Human Resource Factors Affecting Successful Implementation Of Strategic Plans In Carton And Paperboard Manufacturing Smes In Nairobi, Kenya

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Abstract: Organizations are often faced with several challenges as they strive to succeed in their business endeavors. They have to take some very bold steps to realize their goals. For the companies to succeed, they must embrace the concept of strategic management. Studies have revealed that most of the SMEs operate without clearly defined strategic plans. As a result, they are often unable to maintain competitive edge in the market place yet they are under pressure to adopt the international standards of doing business. The main objective of this study was to investigate the human resource factors influencing successful implementation of strategic plans particularly in the carton and paper board manufacturing SMEs in Kenya. Specifically the study sought to establish how training, reward systems, recruitment and job design influence successful implementation of strategic plans. Descriptive Research design was used for the research study. The target population was the 35 carton and paper board companies within Nairobi County while the study population was the 30 carton and paper board SMEs within Nairobi County. A non-probability sampling procedure was ideal for this study because the researcher purposively selected the desired sample size – that is three managers in each SME (based on the premise that in the sector those who hold such positions are normally very few) to give a sample size of 90 respondents. Slovin's formula for calculating sample size was applied in order to justify the sample size of 90 respondents. Questionnaires were the key data collection tool and a pilot test was carried out to determine reliability and validity of the tool and the information gathered. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used because it is software which is economical and capable of giving an output of a large data within a short time. The study applied Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient to measure the strength and direction of association that existed between the variables. The results of the findings revealed a correlation coefficient of reward system as r = 0.922 while that of training, job design and recruitment were r = 0.893, r = 0.573 and r = 0.043 respectively. The Chi-square test was used in testing the hypothesis of the study. Statistical results of reward system were 0.0051<0.05 while that for training were 0.023<.05. This led to the rejection of the hypothesized statements. The Chi- square test of job design and recruitment gave values of 0.292>0.05 and 0.162>0.05 respectively which led to the acceptance of the hypothesized statements. Based on the above results it was evident that reward system and training had strong relationship with successful implementation of SMEs strategic plans. Recruitment and job design had a weak relationship on the same.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current business environment, competition has become so complex that players both small medium and corporate have to adopt new ways of doing business if their goal of profitability and growth is to be realized. It is evident that the advent of globalization and technological advancement has seen a paradigm shift from the old ways of doing business and firms have to seek new strategies, new products and new approaches in doing business. The opinion of Miller, Wilson and Hickson (2004) is that a good strategic plan is closely linked to the firm's business growth. The idea of strategic planning was originally synonymous with government institutions but it has lately permeated in both

small and medium enterprises (SME). This is because the SME sector has realized that the market environment has become too ruthless for their survival. Guided by the old adage by Lakein (1970, Time Management page 25) that "failing to plan is planning to fail" the SMEs are now developing strategic plans to avert their day-to-day operational struggles.

Abor and Quartey (2010) suggest that the many severe operating problems SMEs are facing today have their origin, a failure from months or years in strategic planning. According to them the absence of strategic planning, or poor strategic plans, usually lead to future serious problems in the SME sector yet the sector is recognized as productive driver of economic growth and development for both African countries and the overseas countries. Abor and Quartey (2010) further observed that the innovative and technology-based SMEs can provide an interesting platform for expanding outside of domestic borders, and entering intra-regional and international markets.

In respect to the development of strategic plans, the municipal governments in New York were the first to engage in putting together formal written documents through the Human Resource (HR) department so as to identify objectives and ways in which to achieve them (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000). According to the American Planning Association (2001), there are key human resource characteristics that are critical in formulating and implementing a strategic plan.

The carton and paper board manufacturing companies in Canada for instance have been known to be the first SMEs in the country to embrace latest technology in their operations. In the past decade, the paper board manufacturing company in the country was experiencing poor financial performance as a result of competition from the local market. Their efforts to leverage on employees training, sourcing for competent and skilled personnel, restructuring the role profile of each employee bore tremendous results on the growth of the sector.

