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Influence of Strategic Corporate Governance Practices on Public Service Delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre, Kenya

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Abstract:

Corporate governance is a highly talked of topical issue in the modern literature. This is because of the immense significance attached to it in order to rid-off both public and private organizations from the monster of corruption, which is bedeviling a substantive number of organizations. This study therefore, basically aimed at analyzing the influence of strategic corporate governance practices on public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. The specific research objectives were: To investigate the impact of technology use on service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre in Mombasa County; to determine the effect of staff empowerment level on service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre; and to establish the influence of transparency rates on service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. The study is anchored on five theories; the strategy theory, Change theory, Motivational and opportunity theory, Institutional theory, Agency theory. The study adopted a survey research design whereby 30 employees working at Mombasa Huduma Centre, were involved in the study out of twenty-six duly filled in the research questionnaires and returned them back for analysis. The study was carried out using closed-ended questionnaires whereby respondents were picked through census technique. After collection of data, it was analyzed and conclusions drawn. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used whereby the information was presented into tables and graphs. The findings revealed that technology use had a P=.000, which is within the significance level of 0.05. This posits a very strong relationship between technology uses with public service delivery. Secondly, staff empowerment level had a P=.000, still connoting a very strong relationship between it and the public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. Finally, transparency rate scored a P value=.003, which is also within the significance level of 0.05 connoting a strong relationship with the dependent variable under study. This means that technology, staff empowerment, transparency and public service delivery play a vital role in achieving strategic cooperate governance of Mombasa Huduma Centre. Therefore, the study established that strategic cooperate governance practices directly influence public service delivery. Based on the research findings the study recommends that public institution should embrace technology in all sector so that to give efficient service delivery & able to compete in the digital world. It is also recommended that concerned arm of government continue to develop or revise policy documents and guidelines to ensure efficient management of Huduma Centre facilities across the country to guarantee its citizens sustainable sufficient and efficient service delivery.

Keywords: Huduma centre, public service delivery, technology use, staff empowerment, transparency rates and policy documents

1. Introduction

188

Public system has been defined as a system or a plan that results to the supply of public needs (Oboth, 2001). On the other hand, delivery is the step by step offering of a service. Service delivery is a purposeful obligatory decision by officials, either appointed or elected for service or the delivery of goods and services to consumers (Helmsing, 1995). Poor service delivery can be justified by ineffective corporate governance systems within an organization. Schooner and Whiteman, (2000) acknowledge that in developed and developing nation alike, corporate governance policy's contribution towards the facilitating of a robust public service delivery in the public sector and private organizations is unparalleled. Further, Whiteman, (2000) and Thai, (2009) posit that good laws and regulations always result to its efficiency or inefficiency. Ideally the clarity, consistency, flexibility and comprehensiveness of the public service delivery laws and regulations should be common (Thai, 2009). On the other hand, public service delivery planning is a factor influencing corporate governance. On the same breath Mullins, (2003) alludes that the gains of public service delivery planning in the provision of excellent corporate governance in public organizations cannot be ignored in developed and undeveloped nations alike. For a public service delivery system to be sound, the workforce is also a factor of influence, the workers need to be competent, professional, and equipped with defined skills as well as be knowledgeable for specified jobs (OECD-DAC, 2006). It can be challenging to create a public service delivery workforce with the right ability due to the dynamism of

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corporate governance processes. The expansion of alternative contracting avenues, and over reliance of private sector provided service (Government Accountability Office, 2005).

