

Effect of Staff Autonomy on Strategy Implementation in Private Security Firms in Nakuru County, Kenya

Isaac Ondari¹, Dr. Paul OmatoGesimba², Mr. James Mwangi Njau³

^{1,2,3}Department of Business, St. Paul's University

Corresponding Author: Isaac Ondari

Abstract: In the private security sector in Kenya, 60% of the firms develop formal strategic plan. However, the majority of firms still experience performance issues that highlight deficiency in strategy implementation. One of the factors that have been frequently linked to strategy implementation is staff autonomy. The current study sought to investigate the effect of staff autonomy on strategy implementation in private security firms in Nakuru County. It employed the descriptive survey design and targeted the population of 3282 individual comprising of 186 management staff and 3096 operational staff working in 31 private security firms in Nakuru County. From this population, a sample of 185 staff was selected comprising of 11 management staffs and 174 operational staffs from 11 private security firms. Qualitative data was collected from the management staff using interview guides while structured questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from the operational staff. Qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic technique while quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that there some moderate level of decentralization and delegation of authority, staff involvement in decision-making, and staff empowerment in the in the private security firms in Nakuru County, which varied from one company to the next. The level of staff autonomy has been hampered by little engagement and consultation of low level staff in strategic planning and poor remuneration of staff. The level of staff autonomy in the private security firm was given an average rating of 60.5%. Regression analysis established that staff autonomy has a positive and statistically significant effect on strategy implementation in private security firms in Nakuru County ($r^2 = .239$, $\beta = .305$, $p = .000$). The study recommends that to improve strategy implementation, the private security firms should encourage frequent and open consultation between senior managers, middle managers, and operational employees. Operational employees should be actively engaged in the strategic planning and implementation processes.

Keywords: Strategy implementation, staff autonomy, employee empowerment, decentralization, delegation of authority, staff empowerment, private security, Nakuru County, Kenya.

Date of Submission: 21-08-2019

Date of Acceptance: 05-09-2019

I. Introduction

The modern business environment has become more competitive due to factors such as globalization, changing customer expectations, and technological changes. To survive in this environment, businesses have been forced to think and act strategically (Durmaz&Dusun, 2016). While strategic management was a reserve of large multinational companies in the 1980s, today many businesses use it as means of achieving their objectives. According to Zafar, Babar and Abbas (2013), the art of strategic management has two essential components: strategy formulation and strategy implementation. Strategy formulation is the theoretical phase of strategic management where the organization develops a plan the details the goals that needs to be achieved and how to achieve them (Zafaret al., 2013). Strategy implementation is the practical phase of strategic management where the strategic plans are put into actions.

Strategy implementation is the process that converts the formulated strategy into actions that guarantee the realization of organizational goals and vision (Nkosi, 2015). Strategy implementation is the action phase of the strategic management process (Oada, 2013). It actualizes the activities and tactics stipulated in the strategic plan. Implementation is more complex than planning as it requires the organization to resource the strategy, configure the organization's culture to fit the strategy, and employ change management procedures. Many organizations today craft sound strategies, but of great concern is the high rate of failure during implementation. According to Speculand (2009), most strategies accomplish less than 50% of the goals that were planned for with as high as 90% of strategies failing to be implemented successfully. Organizational excellence can only be achieved through by formulating as well as implementing the right strategies.

Strategy implementation has also become an important subject in the security sector. The demand for security services in Kenya continue to rise due to various factors including economic growth, population growth, rise in crime, and diminishing government capacity to provide security services (Michira, 2016).

According to Swedish Trade and Investment Council (2017), there are between 2000 and 4000 private security firms in Kenya the majority of which are small and medium scale enterprises employing less than 100 people. Most of the firms provide guarding services with a few large companies providing integrated security solutions such surveillance and monitoring, alarm services, armored courier, and car tracking. The private security industry employs approximately 300,000 people (Michira, 2016). The expanding opportunities in the private security sector have attracted many players including international company. As result, competition is getting tighter.

