослідження:** Це дослідження показує, що найбільш успішні на ринку організації мають сильну ієрархічну культуру в своєму середовищі. Отже, професійні органи повинні мати як мінімум механізм забезпечення ієрархічної культури всередині організації.

**Обмеження дослідження/Майбутні дослідження:** В дослідженні розглядалася лише зв'язок між культурою ієрархії і реалізацією стратегії. У майбутніх дослідженнях слід вивчити взаємозв'язок між реалізацією стратегії і іншими аспектами організаційної культури.

**Тип статті:** Емпіричний

**Ключові слова:** стратегічне впровадження, ієрархічна культура, професійні організації, Кенія.

## Реализация стратегии: имеет ли значение иерархическая культура в лицензированных профессиональных обществах в Восточной Африке

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**Цель работы:** Данное исследование направлено на установление иерархии и стратегических взаимоотношений в зарегистрированных профессиональных организациях в Кении.

**Дизайн/Метод/Подход исследования:** Зависимая переменная измерялась посредством реализации политики, оценки ресурсов и мотивации. Культура иерархии как независимая переменная измерялась через доминирующие характеристики и управление сотрудниками. Используя подход описательного дизайна, в исследовании было получено 132 ответа из целевых 168 в профессиональных организациях Кении. В исследовании была создана нулевая гипотеза для проверки с использованием модели линейной регрессии для установления взаимосвязи между зависимыми и независимыми переменными.

**Результаты исследования:** Для иерархических построений было установлено, что существует значимая корреляция между реализацией стратегии и доминирующими характеристиками  $r = 0,316$ ,  $p < 0,05$  с управлением сотрудниками  $r = 0,288$ ,  $p < 0,05$ .

**Теоретическая ценность исследования:** Эта статья расширила объем исследований организационной культуры, показав, что существует значительная взаимосвязь между культурой иерархии и реализацией стратегии, причем как доминирующие характеристики, так и управление сотрудниками демонстрируют положительное влияние на эти отношения.

**Оригинальность/Ценность исследования:** Это исследование показывает, что наиболее успешные на рынке организации имеют сильную иерархическую культуру в своей среде. Следовательно, профессиональные органы должны иметь как минимум механизм обеспечения иерархической культуры внутри организации.

**Ограничения исследования/Будущие исследования:** В исследовании рассматривалась только связь между культурой иерархии и реализацией стратегии. В будущих исследованиях следует изучить взаимосвязь между реализацией стратегии и другими аспектами организационной культуры.

**Тип статьи:** Эмпирический

**Ключевые слова:** стратегическое внедрение, иерархическая культура, профессиональные организации, Кения.

## 1. Introduction

An organizational culture evolves around the survival of specific and gradual mix of leadership, strategy and daily activities that focus on circumstances to run an organization.

As such, an organization culture is simply the self-sustaining pattern of behaviour that determines how things are done (Katzenbach, Oelschlegel & Thomas, 2016). Specifically, the transformation of culture requires value, behaviour and shared vision that aims at focusing people on goals for the achievement and sustainability of organization performance. In a business environment setting, the achievement of goals arising from day-to-day activities is fundamental. The proven path towards achieving goals is through a strategic plan and its implementation. This implies that a modern organization has to set strategies that have to be implemented to achieve its success. However, this strategy implementation is not just achievable through any environment and hence the need to call for specific organizational culture dimensions that help in achieving the organization's strategy. The organizational culture is therefore an important means of corporate strategy implementation. In view of this, while developing and executing a successful strategy within institutions, the organizational culture must fully be aligned with the strategy. The hierarchical culture is one of the commonly practiced culture dimensions. From the various studies carried around it, there is need to explore more on the relationship between this dimension of culture and strategy implementation. This paper used professional bodies in Kenya as a field practicing strategy planning to test the relationship between the hierarchical culture and strategy implementation.

