



**EFFECT OF INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION
ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN COUNTY
GOVERNMENTS IN WESTERN REGION, KENYA**

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Abstract:

County governments in Kenya have been in operation since 2013, but the performance of most of them is still an issue for debate despite the reforms that have been put in place. Consequently, for the achievement of exceptional performance in the current dynamic and uncertain socio-economic environment, a blend of buoyant leadership capabilities and potent management styles is required. Transformational leadership has been touted as a possible remedy to such scenarios. The study sought to determine how intellectual stimulation affects strategy implementation. The study was anchored on the power and influence theory of leadership. A pilot study was conducted in Trans Nzoia County. The study was a census targeting 268 respondents and was anchored on a positivism paradigm and utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. A purposive sampling design was adopted and data was collected using questionnaires and an interview guide. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics descriptive analysis by the aid of SPSS version 23. Results were presented in form of tables and models. The findings revealed that intellectual stimulation significantly accounts for a 30.1% variation in strategy implementation. Further, intellectual stimulation ($\beta=0.448$, $P=0.000$) has a significant statistical effect on strategy implementation. The study concluded that intellectual stimulation has a significant effect on strategy implementation. The study recommends that county management need to develop the competence of their staff at their place of work, appreciate each staff as an individual rather than as a group, and

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ensure fair workload distribution. These will encourage staff to perform their jobs effectively and put extra effort into their work hence strategy implementation.

JEL: G18; H11

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1. Introduction

As performance expectations globally continue to rise in most sectors, organizations are developing effective strategies to improve their competitiveness in various sectors. According to (Küng, 2016; Ansoff, Kipley, Helm-Stevens & Ansoff, 2018; & Wunder, 2019) strategic management has gone through several states, taken many forms and changed profoundly. The concept and practice of implementing strategies have been embraced worldwide and across various sectors because of their perceived contribution to organizational effectiveness and improvement in performance (Thompson & Strickland, 2007; Birasnav, 2014; Yamamoto & Yamaguchi, 2019). Today, organizations both public and private have taken it seriously when it comes to the practice of implementing strategic plans to guide the performance of these organizations (Suphattanakul, 2017; Kihara, Bwisa & Kihoro, 2016).

However, implementation of strategic plans still remains a major challenge facing many organizations, with significant variation among countries. In developed countries especially in Western Europe, North Atlantic, Japan and Australia, over 60% of strategies are implemented due to effective and responsive leadership and the availability of resources and technology. However, in developing countries, most studies acknowledge that strategy implementation has become the most significant challenge, with only less than 50% of formulated strategies being implemented in organizations (Kotlyar & Karakowsky, 2016 Azhar et al., 2013; Mintzberg, 1994; Mubarak & Yusoff, 2019). In another study of Chinese corporations in 2016, only 17% had a reliable process of implementation (Chen, Lin & Song, 2019). In Sub-Saharan Africa only 30% of strategies are implemented as expected whereas in Asian Tigers, Middle East and North Africa, not more than 50% of formulated strategies have been implemented in the last decade (Asongu & Andrés, 2020; Ugwu, 2019; Herbst & Garg, 2017).

In Kenya, strategy implementation is still a challenge that has attracted the attention of many scholars and practitioners. Studies have indicated that strategy implementation in the public sector faces numerous challenges as compared to the private sector (Kahuari, Muraguri & Kinyua, 2019; Kihara, 2017). According to ICPAK (2020), the implementation of various county plans, including CIDP has not met the potential required in most counties. The majority (92%) of the county governments in Kenya are experiencing low performance due to issues with strategy implementation (Nkatha, 2018; Kihara et al., 2016).

Researchers have exposed several problems in strategy implementation connected to leadership roles (Mubarak & Yusoff, 2019; Hayati, Atefi & Ahearne, 2018; Lekasi, 2014). Leadership is a very important factor in any organization because it determines most of its success and failure. It's thus the lifeblood of an organization and its importance cannot be underestimated. It could be said, therefore, that in the current hyper-competitive and globalized world, to achieve success in government projects and sustained relevance, leaders must adopt effective leadership styles that are responsive to the dynamic operating environment (Mitul & Kabir, 2019). Without effective leadership, escalating conflicts of priorities will be a consequence of reduced harmonization since staff may perceive the avoidance of disconcerting and intimidating circumstances by top management, and as a result, the organization may go through impediments in strategy implementation.

Even though there are various types of leadership, transformational leadership has been adequately associated with strategy implementation. Such a leadership style empowers followers to exude exceptionally high employee outcomes and as a result, better organizational performance is achieved. Asrar-ul-Haqa and Kuchinke (2016) concur that when the transformational leadership style results in emotional attachment of the followers' trust and respect towards the leader, in reciprocal, employees exhibit extraordinary behaviour to fulfil their leader's shared vision. This is echoed by Jooste and Fourie, (2016) who assert that leaders must become innovative and creative in the ever-changing environment in order to remain competitive and grow successful organizations. This style of leadership comprises the components of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation and has been widely suggested as the optimum style for managing change (Boal & Hooijberg, 2014; Suphattanakul, 2017; Yamamoto & Yamaguchi, 2019).

