

# Senior Management's Perceptions with Regard to Strategy Implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health

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**Abstract:** Strategy implementation has always been a challenge in government departments. Therefore, this paper argues that strategy implementation should not be perceived as an obstacle in an organisation, but as a vehicle for realising organisational goals. Strategy implementation in public sector has received a limited research, whereas, organisational cultures, organisational structures, resource allocation and processes of linking the strategy formulation and implementation remains a key challenge. Therefore, a strategy implementation processes in the Limpopo Department of Health (LDoH) was investigated. The purpose of the paper was to probe the perceptions of senior managers on the implementation of the strategy in the Limpopo Department of Health. A qualitative research approach was used to collect data, the IBM SPSS statistics (Version 24) was used to interpret and analyse the data that was collected. Preliminary findings revealed that incompetence, devoting less time to the core business, and continual engagement in politics by senior managers, often lead to ineffective strategy implementation. This paper therefore recommends that the appointment of competent senior management who are capable of staying away from party politics during working hours should be considered, so as to improve strategy implementation processes in the public sector.

**Keywords:** Strategy implementation, Strategy practices, Strategy practitioners, Strategy praxis

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## 1. Introduction

The success of public service organisations depends on effective implementation of strategies and optimisation of performance irrespective of influences from political, social and economic situations. Strategy implementation is the second phase of strategy implementation process which forms a pivotal part of strategic management in public service organisations. It refers to the process of executing plans and policies of the organisation to attain long-term objectives (Kordnaeij, 2016). Hence, strategy implementation in public sector is a subject that has not been broadly covered in literature (Andrews, Beynon & Genc, 2017; Burke, 2016). However, the linkage between senior management's perceptions and strategy implementation in public sector has not been explored from both theoretical and empirical viewpoints. Nevertheless, quiet number of studies was conducted locally on strategy implementation in public sector. For example, Burke (2016) investigated strategy implementation insights from the competition commission of South Africa. Ngcobu and Mdani (2015) probed evaluation of strategic management in assisting South African municipalities improve service delivery. Olivier (2015) explored

closing the strategy execution gap in the public sector: a conceptual model. Franks (2014) investigated the crisis of the South African public service.

A study by Andrews *et al.* (2017) advocates that there are several tactics to strategic management as a field of study, these include amongst others, process theories, resource-based view theory, game theory, Porter's strategic positioning, institutional theory, practice-based view theory and contingency theory. Although some of these tactics have been effectively utilised in government departments, such tactics have seldom been employed to respond to matters pertaining to the strategy implementation in public sector. Hence, the apportionment of internal resource is quiet a hurdle in public service institutions (Pablo, Reay, Dewald & Casebeer, 2007). For instance, Franks (2014) argues that the endeavours to propel policy implementation on reward systems for compensating outstanding performance has been obstructed by political interference in public service. As a results, employees lack enthusiasm to contribute effectively to the implementation process due to scarcity of performance incentives. Political interference plays an adverse role in public sector organisations at

large (Franks, 2014). It leads to reduced strategy implementation efforts and thus performance. As a result, in spite of the political environment and other external variables (such as economic, social, technological and ecological), public sector organisations should ensure that the needs of various stakeholders are contemplated including the society (Burke, 2016). However, this requires knowledgeable senior managers who are able to employ their skills and expertise competently. In order to ensure that strategy implementation manifest in public sector, it is substantial that senior management transfer their skills employees by means of coaching and mentoring (Njoroge, Machuki, Ongeti & Kinuu, 2015). This enables them to successfully implement strategies to enhance service delivery and maintain sustainability of strategies within the public sector including the Limpopo Department of Health.

Consequently, the vision and mission statements are the cornerstone for formulating and implementing organisational strategies in public sector. Thus, these should be aligned with the strategies and long-term objectives of the organisation. Hence the primary objective of the public sector is to provide efficient and effective service delivery rather than making a profit. The purpose of this paper was to probe the perceptions of senior managers on the implementation of the strategy in the Limpopo Department of Health (LDoH). The Limpopo Department of Health is one of the twelve government departments in Limpopo Province. It operates within five districts namely, Mopani, Vhembe, Capricorn, Waterberg and Sekhukhune. The primary goal of the LDoH is to provide a free health care service to the citizens of Limpopo Province as stipulated in Section 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Hence Section 27 of Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 specifies that everyone has the right to have access to health care services, including reproductive health care (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). A study by Pablo *et al.* (2012) centred on the employment of internal dynamic capability as a strategic approach to enhancing primary health care services in the public sector, which its core mandates relates to that of the Limpopo Department of Health. Thus, positive internal capability or resource become critical for the achievement of strategic objectives and enhanced service delivery in the public sector at large. Strategy implementation has been viewed a fundamental challenge for both public

