

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE DELIVERY OF COUNTY GOVERNMENTS: THE KENYAN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

The study sought to determine the relationship between strategic leadership and service delivery of County Governments in Kenya. The relevant theories reviewed for this study were the New Public Management (NPM) theoretical perspective and upper echelon theory, institutional theory and principal agent theory. This study used a positivism research philosophy. The study used a cross sectional survey. The target population for the study was drawn from the 47 Counties in Kenya as per 2010 constitution. The study used purely primary data which was collected using a structured questionnaire. Data analysis took place at descriptive statistics level and inferential statistics level. To test the study hypothesis, simple and multiple linear regressions were used. Multiple regression analysis was carried out to predict the dependent variable given the independent variable. P-value was used to check for significance of individual

variables in the regression equations, whereby a relationship was considered to be statistically significant if the p-value was ≤ 0.05 . The study found that strategic leadership was significant in influencing service delivery among county governments in Kenya. It was therefore recommended that county governments must understand the service delivery dimensions in order to carry out frequent analysis and develop strategic leadership concepts relevant to their counties.

Keywords: Strategic leadership, Service delivery, County government, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Strategic leadership is defined as the interaction between leaders and their followers and how such leaders influence the said followers in pursuing certain organizational goals through exchange and application of individuals' tacit and explicit knowledge in a certain thinking pattern to enhancing service delivery (Judge, 2012). The concept of strategic leadership is an important consideration in government organizations since it empowers the team leaders through envisioning, anticipating and creation of changes strategically. It is therefore necessary for organization leaders to think strategically when executing their roles for better service delivery. Aziz, Rahman, Alam and Said (2015) indicate that strategic leadership enables to unleash the strength and potential of individuals and thus improved service delivery (Gowan et al., 2001).

Strategic leadership measurements are derived from Jansen, Vera and Crossan (2009) who suggested that strategic leadership encompasses idealized influence, vision development, inspirational-motivation and contingent-Reward. Visionary leadership is transformative and managerial in nature and thus ensuring that the vision, formulated strategies, mission and strategic objectives of the organization are achieved successfully as planned (Bower, 2010). David (2010) highlights the need for strategic leaders in organizations to appreciate the contextual uniqueness and thus come up with ways of advancing the organizations key mandate in the face of scarce resources. The study posits that strategic leadership possesses unique personality traits, skills and management styles which they apply to the context of the organisations they lead. Strategic leaders defines key and crucial organizational strategic change moments, creates appropriate strategies and translates such strategies to actions in operational terms for the change direction required (Mulcaster, 2012). This is important for any organization that is obligated to achieve the desired goals as far as key stakeholders interests are taken in to the equation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides the theoretical perspective of the study and reviews available scholarly work relevant to the study objectives. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006) noted that literature review requires the logical identification, sorting and analyses of documents with relevance to the stated research problem. The literature was reviewed from books, articles and online source relevant to the subjects under study.

The relevant theories reviewed for this study were the New Public Management (NPM) theoretical perspective and upper echelon theory. Theoretical assumptions, their critique and how they relate to the study variables were well articulated. The new public management theory advocates application of private sector's best practices for efficient and responsive service delivery by public entities (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Hope, 2001; Savoie, 2003). Therefore, the NPM perspective key tenets as put forward by Haque (2004) and Islam (2015) align with the objectives of this study whose drive is the quest for better services by public entities by a strategic leadership which is ethical. The proposed study hypotheses hold that strategic leadership, ethical practices and service delivery concepts have been applied successfully in the private sector and thus the need to test how they fair in public entities on the basis of NPM.

As noted by Aziz et al. (2015), NPM identifies the need for leadership which undertakes strategic planning while upholding values such as professionalism, fairness and responsiveness to public needs, issues which the study sought to understand how they relate to service delivery. The study conceptualizes situation where the public are treated as private sector customers who desire quality and satisfactory service.

The premise aligns with the NPM perspective which emphasizes on competition, quality services and customer satisfaction as desired outcomes in the public sector (Haque, 2007). The flexibility of NPM perspective to diverse conceptual and contextual adaptations also makes it suitable for this study which was based on county governments in Kenya which possess unique characteristics distinct from the Eurocentric or Western public sector models.