International best practices of leadership can be seen in countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, which have shown that transformational leadership and a clear vision prompted and drove major strategy implementation in the public sector (Smith, 2014; Harvey & Beaverstock, 2016). Sayeed & Mazloomi (2017) on the role of transformational leadership in the facilitation of strategy implementation at the University of Tehran acknowledged the relationship between transformational leadership and strategy implementation.

While much has been written on the topic, little is known about transformational leadership, organizational factors and strategy implementation in most African countries' public sector (Regier, 2017; Duressa & Asfaw, 2014; Sanda, 2017), the findings of these studies, have not also exhaustively highlighted the concept of transformational leadership practices, organizational factors as a moderator and strategy implementation. For instance, in Libya, Amgheib (2016) established that transformational leadership is significantly used in both public and private institutions and showed that there is an induced positive level of work engagement, job satisfaction, and well as the organizational commitment of employees, which were attributed to transformational

leadership style. Similar results were reported in Egypt, for example, where a study by ElKordy (2013) established that transformational leadership is significantly used in both public and private institutions.

In Kenya, transformational leadership and strategy implementation have attracted the attention of scholars and strategic management practitioners. However, the gap between private and public sector focus has continued to widen, with the latter attracting less attention. Notable conflicting empirical results have been revealed. For instance, Kyalo, Katuse and Kiriri (2016) found that motivation and reward of employees, which are key roles of organization leaders, positively correlated with profit realization, which measures the success of strategy implementation in Kenya government Tourist Agencies. In contrast, some studies in Kenya have also found insignificant and/or negative effects of transformational leadership on organizational outcomes. For example, Datche and Mukulu (2015) examined the effects of transformational leadership on employee engagement in civil service in Kenya. Supervisors' inspirational motivation of leaders was weak and insignificant, while idealized influence was negatively related to the employee. Comparably, Agoi (2019) while examining the relationship between organizational leadership styles and job satisfaction among the practicing nurses in Kenyatta National Hospital' results that disagree with this study whereby individualized consideration had an insignificant positive effect on job satisfaction.

Leadership and strategic management elements have been shown to become ubiquitous over the last two decades, with strategy implementation becoming a critical issue for organizations. Jooste and Fourie (2016) view the implementation of strategy in terms of a five-step process of envisioning, activating, installing, ensuring and recognizing. He further observes that strategic plan implementation is recognized as a major management challenge with difficulty in knowing which aspects above often fail or contribute less to the effectiveness of implementation effectiveness (Strøm, Willumsen, Oehmen & Heck, 2018). Many scholars have argued that transformational leadership is fundamental to successful strategy implementation, which has also been supported by transformational leadership theory. However, empirical studies have continued to report mixed outcomes on the relationship between transformational leadership and strategy implementation in county governments (Kirui & Muturi, 2019). Various reasons have been accounted for this mix-up, however, organizational factors have stood out to be suggested by most studies. While much has been written, little is known about transformational leadership, organizational factors and strategy implementation in four counties of Western Kenya.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Transformational leadership has been perceived as having an influence on strategy implementation in almost every facet of life among organizations (Sila & Gichinga, 2016). The advent of county governments in 2013 made many Kenyans optimistic that these devolved governments would deliver public services more effectively. To enhance service delivery, all county governments drafted a five-year County Integrated

Development Plan (CIPD) which acted as a strategic plan and the leadership was charged with implementing devolution goals as contained in these plans. It is expected that with a strategic plan in place the leadership will implement the proposed strategies to achieve the desired outcome (Bey, Hauschild & McAloone, 2013; Bolden, 2016; Mubarak & Yusof, 2019).

However, since the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution, the public sector has faced challenges that have derailed the counties' push towards attaining effective and quality service delivery (Nyamunga, 2016). Poor performance has been witnessed as citizens have complained of unsatisfactory service delivery, inefficiency, corruption, absenteeism of county officials and negligence (Bass, Munga & Were, 2017; Mwangi, Kiarie & Kiai, 2018). According to the Auditor General's report (2017), Western Kenya Counties could not account for billions of shillings set aside for project development, many of which remained incomplete years after the expiry of timelines for construction. Various irregularities were reported by the County Public Service Board in the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission report 2014/2015 which include irregular appointments, unfair recruitment practices, corruption, nepotism and favouritism. Such scenarios indicate the existence of an inconsistent situation that calls for an in-depth analysis to determine the extent to which transformational leadership practices are emphasized during strategy implementation.