Professional bodies in Kenya have embraced strategy planning and implementation as a means of achieving their organizational goals. However, the global success stories about strategy implementation have not fully translated into success for professional bodies leading to the suggestion that it might all be in the culture adopted. Specifically, out of the four-dimensional cultures as propagated by Cameron and Quin (2006), the hierarchical culture is most witnessed in professional bodies in Kenya. The study thus sought to answer the key question, “does the hierarchical culture in Kenya Professional bodies influence positive strategy implementation?”

## 2. Theoretical Background

A strategy directs organizational operations towards performance that is action based (Awino, Njeru & Adwet, 2017). This has the implication that core business requires specific activities that forecast the continuation and successful implementation of plans retaining the existence of the organization in a competitive stature. Similarly, methods geared towards ensuring the activities that have a lasting impact have to be tailored in such a way that management feels responsible for any failures both in the past and present. According to Reddy (2017), this specifically points to good allocation of resources in which plans have to be executed with optimal utilization of all related units of production. On the contrary, modern organizations have devised some ways of getting plans implemented with hired resources and measures that can be benchmarked across several business organizations. All these call for a positive approach to the strategy emphasizing the popularity of strategic planning with a view to attracting more scholars to spread both theories and practices of strategy implementation in terms of a global trend (Baroto, Arvand & Ahmad, 2014).

Schein (1990) came up with three levels of an organizational culture including artefacts, as well as espoused values and underlying assumptions. Schein pointed out the manifestation of a hierarchical culture as normally through both physical and social artefacts as well as behaviour that obeys levels of different leadership. These are the visible elements in the organization save for espoused values which are less visible. The underlying meaning of these inter-relations is defined through the constituents of

culture as provided between stated values of the organization and the espoused values. These translate into good future organizational levels that enhance learning of difficult traits in the organization (Lim, 1995).

The main criticism of the cultural dimensions' theory is that it is a challenge to reach a consensus in getting everyone on board across the quadrants of adhocracy, hierarchy, market, and clan cultures. The reason being that is that different functions within an organization might require different approaches of the culture quadrants within the framework (Soares et al., 2018).

According to the cultural dimensions' theory, the most distinguishing feature, the important competitive advantage, and the most contributing factor making these companies successful, is their organizational culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). In the current high velocity environment, if a person is not confused, then that person does not pay attention. This is because of a high failure rate and closure of successful companies in the face of a volatile business environment (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Despite this setback, some organizations sustain high profitability, which cannot be attributed to either their competitive positioning or market forces but a unique and strong culture that overcomes collective uncertainty and ensures long-term financial success.

## 3. Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>: The adoption of a hierarchical culture does not positively affect strategy implementation in professional bodies in Kenya.

## 4. Data and methods

### 4.1. Sample and data collection

The study had a target population of 28 operational professional bodies registered with the Association of Professional Societies (APSEA, Kenya) in East Africa. A total of 168 managers who were thought to be well versed and practically involved in strategy implementation were sought from the field using a structured questionnaire as recommended (Kothari, 2014). The field survey used a convenience approach in collecting 132 questionnaires from managers in the strategic field in the professional bodies. The APSEA-registered bodies bring together professionals from various fields for purposes of providing quality professional services to the public as well as holding their members responsible in case of negligence in their field of profession. Some of the key APSEA bodies include Law Society of Kenya (LSK), Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK), Kenya Medical Association (KMA), Association of Kenya Engineers (AKE) and Insurance Association of Kenya (IAK). Registration as a professional in any of the bodies requires one to be fully certified with the right academic qualifications which normally include a recognizable degree from the field of a mentioned profession and certification of practice by the professional body in Kenya. APSEA as an association is housed at Professional Centre, Nairobi and coordinates the activities of registered professional bodies overseeing ethical issues as well as providing a forum for arbitrations in all matters of dispute within all the professional bodies. There are, however, several other professional bodies in Kenya and East Africa that are not registered under the umbrella of the 28 registered professional bodies with APSEA.