There is evidence that the private security companies have formulated various strategies. For instance, Okindah (2008) found that 60% of private security firms in Nairobi had written strategic plans while 77% of the firms had a written mission and vision statement. These companies exhibited formal strategic planning practices such as environmental analysis, competitor analysis, and strategy formulation. Gototoet *al.* (2015) also found that private security firms in Nyeri County had formulated various strategies for improving service quality including improving employee capacity, service process, and relationship with stakeholders. However, the formulation of these strategies has not been accompanied by improvement in performance of the private security firms. The study by Ekwenye, Theuri, and Mwenda (2018) found that despite the growth of the number of private security firms in Kenya, the security situations in most areas has deteriorated. New trends of crime and violence have emerged including terrorism, mugging, carjacking, and kidnappings. Given that security and safety is the core service offered by the private security firms, rise in insecurity puts a blemish on the performance of these firms and consequently raise doubt regarding the effectiveness of strategy implementation in these organization.

In addition, Githinji (2014) found that most private security firms were characterized with numerous human resource challenges including poor payment of staff, high employee turnover, and employee involvement in crime. Busolo, Ogolla, and Were (2016) also found that most of the security organizations were characterized by long work hours, poor career prospects for employees, low salaries, and poor health among employees. A report by Abrahamsen and Williams (2015) also found that majority of the private security firms were small to medium-sized companies employing less than 100 people. Most of these companies only operate in one locality or town. Except for a few leading companies, the majority of the security firms provide only low-skilled manned guarding services despite the high demand for advance services such as satellite tracking, alarm systems, armored courier services, and personal protection services (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2015). Despite having elaborated strategic plans, most of these firms have found it difficult to grow into large, corporate and professionally-managed companies with operations across the region. All these performance problems point to deficiency in strategy implementation.

Staff autonomy is one of the factors that have been linked to strategy implementation. Autonomy is the degree to which the structure of an organization gives employee the discretion and independence to schedule their work and determine how it is to be done (Painter & Yee, 2010). Some organizational structure gives units that make up the organization greater control over work, finances, and staff while other limit the control of these departments. When it comes to the staff autonomy dimension, organizations can either have horizontal or vertical structures. Horizontal structure is where employees have more or less the same level of authority to make decision without obtaining approval (Lunenburg, 2012). Vertical structure assume the shape of a pyramid where major decisions are made by senior managers at the top of the organizations and cascaded down to middle level managers who are responsible for supervising. Low level employees do not make decision but can only make suggestions that reach upper level management.

A study by Tabo (2013) found that poor coordination, poor and improper communication and poor definition of strategy implementation tasks were among the challenges hindering strategy implementation among security firms in Kenya. These variables are closely related to the element of staff autonomy. Although there plenty of studies demonstrating a link between staff autonomy and strategy implementation, very few have been conducted in the private security industry.

II. Literature Review

Strategy implementation has become a key area of interest in strategic management research because evidence suggests most strategic management processes fail at the implementation stage (Speculand, 2009). Nkosi (2015) noted that after an exciting process of formulating a new strategy, the management often feels lost when it comes to implementation of the new strategy. They get stranded on how to translate their great plans into actions. A study examining prominent chief executive officers (CEOs) failures, found that over 70% failed because of poor strategy implementation (Carruci, 2017).

Quite a number of studies have linked the strategy implementation process to the level of staff autonomy within organizations. The study by Sting and Loch (2016) examined how vertical and horizontal coordination influence the implementation of operations strategy in six German manufacturers. Findings revealed that the two approach of coordination interact to influence strategy implementation. Leaving of them

loose and keeping the other tight results in an optimal balance between compatibility and creativity that supports strategy implementation. On the contrary, tightening both vertical and horizontal coordination or loosening both creates incompatibility across units and thus affect strategy implementation negatively. Sting and Loch (2016) however used in-depth interviews to examine the relationship between level of staff autonomy and strategy implementation and thus the relationship was not statistically tested. The current study made use of inferential tests to examine how staff autonomy influences strategy implementation.

The study by Brock (2017), examined how the level of staff autonomy influences the effectiveness of implementing prospector and defender strategies in a sample of 260 business schools in the United States. Results showed that among schools pursuing the prospector strategy, schools with high level of employee autonomy had a higher mean strategy implementation effectiveness ($M=5.38$) when compared to those with low staff autonomy ($M=4.72$). Among school pursuing defender strategy, schools with high level of staff autonomy also had high mean strategy implementation effectiveness ($M=5.59$) than those with low staff autonomy (5.29). Independent sample t-test show that the differences in implementation effectiveness were statistically significant leading to the conclusion that high level of staff autonomy has a statistically and positive effect on the implementation of both defender and prospector strategies within the schools. Brock's (2017) study was however conducted in the United States and focused on education institutions whose operating environment and nature of staff differ from those of private security firms in Kenya. The findings may therefore not reflect the current situation with regard to influence of staff autonomy on strategy implementation in private security firms in Kenya.