and private sectors which adversely impact performance (Andrews *et al.*, 2017; Burke, 2016; Olivier, 2015; Pablo *et al.*, 2007). However, it should not have been perceived as an obstacle but the vehicle for achieving long-term goals of the organisation. This paper concentrated on strategy implementation that pertains to the Limpopo Department of Health which is in public sector environment. The poor sustainability of strategies due to inefficient senior management perceptions, poor adjustment to technological innovation and changes, as well as lack of proper expertise are, however, evident in both public and private sectors (Ogaja & Kimiti, 2016). Ineffective strategy implementation, amongst others, has been attributed to managerial incompetence. In addition, poor leadership style, political engagement, poor planning and management as well as poor allocation and distribution of resources within the public sector led to strategy implementation failure (Njoroge *et al.*, 2015). The facts highlighted above negatively affect strategy implementation in public sector and therefore overall performance of the Limpopo Department of Health as such. This paper intended to add value to both private sector and public sector institutions including national, provincial and local governments, government parastatals, state-owned enterprises and other public entities.

Subsequently, it has been reported by several studies (Kordnaeij, 2016; Goromonzi, 2016; Olivier, 2015) that nine out of ten (i.e. 90%) of the strategies in both public and private sectors fails pending implementation process. Based on the challenges identified from various reports and literature, this paper sought to embark on probing the senior management's perceptions for enhanced organisational strategy implementation and various approaches that can be employed to enhance strategy implementation in the LDoH. Pertinently, the research questions for this paper were formulated thus: What are the factors that influence strategy implementation of the LDoH or what effect does strategy implementation has on the overall performance of the LDoH or what are the tools and techniques that can help senior management in ensuring successful strategy implementation in the LDoH? These research questions were pursued to explore the best strategies employed within the organisational context for improved managerial competence and hence sustainability of implementing strategies in the LDoH. This paper intends to identify the factors influencing strategy implementation of the Limpopo

Department of Health, to determine the effects of strategy implementation on the overall performance of the Limpopo Department of Health and to identify the tools and techniques that can assist senior management in ensuring effective strategy implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health.

## 2. Literature Review

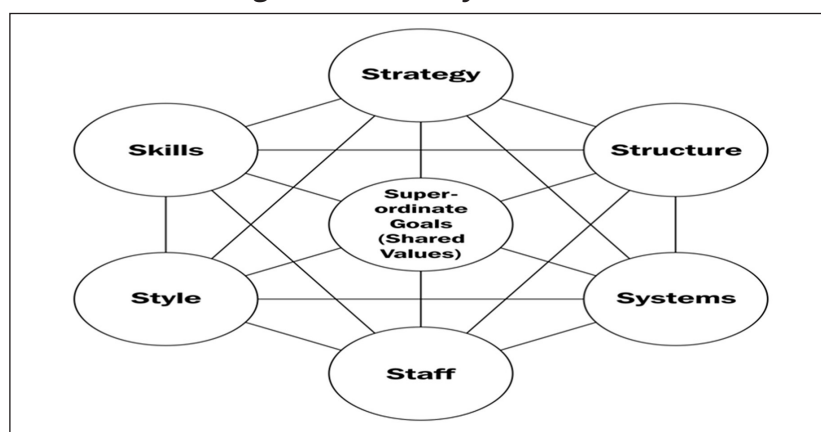
This paper was guided by the theories such as practice-based view theory of strategy, McKinsey 7-S framework and resource-based view theory. The practice-based view endeavours to elucidate organisational performance which is grounded on dynamic capabilities that can be emulated by others (Bromiley & Rau, 2016). From the strategic management point of view, Holohan and Mcdonagh (2017) based their research on the development of practice-based mid-range theory in public service organisations. The theory aimed to explain those taxonomies embedded on daily practice to comprehend what enables the practitioners to attain strategic mandates. Practice-based view has typically been associated with strategy-as-practice (i.e. praxis, practitioners and practices) and has however been extended to the public sector (Olivier, 2015). The three are defined. Strategy praxis refers to the process of putting strategy of the organisation into execution. Strategy practitioners are people who completely deal with the formulation and implementation of strategy. Strategy practices are actions for accomplishing strategy. Therefore, senior management in public sector has to integrate the three in order to fast-track the implementation process and thus achieve the long-term objectives.