In the setting of almost every county in Kenya, the importance of public delivery reform can be shown by the magnitude of its role and scale using corporate governance. Additionally, this could be displayed through the money wasted using existing practices, competition reduction, soaring prices due as a result of market perceptions, and the known ability of nation to accumulate large savings by strengthening of their functions (Harmonizing Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery, 1999). Public service delivery in many developing countries fail to exercise control and oversight roles effectively, audit and record allocation, disbursement and usage of the lack of their financial resources due to a lack of financial and technical capacity (Smee, 2002). As a result of environmental problems, climate change, depletion of resources, and increment of global poverty, the urge of public service delivery profession in the contribution to sustainable development by including the environmental and social pointers within corporate governance practices has increased (Srivastava, 2007) and (Preuss, 2009). Public service delivery is becoming a fundamental component of a global environmental policies (Tukker *et al.*, 2008). The clarity and measurability of the positives that can result when environmental considerations are included in public tenders is every straightforward (Parikka-Alhola, 2008).

The public sector reforms that were spearheaded by Bretton woods during the 80s and 90s in the US, China and Japan, under Structural Adjustment Programme (SAPs), concentrated on the regulation of cost and excellence of service delivery (World Bank, 2003). This was done through denationalization and localization aimed at promoting free trade and democratization (SAP. 2003). The growth of local institutions in order to improve their public management systems which is concentrated on the technicalities of the lending instruments and fails to focus on the local environment has proved to be a failure (World Bank, 2003). However, the most recent reforms have been overtaken by political, economic, social and technological factors, while being influence by the New Public Management (NPM), this has led to the triggering of the quest for efficiency and ways of slashing public services delivery cost. In Africa particularly, additional factors, include lending conditional ties and the increasing emphasis on good governance (ECDPM, 2006). NPM was focused on creating public institutions and organizations which exhibited a management style observed in the private sector (ECDPM 2006).

With time, there has been a change in the architects of public sector in most developing nations (ECA, 2003). They starting with structures originating from their colonizers at the time of independence, while putting into consideration the capacity of nation and their capability for delivery of development the system had a broad width and depth. According to Economic Commission for Africa (ECA, 2003). During the post-colonial period while aiming to promote social justice, the public sector participated in production, commerce and delivery of services. The distribution of wealth under dictatorial single party-political systems was objective. Consequently, it resulted in the dependency of the nation in the presidency thereby leading to loaning of the county's resources at the expense of a puppet legislative and judicial arm of government. (ECA, 2003). Conflicts and coups have occurred with military dictators because of the dissatisfaction of citizens. This promoted the need for changes in government to a more democratic and market based one in line with hopes for improving service delivery (ECA, 2003). Organizational structures for an environment that is constantly changing create room for critical adaptations.

Transformations, initiatives involving large-scale, planned, strategic, and administrative change (Abramson and Lawrence 2014). Public sector reforms (PSR) which were of essence to the formulators of the public sector in Africa were conducted since the 80s hoping that they will transform the economy of the nations (Abramson and Lawrence 2014). Subsequently, a result-oriented management system was then introduced by the government but by 2005 no gainful improvement was seen. Between 2006 and 2008, the 'Results for Kenya' Programme was introduced. The program's main focus was the enhancement performance in all sectors, departments and agencies. Additional it was to wash away the negative public services. In a bid of supporting the Kenya government to advance reforms within reforms in the public sector, in 2009, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) helped Kenya to focus on national transformation. Prior to that the government led reforms on management based on results within the public service, currently though the government has focused itself on itself on partnership building as a way of transforming the public service. These activities were promoted after the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010. A huge difference and long-lasting solutions in the Kenyan public sector are observed as a result of the rapid results initiative (UNDP, 2006). In a span of 100 days, the initiative provides social changes from the village level up to government offices. The initiative has improved delivery of services in many government agencies. For examples the State Law Office's Company Registry achieved 80% satisfaction levels in staff and customer within 100 days as a result of using rapid results approach consequently, this has cut the time it takes for business registration from three weeks to one day, further, it is estimated that almost 500,000 documents including annual returns that were piled were cleared.