A pilot study for testing the research instrument was done to establish reliability and validity. This involved visiting 2 APSEA bodies that were then excluded from the main survey with 24 respondents participating in the pilot survey selected through convenience. The reliability took into consideration the value of Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) for reliability (Creswell, 2014). Similarly, construct validity was enlisted to ensure that all sections of the research instrument returned consistent results as highlighted in Tab. 1 and Tab. 2, respectively.

As indicated in *Tab.1*, the value of the composite reliability for a hierarchical culture is .879 which is greater than .7. This shows that the data for a hierarchical culture is reliable for analysis.

**Table 1:** Reliability Test for Hierarchical Culture

Variable	Composite reliability (CR)	Number of items
Hierarchical Culture	.876	5

Source: Research Data (2020)

*Tab. 2* shows the AVE for a hierarchical culture is .598 which is above the .50 threshold indicating that the hierarchical culture as an independent variable account for more than 50% of the variance. For discriminant validity, the bold value of the hierarchical culture is .598 which is higher than the correlation coefficient loadings of other variables. This concludes that the discriminant validity and convergent validity are positive.

**Table 2:** Average Variance Extracted Matrix for Hierarchical Culture

Variable	AVE	Dominant Characteristic	Management of Employees
Hierarchical Culture	<b>.598*</b>	<b>.316**</b>	<b>.288***</b>

Legend: \*  $p < .050$ , \*\*  $p < .010$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Source: Research Data (2020)

#### 4.2. Analyses and interpretation of data

The factor structure was established by using the method of exploratory factor analysis, as recommended by *Creswell (2014)*. Further, there was verification of the factor structure of the scale. The principal component matrix obtained after the explanatory factor analysis was subjected to varimax rotation (*Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016*).

### 5. Results

To establish the study results, the independent variable was measured using the two constructs of the dominant characteristic and management of employees while the dependent variable was measured using policy implementation, resource allocation and motivation. A scale of 1 to 5 with 1 as strongly disagree, 2 as disagree, 3 as neutral, 4 as agree, and 5 as strongly agree was applied (*Likert, 1932*). The statistical tests, which were conducted, are descriptive statistics and

inferential statistics to establish hypothesis testing by using a regression model.

#### 5.1. Demographic and descriptive constructs of the study

The descriptive statistical tests, which were conducted during the study, are presented in *Tab. 3*, which shows the gender, age group, level of education and professionalism among key statistics. The spread between both male and female indicates the general population mix in the Kenyan professionals.

**Table 3:** Demographic data of respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Demographic Category	Male Percentage	Female Percentage
Age Group	Below 30	4	2
	31-40	23	20
	41-60	30	19
	Over 60	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>
Level of Education	Non-Degree holder	2	1
	Bachelors	20	19
	Masters	35	16
	PhD	5	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>
Professionalism	HRM and Procurement	14	11
	Marketing	6	6
	Finance and Planning	14	6
	ICT and Support	24	19
	<b>Total</b>		<b>58</b>

Source: Research Data (2020)

The results indicated in *Tab. 4* show a high mean of 3.89 with a standard deviation of .954 achieved in the hierarchical culture constructs of “The organization is a very structured place”. Similarly, a low mean of 3.75 with various standard deviations is achieved in three constructs of “The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family (People seem to share a lot amongst themselves)”, “The organization is very controlled” and “The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment”.

**Table 4:** Mean and standard deviation for hierarchical culture

Code	Item Details	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
		<b>Valid</b>		
DC1	The organization is a very personal place like an extended family	132	3.75	.841
DC2	The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place	132	3.85	.725
DC3	The organization is very result-oriented	132	3.80	.873
DC4	The organization is very controlled	132	3.75	.868
DC5	The organization is a very structured place	132	3.89	.954
ME1	Management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation	132	3.83	.942
ME2	The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness	132	3.84	.675
ME3	The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment	132	3.75	.960

Source: Research Data (2020)

#### 5.2. Pattern Matrix of hierarchical constructs

The pattern matrix indicated in *Tab. 5* as a component of the factor analysis was accomplished using rotation method though Promax with Kaiser Normalization and converged in 2 iterations. The pattern matrix of hierarchical culture shows; the specific questions under each of the hierarchical components and the factor loadings for each component.