The study by Brinkschroder (2014) examined the relationship between organizational structure, employee behavior, and strategy implementation in five organizations operating in different industries. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with the companies CEOs. Findings showed that achieving an optimal balance between leadership and sufficient level of employee autonomy was critical to the successful implementation of strategies. One of the CEOs explained that employees should be allowed to work on tasks related to their profession on their own with a certain degree of autonomy. However, Brinkschroder (2014) use of in-depth interview means that the link between staff autonomy and strategy implementation effectiveness could not be statistically tested. The small sample size also limited the generalizability of findings. The current study sought to use inferential statistics to examine the relationship between staff autonomy and strategy implementation effectiveness in private security firms in Kenya.

In his study, Rishipal (2014) also found that organizational structure with fewer levels of management supported strategy implementation by creating more flexibility in decision-making. When there are fewer levels of authority, staff can make decisions faster as they do not need to hunt down several managers in order to get approvals. In another study focusing on strategy implementation in the Kenya Police Service, Magiri, Ngui, and Mathenge (2018) found that heavily hierarchical structures have a negative effect on strategy implementation. From the data, 90.9% of the respondents agreed that the structure of the Kenya Police Service is heavily hierarchical. Another 66.7% of the respondents reported that they found it difficult to make decisions while 77.3% affirmed that too much hierarchy in the police structure delays decision-making in emergency situations as approval have to be obtained from higher up. Magiri *et al.* (2018) however focused on the Police Service which is a public institution and thus findings especially those relating to organizational structure may not reflect the reality in private security organizations.

III. Research Methodology

This study employed the descriptive survey design, which entailed collecting data regarding the study variables by gathering the views and opinion of persons exposed to these variables (Hair, 2015). The target population was 3,282 individuals comprising of 186 management and 3096 operational staff in 31 private security firms operating in Nakuru County. The appropriate sample size was determined to 185 individuals using the following formula, suggested by Nassiuma (2009).

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N - 1)e^2}$$

Where: n = Sample size, N = Population size, C = Coefficient of variation usually expressed as percentage dependent on the level of heterogeneity of the population (70% in the current study), and e = Margin of error which was fixed between at 5% for this study. The respondents were selected proportionally from the two categories of staff as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sampling Plan

Category	Number of Individuals	% of Total Population	Sample Size
Management staff	186	5.7	11
Operational staff	3096	94.3	174
Total	3282	100	185

Source: Author (2019)

A multi-stage sampling process was used where 11 out of the 31 private security firms were selected randomly using the lottery method. The name of the firms was written on small pieces of paper, folded, placed in container, and shuffled. The researcher then randomly picked 11 pieces and the names of the firms contained therein were included in the sample. One management staff was selected purposively from each of the 11 firms. In addition, 16 operational staffs were selected from each of the 11 firms using systematic sampling, where the researcher picked every 5th person in each of the 11 firms' list of operational staff until the desired number of 16 operational staff was attained.

Data was collected using two instruments: questionnaire for operational staff and interview guide for management staff. The questionnaire focused on collecting quantitative data from the operational employees of the private security firms. It comprised of close-ended questions designed to collect quantitative data that facilitated statistical analysis of the study variables and the relationship between them. Apart from the demographic questions, all the close-ended questions were in the form of statement rated on a five-point Likert scale (5 = Very large extent, 4= large extent, 3=moderate extent, 2= little extent and 1= No extent). There was a Likert Scale for each of the study variable. The interview guide was designed to collect qualitative data that provided in-depth information regarding staff autonomy, strategy implementation, and the relationship between these variables. The guide was structured in nature meaning that it contained a list of uniform questions for all the senior managers.

Validity of the research instruments was enhanced by seeking the input of research supervisors at St. Paul's University. Validity was also assessed by conducting a pilot that enabled the researcher to identify mistakes and undesirable trends such as low responses in some questions, high number of middle responses (moderate extent), and lack of proper order in the responses. The pilot study was conducted in four security firms in Nairobi County and involved four management staff (one per firm) and 16 operational staff (4 per firm). The data collected in the pilot study was helped to assess the reliability of the questionnaire using the Cronbach alpha method. Results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis Results

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach alpha
Staff autonomy	10	0.811
Strategy implementation	10	0.870

Source: Field Data

As Table 2 displays, the two Likert scales gave an alpha that was above the 0.7 cut-off point and thus were deemed reliable. Thematic analysis technique was used to analyze qualitative data collected through interviews with managers. Quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics using the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The simple linear regression method was used in the inferential analysis. The following model was formulated.

