FACTORS AFFECTING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY STARTUPS IN KENYA

BY

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AFRICA

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FACTORS AFFECTING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY STARTUPS IN KENYA

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A Research Project Report Submitted to the Chandaria School of Business in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters in Business Administration (MBA)

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SUMMER 2015
STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed: ___________________________ Date: ________________________________
Mark Ndiso Mwinzi - 641758

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

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Dean, Chandaria School of Business

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Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
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Secondly I would like to acknowledge my supervisor, Dr. Paul Katuse for his competence in the subject matter of the project, his professional supervision and the time he dedicated to ensure high standards of this work.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God almighty for the grace and provisions throughout and to my family for been my support system all through.
ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have been conducted in the area of strategy formulation but less attention has been given to the implementation process. The researcher found relatively few studies conducted on strategy implementation with most of them focused on the public sector. The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that affect successful strategy implementation in ICT sectors with a focus on the startups in the sector. The study addressed the following objectives, to identify managerial, institutional and resource allocation factors affecting successful implementation of strategy in ICT startups.

These study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of study was made up employees from ICT startups which started from I-Lab Africa Incubator. A sample of (67) respondents was selected using purposive sampling with (40) of the original chosen respondents been considered for the study. Self-administered questionnaire was developed as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel were used to conduct analysis of the data. The results and findings were then represented in the form of graphs, tables and charts.

The study revealed that majority of the ICT startups formulated appropriate strategies which were befitting the current business environment. However the number of respondents who felt that the set strategies were appropriately implemented dropped significantly.

The study revealed there were challenges in communication which were affecting strategy implementation and hence needed to be addressed. Issues of organizational structure where structures did not completely support strategy implementation were also seen as hindrances in strategy implementation.

It was found from that study that resource allocation was also a challenge with lack of sufficient resource allocation to strategy implementing functions. Financial resources were the main challenge in the strategy implementation process where a majority of the respondents felt this was not properly appropriated to the implementing functions.

Issues of institutional policies also proved to be a challenge in the implementation process with issues such as constant review of competencies proving to be a challenge in most of the startups. Constant review of strategies was also an issues with many of the respondent having a feeling this was not communicated promptly.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

GDP: - Gross Domestic Product
ICT: - Information Communication and Technology
MIT: - Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MS: - Microsoft
RBV: - Resource Based View
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem
Strategic management is the set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation, implementation and control of plans designed to achieve an organizations goals and objectives within the business environment in which the organization operates (Fortuin, 2007). Strategy is defined as large-scale, future oriented plans for interacting with the competitive environment to achieve company objective (John, Richard & Amita, 2007) or “the direction and scope of an organization over a long term: which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment, to meet the needs of markets and fulfill stakeholders expectations” (Wilson, 2005, p. 83). Therefore strategic management can generally be defined as the practice of developing plans, organizing operations, directing employees, controlling outcomes and coordinating work processes to achieve desired results (Dessler, 2008). Strategy implementation is a component of the strategic management process. It is viewed as the process that turns the formulated strategy into actions which ensures that the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the organizations are successfully achieved as laid out in the strategy (Hill & Jones, 2008).

The specific implementation process can vary from organization to organization, dependent largely on the details of the actual strategic plan to ensure that implementation is successful and the strategic plan is effective. Generally strategy implementation involves design and management of systems to achieve the best integration of people, structure and recourses (Sekhar, 2009). In a broader meaning it takes into consideration relations with diagnosis and strategic control, implementation means a continuous process of organization, motivation and strategy application (Banaszyk et al. 2005). This process includes the preparations and implementation works, which are associated with operations of the organization: improvement in organizational structure, rationalization of operating process, human capital management, creating of reputation, etc.

Strategy implementation in the narrow sense means undertaking activities directed to its instantiation and that lead to its implementation. Thus, we will have to do with activities that
assist by the creation of conditions which influence positively on strategy implementation as well as leadership actions and motivational actions relating to human resources of the organization. The notion of strategy implementation might seem at first seem straightforward, implementation maybe perceived as allocating resources and changing structure. However, transforming strategies into action is far more complex and difficult task (Rao, Rao & Sivaramakrishna, 2009).

Evolving a strategic plan from a document that sits on the shelf to actions that drive business growth requires specific actions. Sadly, many companies who have strategic plans fail to implement them. Wasting time and energy on the planning process and then failing to implement the plan is beyond discouraging, it’s catastrophic. It hurts the organization, the team, and individuals. Weak implementation undermines the strategy potential and paves way for shortfalls in organizational performance (Rama & Rao, 2011).

Implementation of strategy has challenges which include the fact that implementation takes long than anticipated in many cases, insufficient coordination within the organization, other matters that arise which take resources away from the implementation phase, insufficient capabilities of the management and employees to implement the changes, lack of training for management ans employees in order to implement the changes, external factors that affect the implementation which were no anticipated and management failure to take lead (Cunningham & Harney, 2012).

More often organizations focus on strategic planning and formulation and less in the implementation process the reason for many unrealized strategies across the board. Organizations seem to have difficulties implementing their strategies (Rao et al, 2009). Implementation of strategies is equally important as the planning and formulation of the strategies. Yet organizations often fail to operationalize their strategies in ways that improve the likelihood that they will implemented effectively (Halonen & Santrock, 2011).
Hoag and Cooper (2006) observe that fewer than 10% of organizations are capable of developing and implementing strategies that work. Studies show that Lack of proper and extensive studies on the environment to lead to many organizations coming up with strategies which cannot stand the hyper competitive competition and turbulent environments. This is because; they might entirely be ignorant of the amount of data and work that go into the formulation process (Beck, 2010).

The study focuses on the ICT sector in Kenya which has grown magnificently over the year to become one of the leading innovators in Africa. A 2014 World Bank report on the Kenyan economy noted the rapid uptake and transformative impacts of a surging ICT sector in the country, particularly in successfully extending a home-grown platform for financial access to the wider public through mobile money (IDC Government Insights, 2014). Further, The following outcomes are expected by 2017; the creation of at least 180 thousand jobs alongside the establishment of 55 ICT entities, at least 10 successfully commercialized application innovations and domestic retention of at least 60 percent of revenues raised from ICT intellectual property, an increase in the country’s Networked Readiness Index and Global Innovation Index ranking by 15 points, the classification of ICT as an independent sector by 2016, an additional 2 percent value-added contribution to GDP by 2017, and wide recognition of Kenya as a regional ICT Hub ((IDC Government Insights et al, 2014). A robust action plan is needed to transform the vision of a globally competitive domestic ICT industry into reality through running of competitive businesses through successful strategy implementation.

1.2 Problem Statement

Strategy implementation is an important component in strategic management process. Many organizations develop good strategies to give them edge and competitive advantage but it is clear there is a high failure when it comes to implementation hence the reason for failure in many organizations. Studies suggest that most strategies, most of the time, accomplish less than half of what their sponsors hoped and planned for, with as high as 9 out of 10 strategies failing to implement successfully (Speculand, 2009).
Kenyan ICT market is highly competitive and turbulent as many other ICT markets in the world and even more in these digital era. ICT plays a major role in our economy, the second foundation of Kenya’s strategic plan vision 2030 is Integrated ICT infrastructure, which seeks provide the integrated infrastructure backbone required for cost effective delivery of ICT products and services to Kenyans (ICT Authority, 2014). For this to be realized there is need for research to bridge the gap and ensure that ICT startups are able to operate competitively by successfully implementing strategies.