The Upper Echelon Theory (UET) as developed by Hambrick and Mason (1984) view strategic organizational processes and outcomes as a product of managerial qualities of topmost managers. Hambrick and Mason's (1984) as well as Hambrick's (2007) arguments are a basis for this study which also holds that styles (such as strategic leadership) and top leadership qualities (such as ethicality) shape the services offered by county governments.

The central tenet of the upper echelon theory is that, organizations are a reflection of the skills, expertise and values of the senior leaders as they work at a strategic level (Chuang, Nakatani & Zhou, 2009; Phipps & Burbach, 2010; Mason & Reilly, 2006). The assertion is similar

to the study's main objective which supposes that an ethical strategic leadership can influence the services provided by public entities such as county governments.

This theory provides a framework within which the role of strategic leaders in influencing organizational outcomes can be interpreted, the key postulation being that organizational outcomes and strategic decisions are partially predicted by strategic leaders (Carpenter et al., 2004). The propositions by the upper echelon theory have brought forth significant literature in research of the role of strategic leadership and service delivery. Strategic leaders are therefore critical in yielding quality service delivery of public service organizations. This theory guides the conceptualization of strategic leaders in influencing service delivery in the context of county governments in Kenya.

There exists numerous reviewed studies in different context cutting across spheres of developing and developed countries as far as strategic leadership and service delivery is concerned with varying argumentative conclusions (Allio 2015; Schutte, Barkhuizen & Swanepoel 2014; Rosenbaum 2003; Matshabaphala 2007; Masungo and Marangu 2015). The impact of strategic leadership on service delivery is felt across the whole organization or the key departments and extends the influence to external organizational elements (Narayanan & Zane, 2009).

Allio (2015) argues that strategic leadership traits possessed by organizational leaders can lead to better service delivery in a well-managed combination of strategic leaders. Schutte, Barkhuizen and Swanepoel (2014) argue that strategic leaders in public entities are faced with unique operating environment as they have to contend with conflicting political, legislative and public demands and expectations and therefore for quality service delivery to be realized, they have to manage the context of the conflict in a well-balanced constructs including better ideas and vision focus.

According to argument by Masungo and Marangu (2015), the advantage and success of an organization in service delivery depends on strategic leaders who are involved in directing and mobilization of employees to achieving both present and future desires of that particular organization as far as service delivery is concerned (Matshabaphala 2007). It is therefore expected that right strategic leaders are put in place in an organization, for any service delivery to be realized (Schutte, Barkhuizen & Swanepoel 2014).

Abashe, (2016) concluded that strategic Leaders develop the strategic vision, set goals and objectives of the organization and that through informed decision making, service delivery is enhanced. He further concluded a positive but weak and insignificant relationship between strategic leadership and service delivery. The study also concludes that the organizational strategy is aligned to its activities and projects. Sila and Gichinga (2016) concluded that

strategic leadership and service delivery relate significantly as it play a critical role in the effective service delivery. It was found that strategic leaders play a role of fostering service delivery through communication and strategic direction.

Henman (2010) in a study on how to turn great strategy into great execution argued that strategic leaders can use innovative thinking to formulate successful strategy and then apply advanced critical thinking to develop the plan for execution service delivery process. However the results showed insignificant relationship. A study of Abdow (2015) on the role of strategic leaders in challenging environment also argued that as strategic leadership has a central role in evolution and cultivating an organization, the process of organizational change demands a very effective and highly competent leadership that is well capable to perceive the most desirable shape of an organization and address the issue of environmental change in the most appropriate way for improved service delivery.

The study showed moderate significant relationship between strategic leadership and service delivery but highly significant when environmental factors were considered. Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2013) reviewing literature on strategic management: competitiveness and globalization emphasized that service delivery depends solely on strategic leaders through creation of firms' competitiveness structure. Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger (2012) in their study on how new leaders affect strategic change following a succession event found that the influence of strategic leaders will lead to better service delivery as followers emulate the decisions made by leaders and translate them to action plans.