According to Ntoiti (2013), Kenyan Local Authorities, central government decentralized units, for many decades failed to provide effectual service delivery to the citizens majorly because of unstable corporate governance practices. Strategic corporate governance practices are by nature complex; thus, it must have clear priorities in order to be manageable. The management of diverse stakeholder's expectations, priorities, interests and powers in this process can make or break an organization. Many organizations have had unending challenges in developing strategic corporate governance practices. Successive governments have continued to deliver poor services to citizens due to weak governance of public institutions across the nation. The quality of corporate governance at all levels is increasingly being seen as a critical factor in the success of the organizations. State Corporations have since independent assumed an increasingly significant role in offering critical/basic services and infrastructure development especially where it looks unattractive for private sector to venture (Nyong'o, 2000). Whereas a number of studies have been done in the past, only a few such as Wambua, (2006), Okech, (2005) and Kabura, (2006) have been done in public sector focusing on state owned corporations and all these studies, have not availed evidence of strategic corporate governance practices in various organizations.

Hence the study sought to fill the identified research gap by exploring to establish the influence of strategic corporate governance practices in public service delivery, in Kenya with a specific reference to Huduma Centre in Mombasa County.

1.1. Study Objectives

The study was set to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the influence of technology use on service delivery of Huduma Centre in Mombasa county, Kenya.
- To determine the influence of staff empowerment level on service delivery of Huduma Centre in Mombasa County, Kenya.
- To establish the influence of transparency rates on service delivery of Huduma Centre in Mombasa county, Kenya.

2. Literature Review

190

The study is anchored on five theories, which articulate the relationship between organizational factors and strategic plan development. First, Strategy Theory is essentially about picks. It mirrors a choice for a condition in future or circumstance and decides how nice to achieve it. By so doing, strategy fights competitors, allies, and different players; and it solves institutional and organizational problems; however, some elements actually will stay past manipulate or can be unexpected (Donald, 2005). Secondly, Change Theory was more on the concept of exchange as a way to explain the set of assumptions that specify both the mini steps that result in the long-time period aim of interest and the connections between software activities and results that occur at every step of the manner (Welbourne, 2005) and (Funnell and Rogers 2011).

Thirdly, was Ability, Motivational and Opportunity (AMO) Theory: The two theories, Resource-based view (RBV) and Ability, Motivation and Opportunity (AMO) theory are the most widely used theories in studies linking the management of human resource and performance (Paauwe & Boselie, 2005). According to RBV human resource is a critical employer's resources, which permit employers to acquire an edge competitively, and a subset among those that cause a sustained overall performance. The AMO theory shows that after employees are prompted, they're in all likelihood to do better, and mainly to better company overall performance (Paauwe & Boselie, 2005). HRM behaviours are critical in the motivation of personnel in showing off favorable work attributes needed for the support and implementation of a competitive approach in a corporation. Wang (2005) observes that modern organizations treat HRM practices as an employer's approach to promote group obligations, beautify organizational condition, and promote client relationships via contribution and promotion.

Fourthly, Institutional Theory, focused on more rooted factors of people inclusion. It focuses on approaches by means of which approaches, consisting of schemes, policies, norms, and routines, turn out to be hooked up as authoritative recommendations for social behaviour (Scott, 2006). Lastly, Agency Theory, which is the mostly used theory in explanation of strategic management development and the measurement of organizational performance. (Bendor, Taylor and Gaalen, 1985) in the view of agency theory, the performance measurement is used in situations of asymmetric information and uncertainty for monitoring managers and linking them with the principal.

On the Use of Technology and Development of Public Service Delivery Laudon and Laudon (2010) assert that advancements in technology have made progress in many industrial sectors, mostly due to the improvement of data-based advances. Out in the public service sector, partly due to the primarily based and its mode in accumulating and investigating data, innovation contributed to many effects on service conveyance. Information Technology (IT) has been characterized by Ige (1995) as the crucial remedy of data by electronic means, which incorporates its entrance, storage, processing, transportation or transfer and conveyance. Langdon and Langdon, (2006) additionally characterizes IT as a combination of linked parts that collect, process, store and convey data for helping decision making, coordinating, and control. Technological invention in backing is considered as the robotized benefit issuance to consumers through electronic, intuitive correspondence channels (Sathye, 1999). Innovation in the public sector additionally includes each of the approaches that promote money related organizations and customers to acquire accounts, carry out business, and acquire information on budgetary items and administrations by technological means. Laudon and Laudon, (1991) battle that administrators can't afford to ignore Information Systems since they assume a fundamental area part in nowadays' institutions. In Kenya, therefore, post devolution, the public sector has improved greatly in terms of technology use. Specifically, the digitalization of services in Huduma Centers which are available across all counties serves as a good example. This has resulted to fast, efficient and cheaper services.