Frank, Frédéric and Saïd (2007) find after 5 years, only 24.5% of firms created by MIT alumni are out of business using data from the MIT alumni survey. This is the case of many ICT startups in Kenya. This study aims to find how failure in strategic implementation contributes to this alarming statistics. Several researches have been carried out on different aspects of strategy implementation in both private and public sectors in Kenya. Fewer researches have focused on factors affecting strategic plan implementation like Teresa (2013) who focused on strategic plan implementation in non-governmental organizations in Kenya. Maxwell, Kepha and Joseph (2013) who focused on the Factors affecting effective strategy implementation for attainment of Millennium Development Goal 5 by international reproductive health non-governmental organizations in Kenya. Messah (2011) researched on factors affecting the Implementation of Strategic Plans in Government Tertiary Institutions. However the researcher has not come across any empirical evidence that has been conducted on factors affecting strategy implementation in the Kenya ICT startups which necessitates the need for the study.

1.3 General Objective

This study proposed to carry out an analysis of factors influencing the implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups in ILab Africa Startups (Strathmore University).
1.4 Specific Objectives

1.4.1 To assess whether Managerial Behavior is a factor influencing implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups

1.4.2 To establish whether Resource Allocation is a factor influencing implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups

1.4.3 To examine whether Institutional Policies is a factor influencing implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups

1.5 Importance of the Study

It was anticipated that the study would be important to the following people.

1.5.1 Management of Technology startups

The study will benefit management of Technology startups on how to best develop and implement strategies in their companies. They will get insights on how to develop capabilities and ensure resources bring forth sustainable competitive advantage.

1.5.2 Employees of Technology Startups

Employees of the startups will gain insights on what roles they play in strategy implementation to ensure technology startups are able to survive the competitive environment and hence provide a source of employment and increased earnings.

1.5.3 Regulatory bodies (ICT Authority)

The Authority also promotes ICT innovation and enterprise in line with the Kenya this study will give insights on how these innovations can be sustainable through strategy implementation.

1.5.4 Related organizations

The study provides insight on how organizations can attain sustainable competitive advantage through strategy implementation to survive the prevailing business environment. These concepts can also be translated to other related organizations.
1.5.5 Researchers and Scholars
The research results can be used as a point of reference and source of secondary on strategic plan implementation. It can also be used to inspire future research on the area of implementation of strategic plans.

1.6 Scope of Study
The study will be focused on ICT startups from ILab Africa incubator to represent ICT startups in Kenya. Data will be limited to the staff of these ICT startups in Nairobi. The research will be conducted between the month of May and June 2015. Being an outsider in some of the organization constrains what is revealed to the researcher by management as well as lack of response from some respondents. The researcher aims to overcome this constraint through the contacts build over time in the Information Technology sector. The management may also be guarded in their conversations around the researcher, especially in the initial stages. The researcher aims to resolve this by promising high confidentiality on the findings from the research.

1.7 Definition of Terms
The following are the terms used in this chapter.

1.7.1 ICT Startups
ICT businesses which are in their early stage in the life cycle of an enterprise where the entrepreneur grows from the idea stage to securing financing, laying down the basis structure, and initiating operations or trading (Steve & Bob, 2012).

1.7.2 Strategy Implementation
The set of decisions and actions that result in formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve company’s objectives (John et al., 2007).

1.7.3 Managerial Behavior
A managerial behavior is an approach is which seeks to understand managerial work by analyzing the day-to-day behavior of individual managers (Seonaidh & Bar, 2014).
1.7.4 Resource Allocation
Resource allocation is involved with balancing competing needs and priorities to determine the most effective course of action in order to maximize the effective use of limited resources (Olsen & Jørgensen, 2015).

1.7.5 Reward Management
Reward Management is concerned with the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies that aim to reward people fairly, equitably and consistently in accordance with their value to the organization (Michael, Duncan & Peter, 2011).

1.7.6 Institutional Policies
Broad, precedent-setting decisions that guide or substitute for repetitive or time-sensitive managerial decision making (John et al., 2007).

1.7.7 Strategic Management
Consists of the analysis, decisions, and actions an organization undertakes in order to create and sustain competitive advantages (Pearce & Robinson, 2014).

1.8 Chapter Summary
The chapter has introduced the problem and purpose of study. This comprised of a review of strategic management process and more in detail the implementation part. The chapter introduced the challenges of strategy implementation in ICT startups in Kenya. It has also discussed the purpose and objectives of the study, scope and also defined terminologies and operating terms used. Chapter two entails the literature review relevant to the study objectives, whereas chapter three details the research methodology.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
This chapter presents literature based on the purpose of the study. The chapter is organized according to specific objectives in order to ensure relevance of the research problem. The literature examines the influence of strategic behavior, the influence of institutional policies and the influence of resource allocation to successful strategy implementation.

2.2 Effects of Managerial Behavior on Strategy Implementation
Strategic behavior refers to actions which a firm takes to improve its competitive position relative to actual or potential rivals, in order to gain sustainable competitive advantage, thereby increasing its long-run profits. Strategic behavior impacts highly on organizational culture. Ke and Wei (2008) look at culture typically in terms of the way people think, which has a direct influence on ways in which they behave. Higgins (2005) defines organizational culture as the fundamental suppositions and values that are commonly shared by people in an organization that is run reflexively. Johnson (2006) refers to these combined suppositions as the model of an organization and hence the Strategic behavior.

2.2.1 Organizational Structure
An organizational structure is the formal definition of working relationships between people and departments in an organization (Gopinath & Siciliano, 2009). More often organization creates charts showing the reporting channels for the organization. Chandler (1962) substantiated the thesis that structure follows strategy based on four case study of American conglomerates that had dominance in their industries. Different structures are required to implement different strategies and typically structures are changed when they no longer provide the coordination and control necessary to implement strategies successfully. Proper strategy-structure alignment is a necessary precursor to successful implementation of new strategies (Mazzolla & Kellermanns, 2010). Changes and increased turbulence in the environment makes it necessary for firms to realign their structures so has to have a competitive advantage.
Organizational structure helps in development of capacity to implement strategies (Kachru, 2005). Structural components are an important means to the facilitation of smooth translation of organizational strategy and policies to actions that lead to motivation and coordination of activities and people working in an organization. Hence an appropriate organizational structure is crucial for success (Kachru et al, 2005).

To achieve a strategic fit changes in structure are necessary, changes in strategy lead to changes in structure (Schnelle, 2008). The underlying assumption to the necessity of change in structure to accommodate strategy change is that strategy-structure fit will lead to a superior organization performance (Harrison, 2012). Therefore in designing the structure strategy should be considered to facilitate the strategic pursuit of the firm therefore follow strategy (Schnelle et al, 2008). According to Schaap (2006), adjusting organizational structure according to perfect strategy can ensure successful strategic implementation.

It is crucial to determine to what in the strategic implementation process the extent in which organizational structure design can change for the different strategic plans. Organizational structure should not only accommodate the intended strategy but also the emergent strategies. Organizations should be able to incorporate new strategies and operations (Sudarshan, 2010). Shifting emphasis towards innovation, pro-activeness and risk taking is necessary in responding to the innovation challenges and speed requirements of strategic change initiatives (Cravens, Piercy & Baldauf, 2009). Organizational structure can therefore be referred as a framework within which strategy implementation should take place in order to achieve organizational objectives (Harsh, 2012).