Ateng (2007) considers that while the numbers of SMEs in Africa continue to grow very fast, the carton and paper board SMEs development does not grow in the same phase. This underscores the fact that the sector has been ailing. Herbiniak (2006) states that South Africa carton and paper board manufacturing companies despite the complex competitive environment, they operate in, they have been able to translate and turn around the sector through innovation. Antalis International is one example of South African companies manufacturing paper. The company has weathered so many business challenges. According to Haines (2004) the company was initially operating within limited resources and the performance was dismally pathetic. But currently it has an annual turnover of more than 2.7 billion Rands. The sector is now the major source of South Africa's incredible economic-growth in terms of its contribution toward the creation of employment, the improvement of GDP and the development of high-tech intensive industries. The question is how this managed to get there. The management of the company recognized the significance of aligning their business objectives to their goals. They developed a strategic plan to realize this goal. One of their approaches was to have the company listed in the stock exchange while workforce training facilitated implementation of their strategic blueprint.

SMEs in Kenya have been recognized as engines through which growth objectives of the developing countries can be achieved. They are; in the opinion of Oketch (2000) potential sources of employment and income in many countries.

Amyx (2005) suggests that SMEs have advantages over their large-scale competitors in that they are able to adapt more easily to market conditions, given their broadly skilled technologies and are as well able to withstand adverse economic conditions because of their flexible nature. Kayanula and Quartey (2000) feels that SMEs in Kenya are more labor intensive than larger firms and therefore have lower capital costs associated with job creation thus facilitating long-term economic growth.

The evolution of government strategies on SMEs can be traced back after the International Labor organization (ILO) of 1972 on Employment, income and equity in Kenya which recognized SMEs as important sector for creating income and employment for the Kenyan population (ILO, 1972). The report underlines the SMEs as the impetus to better returns and employment growth. The sector's importance in economic development was singled out in Sessional Paper No.1of 1986, Economic Management for Renewed Growth Government of Kenya (2006-2010), which set out mechanisms for enhancing an enabling environment for SMEs. The Government's commitment in Sessional Paper 1 of 1986 was reinforced in the 1989 GOK report, 'the strategy for small Enterprises, which delineated the mechanisms for removing the constraints to growth and the development of the SME sector. African Economic Outlook report 2 (2011) suggests that the SMEs sector in Kenya create close to 80% of Kenya's employment. While the SMEs subsector constitute close to 80% of employment, it only contributes to about 20% of the GDP. This implies that the SMEs subsector has been performing dismally despite its potential contribution to employment, income and equity in Kenya. In realization of its significance on the economic growth, the government initiates programs such as strategy planning programs, human capital management seminars and best industry practice to help the sector realize its growth.

According to Mamman, Elridge, and Branine (2007) strategic plan is a systematic, formally documented process for deciding the handful of key decisions that an organization, must get right in order to thrive over the next few years. Strategic planning provides an overall strategic direction to the management of the organization and gives a specific direction to areas like financial strategy, marketing strategy, organizational development strategy and human resources strategy, to achieve success.

In the opinion of Graetz (2002) carton and paperboard manufacturers are continuously exploring new technologies in the carton industry in order to improve the performance and respond to the demands of the market. A number of companies in the industry now use less wood for some production processes, computer controlled processing and on-machine quality monitoring. This is a strategy to improve productivity and become relevant in this competitive industry. To achieve this noble goal, players in the industry need to realize the significant role of their human capital.