Despite CIDP; poor performance, pending bills, absenteeism, corruption, inefficiency and negligence are still observed (Bass, Munga & Were, 2017; Mwangi, Kiarie & Kiai, 2018). Further, some counties are implementing projects which are not in the strategic plan\CIDP despite such entities having top leadership responsible for strategy implementation. Whereas studies have been done on Transformational Leadership and Strategy Implementation, many have been done in the private sectors and different countries neglecting the public sector more so the County Governments despite the influence such governments have on national development (Chege, Wachira and Mwenda 2015). In addition, some study findings have yielded mixed results with some holding that transformational leadership has a major influence on strategy implementation while others hold a contrary opinion. Further, some have been anchored on different theories, for instance, Owuor's (2018) study concluded that intellectual stimulation affected overall organizational performance while Khaleji (2019) found the insignificant effect of transformational leadership on strategy implementation.

Despite many efforts and significant investments made in strategic planning, time and resources, the implementation of strategies remains a challenge in most public organizations. To bridge this gap, therefore, this study sought to assess the effect of individual consideration on strategy implementation in Western Region, Kenya.

1.2 Specific Objective of the Study

To examine the effect of intellectual stimulation on strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region, Kenya.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

H₀: Intellectual stimulation has no significant statistical effect on strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region, Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was guided by servant leadership theory. Robert Greenleaf's essay on servant leadership was groundbreaking when it was published in the 1970s, ushering in a new era of leadership. According to Greenleaf's thesis, "the servant leader is servant first." The impulse to be of the first service is the starting point. The servant leader's inspirational and motivating qualities stem from their dual strengths as a follower and a leader. However, the concept of servant leadership has been developed further by a large number of other theorists. Based on an examination of Greenleaf's works, one scholar, Larry Spears, identified ten traits shared by all servant leaders. Listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, concept formation, foresight, stewardship, dedication to the development of others, and community building are all examples of these traits.

According to Jaiswal, Kumari and Pathak (2017), trust built at the individual level would improve the inventiveness of followers, leading to the attainment of exceptional achievements at every level of the company. They argued that servant leadership might be used to foster trust in relationships and teams. Rather of "sacrificing people on the altar of wealth and growth" (Sendjaya, 2015), servant leaders look at the big picture and prioritize long-term success. According to Manby (2012) and Stone (2015), servant leadership increases workforce engagement and improves organizational performance because it fosters a genuine and natural type of reciprocity between the leader and the follower (Gandolfi & Stone, 2017).

These executives place little value on formal organizational structures. If we do away with artificially imposed levels of authority, we can have more natural conversations and feedback loops. The intellectual stimulation this provides would do wonders for staff morale and pride in the company. As it focuses heavily on inspiring and growing team members, promotes emotional intelligence, communication, participation, and inclusion, it also has a link with individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. This research found this theory to be relevant because successful strategy implementation requires top management to appreciate and cultivate the special skills of their staff.

The practicality of this theory in business settings is still up for discussion. There is a school of thought that claims servant leaders undermine their own authority and the management function of an organization by putting the demands of their followers ahead of those of the company. Because servant leaders are always stepping in to remedy problems or do the work of others, followers of this philosophy learn to relax their standards for work output and stop putting as much consideration into how to best resolve conflicts that may arise. This constrains the scope of possibilities since it separates

leaders from normal employees on the basis of their responsibility for creating and implementing a strategic plan.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

The study conceptual framework consists of an independent variable, Intellectual Stimulation, and the dependent variable, Strategy Implementation. Figure 1 represents the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