There is not best structure in book but organizations should strive to have a structure which fits the organizational strategy. Effective strategy implementation therefore requires organizations to have sufficiently flexible structures to accommodate strategy implementation and change (Henry, 2008). A change in organization strategy may require corresponding change in structure to avoid inefficiencies, but the organizations size, strategy, external environment, stake holder relationships management style all influence appropriateness of a given structure (Harrison, 2012).
2.2.2 Communication and Feedback

Efficient communication should be able to give compressive explanation of new duties, responsibilities and obligations which are to be carried in a given organization. Effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation (Mazzola & Kellermanns, 2010). Chimanzi and Morgan’s (2005), study showed that organizations that focused on marketing and participation of all staff considerable realized high portions of strategy implementation. Strategies need to be communicated, understood and properly coordinated with stakeholders inside and outside the organization (Henry, 2008). The formulated strategy in the world will amount to nothing if it is poorly communicated thought out the organizations (Henry, 2008). An organization must first persuade its employees about the importance of strategy before turning to its customers (Mozzola & Kellermanns, 2010). The lack of shred knowledge with lower management and non-management employees creates barriers for successful strategy implementation (Mozzola & Kellermanns, 2010).

Forman and Argenti (2005), observed that measures linking implementation of strategies with communication rationales of companies were apparent in that the companies were experiencing observable and very significant strategic transformations. They observed that organizations which they gave considerations had taken part in making sure that their communication systems were good. Successful implementers ensured information technology was the focal point in ensuring strategy implementation and making of the organizations reputation (Brown, 2012). According to Forman and Argenti (2005), despite the whole discipline being committed to studying of organizational strategy, with strategy implementation being included, minimal attention has been accorded to to the connection between strategy and communication.

Li, Guohui and Eppler (2008) found out that those employees in restrictive communication environment performed poorly compared to those working in supportive and open communication climates. The barriers to communication include such barriers as learning barriers, organizational structure, personnel management barriers, and cultural barriers. Forman and Argenti (2005) established that alignment between the strategic implementation process and corporate communication function was visible in those firms that were
experiencing fundamental strategic change. Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2006) discussed the connection between communications and strategy coming to the conclusion that a company can establish through managing communication.

2.2.3 Employee Motivation

Motivation is the psychological force that determines the force that determines the direction of a person’s behavior, the person level of effort towards that behavior and the person’s level of persistence in the face of obstacles (Lauby, 2005). In order to realize strategy implementation the human resource factor plays a big role in the process. Speculand (2009) reiterates that leaders need to create the right conditions in their organization in order to realize good employee behavior.

Strategy implementation involves dealing with people with varying levels of motivation, commitment and dedication. These differences often result in interpersonal conflicts that if left unresolved can significantly affect implementation efforts and performance (Lussier & Achua, 2009). There is high probability of failure in strategies if the implementation efforts do not enjoy commitment by majority of employees and middle management same as if they were not consulted in the development (Mozzola & Kellermanns, 2010). An excellent strategy that is poorly executed will yield the same poor results as a bad strategy, regardless of the strategy, careful consideration must be paid not just to its formulation but to its implementation as well (Lussier & Achua, 2009).

Favorable working conditions are essential for strategy implementation; these conditions should take care of motivation for all employees in the different levels in the organization. The culture of an organization also makes employees identify what they believe is critical, achievable and personally important to them (Kachru, 2005). Hence, rewards and other forms of compensation must be aligned with the goals that employees are seeking to accomplish (Lussier & Achua, 2009).
2.2.4 Organizational Culture
Organizational culture is involved with the values and beliefs of an organization which determines how people interact with each other and how they execute tasks. According to Mullins (2007), culture impacts most aspects of organizational life, such as how decisions are made, who makes them, how rewards are distributed, who gets promoted, how people are treated and how organization responds to environmental changes. Higgins (2005) defines organizational culture as the fundamental suppositions and values that are commonly shared by people in an organization that is run reflexively. For an organization to function efficiently there as to be a commonly acknowledged set of practices, John (2006) refer to these combined, lightly considered suppositions as the model of an organization.

Culture can enable the organization in creation of critical connections in which case culture will not be significant factor during the strategy implementation process (Vermeulen, 2011). According to Zink (2008), success comes from successfully implementation strategy, not just having one. Capacity to implement a given strategy drives a large measure from organizations people how they are treated, skills and competencies and their efforts on behalf of the organization. Pfeiffer (2009) formulated seven HRM-practices of successful organizations. This people based strategy leads, on the one hand, to performance results such as innovation, flexibility, customer service, productivity with cost reduction and learning skills development and on the other hand delivers the basis for a concept that is difficult to imitate. Combination of both aspects together, a sustained profitability will be the result of such a strategy (Zink, 2008). The author provides a standard approach to strategy as shown in the Fig 2.1
2.2.5 Employee Development

Strategy implementation requires proper and qualified employees to be recruited to carry out the strategy alternatively employees should be provided with skill, knowledge and capacity to implement it (Greunig and Richard, 2010). Cumberlig (2007) endorse the requirement to nature the people in an organization because they are the process owners and process is what drives implementation. According to Brannen (2005) failing to empower or give people the powers to execute was another significant obstacle to implementation of strategy. Organization have to create conditions where people can figure out what they must do, corporate to get it done, and experience it as personally fulfilling (Kuchru, 2005). A leader will ultimately be responsible for a strategy’s failure, their role should be to encourage and create an organizational culture which empowers managers to respond to opportunities (Henry, 2008).

2.3 Effects of Institutional Policies on Strategy Implementation

For an organization to gain strength through accumulated knowledge in areas of economic and political governance there is an agreement to the effect that for any institution to be able to realize the set goals and objectives, it must have in place, a credible mechanism for
developing policies and strategies for implementing the policy choices (Ige, Adeyeye & Aina, 2011).

2.3.1 Strategic Review
Due to rapidly changing business environment and high competition levels strategy reviews are critical for survival. According to Speculand (2009) leaders must adapt and Amend Strategies. Henry Mintzberg (1985) provides a standard view on how deliberate and emergent strategies may be viewed as a continuous process along which real-world strategies are developed. Firms experience a variety of turbulent ranging from change in customer preferences, new competitors and changes in workforce which necessitate need for strategy change. According to Speculand (2009) leaders should make strategy review in parts once every 2 weeks and a whole in quarterly basis.

Grattan (2011) reviewed Henry Mintzberg model and discussed a holistic approach to analyses corporations and reflection of the pervasive nature of strategy process. The approach is known as the Seven S Model which contains connected seven elements in the strategy process namely; strategy, structure, style, systems shared values and skills. Grattan (2011) argues the purpose of the model was to explore in the interrelationships in an organization and to discover the dysfunctional parts. The theory of strategy process according to Grattan (2011) is illustrated in Fig 2.2
2.3.2 Change Management

Change is inevitable in the current business setting due to highly turbulent business environment. These calls for management efforts to focus beyond value statements but to more important understand dynamics which promote integration and collaboration. A change management methodology is a key tool for managing change. It is a structured set of steps for planning and implementing organizational change. Like other methodologies, (for example, project management, business. Companies must continually assess not only their programs but the projects in their programs to ensure there is strategic fit in the organizations projects (Ginger, 2012). One of the best practices in change management is to assume trust in the organizations people from the start unless proven otherwise to best facilitate collaborative and cooperative behavior and to communicate defined values by which decisions will be made (Levin, 2010). Levin and Green (2010) suggest that organizational leadership to define each benefit in the plan and link the benefits to demonstrate the value of benefits to the stakeholders.
To get it right in change management the organization should recognize that your organization’s challenges affect the organizations projects and reaction to them. An organizations should first, assess its strengths in change management and consider the elements in its competencies (Levin, 2011). Kotter (1995) states that change is implemented or sticks in organizations when embedded in daily work of professionals in an organization. Bourne (2012) adds into that though that to overcome the challenge of entrenched cultures require powerful leadership to be in place, credibility and clear message that highlight the need for change.

2.3.3 Departmental Leadership
According to Mazolla and Kellermanns (2010) middle management with low or negative commitment to strategies formulated by top level management create obstacles to effective implementation of strategy. According to Greunig and Richard (2010) implementation of new strategy requires proper employees to be recruited. Successful implementation rests on the shoulders of managers who must be able to motivate employees to cooperatively perform at high levels of task that is not easy to undertake when the right employees are not in place or the leader lacks people skills.