Despite looking for consistency in quality improvement through its skilled and motivated workforce, the carton

industry has also designed better ways of reducing waste as a significant contribution to the policies on environmental protection. This, according to Lloyd (2010) brings economic benefit because many companies consume these products owing to their ability toprovide convenient and innovative packaging solutions. Producers of beer for instance can store the beer in refrigerators in a carton multipack which can be used as an ice bucket when the beer is consumed. Dealers of ready food can as well take their food from fridge and heat it in a microwave or oven. However, Abor and Quartey (2010) suggest that it is a business planning, although in the carton and paper board SMEs, it should inform and shape the business plan. The importance of strategic planning thus is planning for the corporate whole so that the carton manufacturers get into a strong position where they can be able to face the long-term future. Additionally the business plan should not be looked at as a production planning, although it should guide what the SMEs produce and neither should it be looked as workforce or technology planning or any other type of partial planning, and it definitely is not marketing, even though it guides who to market to and where to market. It is not coordinating, forecasting or budgeting. It is a process designed to yield a corporate strategic plan.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) Report (2013) revealed that 60% of SMEs in Kenya collapse every year. The report further points out that most of the SMEs operate without clearly defined strategic plans. As a result, they are often unable to maintain competitive edge in the market place yet they are under pressure to adopt the international standards of doing business. Key players in the sector which are vulnerable to this practice are the carton and paperboard manufacturers. It is evident according to Herbiniak (2006) that quite a number of them have embraced strategic plans and models with a view of producing better financial results and attains their goal of spurring economic growth – a major expectation by the Kenyan government and other stakeholders. The government and the banking industry have developed policies aimed at helping the SMEs to realize this goal. They have been providing several workshops to train the SMEs on how to develop and implement strategic plans, adopt best industry practice and enhance their human capital management (Rodríguez-Pose and Gill, 2004).

A good number of SMEs as a result have managed to develop strategic plans but according to Kalali (2011) there has been high failure rate in implementation of the strategic plans. This begs the question as to whether the SMEs lack expertise or they are pursuing the wrong factors.

Studies have been done by Obare (2006), Koske (2003), Lumiti (2007), Ateng (2007) on implementation of strategic plans in the SME sector. All these studies seem to propose that successful implementation of strategic plan is a function of the people involved and the management. SMEs in the carton and paper board manufacturing have tried to adopt these proposals but to no avail. Unfortunately the studies have not explored other factors that could contribute to the success in the implementation of strategic plans. Based on the foregoing, this study aims to investigate the human resource aspects influencing successful implementation of strategic plans in the carton and paperboard manufacturing SMEs in Kenya. The study specifically aimed at:

✓ Investigating the effect of training on the implementation of strategic plans.
✓ Examining the effect of reward system on the implementation of strategic plans
✓ Assessing how recruitment influence the implementation of strategic plans
✓ Determining how job design affect the implementation of strategic plans

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

EXPECTANCY THEORY

Expectancy theory which was contained in the Valency-Instrumentality-Expectancy (VIE) theory was developed by Porter and Lawler (1968). According to the philosophers Valency stands for value while Instrumentality is the belief that if we do one thing it will lead to another. Expectancy is the probability that action or effort will lead to an outcome. This study aims at exploring the factors that influence successful implementation of strategic plans in the SME sector and specifically, it is keen on investigating how training, recruitment and Job design play such a role. Organizations train their employees and expect specific results out of the training. The organizations as well recruit specific skills that will lead to achievement of their goal. Needless to say these organizations come up with task specification with an aim of realizing results such as efficiency and effectiveness in the employee. Expectancy theory therefore fits this study because in pursuant of the factors influencing success in the implementation of strategic plans, the research found this theory handy.

REINFORCEMENT THEORY

This further seeks to establish how reward systems influence implementation of strategic plans in the SME sector. Rewarding of employees is a form of motivation and often leads to better performance in the tasks to be accomplished. Reinforcement theory of motivation therefore is ideal for this study because motivation has the potential to influence performance. The theory, which is similarly known as behaviorism or operant conditioning was developed by (Skinner, 2004). The theory proposes that an individual's behavior is a function of its consequences. Reinforcement theory has been used in many areas including training of animals, bringing up of children, and inspiring employees in the workplace. According to Noe (2003) the law of effect states that a response followed by a reward is more likely to recur in the future. The theory generally states that people seek out and remember information that provides cognitive support for their pre-existing attitudes and beliefs. The main assumption that guides this theory is that people do not like to be wrong and often feel uncomfortable when their beliefs are challenged.

CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

Mugenda (2003) defines conceptual framework as a concise description of the phenomenon under study accompanied by a graphical or visual depiction of the major variables of the study. The conceptual framework is used in the research to outline possible courses of action and to present a preferred approach of the study. It attempts to connect to all aspects of inquiry (e.g., problem definition, purpose, literature review, methodology, data collection and analysis). In order to support the evidence the said phenomena (i.e. successful implementation of strategic plans in SMEs) related theories will be proposed that would explore existence of relationship between the variables as illustrated by the model below:

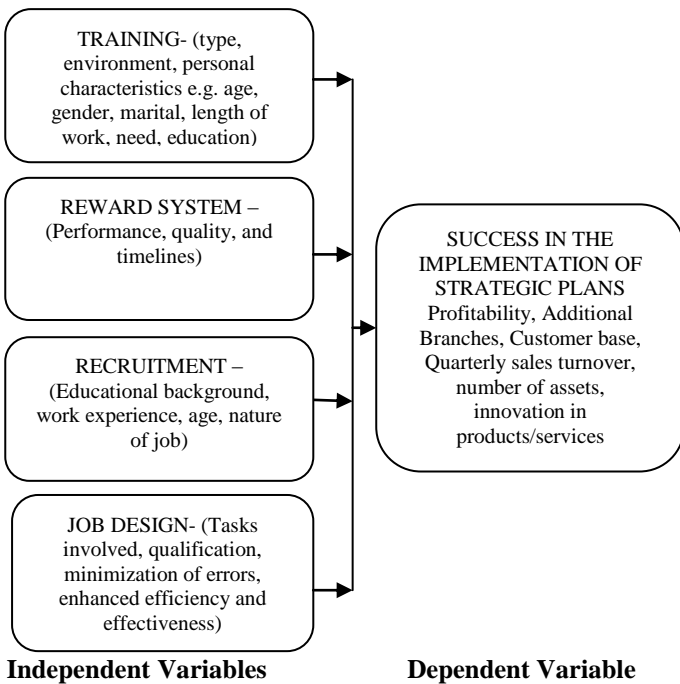$$Y = \beta 0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_1 X_2 + \beta_1 X_3 + \beta_1 X_4 + e.$$

Where:

Y = Dependent Variable

$\beta 0$ = the constant variable

$\beta_1 X_1 - \beta_1 X_4$ = Independent variables

e = Margin of error

Independent Variables   **Dependent Variable**

EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Considerable evidence shows that strategic planning leads to increased firm performance in most of the business organizations. Further findings reveal that almost 80% of SMEs do not plan and the reasons why their business performance often ranks far behind long term goals such as autonomy and profitability (Yusuf & Saffu (2005). For the majority of SME of Graetz (2002) suggests though a number of SMEs in Kenya are exploring new and innovative ways of doing business, for owner-operators, strategic planning may have little value to them.

Research has consistently shown that most small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) do not engage in strategic planning. Research done by Dodd, Gordon &Smart (2004)

pointed out that there is apparent lack of strategic planning in SMEs and highlights inherent problems with how this issue has adversely affected performance of SMEs. The same opinion was advanced by Miller, Wilson and Hickson (2004) who alluded that a good strategic plan is closely linked to the firm's business growth. Studies of these scholars principally indicate that the antecedents of SME strategic planning have not properly been considered. This is supported by Beaver (2003) who stated that the purpose of strategic planning is to enable a business "to gain as efficiently as possible, a sustainable edge over its competitors. For instance the SMEs that engage in strategic planning (compared to those that do not) are more likely to achieve higher sales growth, higher returns on assets, and higher margins on profit and higher employee growth.