Bower (2010) studying leadership behaviour in successful organizations also added his voice to the debate that the management challenge is manifested in the strategy implementation process concerning customers' satisfaction. Another study by Jooste and Fourie (2009) found that the poor service delivery is due to incapable strategic leaders who are viewed as a key driver to structural change that emphasise on service delivery. The study concluded that strategic leadership positively contributes to better service delivery in South African organizations. Further according to Guohui and Eppler (2008) on making strategy work; argued that service delivery being a dynamic and complex process requires a series of decisions to turn strategic plans in to actions for strategic objectives to be achieved.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population for the study was drawn from the 47 Counties in Kenya as per 2010 constitution. The study selected participants based on how the study deems their input necessary to accomplish the objectives of the study and also their availability during data collection period. The study purposively selected six

departments which were common across all the counties and offers services which are the same in all the counties that is, Education, Health services, Public works, Economic planning, Natural resources and Agriculture. Chief Officers and administrators were selected to participate in the study since they were directly involved in the service delivery process and capable of giving information especially on strategic leadership and service delivery.

A self-designed close-ended questionnaire was used to collect primary data relating to the all variables. The questionnaire enabled the researcher to collect views of respondents on the manifestations of strategic leadership and service delivery. The questionnaire adopted a 5-likert scale. The use of 5-likert scale made it possible to quantify the qualitative data, and therefore, enable the attainment of more objective results regarding the views of respondents on the different manifestations. Before administering the data collection instrument, respondents were assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity regarding their responses. The questionnaire was administered using the 'drop and pick up later' method so as to allow the respondents ample time to respond to the questions, thereby enhancing accuracy in responses and improve response rate.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this study, strategic leadership measurements were captured along the five dimensions of idealized influence, vision development, inspirational motivation and contingent reward. The study determined the manifestations of idealized influence in the surveyed county departments. Idealized influence plays a significant role in solving business problems and challenges which in turn provides organizations with the ability to succeed especially in service delivery. To capture these data, the respondents were asked to indicate the rating (Table 1).

Table 1: Idealized Influence Attributes

Variable manifestations	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
The county leadership set goals and objectives to be met	272	3.9154	.76611	.19
The county leadership demonstrates good knowledge in executing their roles	272	3.8971	.78528	.20
The leadership sets functional example to county personnel.	269	3.9777	.77716	.19
The county leadership has described the duties and roles of each functional unit in tandem with the set goals.	272	4.0919	.69448	.17
The county leadership encourages sharing of new information across the functional unit	272	4.0588	.78515	.19

County leadership encourages knowledge acquisition programmes like training opportunities	272	3.7390	.87285	.23
County leadership goes beyond self-interest for the good of the set goals.	272	4.0000	.74892	.19
Average Mean Score	272	3.954	.776	19

Table 1...

The average mean score for idealized influence dimensions is 3.954 and standard deviation of .776. This is a high mean score depicting that the constructs manifests highly within the leadership of the county departments. The statement with the highest mean score was that the county leadership has described the duties and roles of each functional unit in tandem with the set goals (Mean=4.0919, SD=0.69448, CV=.17). This implies that it manifests highly in the organizations surveyed. Other statements were; the county leadership encourages sharing of new information across the functional unit (Mean=4.0588, SD=0.78515, CV=.19).

County leadership goes beyond self-interest for the good of the set goals (Mean=4.0000, SD=0.74892, CV=.19), the leadership sets functional example to county personnel (Mean=3.9777, SD=0.77716, CV=.19), The county leadership set goals and objectives to be met (Mean=3.9154, SD=0.76611, CV=.19) and the county leadership demonstrates good knowledge in executing their roles (Mean=3.8971, SD=.78528, CV=.20). The statement that county leadership encourages knowledge acquisition programmes like training opportunities had the lowest mean (Mean=3.739, SD=0.87285, CV=.23).

The statement on county leadership encourages knowledge acquisition programmes like training opportunities had the highest CV value of 0.23. This means that the statement reported the highest variation in responses. The statement on the county leadership has described the duties and roles of each functional unit in tandem with the set goals had the lowest CV of 0.17.