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

Where, Y= strategy implementation, β_0 = constant, β_1 = Beta coefficients, X_1 = Staff autonomy, and e= error term.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION

The study targeted to collect data from 185 individuals out of which 151 were able to complete the study. Therefore, the response rate stood at 81.6%. Table 3 presents a breakdown of the responses obtained in each staff category.

Table 3: Response Rate for the Two Categories of Staff

Category	Desired Sample Size	Responses obtained	Response Rate
Management staff	11	7	63.6
Operational staff	174	144	82.8
Total	185	151	81.6

Source: Field Data

From Table 3, the response rate for the operational staff was higher (82.8%) than that of the management staff (63.6%). It was difficult to find some of the managers due to their busy schedules. There were more male respondents 89 (59%) than female respondents 62 (41%). This finding is consistent with the study by Nduwimana and Njambi (2016) who found that the security sector in Kenya is male dominated. Nonetheless, the views of female staff were adequately captured with a female representation of 41%.

Table 4: Respondents Demographic Profile

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	89	59
	Female	62	41
Age	20- 39	118	78
	40- 59	27	18
	60 and above	6	6
Highest Education Level	Secondary	60	39.7
	Tertiary Colleges	57	37.7
	University	34	22.5
	Degree		
Work Duration	Less than 5 years	86	56.9
	5- 9 years	34	22.3
	10 years and	31	20.8
	above		

Source: Field Data

The majority of the respondents 118 (78%) were in the 20 to 39 years age brackets. Another 18% were in the 40 to 59 years bracket while 4% were 60 years and above. In terms of education level, most of the respondents (39.7%) had the secondary level of education while another 37.7% had the diploma level. About 22.5% of the respondents had attained a university degree. The majority of the respondents (56.9%) had worked in their respective organizations for less than 5 years. About 22.3% of the respondents had worked for 5-9 years while 20.8% had worked for 10 years and above.

4.1 Staff Autonomy in the Private Security Firms

Staff autonomy was the independent variable of the study, which was measured using four indicators: decentralization, delegation of authority, level of staff involvement in decision-making, and level of empowerment. Respondents were presented with a list of statements relating to these indicators and asked to respond on five point scale ranging from 1= No extent, 2= little extent, 3=moderate extent, 4= large extent and 5 = Very large extent. Table 5 provides a summary of the respondents' views.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis Results for Staff Autonomy

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	S.D
SA1	The decision-making authority in our firm has been decentralized to branch, departments, and employee level.	144	3.06	.930
SA2	Branches/ departments have high level of freedom to make decision on issues that affect them.	144	2.75	1.215
SA3	Middle managers and low level employees have the freedom to organize their work and determine how to do it	144	2.92	1.094
SA4	Senior managers encourage and listen to suggestion from middle managers and lower level employees.	144	3.11	.758
SA5	Senior managers consult middle managers and low-level employees when making key strategic decisions	144	2.50	.989
SA6	All departments are given sufficient resources for strategy implementation	144	3.14	.994
SA7	All employees are given the necessary resources needed to implement strategy	144	2.96	1.050
SA8	Employees have been trained on how to implement strategic activities	144	3.40	.796
SA9	Employees and departments are encourage to take risks and experiment with new ideas	144	2.75	.972
SA10	Employee are held accountable for their actions and performance	144	3.67	1.274
Staff autonomy score		144	30.25	7.600

Source: Field Data

Statements SA1, SA2, and SA3 assessed the level of decentralization and delegation of authority in the private security firms. From Table 4.3, respondents on average agreed to a moderate extent with statement SA1 (mean= 3.06) which stated that the decision-making authority in our firm has been decentralized to branch,

departments, and employee level. Respondents also agreed to a moderate extent with the statement SA2 (mean = 2.75) which asserted that branches and departments have high level of freedom to make decisions on issues that affect them. Respondents further agreed to a moderate extent with statement SA3 which proclaimed that middle managers and low level employees have the freedom to organize their work and determine how to do it.