Further to Jocumsen (2004) arguments, SMEs that engage in strategic planning are also more likely to be those enterprises that are more innovative, that have more newly patented products that employ new process and technological advancement. They end up realizing international growth. Perhaps most importantly, SMEs that engage in strategic planning are less likely to be those that fail. This is in line with Yusuf & Saffu (2005) thinking who alluded that, the reason why some SMEs do strategic planning; while others do not is generally not well understood. However, evidence has it that most of the SMEs focused on identifying the 'barriers' that discourage or prevent planning. Lack of specialized expertise, inadequate knowledge of the planning processes, and or reluctance has led to failure to adopt strategic planning.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive approach because according to Zikmud (2003), it is more formalized and typically structured with clearly stated investigative questions. The carton industry has become competitive with more players joining the industry. Most of the infant companies in the industry have bowed out due to competition. Most of these infant companies are SMEs. It has now become imperative for the carton and paper board SMEs to continuously improve their performance as a noble goal to survive in the competitive environment. Descriptive approach was therefore used because it was able to give detailed and systematic analysis of the factors under investigation such the Human Resource factors that contribute to successful implementation of strategic plans in the carton and paper board manufacturing SMEs in Nairobi.

The entire estimated population of carton and paper board manufacturing companies in Nairobi County was 35 as per KNBS (2014) report. However, this study was only interested with the SME sector within Nairobi County whose number is 30 according to the report. This constitutes the target population. This is illustrated by the attached Appendix I. The criteria for choosing the 30 carton and paper board companies was guided by the data provided by Kenya National bureau of Statistics as demonstrated by appendix 1 in this document. The sample frame constituted the 35 carton manufacturing companies within Nairobi County

Data was collected from the top 3 managers in each SME. The reason for targeting the three managers was because SMEs hardly have more than three senior managers at any one given time owing to their financial constraints (Ateng, 2007).Consequently the kind of data required is too technical for the junior staff to provide hence the reason for targeting the top managers. In order to arrive at the precise sample size, the researcher used Slovin's formula for calculating sample size as illustrated below because formula is relatively easy to understand and apply.

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N *e^2)}$$

Source: Kothari (2005)

The formula gives sample size of 90 managers

Where:

N = Size of the population,

n = Size of sample,

e = Acceptable error or the precision or the estimation error (at 0.05)

This gave a sample size of 90 respondents

Category	Population	Percentage	Sample Size
1. AFA PACK PACKAGING	3	100	3
2. AFRI PACK	3	100	3
3. BANY PACKAGING	3	100	3
4. CORRUGATED PACKAGING LTD	3	100	3
5. ASL PACKAGING LTD	3	100	3
6. ELGON PACKAGING LTD	3	100	3
7. JOAN PACKAGING	3	100	3
8. KEN PACK LTD	3	100	3
9. KRISHNA PACKAGING	3	100	3
10. SILPACK INDUSTRIES LTD	3	100	3
11. MEGVEL CARTON LTD	3	100	3
12. MFI PACKAGING	3	100	3
13. MULTI-PLAN INVESTMENT	3	100	3
14. NICE PACK LTD	3	100	3
15. PACKAGING MATERIALS LTD	3	100	3
16. PACKWEL LTD	3	100	3
17. PAK SPACE LTD	3	100	3
18. PLAMINUM PACKAGING	3	100	3
19. PRESS MASTER LTD	3	100	3
20. PRIME CARTON	3	100	3
21. PRINTING INDUSTRIES	3	100	3
22. QUICK PACK LTD	3	100	3
23. RHINO PACKAGING	3	100	3
24. RUARAKA PACKAGING LTD	3	100	3
25. SAI PACK LTD	3	100	3
26. SHOW PACK LTD	3	100	3
27. STARTPACK INDUSTRIES LTD	3	100	3
28. STIMA PACKAGING	3	100	3
29. TWIN AFRICA PACKAGING	3	100	3
30. WANDI PACKAGING	3	100	3
TOTAL	90	100	90