In many organizations, it's difficult to define individual roles and responsibilities causing many employees wear several different hats completing jobs outside the initial range of their job description. Unfortunately, this can cause a great deal of confusion within the company. Clearly definition of goals and responsibilities, on the other hand has a positive impact to the company as a whole especially when relating to team projects (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Setting of clear roles and duties in an organization ensures that every individual knows what is expected of them in the organization. This will therefore lead to accomplishment of the goals and set objectives of the company. Additionally, within a short period of time, various tasks within the organization get accomplished. Further, people work together better in an organization when they understand their roles. There will be less jockeying for positions, fewer arguments as well as higher overall creativity since everyone understands their responsibilities. The findings of the study indicate that the county leadership demonstrates good knowledge in executing their roles.

Leaders need to be seen by employees and the public as being experts in the field or in leadership. Unless your constituents see you as highly credential. Whether by academic degree or specialized experience and capable of leading your company to success, it will be more difficult for you to be as respected, admired, or followed (Crowe, 2011). According to Okibo and Shikanda (2011), the relevant leadership behaviour is crucial to improve creation of awareness in organizations. Consequently, employees' behaviours are frequently shaped by the way leaders bestow support to organizational members as well as provide clear direction in regard to guidelines. They further elaborated that a transformational leader has to watch out for prospective needs in admirers, and satisfies higher motives, whilst connecting with the full attributes of the adorers.

Professional training is normally overlooked and undepreciated as an employee retention and recruitment tool. In fact, it is often one of the first things to be dismissed when budget gets cut. Even though professional training programs allows employees for better performance and prepares them for positions with greater responsibilities, this study established that the county leadership offers minimal opportunities of training to their staff. Professional development can also help raise overall staff expertise when employees with vastly different backgrounds and levels of experience are encouraged to share information.

Statements depicting the manifestations of vision development were put on A Likert scale and respondents were required to give their views. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Vision Development Attributes

Variable manifestations	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
The county leadership sets vision that is geared towards better service delivery	272	3.9596	.78396	.19
County leadership strives to achieve the set vision	272	4.0809	.73955	.18
The county vision statement is clear towards social welfare	272	4.1397	.76523	.18
County leaders understands citizens issues thus strives to meet them	272	4.0294	.86286	.21
County leaders are more interested with satisfying the citizens	272	3.8713	.83400	.22
County leaders encourages the staff to stick to the county vision	272	3.9743	.74601	.19
The county government set vision is attainable	272	3.7132	.86257	.23
Average Mean Score	272	3.967	.7992	.20

The statements depicting vision development had an overall mean of 3.967 and standard deviation of 0.7992. This is a strong mean depicting respondent's agreement of the manifestations of vision development construct within the departments surveyed. The statement with the highest mean score was that the county vision statement is clear towards social welfare (Mean=4.1397, SD=0.76523 and CV=.18). Other statements were; County leadership strives to achieve the set vision (Mean=4.0809, SD=.73955, CV=.18), County leaders understands citizens issues thus strives to meet them (Mean=4.0294 SD=.86286, CV=.21), County leaders encourages the staff to stick to the county vision (Mean=3.9743 SD=.74601, CV=.19).

The county leadership sets vision that is geared towards better service delivery (Mean=3.9596 SD=.78396, CV=.19) and County leaders are more interested with satisfying the citizens (Mean=3.8713 SD=.83400, CV=.22). The statements with the lowest mean score was that the county government set vision is attainable (Mean=3.7132, SD=.86257, CV=.23). The most varied statement with the highest CV is that the county government set vision is attainable (CV=.23).

Visionary leadership is transformative and managerial in nature and thus ensuring that the vision, formulated strategies mission and strategic objectives of the organization are achieved successfully as planned (Milner & Joyce, 2012). For the success of any leadership structure put in a firm, vision has to be communicated through multiple channels. Many organizations do not communicate vision through sufficient channels and therefore cause their staff to become unfamiliar of what is expected of them.

It appears that there is a prevalent debate on whose duty it is to communicate the vision. Many believe it is the CEO's job. But in the best companies it is clear and certain that every leader and every function sees it as their responsibility to own as well as communicate the vision. When communication comes from the strategic leadership team, possibility of having the vision embraced increases substantially (Rosenbaum, 2003). Therefore for the vision and goals to be achieved, it has to be clearly communicated from the leaders of the organization.