On Staff Empowerment level, there is a generally held view that if representatives are not satisfied with their work customers will never be highest in their mind (Bates, Bates and Johnston, 2003). In any case, it has likewise been perceived that service experiences are a three-path interface between the firm, the contact workforce and the client (Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003). Silvestro (2002) anyway saw that more joyful workers essentially result in more joyful external clients and a more gainful administration activity that drives income as well as constructs the brand value of the organization. With the self-governance and fundamental help expected to perform, workers can go far to having any kind of effect (Gronroos, 2001). Workers in service organizations depict the nature of services clients receive since they have regular contact with the clients. On that ground, organizations are compelled to reevaluate their system in light of the fact that Zeithaml, Bitner and Dwayne (2006) bring up, organizations today perceive that they can contend all the more adequately by separating themselves concerning the quality of their services. Recently, there has been different foreign trips by government officials for the attendance of trainings, conferences and seminars touching on economic development in order to gain knowledge and skills so as to improve public service delivery in Kenya. Aside from that, there is a fund that the government has created for continuous staff training in order to enhance the provision of services to the citizens.

The effect of transparency and accountability on the delivery of services has dependably been a hidden theme in studies on service delivery. Accountability as a focal subject of the discussions on service delivery, notwithstanding, just flourished after the World Bank Report (2004) which distinguished disappointments in service delivery solidly as disappointments in accountability connections. At this point, accountability is broadly acknowledged as key to service delivery upgrades. It is fascinating that the significance of accountability (and related straightforwardness) originates from two very unique ideological stream (Sirker and Cosic 2007). The New Public Management (NPM), which rose in the 1990s, accentuated the utilization of market systems within the public sector to make administrators and suppliers more responsive and responsible (McNeil and Mumvuma 2006). Then again, and in the meantime, the disappointment of fair foundations to convey for the poor additionally brought about calls for developing majority rule government through the direct participation of citizens in administration (Fox 2007). Inventive organizations, for example, governance councils in Brazil or village assemblies in India were seen as epitomizing this spirit (Cornwall and Coelho 2006).

According to Transparency International (TI) (2002) in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania more than 50% of the respondents had paid a bribe at one time of their lives in order to access services. In particular, 68% of the Ugandans, 55% of Tanzanians, and 51% of Kenyans gave bribes to access services. Adili 111 (2009) observe that some unneeded procedures such as registration and licensing for key services should be done away with. ICT is also an instrument that can improve the speed of services and seal the avenues for corruption. Integrated financial management systems should also be introduced in institutions TI-Kenya (2002). In order to counter the limited access of public services, decentralization of these services should be embraced. Government institutions are also supposed to publicize the services they offer, their cost and other conditions such as delivery timeline, offices responsible etc. This will enable the citizens to be informed on the requirements and seal bribery loopholes. Leakey (2009).