The extracted questions for the hierarchical components had factor loadings greater than .50. Further, the average of the components was calculated, and the transformed data had a stronger component of .773. This value was greater than the least factor loading value of .661. This shows the component loadings that informed the pattern matrix were stronger.

**Table 5:** Pattern Matrix on Hierarchical Culture

Components	Component Iterations <sup>a</sup>
The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place	.839
The organization is very results oriented	.875
The organization is very controlled	.661
The organization is a very structured place	.752
Management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation	.836
The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place	.693

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
 Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.  
 a. Rotation converged in 2 iterations.

Source: Research Data (2020)

### 5.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis for Hierarchical Culture

As presented in Tab. 6, KMO sampling adequacy is .738 indicating a stronger degree of sampling adequacy. Bartlett's test of Sphericity is significant at  $X^2(10, N=132) = 122.077, p < .05$ . The factor of the hierarchical culture is adequate for extraction since KMO sampling adequacy is stronger and Bartlett's test is significant ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 6:** KMO and Bartlett's Test for Hierarchical Culture

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.738
Approx. Chi-Square	122.077
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df
	10
	Sig.
	.000

Source: Research Data (2020)

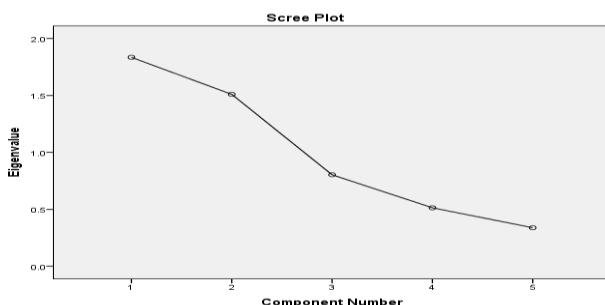
The total variance explained for the hierarchical culture shows that 2 components were extracted. Further, the 2 components had Eigen value of greater than 1 and accounted for 66.892% of the variability of the variables. The extraction of the 2 components was done using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) as presented in Tab. 7.

**Table 7:** Total variance explained for hierarchical culture

Component		Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
		Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place	1.835	36.697	36.697	1.835	36.697	36.697	1.787
2	The organization is very results oriented	1.510	30.195	66.892	1.510	30.195	66.892	1.585
3	The organization is very controlled	.803	16.069	82.961				
4	The organization is a very structured place	.514	10.273	93.235				
5	Management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation	.338	6.765	100.000				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
 a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.  
 Source: Research Data (2020)

A scree plot diagram was developed to show the 2 components extracted that are based on the two fixed factors of the hierarchical culture. As indicated in Fig. 1, the inflexion point is on factor 3, hence the 2 components extracted are adequate to form the hierarchical culture patterns as discussed in the pattern matrix.



**Figure 1:** Scree plot for hierarchical culture

Source: Research Data (2020)

### 5.4. Model summary of hierarchical culture and strategy implementation

To test the hypothesis of the study, linear regression was applied on:

$H_{01}$ : There is no relationship between the hierarchical culture and strategy implementation in professional bodies in Kenya.

The model summary results presented in Tab. 8 indicate that the hierarchical culture explains 11.3% of strategy implementation in professional bodies in Kenya ( $R^2 = .113$ ).

### 5.5. Regression ANOVA

The results in Tab. 9 for ANOVA (Kothari, 2014) indicate that the hierarchical culture significantly influences strategy implementation  $F(2, 131) = 9.336, p < .05$ . This means that the regression model is suitable for predicting the outcome variable on how the hierarchical culture influences strategy implementation in professional bodies in Kenya. The significance figure at .000 is very strong, hence suitable for discussion purposes.