The findings of the study indicate that county leadership strive to achieve the set vision. Set vision can be achieved through giving a clear communication and ensuring the staff are aware of what is expected of them in order to achieve the set goals of the company. It is important for the leadership team to use easily understood, unambiguous terms to ease communication. Further, the leadership need to outline the specific task, actions and behaviors to the staff. Moreover, the leaders need to lead by action and example. In organizations where words are rarely acted upon, the vision and mission statements become meaningless with no reality attached to them.

The main objective of the county governments is to bring improved services closer to the people through fairness in distribution of resources and access to quality services. County governments in the country are supposed to deliver better services to the citizens because of the accessibility unlike handling it in terms of nation- wide. Additionally, substantial resources are being allocated to devolved units in Kenya and thus the need for evidence on the nature of outcomes obtained from devolved efforts and resources. The findings of the study indicated that the county government leadership are aware of the citizens needs and strive to meet them.

The study also formulated statements on how inspiration motivation is manifested within the surveyed counties upon which respondents were required to give their responses on a 5 Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Inspirational Motivation Attributes

Variable manifestations	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of variation
County leadership are involved in strategic decision making process	272	3.9706	.78210	.19
County leadership shares their desires to staff for implementation.	272	4.0956	.74773	.18
There exist high standards of performance in the count due to team building.	272	3.9412	.78515	.20
The county leadership have inspiration appeals of faith and trust towards the set goals	272	4.0074	.84606	.21
The county leadership inspires loyalty and commitment to work.	272	4.0441	.78611	.19
The county leadership displays optimism and enthusiasm.	272	3.9779	.78704	.20
The county leadership emphasis on collective team building	272	3.8272	.84364	.22
The county leadership plans for motivational talks for the staff	272	3.7500	.97383	.26
Average Mean Score	272	3.9518	.81896	.21

The findings show that the average mean score is 3.9518, standard deviation of .81896 and coefficient of variation of 0.21. All statements had a mean above 3.0 indicating that they are well manifested within the county departments surveyed. The statement with the highest mean score was, the county leadership shares their desires to staff for implementation (Mean=4.096, SD=.747 and CV=.18). The statement that showed highest variations in the responses was that the county leadership plans for motivational talks for the staff with a CV of .26. This means motivation talks are not well manifested within the county departments by the strategic leaders. Other statements were; the county leadership inspires loyalty and

commitment to work (Mean=4.0441, SD=.78611 and CV=.19), the county leadership have inspiration appeals of faith and trust towards the set goals (Mean=4.0074, SD=.84606 and CV=.21).

The county leadership displays optimism and enthusiasm (Mean=3.9779, SD=.78704 and CV=.20), County leadership are involved in strategic decision making process (Mean=3.9706, SD=.78210 and CV=.19), There exist high standards of performance in the count due to team building (Mean=3.9412, SD=.78515 and CV=.20) and the county leadership emphasis on collective team building (Mean=3.8272, SD=.84364 and CV=.22).The statement with the lowest mean was the county leadership plans for motivational talks for the staff (Mean=3.7500, SD=.97383 and CV=.26). For any leadership to be termed as strategic and successful, the leaders need to ensure that they share their desires to the staff for implementation. If the staff of your organization are not aware of what is expected from them, chances are each person will carry out the task in the manner he or she feels it is supposed to be conducted and therefore lead to lack of achievement of the set goals and vision. Further the study established that the county leadership inspires loyalty and commitment to work and as well as have inspiration appeals of faith and trust towards the set goals. It is important as strategic leaders to provide their employees feedback on performance and acknowledge their efforts.

According to Bass & Riggio (2006), one of the ways of exercising strategic leadership is scheduling meetings to cover employee's progress towards the goals, any performance issues that may arise, identification of additional information, resources or support that they may require to ensure job gets done and any issues that may arise in the working environment. Additionally, it is crucial for the strategic leadership team to build an atmosphere of trust. This can be done by defining the organizational values to determine conduct on how to relate and behave with each other. It will be expected as a strategic leader after outlying the conduct, to act it out. Your behavior as a leader or manager speaks much louder than your words. Moreover, it is important for the strategic leaders to communicate constantly with the staff not just about the decisions being made but also why they are being made. Strategic leaders also encourage people to express their ideas and opinions as well as listen when they do. Hold people accountable for observing organizational values and performing at high level. Nothing erodes trust and the sense of engagement like allowing poor performance or bad conduct which is against the organizational norms (Phipps, & Burbach, 2010).