The findings in statement SA1, SA2, and SA3 suggest that there some moderate level of decentralization and delegation of authority in the surveyed private security firms. The study by Atieno and Juma (2015) found that there was statistically significant and positive associated between decentralization and strategy implementation in the county government of Nakuru ($r=.461$, $p=.003$). The study found that decentralization leads to faster decision-making, empowers employees to make important decisions, make more people to contribute to decision-making, and provide greater level of procedural fairness. The study Mailuet *al.* (2018) also found that organizations with relatively flat and decentralized structures were more effective in implementing their strategies. These views were reinforced during the interview where Manager5 explained that:

“Decentralizing and delegating most of the tasks to the people on the ground has improved the organization decision-making. It has now become easier to respond to situation and address issues as they come,” (Manager5, 2019).

Statement SA4 and SA5 assessed the level of staff involvement in decision-making in the private security firms. The mean score for SA4 was 3.11 indicating that on average respondent agreed to a moderate extent with claim that senior managers encourage and listen to suggestion from middle managers and lower level employees. Similarly, respondents agreed to a moderate extent with statement SA5 (mean= 2.50) which claimed that senior managers consult middle managers and low-level employees when making key strategic decisions. These findings suggest that on average there is a moderate level of staff involvement in decision-making in the private security firms in Nakuru. Qualitative findings suggest that the level of staff involvement varies from one department to the next. Manager 3 expressed that:

“The management values and respect the input made by all employees, big or small. Suggestions by employees are usually encouraged. We also hold regular meetings with the employees to discuss issues that affect the organization,” (Manager3, 2019).

On the other hand, Manager 7 specified that:

“Decisions are mainly made by the senior managers of the organizations. Staffs at the lower level are only informed about the decisions through memos and circulars,” (Manager7, 2019).

Statement SA6 to SA10 assessed the level of staff empowerment in the private security firms. On average, respondents agreed to a moderate extent with SA6 (mean= 3.14), which proclaimed that all departments are given sufficient resources for strategy implementation. Respondents also moderate agreed with SA7 (mean=2.96) which declared that all employees are given the necessary resources needed to implement strategy. Providing resources to department and individual employees are vital ingredient for empowering employees. Other ways of empowerment include training and development, which was captured in statement SA8 (mean=3.40), and encouraging risk taking captured in statement SA9 (mean= 2.75), and ensuring accountability captured in statement SA10 (mean= 3.67).

These findings suggest the existence of a moderate level of staff empowerment in the private security companies. Atieno and Juma (2015) found an association between employee empowerment and strategy implementation. The findings however contradict earlier studies such as Busoloet *al.* (2013), which suggest the existence of poor human resource practices in Kenyan private security firms, particularly low compensation of workers. The issue was also captured during the interview where Manager 6 explained that:

“Many employees have low level of motivation due to poor pay. Others such as guards are not provided with proper equipment and training; which affects their morale and ability to perform. This things need to be addressed,” (Manager6, 2019).

The overall staff autonomy score was 30.25 out of a maximum possible score of 50. This translates to a percentage score of 60.5%. This implies the overall level of staff autonomy in the private security firms in Nakuru as rated by the respondents was 60.5%.

4.2 Strategy Implementation in the Private Security Firms

Strategy implementation was the dependent variable of the study. It was measured using five indicators namely: the extent to which firm vision and goals are shared, translation of strategy into actionable tasks, alignment of departmental activities to company’s strategic goals, effectiveness of resource allocation, and link between employees and department performance with the strategic goals of the organization. Respondents were presented with a list of statements relating to these indicators and asked to respond on five point scale ranging from 1= No extent, 2= little extent, 3=moderate extent, 4= large extent and 5 = Very large extent. Table 6 presents a summary of respondents’ views.

From Table 6, item SI7 had the highest mean score of 3.82. This mean value indicates that on average respondents agreed to a great extent with the assertion that departments and branches performance measures are linked to the company’s strategy. The standard deviation was less than 1 suggesting that there was high level of consensus among respondents on this issue. The finding implies that most of the private security firms have excelled in terms of linking their performance management systems with the company strategy. The importance of linking strategy to performance measures is emphasized in the social exchange theory which emphasizes the need to create a reward system that motivates staff to pursue strategic goals (Majiros, 2013).

Respondents also agreed to a great extent with statement SI9 (mean= 3.54), which asserts that there is proper synergy between departments during the implementation of strategic activities. Synergy between departments is critical to the strategy implementation process. It is also one of the pathways through which organizational structures can affect strategy implementation. According to Maranguet *al.* (2014), the primary goal of organizational structure is to define how employees relate at work so as to bring about synergy and proper coordination of organizational tasks. The issue of synergy was also brought out during the interview where Manager4 explained that:

“All departments and branches own the process of implementation. Branch managers and HODs help in driving the process. All branches and departments work together to ensure strategic goals are realized,” (Manager4, 2019).