Strategy implementation relies more on the commitment of all employees to the strategy and departmental heads are the closest to the employees in the lower levels. Synergy among departments is also crucial in actualization of the organizational strategy. According to Lussier and Achua (2009) the style of leadership and an abundance of managerial skills make the difference. Due to decentralized nature of organization in today’s business leadership at departmental level is critical to bring about cultural change. Employees of an organization though working for the organization they tend to mostly identify with their immediate department (Mills, Bettis, Miller, & Nolan, 2005). New leadership theories challenge traditional models by calling for new and integrated approaches to leadership which are empowering, collaborative, and inclusive (Kezar, 2006). This kind of leadership allows for empowered departments which promote departmental leadership.
2.3.4 Top Management Leadership and Commitment

Top manager’s roles involve setting of strategies and organizing middle management to implement the different components in the strategy. Top management leadership plays critical role in determining the success and failure of strategy implementation (Gopinath, 2013). Top level Leadership should always begin and end with the organization’s strategy and objectives in mind. According to Salob and Greenslade (2005) the top 20 companies in the U.S. in leader development linked the development of strategies with business strategies.

The best organizations for leaders are those that are consistently executing on the strategies that make for good leadership development and actualization of organizational goals. Top management aim at creating enterprise wide standards, practices, and metrics for leadership. They cascade programs and processes down through the organization to improve impact and drive cultural change (Fulmer, 2005). Decision making forms one of the most important functions of a manager. Making decisions involves making a judgment regarding how to act in a given situation after considering alternative courses of action (Yeyaratham, 2006). Decisions made by top level executives can be said to be the most crucial in determination how strategy will be implemented (Rao, 2008).

Top management has the direct link to the middle management who are referred to as the implementers of strategies developed by management teams as represented by Hrebinia (2008). By linking the organizational space between strategy and operations, middle managers connect strategic objectives with day-to-day operations and the concerns of personnel at different organizational Hrebinia (2008). Maintaining these complex links requires a well-defined, logical approach with planned activities enables implementation of the strategy

2.4 Effects of Resource Allocation on Strategy Implementation

“Implementation” also refers to the organizational resources and in which way the resources reflect in the activities and choices required for execution of a strategic plan (Kuchru, 2005). The resource based view of competition draws upon the capabilities and resources that reside within an organization or that which an organization might want to develop in order to
achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Henry, 2008). Organizational capabilities are equated to the collective skills and abilities within an organization to organize, manage, and coordinate and control specific activities. Resources can be Tangible resources can be categorized as physical resources, financial resources and human resource (Henry, 2008).

### 2.4.1 Organizational Capabilities

According to Henry (2008), RBV emphasizes on organizations internal capabilities in formulating strategy to achieve competitive advantage. Capabilities based view brings the question of its linkage to performance in strategic management theory, the relationship between organizational capabilities dynamic capabilities and performance (Teece, 2007). According to Pavlou and Sawy (2010) dynamic capabilities are defined as the ability to integrate, build and reconfigure internal and external competencies to address rapidly changing environments.

Dynamic capabilities might improve organizational performance by “sensing” the environment, “seizing” opportunities for innovation, and “transforming “current working procedures and patterns (Teece, 2007). Capabilities exert more influence on the organization which in most cases result in effects in its performance. This notion avoids the common trap found when capabilities are equated to performance, for example by suggesting a positive relationship between capabilities and performance in the definition of capabilities which makes falsification of this linkage impossible (Kranner, 2011). Dynamic capabilities help in the enhancements of operational capabilities which in turn bears potential to enhance performance. While the link between dynamic capabilities and operational capabilities is partially collaborated, there is no study which explicitly analyses the mediating effect of dynamic capabilities on performance (Piening, 2011).

Effectiveness of strategy implementation is affected by the quality of people involved in the process which comprises of top management, middle management, lower management and non-management playing different roles in the strategy implementation. In developing a high-quality implementation and use of framework to ensure they are taking the right actions (Mazzola & Kellermanns, 2010). Both this views are essential differences to current
implementation thinking (Speculand, 2009). Eikelenboom (2009) noted organizational capabilities have been stated to provide the foundations for strategy execution.

2.4.2 Resource Alignment

According to Eikelenboom (2009) resources are considered the ultimate source of sustainable value creation. Effective management is plays a major role to ensure proper utilization at the right time and setting. While resources are important their existence per se do not confer any benefit to the organization (Henry, 2008). Competences are the attributes that a company requires to be competitive in a highly turbulent and hyper competitive environment. Implementation of strategy test the ability to allocate resources, design structures and systems, formulate functional objectives and plan for operational effectiveness (Kachru, 2005).

Finding correlations between strategies and business processes are a key component in resource alignment (Rosemann, 2010). Strategic Management should build on the foundations of business process alignment to ensure that there is alignment between processes and strategies. This process by extension is interested in optimizing the use of process to the given strategies to ensure optimal resource allocation (Koliadis and Ghose, 2008). Alignment can be described as a realization of relation between a set of process models and a set of strategies (Bleistein, Cox & Verner, 2006).

Strategic alignment aims at energy focusing, elimination of redundancy and conflicts of work and defines the capabilities and competencies which develop competitive advantage to an organization (Herbert, Heneman & Anthony, 2011). Contribution to project coordination, such as redundancy elimination in outcomes, project conflict avoidance, and project outcome quality assurance are some of the other benefits of resource alignment (Collins, Ericksen & Alen, 2005). Most conflicts, redundancy and coordination problems experienced in many organizations arise due to lack of alignment in the business itself and rarely due to mismanagement (Herbert et al., 2011).
2.4.3 Financial Resources

Strategies fail in implementation due to lack of resources (Lussier & Achua, 2009). The finance strategic plan is an arrangement that focuses on how to successfully make money, spend money, and estimate the income and operating cost (Hrebiniak, 2006). The total amount necessary to effectively manage an organization is planned for by executives as they settle on the requirements for the execution of their sections goals as well as the objective (Hrebiniak, 2006).

A recent school of thought based on extensive research suggests that competitive advantage of a firm depends on the resources the firm can command (Grattan, 2011). Financial resources are one of the critical resources which affect the ability of an organization to execute given tasks. According to Hussey (2013) financial resources can be a limiting factor and the way which it is obtained may make it easier or harder to further resources in the future. Leveraging of the firm is a key strategic decision and affects the strategies which are developed in the future and how successfully they can be implemented. Leadership plays a key role in financial resource allocation and alignment; a leader must prioritize and makes resources available during strategic implementation (Lussier & Achua, 2009). Financial metrics have generically been used as a mode of accessing performance of an organization. Strategy implementation shows role of finance as the establishing and monitoring of specific and measurable financial strategic goals on a coordinated and integrated (Thompson, Strickland, & Gamble, 2009). Financial resources Management function is a critical function of the management team of any organization (McCarthy, 2012). This function is even more important when financial resources are highly limited and capital allocations are difficult (McCarthy et al 2012). This call for the finance team to be fully engaged and involved in the decision-making process of the business, its long-term strategy and the implementation of the strategy. The strategy should detail how all financial and non-financial resources will be managed to support delivery.

2.4.4 Human Resource

Human resource is concerned with the people factor in the organization which is the most critical resource for an organization. The idea of the importance of human resource is mainly
founded on the idea that management is indispensable basis of competitive advantage. A greater part of the latest studies has the same opinion that Human Resource operates as an aspect in recognizing the performance of the organization (Brenes, Mena & Molina, 2007). Traditionally strategic planning was a mechanist chain of actions, people in this view were pushed to the periphery however in recent time’s strategy implementation and planning has undergone changes to accommodate the human resource factor (Schmigt & Brauer, 2006). Strategic planners are required to consider necessary relations between the strategic planners and the human resource persons, increasing networking and altering the environment for strategic planning (Forman & Argenti, 2005).