### 2.1 McKinsey 7-S Framework

The McKinsey's 7-S framework was initiated by the consultant McKinsey from New York. This framework classifies the seven components. This component is categorised as "hard" and "soft" (Ochiel, Ombui & Omwenga, 2016; Olivier, 2015). The hard components are simpler to distinguish and detect and thus, can explicitly be influenced by the managers. They include strategy, organisational structure and systems. On the other hand, soft components are complex to expound and are persuaded by values, beliefs and norms embedded to organisational employees. Therefore, they include staff, style (adopted leadership style), skills (expertise of employees) and shared values. The seven components play an integral role in strategy formulation and implementation. The framework has become a significant approach of evaluating and monitoring organisational change management activities to warrant effective strategy implementation in the public sector.

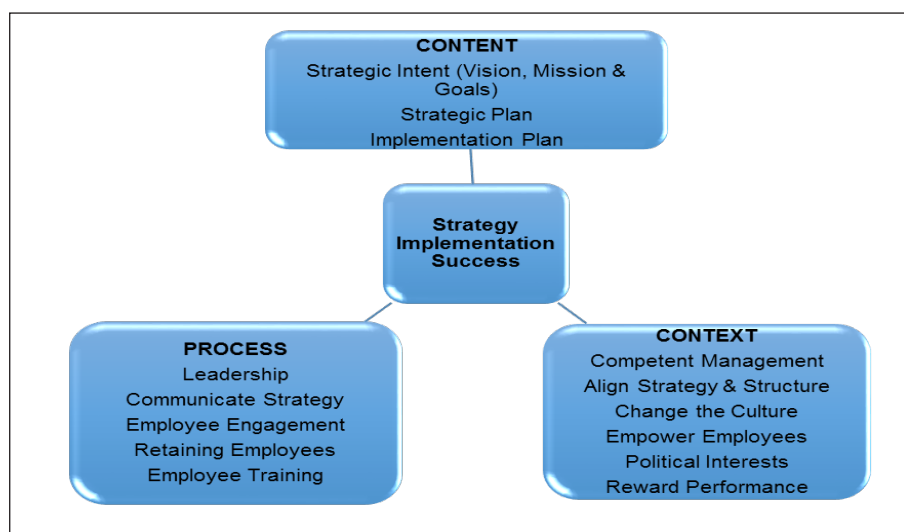
Consequently, The McKinsey's 7-S framework informs this research paper by explaining the significant factors influencing strategy implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health (LDoH). The theory normally resides on the implication of senior management's perceptions with regard to strategy implementation processes. McKinsey's framework undertakes a coherent and hierarchical difference between formulation and implementation of organisational strategy, while submitting that "implementation delegated to a subordinate status as the responsibility of middle management" (Ochiel *et al.*, 2016). As a result, strategy implementation demands a dynamic organisational hierarchy which is aligned to long-term goals of the organisation. The model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: McKinsey 7-S Model



Source (Kihara, 2017)

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework



Source: Authors

## 2.2 Resource-Based View Theory

A research by Bromiley and Rau (2016) suggests that that resource-based view endeavours to describe the continuous competitive edge which relies on organisational dynamic capabilities that are unique. However, dynamic capabilities are based on resource-based view of the business and thus appear to be pertinent for public sector as they emphasis on organisational resources instead of competition in the marketplace (Pablo *et al.*, 2007). By implication resource-based view theory has been relevant to the Limpopo Department of Health as a non-profit making organisation. Therefore, meticulous allocation of resources has been an apparent prerequisite for service delivery in public sector (Ngcobo & Mdani, 2015). Generally, the emphasis of resource disbursement and allocation are often prevalent for public sector institutions "since they do not normally compete for customers" as this has been the case in private sector (Pablo *et al.*, 2007:689). The resource-based view approach has been valuable tactic that assists in ensuring value creation for citizens and attainment of strategic objectives in public sector context.

## 3. Conceptual Framework

This paper has adopted a specific conceptual framework. A conceptual framework enables the author to graphically portray the fundamental dimensions to be studied such as key factors or models (Kihara, 2017). The framework affords senior management an explicit direction of the major variables and dimensions to contemplate during strategy

implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health. Hence the framework has been suitable for both public and private sectors. See Figure 2.