From the results of the coefficients in Tab. 10, the values of the regression model are derived.

**Table 8:** Model summary of hierarchical culture and strategy implementation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.356 <sup>a</sup>	.126	.113	.54926	.126	9.336	2	129	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management of Employees, Dominant Characteristic  
 Source: Research Data (2020)

**Table 9:** Regression ANOVA of hierarchical culture on strategy implementation

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.633 <sup>a</sup>	2	2.816	9.336	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.918	129	.302		
	Total	44.551	131			

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy implementation  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Management of Employees, Dominant Characteristic  
 Source: Research Data (2020)

**Table 10:** Coefficients of Hierarchical Culture on Strategy Implementation

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.100	.374		5.615	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Dominant Characteristic	.254	.100	.234	2.531	.013
	Management Employees	.165	.084	.182	1.970	.041

a. Dependent Variable: Strategy implementation  
 Source: Research Data (2020)

The general form of the regression model used is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

$\beta_0$  – Constant;  $\beta_1$  – Dominant Characteristic,  $\beta_2$  – Management Employees, and  $\epsilon$  – Error term.

The findings from the coefficient table indicate that the hierarchical culture influences strategy implementation in professional bodies in Kenya.

$$Y = 2.100 + .234X_1 + .182X_2$$

The study analysis concludes with a selected regression model in which the dependent variable was measured against the independent variables. This was done to identify the link between strategy implementation and the hierarchical culture in the APSEA registered professional bodies in Kenya. It led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that suggests that there is no relationship between the two variables and to the adoption of the alternative hypothesis which suggests that there is a strong relationship between the strategy implementation and hierarchical culture in the APSEA registered professional bodies in Kenya.

## 6. Discussion

In support of a hierarchical culture, there is an indication that the support provided in a hierarchical culture means there is relaxed access to management and hence ease of strategy implementation is achieved (Zahari, & Shurbagi, 2012). The authors further asserted that when a hierarchical culture is dominant in an organization, it is highly likely that the stated goals and purposes are widely embraced and that helps to implement a strategy. A dominant culture has a significant correlation in the current study and thus reflects similar findings by the other scholars.

Many scholars in line with the current studies have supported the positive relationship between a hierarchical culture and the effective strategy implementation. Another conclusion is that commitment, clear goals, and vision as well as targets that differentiate mid-term and long-term as highlighted in the hierarchical culture play a key role in the effective strategy implementation (Passos, Dias-Neto, & da Silva Barreto, 2012). Similarly, it was observed that the role of a hierarchical culture was very significant in the effective strategy implementation in several

organizations (Al-Ali, Singh, Al-Nahyan, & Sohal, 2017). Both planned and emergent issues in an organization were best dealt with when there was a good hierarchical culture or focus on that organization. In conclusion, these scholars' findings correspond to the strong correlation, which the current study found, in which management of employees is a positively effective factor in strategy implementation.

Specifically supporting the above view, the findings indicate that both private and public sectors need systems and hence the necessity of a hierarchical culture in their effective strategy implementation in organizations (Lepore, Metallo, Schiavone, & Landriani, 2018). Other studies also support the significance of a hierarchical culture with a strong relationship to strategy implementation concluding that a hierarchical culture plays a big role in any change management giving hints to significant role models in leadership changes (Al-Ali et al., 2017).

In so doing, Al-Ali et al. (2017) suggested that a hierarchical culture leads to organizational leadership change management. This is also a factor in strong strategy implementation within organizations. Other studies alluded to the fact that a hierarchical culture has formal rules enabling staff to have a common purpose sense, thus enhancing the strategy implementation process (Lepore et al., 2018). As clearly indicated, such employees will not require special instructions to implement what has already been spelt out for them in the organization vision, mission, objectives, and target goals during the strategy-planning period.