According to Harrighton (2006) all actions taken in the accomplishment of strategy affects both the executives and the work force. The human resource factor in strategy implementation involves attracting the right type of people; developing the knowledge, skills and abilities and human resource retention (Maw-Shin, Yung-Lung & Feng-Jhy, 2014). Successful organizations seek to have the right type and numbers of people to perform the duties aimed to achieve the firm’s objectives (Schuler, Randall & Jackson 2006). To capitalize on organization on it potential, it must design and deliver human resource practices that focus on necessary employee performance competencies, creating an HR system with vertical and horizontal alignment around those competencies (Herbert, Heneman & Anthony, 2011). Misalignment of human resource practices can produce conflicting messages to employees, leading to reduced motivation and commitment to the company strategy. Further to that attempts to adopt isolated best practices without sufficient consideration of fit have negative consequences (Samnani & Singh, 2013).

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has present a review of literature on factors that potentially influence strategy implementation success. These factors relate to organizational behavior, institutional policies and resource allocation. The factors underpinning each factor constitute the variables that the study proceeded to investigate. The next chapter describes the methodology that was used for the study.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
This chapter presents a discussion of the research questions and also introduces the process through which collection, analysis and processing of the data collected and used to accomplish the objectives of this research was carried out. This chapter introduces the participants to the collection of data used in the research as well as challenges identified in the data collection and how those problems were overcome. Also, the chapter outlines the techniques used to implement the research and gives an insight to the quality of all means used throughout the process.

3.2 Research Design
Research design can be defined as the strategy and structure conceived in a bid to acquire solutions to research problems; it is also defined as a blueprint for collection, measurement and data analysis (Creswell, 2012). The research design that will be employed in this study is the descriptive research design, this allows for collection of data that demonstrates relationships and describe environment as is. Descriptive study addresses the "what" of the research (Shields & Nandhini, 2013).

Descriptive study is meant to aid in the explanation of phenomena or characteristics associated with a subject population, it seeks to answer questions such as who, what, when, where and how of any provided topic in its wake, (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008). The research design is best suited for the study in trying to access the factors affecting strategy implementation in Kenya ICT startups. The research seeks to answer the following questions: How organizations strategic behavior affects strategy implementation in Kenyan ICT startups, How institutional policies affects strategy implementation in Kenyan ICT startups and How resources allocation affects strategy implementation in Kenyan ICT startups?
3.3 Population and Sampling Design

3.3.1 Population
The population is the collection of individuals which are the main focus in the research which comprises 67 startups from i-Lab Africa incubator. To achieve the study objective the study will focus on the population of ICT startups from I-Lab Africa business incubator as at January 2015. Currently, there is a total of 67 ICT start-ups from I-Lab Africa all operating from Nairobi. This start-ups include limited liability companies and sole proprietorships.

3.3.2 Sampling Design

3.3.2.1 Sampling Frame
Drost (2011) defined a sampling frame as ‘a comprehensive list of individuals or objects from which the sample is to be drawn.’ The sampling frame, according to (Blumberg et al, 2008), represents a list of elements from which a sample is actually drawn. In addition, they would clearly state that the basic idea behind sampling, is primarily to draw out certain characteristics representative of the entire population, therefore the choice of the sample is extremely vital. With the given population, due to the small number of the start-ups it would not warrant a sampling technique that would exclude any of the start-ups and hence the study will focus on all the 67 start-ups from I-Lab Africa.

3.3.2.2 Sampling Technique
Sampling technique, according to Blumberg et al, (2008) it is a scientific or rather statistical method of selecting the sampling units that would offer the requisite estimates with their related margins of uncertainty; this would emerge from the probe of only part (sample) and not the whole population. In reference to the small number of the population the study will focus on all the start-ups from I-Lab Africa and hence no sampling technique will be used. This research adopted a census approach where data will be collected from 1 element of each member of the population.
3.3.2.3 Sample Size

The sample size, according to Blumberg et al, (2008) and Saunders, (2012), is the actual number of respondents that would be representative of the population under study, they proceed to state that the size must be large and should bear some proportional relationship to the size of population from which it is draw. The sample size is determined by a three based criterion, this being level of precision, the level of confidence, and finally the degree of variability in the attributes being measured. In this case one employee from each of the 67 will be given a questionnaire. Due to the small size of the population it is deemed appropriate that data should be collected from the 67Startups.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Primary sources are those which come into existence in the period under research for example questionnaires completed for the study. Secondary data sources are interpretations of events of that period based on primary sources. Questionnaires will be used which is ‘a method of collecting data in which a selected group of participants are asked to complete a written set of questions to find out what they do, think or feel’ (Collis & Hussey, 2013). The study adopted will use online questionnaire (administered using Survey Monkey). The advantages of using on-line questionnaires include: easy administration, speedy delivery with the online tools; cost efficient as input by respondents is automated; and it enables a larger geographical dispersed sample to be administered. Disadvantages of questionnaires include: can be expensive in terms of purchasing the licences, internet usage, time consuming to analyse the data, and the clarification of questions cannot be provided to the respondents. For attaining the relevant information for the different elements from the respondents of this research project the questionnaire (Appendix II) was structured into four sections as below in relation to the research questions. Section 1 focuses on demographic data, section 2 Effects of Strategic Behavior on Strategy Implementation, section 3 Effects of Institutional Policies on Strategy Implementation and section 4 Effects of Resource Allocation on Strategy Implementation.
3.5 Research Procedure
The research procedure adopted by the researcher would involve conducting a pilot study or a pre-test, this according to Blumberg et al, (2008) would best be suited in order to analyze the questions and determine the questions are well framed and they are not ambiguous, a pre-test is important as it evaluates the respondents interest, Saunders et al, 2012 further stated that pilot studies are vital for analyzing the time it takes to answer the questions as well as assessing validity of the questions. This will be done by administering the questionnaire to 5 respondents who were selected randomly from the sample size of 67. This is to specifically enable the researcher to fine tune the questionnaire so as to get objectivity and efficiency of the process. After validation of questions the questionnaire will be send to the selected respondent for the survey activity and the filled questionnaire collected for analysis

3.6 Data Analysis Method
This study will make use of the quantitative method of data analysis. To make sure that there is easy analysis, the questionnaires will first be coded as per each variable in each question of the study so as to ensure the margin of error is minimized and assure accuracy during the analysis. Following data collection and coding, quantitative analysis will applied using descriptive statistics. According to (Denscombe, 2012), descriptive statistics is simply a process of transforming a mass of raw data into tables, charts, with frequency distribution and percentages which are a very vital part of making sense of the data. Data will then analyzed using Microsoft Excel program to compute descriptive statistics for the collected set of data.

3.7 Chapter Summary
The chapter has presented a description of the methodology that will be used in carrying out the study. The research design is descriptive in nature with the main focus on ICT startups from Strathmore University I-Lab Africa 1 employee from each of the startups. The questionnaire structure is also presented with four sections and a pilot test will be conducted before being administered to the respondents. The chapter has also indicated that data will be analyzed using Microsoft Excel then presented in inform of chart and tables.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction
This chapter aim at reporting the research findings as collected in the research activity based on the following research objectives: to identify effects of managerial behavior on strategy implementation, to identify effects of institutional policies in the implementation of strategy and to identify effects of resource allocation in strategy implementation.