Table 1

The researcher aimed at collecting data from all the 30 SMEs within Nairobi and in this regard a census method was used in the sampling technique and purposively and conveniently chose the top managers of each company. According to Procter and Meullenet (2000), sampling is concerned with the selection of a subset of individuals from within a statistical population to estimate characteristics of the whole population. They identified three key steps for obtaining appropriate sample size. In their opinion, the researcher should first and foremost define the target population and secondly define the accessible population. Finally the researcher should define the steps and efforts that will be employed to recruit subjects for study. The sampling process was therefore carried out personally by the researcher. The researcher visited the targeted population and with the introduction letter requested to be introduced to the top level managers for the purpose of collecting the required data.

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According to Marshall and Trochim (2008), data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of collected data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the analysis. The researcher preferred SPSS because of its ability to cover a wide range of the most common statistical and graphical data analysis and is very systematic.

Quantitative data from the study was analyzed with both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies mean and standard deviations were utilized. Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. Each descriptive statistic reduces lots of data into a simpler summary. The hypothesis was tested by use of chi square (tested at significance level of 0.05) while spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to measure correlation. The data collected from questionnaires were carefully organized according to the research questions. Data analysis techniques involve the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics specifically measures of (Percentages and frequencies) were used.

According to Trochim, (2008) inferential statistics are carried out to draw conclusions about the unknown parameters of a population based on statistics, which describes a sample from that population. The data was then presented by use of frequency tables and charts.

IV. CORRELATION ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATIONS COEFFICIENT ON TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

Variable Measured	Implementation of strategic plan in the company has been successful due to employee training
Company has an elaborate policy in place	0.818
There are training programs tailored for specific tasks	0.958
Management trains employees in all areas of operations	0.788
Training has positive results	0.985
Implementation of strategic plan has been successful due to employee training	0.915
Average correlation	0.893

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 2

HO1: TRAINING HAS NO EFFECT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS.

On testing this hypothesis, the results revealed that the observed distribution (0.023) was insignificant and did not conform to the hypothesized distribution (0.05). The obtained chi-square statistic of 5.822 is not close to any reasonable level of significance as demonstrated in the table below. The stated hypothesis can therefore be rejected that training has no effect on the implementation of strategic plans and the alternative hypothesis assumed.

HYPOTHESIS TEST ON TRAINING

Chi Square Statistic	Training has no effect on the implementation of strategic plans.
Chi-Square(a)	5.822
Degree of Freedom	89
Asymptotic Significance	0.023

Chi Square test is significant at the 0.05 level
Table 3

SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATIONS COEFFICIENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS AGAINST THE EFFECT OF HAVING A REWARD SYSTEM IN PLACE

Variable Measured	SMEs Implementation of Strategic Plans
Management has a reward system in place	0.886
Management believes its only through a rewards system that it can achieve goals	0.956
Reward systems supports on-going changes	0.956
Employees do not accomplish tasks unless rewarded	0.856
Implementation of strategic plans in SMEs has significant relationship with reward systems	0.954
Average correlation	0.922

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 4

HO2: REWARD SYSTEM HAS NO EFFECT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS.

In testing this hypothesis, the results revealed that the observed distribution (0.0051) was insignificant and did not conform to the hypothesized distribution (0.05). The hypothesis stated that reward system in SMEs has no effect on the implementation of strategic plans. This hypothesis should be rejected because the chi-square statistic obtained 9.023 which is small and is not close to a reasonable level of significance as explained in the table below.