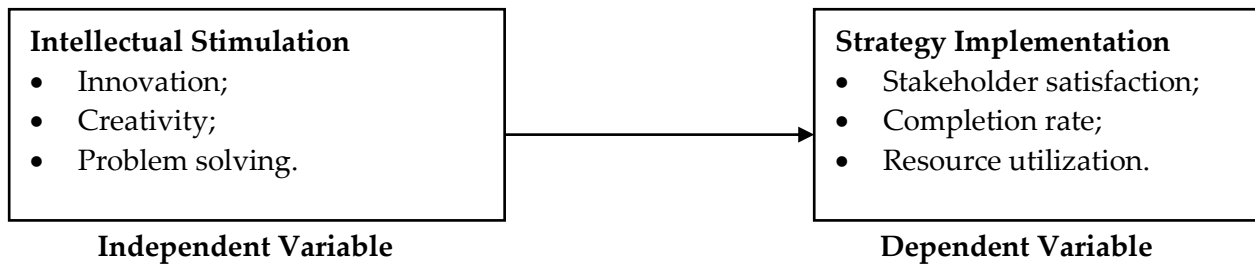


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.3 Empirical Studies

Carreiro et al. (2019) corroborate the findings of this study by claiming that IS employees exhibit behavior that includes a desire to use their skills in novel ways to the solution of challenges. IS helps workers hone their analytical, conceptual, and logical skills, which in turn leads to better work. As a result, workers are able to shift their attention inside and gain the ability to provide explanations for how they adapted their thinking to solve difficulties in novel ways. Using creative self-efficacy as a moderator, Jaiswal and Dhar (2016) investigated whether or not transformational leadership could foster creativity in the workplace. The sample included 424 front-desk staff and their direct superiors from hotels in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. Employees' creative output was found to be influenced by their views of their leaders' transformative leadership styles and their confidence in their own creative abilities. Transformational leaders, according to the research, bolster their teams' capabilities by engaging their minds. These findings are supported by prior research conducted by Jack (2020), who examined leadership and identified IS as a means of creating a demanding atmosphere for executing professional activities. Employees benefit from the opportunity to think creatively in the face of adversity. This procedure encourages the worker to maintain his or her performance at work. Intellectual stimulation develops employees' preconceptions and encourages them to perform better at work (Chen et al., 2020).

Elgelal and Noermijati (2015) conducted research at FEB UMM with the intent of understanding the impact of direct transformational leadership on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance. The investigation shows that employee motivation does not significantly improve productivity. However, it was discovered that intellectual stimulation is the major indicator of transformational leadership; as a result, managers who inspire employees should be able to carefully solve problems and then motivate

employees to behave creatively. These results are supported by the claims of (Boomah et al., 2018), who argue that IS creates enabling conditions in which individuals are given access to excellent assistance for the development of performance, knowledge to create opportunities, and resources to sustain performance in the workplace.

Ogola and Linge (2019) investigated into how leaders' ability to stimulate workers' minds affected productivity in Kenya's smallest and largest businesses. Employee Performance in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Kenya was found to have a high positive link with intellectual stimulation leadership conduct. It is implied that improved employee performance is obtained when a leader enables healthcare professionals to exercise independent judgment when confronted with challenges, take initiative, and look for new ways to complete tasks and achieve goals. Afsar et al. (2019) agree with the study's findings, arguing that IS helps workers gain a fresh perspective from which to analyze and solve challenges of all kinds. Workers are given the chance to view a familiar problem in a fresh light, allowing them to weigh a range of perspectives as they make decisions.

A study by Otieno, Lingeb, and Sikalieh (2019) examined the effect of employee motivation on the link between intellectual stimulation and employee engagement. They found that engagement has a statistically significant association with creativity and innovation, work design, and employee involvement. Employee motivation was found to positively and considerably attenuate the connection between intellectual stimulation and participation in work in a multivariate linear model. Employee engagement was found to increase with increases in staff motivation, employee involvement, work design, and employee creativity and innovation.

Ndwiga and Ngaithe (2016) conducted research into the impact of leadership on organizational performance from the vantage point of the Kenyan customer service sector. Employee-responsive corporate ideology, the extent to which employees are more likely to be productive than unmotivated healthcare professionals, the impact of company financial inducements, and teamwork are all advocated in the study as means by which organizations might boost their performance. They also need to foster an environment where people are discouraged from delegating work to others, encouraged to seek out career mentoring and coaching, and inspired to create new chances for growth and development.

Ayacko, K'Aol, and Linge's (2017) study examined the effects of mental role-playing on the productivity of Kenya's court personnel (n=770). The results of this study, which employed a descriptive correlation research approach, showed that the intellectual stimulation of judicial officers in Kenya did have an effect on the performance of judicial employees. Employees' levels of originality, curiosity, and inventiveness were used as indicators of intellectual stimulation in the study. All of the study's metrics for assessing intellectual stimulation were found to have a statistically significant and favorable effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of Kenya's judicial staff.

3. Material and Methods

This research was grounded in positivism since it attempted to objectively establish facts by establishing empirical links between variables. According to the positivist philosophy, research strategy is built on data gathering and the formation of hypotheses (Hughes & Sharrock, 2016). This study used a mixed methodology, namely a descriptive correlational research design. The descriptive design serves as a guide for data gathering, measurement, and analysis. The correlational research design is a non-experimental method for establishing the link between two closely related variables. This research was done in the county administrations of Kenya's Western Region. There are 33 sub-counties in the four-county administrations, with Kakamega County having 12, Bungoma 9, Busia 7, and Vihiga 5 sub-counties.

The target population of this study was 268 respondents, who were all managers, from executives to line managers, in the four-county governments. The sampling frame included Governors, Deputy Governors, the County Secretaries, CECs, Chief Officers and Directors. These are employees who are involved in the day-to-day implementation of programs, projects, and tasks that impact the overall strategy. The study selected two hundred and fifty-nine (259) respondents thus a census study. This study also adopted purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique, as the researcher intended to purposely target a group of people believed to be reliable or have expertise and knowledge relevant to the study. Purposive sampling was undertaken among the governors, deputy governors and county secretaries of the respective Western Kenya counties.