4.2 Demographic Information

![Position in Organization](image)

Fig 4. 1: Position in Organization

The chart above shows that the majority of the respondents were middle level management comprising of 59% of the total respondents while senior management comprised of 32% of the respondents and 9% supervisory level. The study aimed at targeting a majority of middle management as they are mainly in the implementation area.
Fig 4.2: Work Experience

Fig 4.2 shows even distribution of respondents with 50% of the respondents having worked in the organization for less than 2 years and 50% having worked in the organization for a period of 3-4 years.

4.3 Effects Managerial Behavior and Strategy Implementation

The researcher wanted to establish if the startups were formulating strategies and implementing the set strategies.

Fig 4.3: Formulation of Appropriate Strategies
The researcher established that 75% of the respondents worked in startups which formulated appropriate strategies befitting the prevailing environmental conditions while 25% were neutral on the formulated strategies.

Fig 4.4: Implementation of Strategies

Fig 4.4 show that 50 % of the respondents of the respondent indicated that the set strategies were implemented while 25 % of the respondents were neutral and another 25% strongly disagreed that strategies were not implemented

Fig 4. 5: Daily Operations Effects on Strategies
A majority of the respondents indicated that daily running of the business did not affect the implementation of strategies which comprised of 47.73% of the respondents. The researcher also found out that 25% of the respondents however indicated that daily running of the business affected the implementation of strategies.

![Chart 4.6: Implementation of Strategies on timely Manner](chart)

**Fig 4.6: Implementation of Strategies on timely Manner**

The researcher aimed at finding out if the set strategies were implemented in a timely manner a majority of 52% of the respondents agreed while 25% were neutral and 23% disagreed.

![Chart 4.7: Organization Structure Existing](chart)

**Fig 4.7: Organization Structure Existing**
The researcher wanted to find out if the organizations had clear organizational structures. The results are as shown in Fig 4.4 73% indicated existence of clear organizational structures while 27% indicated lack of clear organizational structures.

**Fig 4.8: Organization Structure Support Strategy**

The researcher sought to find if the existing organizational structures support strategy implementation. As shown in Fig 4.8 above 72.73% indicated that structure supported the implementation of structure while 27.27% were neutral.

**Fig 4.9: Organization Communication Lines**
The researcher wanted to establish if there were clear communication lines existing in the startups. Fig 4.9 shows 50% indicated agreed there was existence of clear communication lines while the other 50% were neutral.

**Table 4.1: Organization Communication Lines and Strategy Implementation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Neutral</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher wanted to establish how communication lines affected strategy implementation. Table 4.1 indicates that 75% of the respondents agreed while 25% of the respondents strongly agreed.

**Fig 4.10: Assignment of Strategy Implementation Tasks**

Fig 4.10 above indicated that 75% of the respondents agreed that strategy implementation tasks were clearly assigned while 25% were neutral on the assignations.
The research sought to find out if the startups employed employees capable of strategy implementation. Fig 4.11 shows that 63.64% of the respondents agreed while 36.36 strongly agreed.

Fig 4.12: Existence of Employee Development

The researcher sought to find out if there were employee development programs in existence. Fig 4.12 indicates 25% of the respondents agreed while 75% strongly agreed.
4.4 Effects of Institutional Policies and Strategy Implementation

Fig 4. 13: Vision for the future

The researcher sought to find out if the management demonstrates clear vision for the future. Fig 4.13 shows that 75% of the respondents strongly agree while 25% of the respondents agree.

Fig 4. 14: Communication of Strategy
The researcher sought to find out if the management clearly communicated the organization strategy to the employees. Fig 4.14 shows that 31.82% of the respondents strongly agree while 68.18% of the respondents agree.

**Table 4.2: Constant Review in Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher sought to find out if there is a constant review of strategies and if changes were implemented promptly. Table 4.2 shows that 50% of the respondents agree while 25% of the respondents strongly agree and 25% were neutral on the matter.

![Chart](image)

**Fig 4.15: Commitment of Top Management to Strategy**
The researcher sought to find out if the commitment of top management to inspire employees to implement strategies and if changes were implemented promptly. Fig 4.10 shows that 75% of the respondents agree while 25% of the respondents strongly agree.

**Table 4.3: Prompt Implementation of Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.45</td>
<td>20.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29.55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher sought to find out if there is a constant review of strategies and if changes were implemented promptly. Table 4.3 shows that 50% of the respondents agree while 29.55% of the respondents strongly agree and 20.45% were neutral on the matter.

**4.5 Effects of Resource Allocation and Strategy Implementation**

**Table 4.4: Appropriate Resource Allocation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45.45</td>
<td>70.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29.55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher sought to find out if there was appropriate resource allocation to support strategy implementation. Table 4.4 shows that 45.45% of the respondents agree while 29.55% of the respondents strongly agree and 25% were neutral on the matter.
The researcher wanted to establish if competencies are aligned to strategy. Fig 4.16 indicates that 93.18% of the respondents agreed while 6.82% of the respondents strongly agreed.

The researcher wanted to establish if there is constant evaluation of competencies. Fig 4.17 indicates that 29.55% of the respondents agreed while 70.45% of the respondents were neutral on the matter.
Table 4.5: Distribution of Financial Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cummulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher wanted to establish if financial resources are sufficient and correctly distributed to enable strategy implementation. Table 4.5 indicates that 50% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 25% agreed and 25% of the respondents were neutral on the matter.

Fig 4.18: Right People in Place to Execute Strategies

The researcher wanted to establish if the organization had the right people to execute the strategies. Fig 4.18 indicates that 25% of the respondents agreed while 75% of the respondents strongly.
The researcher wanted to establish if the organization constantly develops its resources and capabilities. Fig 4.19 indicates that 50% of the respondents strongly agreed while 50% of the respondents were neutral on the matter.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction
This chapter deals with the discussion and findings of the study as well offers a conclusion and recommendations that Kenyan ICT startups can adopt to improve on their strategy implementation.

5.2 Summary
The general objective of this study was to identify the factors that affect successful strategy implementation in Kenyan ICT startups taking a closer look at startups from I-Lab Africa incubator. The research questions which guided the study were: (1) to assess whether Managerial Behavior is a factor influencing implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups? (2) To establish whether Resource Allocation is a factor influencing implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups? (3) To examine whether Institutional Policies is a factor influencing implementation of strategic management plans in Technology Startups?

To achieve this, the study employed a descriptive study design to look at ICT startups from I-Lab incubator. A census approach was chosen to enable the researcher to collect comprehensive data on the population under study due to the small number of the population.

The study covered the following groups of the target population, senior management, middle level management and supervisory level. A census approach was applied where all the startups were selected in a non-probability sampling technique. This method allowed the researcher to select samples according to his/her judgement provided the necessary information for the research. For the purpose of the study 41 respondents we considered a representative of the total population. The sample took into account all management levels from senior, middle and supervisory level. Self-administered structured questionnaire was the instrument used in data collection. The questionnaire had different sections with each section addressing study question and the respondents were provided with guidelines to ensure that they understood the questions and therefore responded appropriately. A time frame of one
week was given to the respondents to complete the questionnaire. In order to protect confidentiality the respondents were advised not to give out their names or reveal their identity in the surveys. Further to that the questionnaire was designed not collect any personal information by limiting personal information to the level of management. Respondents were assured of anonymity and their responses would be treated with confidence and that at no point would their names be mentioned in the report.

The study revealed that majority of the ICT startups formulated appropriate strategies which were befitting the current business environment. However the number of respondents who felt that the set strategies were appropriately implemented dropped significantly. The study revealed there were challenges in communication which were affecting strategy implementation and hence needed to be addressed. Issues of organizational structure where structures did not completely support strategy implementation were also seen as hindrances in strategy implementation.