Past studies for instance, (Okumus, 2001; Ngugi, 2007; Gatauwa, 2008; and Matengo, 2008) discovered a positive connection between reception of corporate administration and organizational performance. While Ntoiti (2013) discovered that for a very long time, Kenyan Local Authorities, decentralized units of the central government, neglected to give effective service delivery to the nationals generally because of frail corporate administration practices. It is against this backdrop that the present study seeks to establish the influence of strategic corporate governance practices on public service delivery, in Kenya, through a case study of Mombasa Huduma Centre.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a case study design to get information from a particular group of persons through self-reporting, this involves responding to questions that are asked by the researcher ((Bryman and Cramer, 1997) and Orotho, 2005). The target population for the study constituted all the employees working at Huduma Centre, in Mombasa City, Kenya. According to Mombasa Huduma Centre, (2018) the employees numbered around 30 compromising all the staff at the center in the information desk, Casual workers, Interns, Security officers, Counter service staff, support staff, ICT desk staff, Cashiers, and all desk supervisors were selected for study for they represent their different ministries in the Huduma Centre and presumed to have information that pertains to the objectives of the study. A census technique was employed where all the 30 employees were selected for study. The main data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were self-administered on 'drop and pick-up basis', whereby respondents were given a period of three days for them to fill in the questionnaires. For the validation of the instruments content validity was used. The study employed a multivariate linear regression analysis to examine the strategic corporate governance practices on public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre.

Thus, the formula for this was given as;

 $y = f (\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon)$

Where by:

y Development of Public Service Delivery (Dependent Variable)

G₀ Constant Variable

X₁ Use of Technology

X₂ Staff Empowerment

X₃ Transparency Rate

ε An error term

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Regression Analysis Outputs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.820ª	.792	.752	.56958	

Table 1: Regression Model Summary Results Source: Research Data (2020)

The regression model above posits that there is a positive relationship between independent variables (technology use, staff empowerment level and transparency rate) and dependent variable (development of public service delivery) as indicated by the R value of 0.820.

The results also show a strong correlation between the dependent and the independent variables as shown by the value of R^2 as 0.792, which is the determinant of coefficient or variation. This suggests a very strong relationship between the strategic corporate governance practices and development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. The R^2 value can be translated as 79.2%, which indicates how much of development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre can be explained strategic corporate governance practices. Hence in this case, the variation that has been explained is 79.2%. This implies that the strategic corporate governance practices studied account for 79.2% and the remaining governance practices have 20.8%.

Therefore, caution should be taken not to ignore any other emerging strategic corporate governance practices that have not been involved in this study such as creativity or innovativeness, coaching and transformational leaderships.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.222	5	1.055	2.253	.000a
Residual	36.984	19	.324		
Total	41.205	26			

Table 2: ANOVA Results Source: Research Data (2020)

The ANOVA statistics was used to test the fitness of regression model and the significance F value of 2.253 with P value=0.000 was obtained as displayed, which is within the significance level of 0.05. This therefore means that the regression model obtained was fit and can be deemed fit for prediction purposes. Again, this connotes the strategic corporate governance practices under study do influence strongly the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Т	Sig.
	В	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.136	.333		6.422	.000
Technology Rate	.143	.092	.171	2.556	.000
Staff Empowerment Level					
	.129	.068	.200	2.910	.000
Transparency Rate	.012	.030	.037	.400	.003

Table 3: Coefficients Results Source: Research Data (2020)

After the analysis of the strategic corporate governance practices against the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre; the findings revealed that technology use had a P=.000, which is within the significance level of 0.05. This posits a very strong relationship between technology use with the dependent variable. Secondly, staff empowerment level had a P=.000, still connoting a very strong relationship between it and the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. Finally, transparency rate scored a P value=.003, which is also within the significance level of 0.05 connoting a strong relationship with the dependent variable under study.

As per the variable coefficients results generated therefore, the earlier multiple linear regression for the study was:

$$y=f(80, +X_1+X_2+X_3+\epsilon)$$

The model, therefore, for the study will now appear as below;

y=0.143+ 0.129+ 0.012

This is a clear indication that out of the three strategic corporate governance practices studied, all of them strongly affect the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. Therefore, it is upon the management of Mombasa Huduma Centre to ensure that they incorporate these strategic corporate governance practices in their strategic planning so that can assist in the enhancing of their service delivery. Caution is however given to those three said strategic corporate practices not to be used dogmatically as the only governance practices; instead the Mombasa Huduma Centre management should be alert and agile enough to any other emerging governance practices that has not featured in this study such as, creativity and transformational leadership to mention but a few.