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire and interview guide designed by the researcher herself. The questionnaires collected mainly quantitative data while the interview guide collected qualitative data. The questionnaire was administered to the Chief Executive Committee Members, Chief Officers and Directors. The questionnaire was based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = fairly agree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The study also conducted an interview on the governors, deputy governors and county secretaries to collect qualitative data.

A pilot study was conducted in Trans Nzoia County using 10% of the target population of 268 respondents. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the research instruments Intellectual stimulation had Cronbach Alpha of 0.913 and strategy implementation also had Cronbach Alpha of 0.909. Validity was measured using construct and content validity. The study employed expert judgment from supervisors, other experts from the School of Business and Economics, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology and two managers (1 CEC and 1 Director) randomly selected in Trans Nzoia County. Construct validity was measured using factor analysis. Strategy implementation yielded a factor loading with an average of 0.776 while Intellectual stimulation had a factor loading of 0.868 which were above 0.5.

In order to draw conclusions and inferences, the data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The frequencies, percentages, the mean, and standard deviations were all included in the descriptive statistics. Both regression analysis and correlation analysis were included in the inferential analysis. The qualitative data that was gathered using open-ended questions was subjected to content analysis. SPSS Version 21 was used for the analysis of the gathered data. The data was given with tables of frequencies, as well as percentages. A continuous prose report was produced as a result of qualitative data being processed using content analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents both descriptive and inferential statistics.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The study sought to interrogate whether intellectual stimulation influences strategy implementation. To describe a distribution of the scores of measurements using indices or statistics the study entailed the use of descriptive statistics to present findings using percentages.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis for Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation (Valid N=181)	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	S.D
1. New innovative ways to complete tasks/assignments are suggested by top management.	9.4% (17)	28.2% (51)	24.3% (44)	33.7% (61)	4.4% (8)	3.0	1.08
2. Top management seeks differing views when solving problems or in decision-making.	11% (20)	48.6% (88)	26% (47)	10.5% (19)	3.9% (7)	3.5	0.96
3. Top management encourages others to look at problems from varied perspectives.	17.1% (31)	38.1% (69)	28.7% (52)	11% (20)	5% (9)	3.5	1.06
4. Top management re-evaluates critical assumptions to question their appropriateness.	5% (9)	24.3% (44)	41.4% (75)	21% (38)	8.3% (15)	3.0	0.99
5. Involvement of relevant persons in decision-making.	9.9% (18)	53% (96)	22.1% (40)	8.8% (16)	6.1% (11)	3.5	1.00
Aggregate Score						3.3	1.02

Key: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, Fairly Agree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree, S.D-Standard Deviation

Source: Research data (2022).

The results as shown in Table 1 indicated that out of 181 respondents who participated in this study, 9.4% strongly agreed and 28.2% agreed, with mean of 3.0 and standard deviation of 1.08, which implies that new innovative ways to complete tasks/assignments are fairly suggested by top management. On the statement that the top management seeks differing views when solving problems or in decision-making, 11.0% strongly agreed and 48.6% agreed with the same statement. The statement had a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 0.96 an indication that the top management sought differing

views when solving problems or in decision-making. On the top management encourages others to look at problems from varied perspectives, of the respondents who took part in the study, 17.1% strongly agreed and 38.1% agreed, 28.7% with a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.06 which implies that the top management encouraged others to look at problems from varied perspectives

Out of 181 respondents who took part in this study, 5% strongly agreed and 24.3% agreed that the top management re-evaluates critical assumptions to question their appropriateness. The statement had a mean of 3.0 and standard deviation of 0.99 implying that the top management fairly re-evaluated critical assumptions to question their appropriateness. The majority of the respondents agreed 53.0% and 9.9% strongly agreed that the involvement of relevant persons in decision-making. The statement had a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.00 an indication that there was the involvement of relevant persons in decision-making.

In general, respondents fairly agreed with a small variation in their responses (Aggregate Mean=3.3, Aggregate SD=1.018) that their county governments practice intellectual stimulation as a strategy in transformational leadership. These entail top management performing the following roles; Suggesting new innovative ways to complete tasks/assignments, seeking differing views when solving problems or in decision-making, encouraging others to look at problems from varied perspectives, re-evaluating critical assumptions to question their appropriateness, and involving of relevant persons in decision making.

To enforce the respondents' views, an interview conducted revealed that top-level managers encourage their staff to be innovative to facilitate strategy implementation. It was evident that counties have programs that develop employees' full potential which is one tenet of intellectual stimulation. All eight interviewees affirmed that the four counties have been at the forefront to encourage innovative tendencies among employees. The researcher noted that county government leadership has encouraged innovativeness and finding new ways to solve common problems. However, they (interviewees) also hinted that the lack of adequate resources has made it difficult to achieve intellectual stimulation. Limited and competing needs have made it difficult for county governments in western Kenya to provide the perfect ground for intellectual stimulation among its employees.