It was found from that study that resource allocation was also a challenge with lack of sufficient resource allocation to strategy implementing functions. Financial resources were the main challenge in the strategy implementation process where a majority of the respondents felt this was not properly appropriated to the implementing functions. Issues of institutional policies also proved to be a challenge in the implementation process with issues such as constant review of competencies proving to be a challenge in most of the startups. Constant review of strategies was also an issues with many of the respondent having a feeling this was not communicated promptly.

5.3 Discussions

5.3.1 Managerial Behavior and Strategy Implementation

The study established that most of the ICT startups formulated appropriate strategies for their companies. The study however pointed out that very few of the companies implemented the set strategies appropriately and even the few that implemented did not do so promptly. The study revealed that majority of the ICT startups had proper organizational structures set up which are crucial for strategy implementation. According to Kachru (2005)
Organizational structure helps in development of capacity to implement strategies. The study revealed that that the proper structures set actually supported the implementation of set strategies.

Chandler (1962) substantiated the thesis that structure follows strategy based on four case study of American conglomerates that had dominance in their industries. The study however showed most of the startups change in strategy was not followed by corresponding changes in structure which has high implications on why most of the strategies set were not implemented fully. It was observed from the study that most of the organization has clear communication channels set. According to Mazzola and Kellermanns (2010) effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation. This is affirmed by the fact that a majority of the respondents indicated that clear communication lines promoted strategy implementation.

Speculand (2009) reiterates that leaders need to create the right conditions in their organization in order to realize good employee behavior. The study showed that management creation of open sharing of ideas environment promoted communication and hence strategy implementation by creating synergy. It was observed that most of the respondents felt that promotions and rewards were done in an open and transparent manner on merit. This can be related to the fact that most of the respondents felt driven to bring change to their organizations. Rewards and other forms of compensation must be aligned with the goals that employees are seeking to accomplish (Lussier & Achua, 2009).

The study brought out that most of the organization had a constant employee development programs running which in turn can be seen as factors encouraging strategy implementation. Cumberlig (2007) endorse the requirement to nature the people in an organization because they are the process owners and process is what drives implementation.
5.3.2 Institutional Policies and Strategy Implementation

The study brought out the importance of constant review of strategies to fit the prevailing business environment. According to Ginger (2012) companies must continually assess not only their programs but the projects in their programs to ensure there is strategic fit in the organizations projects, this is in agreement with the findings of the study. Change is inevitable in the current business setting due to highly turbulent business environment. These calls for management efforts to focus beyond value statements but to more important understand dynamics which promote integration and collaboration. The study showed that the current leadership demonstrated clear vision for the future. Clear direction by management encouraged implementation of strategies. This resonates with Gopinath (2013) that top management leadership plays critical role in determining the success and failure of strategy implementation.

The study brought to light that top management commitment to the strategy inspires and motivates employees to implement strategies. Top management cascade programs and processes down through the organization to improve impact and drive cultural change (Fulmer, 2005) which is in line with the findings of the study. This in turn impacts strategy implementation. Decision making forms one of the most important functions of top management as per the finding of the study. Making decisions involves making a judgment regarding how to act in a given situation after considering alternative courses of action (Yeyarathnam, 2006). According to Rao (2008) decisions made by top level executives can be said to be the most crucial in determination how strategy will be implemented, this is in agreement with the study findings.

Synergy in direction by top management and departmental heads was found critical for strategy implementation and unity in direction in the study. This is in line to Mazolla and Kellermanns (2010) that middle management with low or negative commitment to strategies formulated by top level management create obstacles to effective implementation of strategy. As found in the study strategy implementation relies more on the commitment of all employees to the strategy and departmental heads are the closest to the employees in the
lower levels. According to Lussier and Achua (2009) the style of leadership and an abundance of managerial skills make the difference.

The best organizations for leaders are those that are consistently executing on the strategies that make for good leadership development and actualization of organizational goals. Top management aim at creating enterprise wide standards, practices, and metrics for leadership. They cascade programs and processes down through the organization to improve impact and drive cultural change (Fulmer, 2005). Decision making forms one of the most important functions of a manager. Making decisions involves making a judgment regarding how to act in a given situation after considering alternative courses of action (Yeyarathnam, 2006). Decisions made by top level executives can be said to be the most crucial in determination how strategy will be implemented (Rao, 2008).

5.3.3 Resource Allocation and Strategy Implementation

The study showed that alignment of resources to the strategy in most of the ICT startups which shows the importance of the alignment. Effective management plays a major role to ensure proper utilization at the right time and setting. While resources are important their existence per se do not confer any benefit to the organization (Henry, 2008) which resonates with the findings in the study. From the study it was found out that effectiveness of strategy implementation is affected by the quality of people involved in the process of strategy implementation.

The study revealed that management continually develop competencies in their organizations. This is in line with Eikelenboom (2009) who noted organizational capabilities have been stated to provide the foundations for strategy execution. The study showed it is not only important to create competencies but also to align them to set strategies. This is in line that finding correlations between strategies and business processes are a key component in resource alignment (Rosemann, 2010). According to Rosemann (2010) finding correlations between strategies and business processes are a key component in resource alignment. Strategic Management should build on the foundations of business process alignment to ensure that there is alignment between processes and strategies. This view of alignment was
evident from the study which showed the role that aligned plays in the implementation process. This process by extension is interested in optimizing the use of process to the given strategies to ensure optimal resource allocation (Koliadis and Ghose, 2008).

The human resource factor in strategy implementation involves attracting the right type of people; developing the knowledge, skills and abilities and human resource retention (Maw-Shin, Yung-Lung & Feng-Jhy, 2014). The study revealed having right people in place was critical for strategy implementation. The study revealed that most of the ICT startups had the right people for the different tasks. From the study it reveals that there is the realization that human resource is a strategic resource contrary to the traditional views of the human resource which was view as a mechanistic and people were pushed to the periphery. This resonates with Schmigt and Brauer (2006) who noted that strategic implementation has undergone changes to accommodate human resource as a strategic resource. According to Forman and Argenti (2005) strategic planners are required to consider necessary relations between the strategic planners and the human resource persons, increasing networking and altering the environment for strategic planning, this is also visible from the studies.

Lussier and Achua (2009) observed that strategies fail in implementation due to lack of resources. The study analysis clearly shows the importance of resources allocation in the process of strategy implementation. Financial resources were found to one of the key resources in strategy implementation. According to Hrebinjak (2006) the finance strategic plan is an arrangement that focuses on how to successfully; make money, spend money, and estimate the income and operating cost, this show the importance of financial resource for implementation of strategies. The total amount necessary to effectively manage an organization is planned for by executives as they settle on the requirements for the execution of their sections goals as well as the objective (Hrebinjak, 2006).

5.4 Conclusion

5.4.1 Managerial Behavior and Strategy Implementation

With regards to formulation and implementation of strategies, the respondents perceived that their organizations were better in formulating appropriate strategies but less effective in the
implementation of the set strategies. While normal running of the organizations affected the implementation of strategies it was not the main reason for failure to implement the set strategies but that promptness of implementation also had an impact in the process. A combination of factors associated with the day to day of the business and lack of prompt action as far as implementation is concerned can be attributed to the failure to fully implement the set strategies. Open sharing of ideas which creates synergy in the organization couple with clear and transparent promotions and recruitment of competent employees are some of the factors promoting the implementation of the set strategies.

5.4.2 Institutional Policies and Strategy Implementation
The companies institutional policies played the study showed that the current leadership demonstrated clear vision for the future. Clear direction by management encouraged implementation of strategies. This can be perceived as contributing factor in the setting of appropriate strategies The study also brought to light that top management commitment to the strategy inspires and motivates employees to implement strategies. Constant review of strategies was not however effectively done to ensure that the companies were able to address the prevailing business conditions. This could be contributing to the failure of implementation of the set strategies in full.