## 4. Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation in Public Sector

Various dimensions influencing strategy implementation in public sector includes amongst others organisational structure, organisational culture, people, communication, control, time and resources (Kihara, 2017; Olivier, 2015).

**Organisational structure:** Organisational structure has been regarded as one of the substantial internal strengths that persuade strategy implementation and improve organisational performance in public sector (Olivier, 2015). As a result, Limpopo Department of Health require a complete modified organisational structure and systems to enhance strategy implementation. Komingoi (2011) suggests that organisations in public sector should match the organisational structure with the chosen strategy in order to attain superior performance.

**Organisational culture:** People possess diverse beliefs, values, norms and standards that are deeply embedded with the organisation. Organisational culture as a dimension of strategy implementation in public sector has a persuasive effect on organisational "processes, employees and performance" (Alam & Islam, 2017). Thus, the culture needs to be aligned with the strategies, vision and values of the organisation (Olivier, 2015).



**People:** Human resources are essential dimension that steer strategy implementation in public and private sectors, and hence higher organisational performance (Kihara, 2017). The extensive training and development strategy of employees including leadership have to be consciously effected to support effective strategy implementation in public sector (Frank, 2014). However, the absence of employee involvement creates gradualness of strategy implementation as employees feel sidelined. Hence, teamwork has been perceived as a contributory dimension to attaining objectives of the organisation. This implies meeting the desires of the employees to the attainment of strategy implementation as a project.

**Communication:** Communication plays a significant role in disseminating information and knowledge in the process of strategy implementation. Therefore, regular and continuous communication becomes significant. Lack of communication strategy can be contemplated a possible reason that hamper proper strategy implementation in the public sector (Komingoi, 2011). For this reason, appropriate communication channels and strategies should be in place. These could include the use of e-mails, intranet, departmental newsletters, notice boards and so forth.

**Control:** The solid control of flow of information and financial resources has been vital in public sector environment. Therefore, leadership in public sector need to constrict control, maintain flexibility and capability of employees in strategy implementation. Ngcobo and Mdani (2015) suggest that the lack of ample control in public service had led to incurrence of the unauthorised, irregular and fruitless and wasteful expenditure. This has resulted to adverse effect on service delivery and performance of institutions in the public sector environment. Then, control of internal resources play a material role in ensuring effective implementation of strategies in public sector environment (Pablo *et al.*, 2007).

**Time:** Time has been contemplated another dimension that impede effective policy and strategy implementation in the public sector as senior managers "often spent their time garnering political favour and looking for their next position" (Frank, 2014). It has been declared scarce resource and thus an independent variable. Therefore the fulfilment of policy and strategy implementation depends much on time. At the same time, senior managers

in public sector should thus devote much time on implementing chosen strategies to ensure focus on service delivery.

**Resources:** Resources such as leadership's expertise and time devoted would be unceasingly necessitated to carry out any uncertainties that may arise during implementation process. Organisations in public sector encounter huge challenge in the process of strategy implementation which involves distribution of scarce resources, motivation of employees and politics (Alam & Islam, 2017). Ochiel *et al.* (2016) advocates that performance of public sector organisations are obstructed by shortage of resources. Frank (2014) contends that senior manager's lack of appropriate expertise hamper achievement of goals in the public service.

## 5. Tools and Techniques for Successful Strategy Implementation in Public Sector

The tools and techniques for effective strategy implementation in public sector include annual objectives, policies and functional strategies (Komingoi, 2011).

**Annual objectives:** Annual objectives are necessary for strategy implementation in public sector as they signify the means for distributing resources in various directorates (Komingoi, 2011). It enables senior managers in public sector to focus on set targets and measureable objectives.

**Policies:** Policies are required to direct the organisation in accomplishing its mandate resulting from short-term basis. Komingoi (2011) suggests that policies are there to "set boundaries, constraints and limits on the kind of administrative actions that can be taken to reward or sanction behaviour; they clarify what can and cannot be done in pursuit of the organisation's objectives". Formal policies and procedures enable senior managers to make reasonable decisions in order to attaining strategic objectives of the organisation (Kihara, 2017). The enhancement of strategy implementation in public sector depends on introducing a system that enforces proper policies and procedures execution (Olivier, 2015).