Table 6: Descriptive Analysis Results for Strategy Implementation

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	S.D
SI1	The company vision is shared by all members of the organization	144	3.07	1.909
SI2	The company’ strategy has been translated into actionable tasks	144	3.14	1.320
SI3	Employees’ job tasks are linked to the company’s strategy	144	3.36	1.402
SI4	Departmental activities are aligned to the company’s strategic vision and goals	144	2.79	1.697
SI5	The company allocated adequate resources towards implementation of strategic activities	144	2.90	1.219
SI6	Employee performance measures are linked to the strategic goals of the organization	144	2.74	1.672
SI7	Departments and branches performance measures are linked to the company’s strategy	144	3.82	.951
SI8	The firm is on course of achieving at least 50% of its strategic goals.	144	3.10	1.173
SI9	There is proper synergy between departments during the implementation of strategic activities.	144	3.54	.747
SI10	There is high level of commitment towards strategy implementation among employees.	144	2.71	1.651
Strategy implementation score		144	31.17	12.568

Source: Field Data

Item SI10 had the lowest mean of 2.71, which indicates that respondents on average agreed to a moderate extent with the claim that there is high level of commitment towards strategy implementation among employees. This implies that on average private security firms have not excelled in terms of promoting staff commitment towards strategy implementation. This problem might be connected to poor human resource practices documented in the study by Busoloet *al.* (2013), who found that many private security farmers are characterized by poor staff remuneration and working conditions. The standard deviation for item SI10 was greater than 1 suggesting that there were major variations in the respondents’ views on this issue. This implies that level of staff commitment towards strategy implementation varies from one firm to the next.

4.3 Effect of Staff Autonomy on Strategy Implementation

The effect of staff autonomy on strategy implementation was assessed using the simple linear regression method. Table 7 presents a summary of the results.

Table 7: Regression Analysis Results

Variable		r	r ²	Constant	F	P
Dependent	Strategy Implementation	.489	.239	8.317	34.578*	.000
Independent	Staff autonomy		Beta	Standardized Beta	t	
			.305*	.289	5.316	.000

From Table 7, the r-square for the model was 0.239 suggesting that the model explains 23.9% of the variations in strategy implementation. This r-square is above the minimum of 0.10 set for social phenomenon, which suggests that the staff autonomy provides satisfactory explanation of the changes observed in strategy implementation. The model had an F-value of 34.578 and a p-value of less than 0.001 suggesting that there is a statistically significant relationship between staff autonomy and strategy implementation. The beta coefficient