Tanwar (2013) theoretically supported the hierarchical culture as a conducive environment for strategy implementation arguing that organizations with a hierarchical culture outperformed their rivals or competitors with the characteristics of a hierarchical culture combined with a distinguishing characteristic. Nyukorong (2016) was also in support of a hierarchical culture as being key in strategy implementation with various designed frameworks working in favour of strategy implementation. This is manifested in the laid down structure of the organization, which the hierarchical culture develops.

It is argued that the nature of a hierarchical culture enables strict observance of plans passed on to organizational members (Laurian, Walker, & Crawford, 2017). This, the scholars add, is reason enough to make the culture supportive of strategy implementation. This view is also supported by scholars who

attribute leadership in a hierarchical structure as the key to strategy implementation (Al-Ali et al., 2017).

In contrary, other scholars who support a hierarchical culture as being conducive for strategy implementation found hierarchy opposing the process of implementation (Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Sanz-Valle, 2019). These scholars concluded that there would be a sense of bullying in the organization in trying to maintain the status quo, thus leading to disharmony in pursuit of strategy implementation. Similarly, the scholars faulted the characteristic of a hierarchical culture which promotes imitation making it hard to encourage innovations and hence not conducive for strategy implementation.

Beyene (2011) too, found no significant relationship between a hierarchical culture and strategy implementation. He pointed to the conclusion that both the existing and incoming changes might not be any different, thus giving no incentive to implement the strategy by organizational staff. Mutai (2015) also cited the informal nature of a hierarchical culture as being a hindrance to strategy implementation since there is literally no commitment to chase the given goal at an organizational level. It therefore leads to the slowing down of acceptance and hence a long period in strategy implementation which is not productive to the organization.

Mwaura (2017) also cited the commitment of top-level management as being key to strategy implementation, and yet this does not augur well for a hierarchical culture. Similarly, there was discontent about the hierarchical culture by Pilch & Turska (2015). They concluded in their studies that bullying was rampant in the hierarchical culture due to its Machiavellian nature. This implied that there was a negative influence on strategy implementation from the hierarchical culture.

Similarly, Shiflett's theoretical works (2013) pointed to the difficulty in a hierarchical culture since there were no flexible ways of speeding up any abrupt changes with the rank and file being the order of the day in the organization. This means that any impromptu changes have to await the chain of command that is the mainstay of a hierarchical culture. Nyukorong (2016) also pointed out that even though there is unity of command and communication of internal activities, the hierarchical culture is such that any changes will require lots of decisions before being implemented. Corrections are therefore always delayed, and this is against the spirit of strategy implementation.

Other scholars opposing a hierarchical culture include Wroblewski (2017) and Gao (2017) who both observed that the need to await instructions from the bosses above could be detrimental to strategy implementation and hence lead to more delays. Again, a hierarchical culture provides a dilemma to leadership since delegation can only be done to specific rank, thus slowing down any processes in case such ranks are missing at the time of critical implementation (Pakdil, & Leonard, 2015).

Hierarchy is heavily practiced within most organizations in what we refer to as rank and file around offices. In Kenya, this practice is quite strong especially in public offices where order of doing things remains very strict. Examples include processing of financial vouchers at government ministries in which the official rank and file must be followed, from one signatory to another. In fact, the culture leads to bribery in which the higher the rank is, the more likely an officer will yield the powers to speed up, slow down or distort a project plan.

## 7. Conclusion

The study results were summarized in a regression output model indicating that there is a significant relationship between the hierarchical culture and strategy implementation with the analysis showing both dominant characteristics as well as management of employees returning positive results for the relationship.

The study has concluded that there is a significant relationship between the hierarchical culture and strategy implementation in

professional bodies in Kenya. Based on this, the study has established that organizations that are most successful in the market have a strong hierarchical culture within their environment.

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## 9. Competing interests

The author declares that he has no competing interests.

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