**Functional strategies:** Functional strategies are keys to regular activities that take place in every functional area within the organisation with the

view to successfully implement chosen strategies (Komingoi, 2011). These include, amongst others, directorates such as financial management, human resources, public relations and communications in the public sector.

## 6. Research Methods

This paper adopted a qualitative approach, exploratory design. The target population was 120 employees of the Limpopo Department of Health (LDoH) comprising of health professionals and middle managers. The target population was drawn from employees from Provincial Head Office, Mopani District Office and Mopani District Hospitals. Only Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors and Directors were selected to participate in the study. Further, a non-probability purposive sampling was employed. The sample size was 30 employees. A self-completion questionnaire was applied as a data collection method. The self-completion questionnaires were administered by means of drop and pick method. The preliminary questionnaires was pretested (piloted) amongst three employees of the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) in order to ascertain their opinions concerning question clarity and simplicity of answering (Creswell, 2015).

Data analysis and interpretation was conducted using IBM Statistical Packaging for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistics (Version 24). Furthermore, descriptive and inferential statistics was utilised to interpret the collected data. Cronbach's Alpha was used as a measure of internal consistency and the average inter-item correlation. The One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was also used for the significance of the difference between the research variables.

## 7. Findings and Discussion

Data interpreted and analysed was summed up in relation to research objectives of this paper and graphs was used to explicitly illustrate the findings. 30 self-completion questionnaires were distributed amongst the respondent's, appropriately completed and returned on time. Actually, this signifies the response rate of 100%.

### 7.1 Demographics

Personal information of respondents was required. This included respondent's name of directorate,

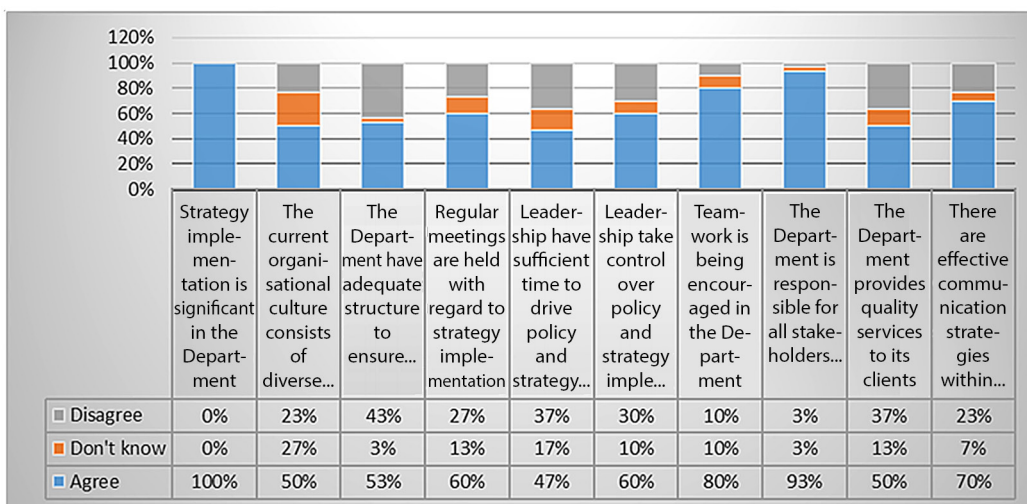
number of years in public service, gender, age, number of years in the Department, marital status, position, salary level, employment status and qualifications obtained. The findings revealed that out of 30 respondents, 23 were male and the remaining 07 respondents were female. Findings revealed that 46,7% of the respondents were aged between 36-45 years, 40% of the respondents were 46-55 years, 6,7% of the respondents were 56-65 and 6,7% of the respondents were 36-45 years. Findings also indicated that 40% of the respondents possess 11-20 years' experience in public service, 30% of the respondents have 21-30 years of experience, 20% of the respondents have 0-10 years of experience and 10% of the respondents have 31-40 years of experience. Further, the findings showed that 36,7% of the respondents have 0-10 years in the Limpopo Department of Health, 43,3% of the respondents have 11-20 years in the LDoH, 10% of the respondents have 21-30 years in the LDoH and other 10% of the respondents have 31-40 years in the LDoH. The findings also showed that 60% of the respondents were Assistant Directors, 33,3% of respondents were Deputy Directors and 6,7% of the respondents were Directors. Findings also indicated that 43,3% of the respondents were on salary level 9-10, 50% of the respondents were on salary level 11-12 and 6,7% of the respondents were on salary level 13-14.