5. Discussion of Results

The study findings indicate that strategic corporate governance practices strongly influence the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre. The findings are supported by table 11. In as far as the influence of technology use on the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre is concerned; the findings are echoed by Laudon and Laudon, (1991) who contend that information systems play a crucial role in these days' organizations they cannot be ignored by managers.

Vol 8 Issue 9 DOI No.: 10.24940/theijbm/2020/v8/i9/BM2009-060

Similarly, Casu et al., (2006) lauds that the development in IT is changing the way in which service providers deliver their services in the competitive market today. This implies that pro-active enterprises show initiative in the development of new procedures and technologies.

On the influence of staff empowerment level on the development of public service delivery of Mombasa Huduma Centre is concerned, the findings are in agreement with other studies, for example Bates, Bates and Johnston, (2003) argue that in service organizations employees play an important role in the satisfaction of external customers. Silvestro, (2002) observes that employees who are happy translate to customers who are happy thus raking high profits for the organization, this grows earnings and also promotes the organization's brand: Gronroos, (2001) posits that if given the space for creativity and independent thinking, employees can go an extra mile to contribute to the organization. This suggests that unhappy employees will not focus on the customers as they are supposed. Finally, in as far as the influence of transparency rate is concerned; the findings are supported by World Bank Report, (2004) which lauds that the impact of transparency and accountability on service delivery has always been an underlying motif on service delivery.

The essence of these findings, therefore, is that consistent public service delivery is an essential aspect of a development of the public-sector in-service delivery. To improve on the public service delivery, it is advisable for Mombasa Huduma Centre in particular to incorporate and practice these corporate governance practices and any emerging one as a competitive strategy measure.

6. Conclusion

From the research findings, the study found that technology, staff empowerment, transparency and public service delivery plays a vital role in achieving strategic cooperate governance for the Mombasa Huduma Centre. Therefore, the study established that strategic cooperate governance of Mombasa Huduma Centre is directly influenced by technology, staff empowerment, transparency and public service delivery. The study revealed that Technology contributed to increased number of customers at the Mombasa Huduma Centre due to easy access to both current and archived records/information.

Clients felt comfortable to adopt various technologies in solving their respective problems due to the short period taken at the Huduma Centre. On transparency, it was noted that majority of clients felt comfortable to be served at the Mombasa Huduma Centre to transparency, accountability, honesty and ability of workers to respond to issues as first as possible. This reduced their time spend at the Centre and other related costs. Lastly on public service delivery, it was established that customer's expenditure on obtaining services has drastically decreased which encourages many customers to visit the nearest Huduma Centre facility.

7. Recommendations

Based on the research findings it is recommended that public institution should embrace technology in all sector so that to give efficient service delivery & able to compete in the digital world. The study also recommends continued capacity training of Huduma Centre employees in order to deliver best services to customers in a more professional manner. Majority of customers are attracted to professionalism of service providers and therefore all workers should remain professional.

On matters of staff empowerment levels, there is more need for Mombasa Huduma Centre in particular and other public organizations in general to keep and continue empowering on their staff. This will impart more knowledge and experience to their employees and more so motivate them in striving to give the best in service delivery to the Mwananchi. As it said happy employees is equal to satisfied customers.

On the transparency rate, the study recommends that public participation to be carried out more often. In organizations where the participation of the public is allowed and promoted, there is an open sharing of important information for the public to make informed decisions, hold the organizations to account by giving balanced reports, open scrutiny from the public, and thus they often get the trust from the public.

Lastly, this study recommends that concerned arm of government continue to develop or revise policy documents and guidelines to ensure efficient management of Huduma Centre facilities across the country to guarantee its citizens sustainable sufficient and efficient service delivery.

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