HYPOTHESIS ON REWARD SYSTEM

Chi Square Test Statistic	Reward system has no effect on the implementation of strategic plans.
Chi-Square(a)	9.023
Degree of Freedom	89
Asymptotic Significance	0.0051

Chi Square test is significant at the 0.05 level
Table 5

SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATIONS COEFFICIENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS AGAINST THE RECRUITMENT IN SMES

Variable Measured	SMEs Implementation of Strategic Plans
Company sources employees with specialized skills on strategic management	0.012
Company sources for specialized skills from within	0.012

the company to discharge specific tasks	
Employees are able to do assigned all tasks	0.024
Company single source for necessary skills	0.122
Average correlation	0.043

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 6

H$_O$3: RECRUITMENT HAD NO EFFECT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS

In testing this hypothesis, the study revealed a significance value of 0.162 which is greater than hypothesized distribution of 0.05. This finding conformed to the hypothesized distribution. The obtained chi-square statistic of 28.500 is close to reasonable levels of significance as explained in the table below. The stated hypothesis can therefore be accepted that statistically, recruitment had a weak impact on the implementation of strategic plans in SMEs.

HYPOTHESIS TEST ON RECRUITMENT

Chi Square Test Statistic	Recruitment has no effect on the implementation of strategic plans.
Chi-Square(a)	28.500
Degree of Freedom	89
Asymptotic Significance	0.162

Chi Square test is significant at the 0.05 level
Table 7

SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATIONS COEFFICIENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS AGAINST THE JOB DESIGN IN SMES

Variable Measured	SMEs Implementation of Strategic Plans
Company not familiar with job design	0.542
Tasks done in the company are well structured	0.632
Company ensures no work overload	0.524
Poor discharge of tasks is caused by employee doing many tasks at the same time	0.422
Management issue variety of tasks to employees	0.524
Employees are effective on tasks	0.358
Repetitive leads to efficiency and competence	0.754
Company goal achieved due to job design	0.654
Employee satisfaction achieved	0.689
Job design has made strategic plan successful	0.629

Average correlation	0.573

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 8

HO4: JOB DESIGN HAS NO EFFECT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS.

In testing this hypothesis, the study revealed a significance value of 0. 2921. This value was greater than the hypothesized distribution of 0.05. The findings conformed to the hypothesized distribution. The obtained chi-square statistic of 38.520 was close to reasonable levels of significance as explained in the table below. The stated hypothesis can therefore be accepted that statistically, job design had a weak impact on the implementation of strategic plans in SMEs.

Chi Square Test Statistic	Job Design has no effect on the implementation of strategic plans.
hi-Square(a)	38.520
Degree of Freedom	89
Asymptotic Significance	0.292

Chi Square test is significant at the 0.05 level
Table 9: Hypothesis Test on Job Design

V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Majority (84%) of this study shows that Carton and Paper Board manufacturing SMEs was a male dominated industry with a highest response rate of 84% being male respondents. Another finding revealed that the leadership of the Carton Manufacturing SMEs was composed of people who were well educated as illustrated by the highest response rate of 80% of the total respondents. Further finding from this study revealed that most of the SMEs studied had strategic plans in place as illustrated by the highest response rate (93%) of the respondents who agreed to this assertion.

It was also established that stakeholders were involved in the development of the strategic plans and that there was an elaborative training policy in place to enhance discharge of employee's tasks though it did not indicate whether the training was specific to strategy implementation. However, conclusion may be drawn that this has influenced success in strategy implementation as is illustrated by a high number of respondents (73%) who confirmed that most of the SMEs under study had training programs tailored for specific tasks and these trainings bore positive results. This suggests that if there were those trained on strategy implementation, it would be successful. Correlation coefficient result (r = 0.893) confirmed this finding by indicating a very significant relationship between training and successful implementation of strategic plans. A further test of hypothesis which gave a value of 0.023<.05 led to rejection of null hypothesis that training has no relationship with successful implementation of strategic plans. This hypothesis was rejected giving strength to training as strong predictor successful implementation of strategic plans