### 7.2 Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health

The study sought to probe the senior management's perceptions with regard to strategy implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health. Various factors influencing strategy implementation in the department were explored. Figure 3 on the following page present the findings from empirical findings.

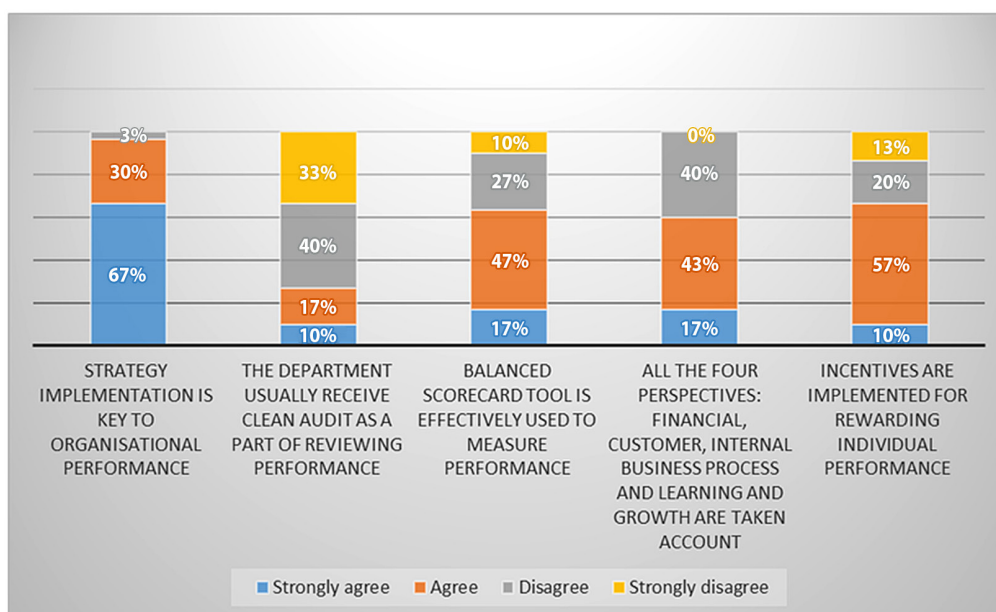
The entire respondents (100%) agreed that strategy implementation is significant in the department. On the question of the current organisational culture consists of the diverse environment, 50% of the respondents agreed, 27% don't know and while 23% disagreed. A majority of respondents (53%) agreed that the department have adequate structure to ensure proper strategy implementation, 3% don't know and while 43% disagreed. Further, a majority (60%) of the respondents agreed that regular meetings are held with regard to strategy implementation, 13% don't know and 27% disagreed. 47% of the respondents agreed that leadership have

**Figure 3: Factors Influencing Strategy Implementation in the LDoH**



Source: Authors

**Figure 4: The Effects of Strategy Implementation on the Overall Organisational Performance**



Source: Authors

sufficient time to drive policy and strategy implementation, 17% don't know and 37% disagreed.

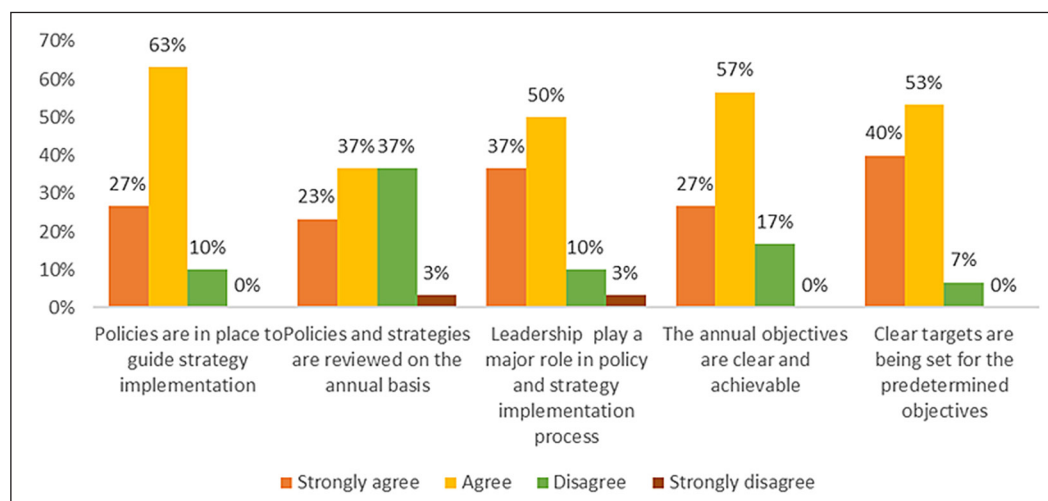
On the question of leadership take control over policy and strategy implementation, a majority (60%) of the respondents agreed, 10% don't know and 30% disagreed. Further, on the question of teamwork is being encourage in the department, a majority (80%) of the respondents agreed, 10% don't know and while 10% disagreed. 93% of the respondents agreed that the department is responsible for all stakeholders (both internal and external), 3% don't know and other 3% disagreed. 50% of the respondents agreed that the department provide