for staff autonomy was 0.305 which indicates that there is a positive relationship between staff autonomy and strategy implementation. The coefficient indicates that when staff autonomy is increased by 1 unit, strategy implementation would improve by 0.305 units. The t-statistics for this beta was 5.316 while the p-value was less than 0.001 suggesting that the relationship between staff autonomy and strategy implementation was statistically significant. The study therefore concluded that staff autonomy has a statistically significant and positive effect on strategy implementation in the private security firms in Nakuru County.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on findings, the study concludes that staff autonomy has a positive and statistically significant effect on strategy implementation in private security firms in Nakuru. Improving the level of staff autonomy would improve strategy implementation in the firms. The study also concludes that there are some moderate level of decentralization and delegation of authority, staff involvement in decision-making, and staff empowerment in the private security firms in Nakuru County. The level of staff autonomy varies from one company to the next. Qualitative findings suggest that the level of staff autonomy has been hampered by poor remuneration of staff and limited involvement of middle and lower level employees in making key decisions. To improve strategy implementation, the private security firms should encourage frequent and open consultation between senior managers, middle managers, and operational employees. Operational employees should be actively engaged in the strategic planning and implementation processes. The current study was limited to private security firms in Nakuru County. Future studies should examine the effect on staff autonomy on strategy implementation in private security firms in other counties.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Abrahamsen, R., & Williams, M. (2015). *The globalization of private security: Kenya country report*. London, UK: Programme of the Economic and Social Research Council.
- [2]. Brinkschroder N. (2014). *Strategy implementation: Key factors, challenges and solutions*. Paper presented at the 4th IBA Bachelor Thesis Conference, Enschede, The Netherlands.
- [3]. Brock, D. (2017). Strategy, autonomy, planning mode and effectiveness: A contingency study of business schools. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 11(6), 248- 259.
- [4]. Busolo, C., Ogolla, D., & Were, E. (2013). Relationship between human resource management practices and performance of private security firms in Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Commerce*, 6(7), 1-13.
- [5]. Busolo, C., Ogolla, D., & Were, E. (2016). Relationship between human resource management practices and performance of private security firms in Kenya: A case of private security firms in Kitui County. *International Journal of Business and Commerce*, 6(7), 1-13.
- [6]. Durmaz, Y., & Dusun, Z. (2016). Importance of strategic management in business. *Expert Journal of Business and Management*, 4(1), 38-45.
- [7]. Ekwenye, O., Theuri, M., & Mwenda, L. (2018). Drivers of quality service provision by private security firms in mitigating crime in Nairobi County, Kenya. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 6(5), 253- 269.
- [8]. Githinji, S. (2014). *The effect of staff turnover on financial performance of private security firms in Kenya* (Unpublished thesis). United States International University, Kenya.
- [9]. Hair, J. (2015). *Essential of business research methods*. New York, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- [10]. Lunenburg, F. (2012). Organizational structure: Mintzberg's Framework. *International Journal of Scholarly, Academic, Intellectual Diversity*, 14(1), 1-8.
- [11]. Magiri, K., Nguu, T., & Mathenge, P. (2018). Factors affecting strategy implementation: A case of the Kenya Police Headquarters. *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, 6(5), 65- 76.
- [12]. Mailu, R., Ntale, J., & Nguu, T. (2018). Strategy implementation and organizational performance in the pharmaceutical industry in Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 3(2), 33-47.
- [13]. Majiros, C. (2013). Beyond Social Exchange Theory: A theoretical shift for mentoring relationships in the federal workplace. *Advances in Social Work*, 14(2), 531- 543.
- [14]. Marangu, W., Kanchori, D., Nyandika, L., & Yegon, R. (2014). An assessment of organizational structure on performance of public health service providers in Western Kenya. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 6(12), 105- 110.
- [15]. Michira, M. (2016). Private security services to double by 2020. *Standard Digital*. Retrieved <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2000214166/private-security-services-to-double-by-2020>.
- [16]. Nduwimana, D., & Njambi, E. (2016). *Gender mainstreaming in security sector reform in Kenya: An assessment of the National Police Service*. Nairobi, KE: International Peace Support Training Center.
- [17]. Nkosi, S. (2015). Factors affecting strategy implementation: A case study of a local municipality in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(36), 29- 35.
- [18]. Oada, V. (2013). Challenges of strategy implementation in private security companies in Kenya. Thesis submitted to the University of Nairobi.
- [19]. Okindah, M. (2008). Strategic planning practices of private security firms in Kenya. Thesis submitted to the University of Nairobi.
- [20]. Painter, M., & Yee, W. (2010). Task matters: A structural analysis of the staff autonomy of Hong Kong Government bodies (Unpublished thesis). City University of Hong Kong.
- [21]. Rishipal, D. (2014). Analytical comparison of flat and vertical organizational structures. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 6(36), 56- 65.
- [22]. Speculand, R. (2009). *Beyond strategy: The leaders role in successful implementation*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- [23]. Sting, F., & Loch, C. (2016). Implementing operations strategy: How vertical and horizontal coordination interact. *Production and Operations Management*, 9(1), 101-123.
- [24]. Swedish Trade and Investment Council (2017). Opportunities in the Kenyan security sector. Retrieved <https://www.business-sweden.se/contentassets/2939214fcb5d47d6894a6b5e58eb7b77/factpack---opportunities-in-kenyan-security-sector---2017.pdf>.

- [25]. Tabo, O. (2013). *Challenges of strategy implementation in private security companies in Kenya* (Unpublished thesis). University of Nairobi, Kenya.
- [26]. Zafar, F., Babar, S., & Abbas, H. (2013). The art of strategic management: A key to success in corporate sector. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Management Sciences*, 1(1), 15- 24.

VII. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
HOD:	Head of Department
SPSS:	Statistical Packages for Social Science

*Isaac Ondari. " Effect of Staff Autonomy on Strategy Implementation in Private Security Firms in Nakuru County, Kenya". *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, Vol. 21, No. 9, 2019, pp. -29-37