Finding from the study confirmed that employees of SMEs did not need to be pushed to do their jobs because they were well rewarded as demonstrated 61% response rate. Majority of respondent (83%) confirmed that those employees charged with implementing strategic plans were not committed in their tasks. This illustrates that these employees were not motivated to do the job. A further finding revealed that respondents agreed that the implementation of strategic plans had been successful because the employees doing it were well rewarded as demonstrated by a 100% response rate which affirms that reward system is a strong predictor of successful implementation of strategic plans. The Spearman's correlations coefficient results (r=0.922) confirms this finding while the hypothesized statement was rejected and the alternative accepted that reward system has a significant relationship with successful implementation of strategic plans as demonstrated by significance value of 0.0051<0.05

An interesting finding of this study showed that majority of the SMEs employs specialized people who were skilled in strategic management. This is demonstrated by the highest response rate of 58% though the company still employs from within special skills to discharge specific duties. However, the study established that those sourced from within the company were not effective in discharging their tasks as explained by highest response rate of 40%. Majority of the respondents (40%) disagreed to the fact that employees were effective in doing all tasks allocated to them. This problem according to the findings was brought about by the management because it single sources the necessary skills (59%). This led to bias recruitment and hence wrong character of employees making recruitment a fairly weak predictor of successful implementation of strategic plans as illustrated by the results of spearman correlation coefficient (r = 0.043). The hypothesized distribution still supports this finding by accepting the null hypothesis that recruitment has no significance with successful implementation strategic plans as demonstrated by a significance value of 0.162 > 0.05.

Majority of the respondents (43%) confirmed that SMEs are familiar with the concept of job design and always ensured that employees were not overloaded with many tasks. But findings have revealed that employees were performing many different tasks at the same time and this led to them performing very poorly in their tasks as illustrated by 60% response rate. The findings further showed that due to handling so many different tasks, the employees have been inefficient and incompetent in their tasks. The findings also established that though some companies had realized their overall goals, this has not been attributed to presence of job design concept. Outcome of this study gave a spearman correlation coefficient of r = 0.573 while the hypothesized distribution gave a p- value of 0.292 > 0.05. This shows that job design is a weak predictor of successful implementation of strategic plans.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, it is appropriate to conclude that though the Carton and Paper Board SMEs in Nairobi have a training policy in place tailored for specific tasks, some of these policies may not be documented and followed to the letter for them to be effective. The fact that the training programs the SMEs have had borne positive results with a correlation of 79%, reward system was more significant with 85%. Based on this it is safe to conclude that for training to bear significant results the SMEs should have a broader approach to training programs which should not be limited to specific tasks.

Employees in most of the SMEs performed their tasks effectively whenever they are rewarded as per the findings. This gives credence to the premise that reward system is a critical component for the SMEs if they should achieve their corporate goals.

Evidence from the research findings has revealed that majority of carton and paper board manufacturing SMEs in Nairobi sources employees from within the company to discharge some specific tasks. It is also clear that these employees are single sourced. Effective discharge of tasks is underpinned on the employees' skills and competences which underscores the importance of recruiting skills from outside the company. Recruitment for that matter failed to make any significant contribution to the implementation of strategic plans hence the companies would find it hard to weather the business challenges.

It is safe to conclude that job designing in the SME has no relevance because despite the management being conversant with the significance of job design, the organizations continue loading their workers with many different tasks. This has made the workers inefficient and incompetent.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of strategic planning is to help the SMEs plan for the following year in terms of their financial strategies, marketing strategies, organizational strategies, human resource strategies among other strategies. Human resource factors have been reviewed as key determinants towards successful implementation of strategic plans in the SME sector. The study findings revealed that reward system and training were strong predictors in successful implementation of strategic plans in Nairobi County SMEs. The study further revealed that recruitment and job design were weak predictors. Based on this finding conclusion was drawn that for the SMEs to realize their business goals and objectives they need more HR factors to reinforce the strong predictors (reward system and training). This study recommended that SMEs need to invest more on the strong predictors to achieve more from the same without losing sight of the relevance of the weak predictors (recruitment and job design) which can help the SMEs perform better.

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