Table 2: Strategy Implementation

Stakeholder satisfaction (N=181)	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	S.D
1. Top management has put mechanisms in place to ensure quick responses to customer complaints.	10.5% (19)	25.4% (46)	49.7% (90)	6.6% (12)	7.7% (14)	3.2	1.00
2. A customer feedback evaluation tool is in place to analyze satisfaction levels.	10.5% (19)	30.4% (55)	33.1% (60)	16% (29)	9.9% (18)	3.2	1.12
3. The services and products offered by this county are of high quality/standards.	12.2% (22)	35.9% (65)	42.5% (77)	6.1% (11)	3.3% (6)	3.5	0.90
4. This county has a highly satisfied clientele.	6.6% (12)	35.9% (65)	44.2% (80)	7.7% (14)	5.5% (10)	3.3	0.91

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5. The number of customer complaints within the last 6 months has noticeably decreased.	28.7% (52)	34.3% (62)	22.1% (40)	6.6% (12)	1.1% (2)	3.0	1.08
6. Customer satisfaction is a priority.	21.5% (39)	34.3% (62)	28.7% (52)	7.7% (14)	7.7% (14)	3.5	1.14
Aggregate Score						3.28	1.03
Completion Rate							
7. Top management has created a culture of observing timelines.	19.3% (35)	46.4% (84)	19.3% (35)	6.1% (11)	8.8% (16)	3.6	1.13
8. A policy reinforcing adherence to deadlines is in place.	11.6% (21)	40.9% (74)	19.3% (35)	18.8% (34)	9.4% (17)	3.3	1.17
9. There's a code of conduct in place signed by every employee of the county	22.1% (40)	29.3% (53)	32% (58)	9.9% (18)	6.6% (12)	3.5	1.14
10. The structure allows fast and effective capabilities for decision-making down the line of the organization.	14.4% (26)	34.8% (63)	35.4% (64)	12.2% (22)	3.3% (6)	3.4	0.99
11. Timelines are observed across the county.	14.4% (26)	27.6% (50)	37.6% (68)	13.3% (24)	7.2% (13)	3.3	1.09
Aggregate Score						3.42	1.1
Resources Utilization							
12. Our structure allows efficient resource utilization.	27.1% (49)	29.3% (53)	33.1% (60)	7.2% (13)	3.3% (6)	3.7	1.05
13. Opportunities are provided by our structure by flexibly moving resources from one department to another to enhance their utility.	8.8% (16)	35.4% (64)	32% (58)	17.7% (32)	6.1% (11)	3.2	1.04
14. Top management has put mechanisms in place to ensure that resources are properly utilized to avoid wastage.	16% (29)	30.4% (55)	37.6% (68)	9.4% (17)	6.6% (12)	3.4	1.07
Aggregate Score						3.43	1.05
Grand Mean						3.38	1.06

Source: Research Data (2022).

Table 2 reveals that 10.5% and 25.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the top management has put mechanisms in place to ensure quick response to customer complaints with a mean of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 1.00. This implied that the top management has fairly put mechanisms in place to ensure quick response to customer complaints. The results further revealed that 10.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that the customer feedback evaluation tool is in place to analyze their satisfaction levels and 30.4% agreed with a mean of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 1.12. This postulates that there is some customer feedback evaluation tool is in place to analyze their satisfaction levels. With a mean of 3.5 and standard deviation of 0.90, 12.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and a further 35.9% agreed that the services and products offered by their county are of high quality/standards.

In regards to the county has a highly satisfied clientele, a slight majority of the respondents were in agreement as shown by 35.9% of the respondents who agreed and 6.6% who strongly agreed with a mean of 3.3 and a standard deviation of 0.91 an indication that the county has the fairly satisfied clientele. Moreover, 28.7% of the

respondents strongly agreed as well as 34.3% agreed that the number of customer complaints within the last 6 months has noticeably decreased with a mean of 3.0 and standard deviation of 1.08 implying the number of customer complaints within the last 6 months has fairly decreased. Finally, 21.5% and 34.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that customer satisfaction is a priority with a mean of 3.5 and standard deviation of 1.14 implying customer satisfaction is a priority.

In general Table 2 reveals that respondents fairly agreed with a small variation in their responses (Aggregate Mean=3.28, Aggregate SD=1.025) that their county governments have a satisfied stakeholder. This is due to the following approaches undertaken by top-level management; Putting mechanisms in place to ensure quick response to customer complaints, having a customer feedback evaluation tool to analyze satisfaction levels, offering quality products and services, having a highly satisfied clientele, decreasing the number of customer complaints within the last 6 months, and Having customer satisfaction is a priority.