Further in this study the statements relating to contingent reward were developed and respondent were asked to rate them. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Contingent Reward Attributes

Variable manifestations	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of variation
County leaders are transactional –set goals, monitor behaviour and performance, provide feedback and set rewards	272	4.0331	.69448	.17
County leadership emphasizes the importance of having collective sense of mission	271	3.9336	.75720	.19
County leadership rewards staff when they meet the work expectations	271	4.0148	.81636	.20
County leaders summons staff for failure to meet the set standards	270	3.9889	.79722	.20
County leadership rewards for undertaking difficult and unexpected challenges	271	4.0959	.78765	.19
The county leaders are willing to share power	271	3.6015	.99062	.28
County leadership rewards for assignments geared towards better service delivery	271	4.0923	.69039	.17
County leadership are keen to motivating functional units for better performance	270	4.1593	.76190	.18
Average Mean score	270	3.989	0.787	.20

The average mean score for the manifestations of contingent reward was 3.989, standard deviation of 0.787 and coefficient of variation of .20. This mean depicts high agreement with respect to the manifestation of contingent reward in the departments surveyed within the counties. The statement that county leadership are keen to motivating functional units for better performance had the highest mean (Mean=4.1593, SD=0.7619, CV=.18) and the statement that the county leaders are willing to share power representing low agreement (Mean=3.6015, SD=.99062 and CV=.28).

Other statements were; County leadership rewards for undertaking difficult and unexpected challenges (Mean=4.0959, SD=.78765, CV=.19), County leadership rewards for assignments geared towards better service delivery (Mean=4.0923, SD=.69039, CV=.17). County leaders are transactional –set goals, monitor behaviour and performance, provide feedback and set rewards (Mean=4.0331, SD=.69448, CV=.17), County leadership rewards staff when they meet the work expectations (Mean=4.0148, SD=.81636, CV=.20),

County leaders summons staff for failure to meet the set standards (Mean=3.9889, SD=.79722, CV=.20) and County leadership emphasizes the importance of having collective sense of mission (Mean=3.9336, SD=.75720, CV=.19). The coefficient of variations ranged between .17 to .28 implying that the variations on the responses for the statements was

moderate among the respondents and thus sufficient to conclude the existence of contingent reward among the departments surveyed by the strategic leadership in place.

Employees who are engaged in their duties and committed to their organizations provide companies crucial competitive advantage which includes higher productivity as well as lower employee turnover. According to McShane & Gilnow (2000), the concept of employee engagement remains very critical in an organization's setting and is rated among the key preoccupations of today's organizations.

Employee engagement level determines an organization's survival or demise as well as its prosperity or failure. High positive engagement level leads too high prospects of expansive development growth, survival in addition to competitiveness of an organization. Therefore employee engagement is crucial for sustainability of an organization.

Findings of the study established that there is active engagement of the county leadership to the staff. It further recognized that county leadership rewarded for undertaking difficult and unexpected challenges as well as for assignments geared towards better service delivery. Rewards can comprise of both financial and non-financial elements (Armstrong, 2009). Composition of reward system greatly influence employee engagement and commitments.

These rewards given to employees increase motivation, morale, identification as well as offers freedom of choice and chance for progressions, growth and great accomplishments in the organization. Contingent rewards also offer an opportunity to formulate key resources, obtain high levels of skill inventory and capacity, capability and competency levels. Further it provide an opportunity for staff to compete amongst themselves and hence the organization develop quality, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness.

Hypothesis Testing

The study hypothesized that there is an association between strategic leadership and service delivery In order to establish the statistical significance of these hypotheses, simple regression analysis was employed through the hypothesis that **H₁: There is a significant relationship between strategic leadership and service delivery of County governments in Kenya.** The results were as presented on Table 5.