5.4.3 Resource Allocation and Strategy Implementation
The study showed that alignment of resources to the strategy in most of the ICT startups which shows the importance of the alignment. This includes human resources which involves competencies and financial resources. While human resources were noted to be effectively aligned the financial resources did not seem to be effectively and efficiently aligned to the strategy and strategy implementing functions. Development of the resources was noted also not to be effective with many respondents being neutral on the matter. This can perceived as one of the causes of failure of the strategies of the lack thereof for implantation of the set strategies in full.
5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations for Improvement

5.5.1.1 Managerial Behavior and Strategy Implementation

Promotions and rewards: Leadership needs to come up with more transparent ways for promotions and rewards based on merit and which are aligned to the strategic plan. The management can elicit more support for the set strategies by having clear and communicated career paths for their employees. Communication of strategy: though most of the startups had presence of good communication channels more needs to be done in the area of strategy communication. Communication to all stakeholders is necessary to ensure that the strategic process receives support from all concerned function.

Synergy development: there is some moderate level of synergy between the top leadership and departmental heads which leaves some room for improvements to ensure unity of efforts in support of strategy implementation. Organizational structure: More needs to be done in the formation of organizational structures. Organizational structure should be dictated by the set strategy, review in strategy should be followed by a review in organizational structure so as to bring about efficiency and effectiveness in strategy implementation. This was found not to be the case in most of the ICT startups. Assignment of key implementation functions: Assignment of key implementation functions was found to be missing where the key functions were not clearly assigned. Clear assignment of these functions clearly highlights responsibilities and ensures implementation has a high probability of success.

5.5.1.2 Institutional Policies and Strategy Implementation

Strategy review: strategic review need to be carried out in a constantly so as to address the turbulent business environment brought about by the hyper competition in the global market. More can be done to address this to ensure the ICT startups are able to have a competitive edge and be able to compete with the older firms in the market. Recruitment and Employee development: the management of this ICT startups can also improve on this even though it showed a good rating from the study. More needs to be done especially in the area of employee development where employee developments need to be aligned to the set strategy.
5.5.1.3 Resource Allocation and Strategy Implementation

Alignment of resources: is not only important to have the resources but of more importance is the alignment of the resources to the strategy so as to support the implementation process. More needs to be done to ensure human and financial resources are aligned to the implementation of the strategy. Development of Competencies: ICT startups needs to continually develop competencies which seems not be at optimum. Competencies help organizations to create competitive advantage for the firm. Financial resources distribution: distribution of financial resources to strategy functions is still not clearly aligned to the strategy implementation functions in most of the ICT startups. Financial resources can be a limiting factor and the way which it is obtained may make it easier or harder to further resources in the future this calls for proper management of these resources.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Further Studies

There is a lot in terms of studies on factors which affect strategy implementation in the larger ICT sector. A similar study can be conducted with a focus to startups from other business incubators in the country. A similar study may also be carried out on how external factors affect strategy implementation. Further to that all these studies proposed may be carried on other business sectors in the in both public and private sectors.
REFERENCES


Appendix I: Cover Letter

Date May 1st, 2014

Dear Participant:

My name is Mark Ndiso and I am a graduate student at United States International University Africa. For my final project, I am examining factors that affect strategy implementation in information and communication start-ups in Kenya. I have chosen you to participate in this study because of the significant role you play in Kenya ICT startups. I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the attached surveys.

The following questionnaire will require approximately 15 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Copies of the project will be provided to my United States International University. If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible and submit the completed questionnaires promptly as instructed in the survey instruction. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to these study. The data collected will provide useful information regarding strategy implementation by ICT startups which. If you would like a summary copy of this study please complete and detach the Request for Information Form and return it to me in a separate envelope. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information or have questions, please contact me at the number listed below.

Sincerely,

Mark Ndiso Mwinzi
Mobile: +254 720 490 911 Email: markndiso@gmail.com
Appendix II: Questioner

FACTORS AFFECTING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN KENYA ICT STARTUPS

Kindly fill all the questions by either ticking in the boxes or writing in the spaces provided appropriately.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION
1. Management Level
   ○ Senior Management
   ○ Middle Level Management
   ○ Supervisory Level
2. How long have you worked in the organization?
   ○ Less than 2 Years
   ○ 3-4 Years
   ○ 5-6 Years
   ○ 7-8 Years
   ○ Above 9 Years
3. The organization formulates appropriate strategies
   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
4. The organization implements formulated strategies effectively
   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
5. The organization normal running of business distract strategy implementation
   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
6. The organization strategy implementation is not done in timely manner
   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
   ○               ○        ○         ○          ○

7. The organization's strategies are not implemented at all
   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
   ○               ○        ○         ○          ○

SECTION B: Effects of Strategic Behavior on Strategy Implementation
Please tick the box corresponding your personal opinion for each of statements below
8. There is a clear organization structure in the organization
   ○   Yes
   ○   No

9. The current organization's structure adequately supports strategy implementation
   Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
   ○               ○        ○         ○          ○

10. The current organization's structure enhances efficiency and effectiveness
    Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
     ○               ○        ○         ○          ○

11. Change in organization's strategy leads to change in structure
    Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
     ○               ○        ○         ○          ○

12. The organization has clear lines of communication?
    ○   Yes
    ○   No
13. The communication channels promote the strategy implementation process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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14. Key strategy implementation tasks and activities are clearly assigned

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15. I feel driven to make a difference in the organization

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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16. There is openness in idea sharing in the organization and individual contributions are encouraged

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
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17. Promotions in the organizations are transparent and rewards are awarded in a clear and transparent manner

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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18. The organization recruits capable employees with the right skill for the positions been filled

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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19. There is constant employee development programs running in the organization either through formal training or knowledge sharing

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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SECTION C: Effects of Institutional Policies on Strategy Implementation

Please tick the box corresponding your personal opinion for each of statements below

20. The organization leadership demonstrates clear vision for the future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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21. The top management communicates the organization strategy clearly to the employees

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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22. There is a constant review of the organizations strategies and changes are communicated promptly

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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23. There is a constant review of the organizations strategies and changes are communicated promptly

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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24. Top management is committed to the strategy implementation and inspires and motivates employees to support the process

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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25. There is synergy between the direction given by departmental leaders and direction given by departmental heads is sufficient

<table>
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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
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26. There is constant evaluation of the strategic process

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
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</table>
27. Leadership is competent enough to implement set strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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SECTION D: Effects of Resource Allocation on Strategy Implementation

Please tick the box corresponding your personal opinion for each of statements below

28. Allocation of resources is clear and is aligned to the organizational strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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29. The organization continuously develops competencies among the employees

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
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30. The organization competencies are correctly aligned to the organization strategy

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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31. There is a clear and constant evaluation of competencies

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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32. Financial resources are sufficient and correctly distributed to enable strategy implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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33. The organization has the right people in place to implement the strategies

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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34. The organization constantly develops its resources and capabilities

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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## Appendix III: Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopying, Printing and</td>
<td>This part of funding will be used to cover direct out-of-pocket expenses,</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binding Cost</td>
<td>including questionnaire production, printing, distribution, and collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Monkey</td>
<td>Select package</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants Incentives</td>
<td>We will be offering shopping voucher to those who successfully complete each of a questioner.</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Direct cost</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Costs</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up calls</td>
<td>This part of cost involves the cost of making calls to follow up the progress of questioner answering</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Communication Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Travel expenses</td>
<td>Comprises of cost to follow up questioner answering by following by means of courtesy visits</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Travel Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL COST</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,500</td>
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## Appendix IV: Timelines

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Construction</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Pretest of the Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Writing/Submission</td>
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</table>