In regards to the completion rate, the findings obtained from table 2 indicate that out of 181 respondents who participated in the study, 19.3% strongly agreed and 46.4% agreed that the top management has created a culture of observing timelines. The statement had a mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.13, which implies that the top management has created a culture of observing timelines. On the statement that a policy reinforcing adherence to deadlines is in place, 11.6% strongly agreed and 40.9% agreed. The statement had a mean of 3.3 and a standard deviation of 1.17 implying that there is policy reinforcing adherence to deadlines. In regards to there's a code of conduct in place signed by every employee of the county, of the respondents who took part in the study, 22.1% strongly agreed and 29.3% agreed. The statement recorded a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.14 suggesting that there's a code of conduct in place signed by every employee of the county.

Further, out of 181 respondents who participated in this study, 14.4% strongly agreed, 34.8% agreed and 35.4% fairly agreed on the contrary 12.2% disagreed and 3.3% strongly disagreed with the statement that the structure allows fast and effective capabilities for decision-making down the line of the organization. The statement had a mean of 3.4 and a standard deviation of 0.99 suggesting that the structure allowed fast and effective capabilities for decision-making down the line of the organization. Lastly, few of the respondents agreed 14.4% and 27.6% strongly agreed that the timelines are observed across the county. The statement had a mean of 3.3 and a standard deviation of 1.09 implying that timelines are fairly observed across the county.

In general, Table 2 depicts that respondents fairly agreed with a small variation in their responses (Aggregate Mean=3.42, Aggregate SD=1.104) that their county governments put in place measures to complete projects in a record time. This is through adopting the following measures; creating a culture of observing timelines, having a policy reinforcing adherence to deadlines is in place, signing a code of conduct by every employee of the county, having a structure that allows fast and effective capabilities for

decision-making down the line of the organization, and Observing timelines across the county.

In regards to resources utilization, results in Table 2, revealed that the majority of the respondents were in agreement that their structure allows efficient resource utilization as shown by 27.1% who strongly agreed and 29.3% of the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.7 and standard deviation of 1.05 implying that the structure allowed efficient resource utilization. The results also revealed 8.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that opportunities are provided by their structure by flexibly move resources from one department to another to enhance their utility and a further 35.4% agreed with a mean of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 1.04. This postulates that there are some opportunities provided by their structure by flexibly moving resources from one department to another to enhance their utility. Lastly, 16% of the respondents strongly agreed that the top management has put mechanisms in place to ensure that resources are properly utilized to avoid wastage an assertion which was further supported by 30.4% of the respondents. On the hand, 37.6% of the respondents fairly agreed and 9.4% disagreed and 6.6% strongly disagreed with a mean of 3.4 and standard deviation of 1.07 implying that the top management has fairly put mechanisms in place to ensure that resources are properly utilized to avoid wastage.

In general Table 2 indicates that respondents fairly agreed with a small variation in their responses (Aggregate Mean=3.43, Aggregate SD=1.053) that their county governments utilize well the resources allocated to them. This is done through the following measures; Putting in place a structure that allows efficient resource utilization, flexibly moving resources from one department to another to enhance their utility, and Having mechanisms in place to ensure that resources are properly utilized to avoid wastage.

4.2 Inferential Analysis

The objective of the study was achieved by the use of regression and Pearson correlation analysis to test the null hypothesis. The researcher sought to test for the following hypothesis;

H₀: Intellectual stimulation has no significant influence on Strategy implementation in Public Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions in Kenya.

The study sought to establish the relationship between intellectual stimulation and strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region, Kenya. To achieve this, Pearson correlation analysis test was used and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis Intellectual Stimulation

		Intellectual Stimulation	Strategy Implementation
Intellectual Stimulation	Pearson Correlation	1	.732**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	181	181
Strategy Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.732**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	181	181

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data (2022).

As indicated in Table 3, $r = 0.732$ and $P = 0.000$ indicate a strong association between intellectual stimulation and strategy execution in Kenya's Western Region County Governments. This suggests that intellectual stimulation will result in an increase in the implementation of strategies by County Governments in Kenya's Western Region.

Table 4: Regression Results

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.732 ^a	.535	.533	.56251		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Intellectual stimulation						
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	65.284	1	65.284	206.318	.000 ^b
	Residual	56.640	179	.316		
	Total	121.923	180			
a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Intellectual stimulation						
Regression Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.044	.167		6.239	.000
	Intellectual stimulation (IS)	.702	.049	.732	14.364	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Strategy Implementation						

Source: Research Data (2022).

From Table 4, 4 the findings indicated that intellectual stimulation had a value of R squared = 0.535 which translated to 53.5%. This was the percentage change in strategy implementation as accounted for by intellectual stimulation, while 46.5% was caused by other factors not explained because the study focused on intellectual stimulation and strategy implementation. ANOVA results showed that F value = 206.318 and P value was 0.000. Tests were done at 0.5 or 5% level of significance. The results indicated that intellectual stimulation had a statistically positive and significant effect in explaining the change in strategy implementation hence the model is feasible.