quality services to its clients, 13% don't know and 37% disagreed. The last question of determining whether there is effective communication strategies within the department, a majority (70%) of the respondents agreed, 7% don't know and 23% disagreed.

### 7.3 The Effects of Strategy Implementation on the Overall Organisational Performance

The study further investigated the effects of strategy implementation on the overall organisational performance. Therefore, Figure 4 above illustrates the results from empirical research.

**Figure 5: The Tools and Techniques that Can Assist Leadership in Ensuring Effective Strategy Implementation in the LDoH**



Source: Authors

On the first statement of strategy implementation is key to organisational performance, a majority (67%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 30% agreed and while 3% disagreed. Further, 10% of the respondents strongly agreed that the department usually receive clean audit as a part of reviewing performance, 17% agreed, 40% disagreed and 33% strongly disagreed. On the statement of balanced scorecard tool is effectively used to measure performance, 17% of the respondents strongly agreed, 47% agreed, 27% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. Only 17% of the respondents agreed that all the four perspectives: financial, customer, internal business process and learning and growth are taken account, a majority (43%) agreed and 40% disagreed. On the last statement of incentives are implemented for rewarding individual performance, 10% of the respondents strongly agreed, 57% agreed, 20% disagreed and 13% strongly disagreed.

#### 7.4 The Tools and Techniques that Can Assist Leadership in Ensuring Effective Strategy Implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health

The study further explored the tools and techniques that can assist leadership in ensuring effective strategy implementation in the Limpopo Department of Health. Figure 5 above depicts the findings from empirical study.

On the statement of whether policies are in place to guide strategy implementation in the department, 27% of the respondents strongly agreed,

63% agreed and 10% disagreed. Further, 23% of the respondents strongly agreed that policies and strategies are reviewed on the annual basis, 37% agreed, 37% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. On the statement of leadership play a major role in policy and strategy implementation process, 37% of the respondents strongly agreed, a majority (50%) of the respondents agreed, 10% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. 27% of the respondents strongly agreed that the annual objectives are clear and achievable, a majority (57%) agreed and 17% disagreed. Finally, 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that clear targets are being set for the predetermined objectives, a majority of 53% agreed and 7% disagreed.

### 8. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to explain the elements of a sample. Further, the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values for all scaled questioned was also computed and used in the explanation of the findings. The item-level responses are summated to scale level and the summary of statistics and frequency distribution are supplied in Table 1 on the next page.

### 9. Reliability and Validity

The internal consistency of the knowledge scale was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha and the average inter-item correlation. Cronbach's Alpha is used as a measure of internal consistency of similar elements consisting of scale (Bryman & Bell, 2015).



**Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics of Mean Knowledge Scores (N=30)**

		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
Factors influencing strategy implementation in the department of health	Assistant Director	18	14.5	4.579	1.079
	Deputy Director	10	16.5	5.359	1.695
	Director	2	22.5	2.121	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>5.066</b>	<b>0.925</b>
Tools and techniques that assist in ensuring successful strategy implementation in the department of health	Assistant Director	18	9.11	2.139	0.504
	Deputy Director	10	9.2	2.616	0.827
	Director	2	13	1.414	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>2.415</b>	<b>0.441</b>
The influence of strategy implementation on organisational performance in the department of health	Assistant Director	18	10.83	2.203	0.519
	Deputy Director	10	11.3	2.791	0.883
	Director	2	14.5	0.707	0.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11.23</b>	<b>2.473</b>	<b>0.452</b>

Source: Authors

**Table 2: Internal Consistency Reliability Values of Scales**

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Average Inter-Item Correlation</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>
Factors influencing strategy implementation in the department of health	0.847	0.384	9
The influence of strategy implementation on organizational performance in the department of health	0.584	0.208	5
Tools and techniques that assist in ensuring successful strategy implementation in the department of health	0.724	0.365	5
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0.879</b>	<b>0.279</b>	<b>19</b>

Source: Authors

These values are presented in Table 2 above.