Table 5: Regression Results of Strategic Leadership and Service Delivery

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Strategic leadership	.585 ^a	.342	.340	.38402

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic leadership

a) ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Strategic leadership	Regression	37.526	1	37.526	254.469	.000 ^a
	Residual	72.260	270	.147		
	Total	109.786	271			
a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic leadership						
b) Combined coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
((Constant)	1.335	.108			12.333	.000
Strategic leadership	.473	.030	.585		15.952	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery						

The results indicate that there is a relatively strong association between strategic leadership and service delivery ($R=.585$). The coefficient of determination $R^2 = .342$ implies that strategic leadership explains 34.2% of the variation in service delivery. The other variables in the county governments explain the remaining 65.8%. This is an indicator of strong influence of strategic leadership on service delivery.

The analysis from the model had the F value of 254.469 with p-value $.000 < 0.05$, while the results of the beta coefficient showed that a unit increase in strategic leadership will cause a .473 increase in service delivery ($B=.473$, $t=15.952$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that strategic leadership is a good predictor of service delivery among County Governments of Kenya. The findings, thus, were sufficient to support the influence of strategic leadership on service delivery, therefore the hypothesis (H_1) was accepted.

The regression equation can be written as follows;

$$Y = 1.335 + .473SL$$

Where, $Y =$ Service delivery, $SL =$ Strategic leadership

CONCLUSIONS

The results indicated that strategic leadership influences service delivery significantly. This implies that strategic leadership of county governments determines greatly their service delivery. According to the study, the advantage and success of an organization in service delivery depends on strategic leaders who are involved in directing and mobilization of employees to achieving both present and future desires of that particular organization as far as service delivery is concerned. It is therefore expected that organizations put in place the right strategic leaders are put in place in an organization.

It further established that the county leadership had described the duties and roles of each functional unit in tandem with the set goals and that County leadership goes beyond self-interest for the good of the set goals. In many organizations, it's difficult to define individual roles and responsibilities causing many employees wear several different hats completing jobs outside the initial range of their job description. Unfortunately, this can cause a great deal of confusion within the company.

It was therefore recommended that county governments must understand the service delivery dimensions in order to carry out frequent analysis and develop strategic leadership concepts relevant to their counties. The study further recommends that for any leadership to be termed as strategic and successful, the leaders need to ensure that they share their desires to the staff for implementation. If the staff of your organization are not aware of what is expected from them, chances are each person will carry out the task in the manner he or she feels it is supposed to be conducted and therefore this may lead to lack of achievement of the set goals and vision.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has confirmed the contributions by the various theories and lends support for the hypothesized relationships. It lends support to NPM, the test of Upper Echelon Theory, the agency theory and institutional theory on issues related to strategic leadership, ethical practices, organizational structure and their interaction with service delivery and the ensuing challenges. Strategic leadership dimensions had varied results on service delivery among county governments in Kenya. The findings of this study offer suggestions that are beneficial to policy makers on county governments in Kenya and more so the ministry of devolution. County governments in Kenya have previously tried to have best leadership practices through better structure and ethical practices.

Strategic leadership manifest differently in the county governments in Kenya. Some dimensions are significant while others are not on the different indicators of service delivery. It is therefore prudent that county governments must understand the service delivery dimensions in order to carry out frequent analysis and develop strategic leadership concepts relevant to their counties. County officers who develop structure to aid in service delivery should find the results of this study useful. The results of this study had statistically significant results from the hypothesized relationships of the four objectives. It was to explore and establish the causal relationships on the variables. Lenz (1980) proposed that any relationship must be directly or indirectly caused by the other and there is need to explore further interactions. It therefore calls

for the need to look at the operationalization of the research variables in this study and test their interactions.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to establish the relationship between strategic leadership and service delivery among county governments in Kenya. However, the study had a number of limitations. A cross sectional survey approach method was used for the study which captures only one respondent for the target county departments. One issue that might have affected the response is the required respondents who are familiar and well-grounded with the operations of the county.

The use of aggregated statistics within a five year for measures of the conceptualized variables on service delivery was with the assumption that those measures had not changed and that service delivery reflected the outcome of strategic leadership dimensions adopted. The leadership and structure within the various county departments takes different forms and the conceptualization of these variations was a limitation and had to take a general view on how to incorporate all the views. The other limitation was capturing of the study variables. It was mainly on quantitative (subjective) aspects and limited on the qualitative may give more in-depth on the nature and manifestations of the variables considered within the county governments.

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