The study also aimed to find the coefficient of regression between intellectual stimulation and Strategy implementation. The value of regression coefficient $B = 0.7022$ suggested that an increase of one unit of intellectual stimulation was connected with an increase of 0.7022 units of strategy implementation in Kenya's Western Region County Governments. Therefore, based on this evidence, the study failed to accept the third null hypothesis and found that intellectual stimulation had a statistically significant impact on strategy execution in Kenya's Western Region County Governments. Based on the results of the regression coefficients, the simple linear regression model equation was formulated as follows:

$$Y_{SI} = 1.044 + 0.702X_{IS}$$

Results show that mental challenge helps county governments in Kenya's Western Region put their strategies into action. Descriptive statistics results back up these conclusions enough. Top management's openness to new ideas and viewpoints, as well as their encouragement of others to do the same, and their participation in decision-making, all have a role in the success of a strategy's execution.

6. Discussion

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of intellectual stimulation on strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region, Kenya. As obtained from the descriptive analysis, respondents agreed that top management seeks differing views when solving problems or in decision-making, top management encourages others to look at problems from varied perspectives and there is the involvement of relevant persons in decision-making. On the other hand, the respondents fairly agreed that top management re-evaluates critical assumptions to question their appropriateness and new innovative ways to complete tasks/assignments are suggested by top management. Peng and Er Lin (2015) provided confirmation for these findings when they found that a durable positive association existed between the CEO's intellectual stimulation and employee work meaningfulness notwithstanding low firm performance or rapid and volatile industry change. These results are supported by the claims of (Boomah et al. 2018), who argue that IS fosters enabling conditions among people, ensuring that workers have access to high-quality resources and support in order to improve their performance at work.

Pearson Correlation revealed that there is a significant strong relationship between intellectual stimulation and strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region as shown by $R=0.732$, $P=0.000$. Yasin, Samina, and Khalid (2014) confirmed the existence of a strong association between the individual construct of leadership style as intellectual stimulation and the creativity and performance of SMEs. This study was also backed by Elgelal and Noermijati (2015), who investigated the impact of direct transformational leadership on employee performance, focusing on all FEB UMM

employees. However, Agyemang, Boateng, and Dzandu (2017), who evaluated intellectual stimulation as a precursor to knowledge sharing, refute these findings. The study determined that there is no correlation between intellectual stimulation and knowledge sharing. Similarly, Ngaithe and Ndwiga (2016) found that intellectual stimulation had a negative impact on the functioning of an organization through organization.

From simple linear regression, model summary findings on intellectual stimulation indicated that 53.5% ($R^2=0.535$) of variation in strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region is significantly accounted for by intellectual stimulation ($P=0.000$). These findings are consistent with those of Orabi (2016), who showed that intellectual stimulation has a major impact on organization's performance in Jordan. Kirui, Iravo, and Kanali (2015) discovered that the individual coefficients of the regression function significantly impacted efficient organizational performance. However, some studies on the effects of intellectual stimulation have found mixed findings, though. Komakech, Obici, and Mwesigwa (2021) indicated that intellectual stimulation has a small detrimental influence on workers among Ugandan healthcare professionals at the mid-level in the Lira district. Additionally, Milelu (2019) showed that the influence of intellectual Stimulation on organizational performance at Kenyatta University, one of the country's public universities, is negligible.

Multiple linear regression revealed when other variables in the model are controlled, a unit change in intellectual stimulation would result in a significant increase in strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region by 0.702 units ($\beta_3=0.702$, $P=0.000$). This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that was hypothesized intellectual stimulation has no significant statistical effect on strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region, Kenya. Ogola and Linge (2019), who studied the effect of intellectual stimulation on leadership behavior and SME performance in Kenya, found similar outcomes. Ayacko, K'Aol, and Linge (2017) found that all of the factors of intellectual stimulation had a positive and substantial effect on judicial staff performance in Kenya. While some prior research has backed up the claims made in this study, there is also some research that runs counter to the findings. Example: Kiragu (2020) discovered that intellectual stimulation had little effect on the Engineers Board of Kenya's organizational performance. Ndirangu (2018) conducted a case study of Kenyan NGOs to determine the effect of transformative leadership on staff productivity. Employee performance at local NGOs was found to not be significantly affected by intellectual stimulation.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study established that staff intellectual stimulation has a positive and significant effect on strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region. As a result, the study rejected the third null hypothesis and concluded that intellectual stimulation has a significant statistical effect on strategy implementation in County

Governments in Western Region. There was evidence of top management seeking differing views when solving problems or in decision making, top management encouraging others to look at problems from varied perspectives and involvement of relevant persons in decision making. These practices enhanced strategy implementation in County Governments in Western Region. The study recommends that County governments management need to consider applying the practices associated with intellectual stimulation including seeking innovative ways to complete tasks, seeking differing views when solving problems/decision-making, reevaluating critical assumptions to question the appropriateness and encouraging others to look at problems from varied perspectives in promoting positive behaviors among employees that enhance strategy implementation.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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