The values of Cronbach's Alpha are acceptable for both scales if they are greater than the minimum acceptable value of 0.6 (Babin & Zikmund, 2015). However, the following scales can be interpreted:

- For a coefficient between 0.7 and 0.8, reliability is considered good.
- For a coefficient between 0.6 and 0.7, reliability is considered fair.
- For a coefficient below 0.6, reliability is considered poor.

Therefore, the value of the average inter-item correlation is greater than the minimum acceptable value

of 0.3 (Babin & Zikmund, 2015). The Cronbach's Alpha of this study is 0.879 and the average inter-item correlation is 0.279 which is the acceptance value of Cronbach's Alpha and average inter-item correlation.

## 10. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the success and survival of every organisation depends on proper implementation of the strategies. Hence, a remarkable organisational performance goes hand in hand with effective strategy implementation. Therefore, strategy implementation should be highly contemplated as it has an impact in the overall organisational performance. In addition, senior management of the Limpopo Department of Health should devote ample time to fruitfully disburse the scarce resources in order

to attain the strategic objectives of the organisation. Therefore, proper systems, processes and procedures should be in place in order to successfully drive the strategy implementation of the Department.

The paper concluded that leadership style applied by the organisation is very crucial for executing strategies. Thus, the balancing of both transactional and transformational leadership styles specifically in the Limpopo Department of Health should enable the Department to fast-track the strategy implementation processes. This involves engaging employees in decision-making process and responding to the desires of various stakeholders that is, both internal and external. In spite of that, the paper concluded that senior management of the Department should enforce policy and procedure implementation and also ensure compliance with those prescripts. This further entails reviewing policies and procedures on the annual basis to ensure smooth running of daily activities within the department.

This paper recommends that senior management should effectively document and operationalise tools and techniques for successful strategy implementation. This may include aspects such as annual objectives, policies and functional strategies of the Department. They should therefore link the strategies with the vision statement, mission statement, organisational structure, systems and organisational culture. Furthermore, senior management should devise strategies to adapt with the changes resulting from the external environments (i.e. macro-environments such as economic, social, political, ecological, legal and technological variables) because strategy implementation have been perceived a multifaceted, vigorous and ever-changing task. On the other hand, they should be capable of internally aligning resources with the strategies. Hence most of the government institutions are under-performing and lack remedial action.

The paper recommends that team-work need to be in place to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation of strategies in the Limpopo Department of Health and public service organisations at large. Therefore, the tight engagement of team members becomes pivotal to accelerate the execution process. It is further recommended that the competent, qualified senior management be appointed regardless of their political status so to ensure effective strategy implementation. The

reason being that they spend much time advancing in political activities and this leads to adverse impact on policy and strategy execution. Therefore, senior management in the public sector at large should learn from this study.

Senior management of the Limpopo Department of Health should provide full support to employees as the drivers of the strategy and policy implementation process. Thus, regular communication is essential to steer the process. This can be through meetings, mentoring, coaching, workshops, seminars and so forth. In addition, effective communication channels and strategies should be in place. This enables speedy policy and strategy execution. Furthermore, employees should be motivated by means of appropriate reward systems. This involves payment of incentives in the form of performance bonuses, and recognition by means of non-financial rewards such as awards, status and responsibility.

Subsequently, The Limpopo Department of Health should have a proper, adequate and effective organisational structure. This entails that vacant positions should be filled with the view to respond to strategy implementation challenges. Although resources to cater for that can be scarce, prioritisation becomes crucial. This implies that the Department should be able to furnish for financial, human, technological and physical resources in order to improve implementation process; and thus achieve superior performance by means of obtaining clean audits. This require earnestly devoted senior management who are ready to respond to the needs of various stakeholders including employees of the Department.

Finally, performance measurement is crucial for every organisation, for both public and private institutions. Thus, senior management should apply relevant tools and techniques to measure organisational performance within the Department. This involves gaining knowledge and insight in terms of assessing and evaluating performance using the four perspectives of balanced scorecard such as financial, customer, internal business processes and learning and growth.

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