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Leadership Strategy and Organizational Outcomes: A Review of Literature

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Abstract

This paper is research on leadership strategy and specifically scrutinizing the reasons why most organizations fail to successfully implement their strategic plans. To guarantee a successful organizational outcome, it is important to trace the paths others have walked, those who have succeeded as well as those that have not. And more important during this era and age of technology, could there be something new a leader needs to consider? Several literatures are on strategic leadership, but only very few looks at a strategy execution—leadership strategy. Leadership definition has been evolving, the need to a new approach to strategy implementation is therefore inevitable. A leader must therefore keenly take into consideration the different working environment that follows the dictates of modernism. Services like procurement, recruitment, performance evaluation are technologically driven in this age and era. Following these realities, a review of existing materials points to a new way of leadership strategy, one that seems to incline so much towards modern technology. It is evident that modern technology largely has a huge space in determining organizational outcomes. Leadership strategies are it for a new business or an existing one, for a large organization or small must therefore take into consideration these realities. This literature review has picked on critical aspects of what a leader does to plan and successfully execute the plan. While it could be considered as a new norm, the fact though is that using technology is age long only that the modern types are new inventions that have taken the centerstage. The COVID-19 pandemic has also not only brought about so much pain but has completely changed the way things are done. In a world where "lock-down", working from home and social distances seem to be the order of the day, a leader must therefore have new innovative ideas. As William Pollard once said, "Learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow." (Sinquefield, 2013).

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

An organization requires a framework of choices that determine their nature and direction (Freedman, 2003). This is the definition of strategy according to Freedman. Whereas it is almost correct to assert that formulating a strategic plan and implementing it are management functions, among all the things that managers do, few affect the organization's performance in a more lasting way than the way the management team handles the tasks of charting the organization's long-term direction through leadership to produce the intended results (Muthimi & Kilika, 2018). This partly explains why an organization may have a genuinely nice, well documented strategic plan but fail at execution. It requires leadership strategy.

The background of leadership strategy is best demonstrated in the Holy Bible's story of the young David the son of Jesse an Ephrathite who walked into a battlefield and bumped into a complex problem, one that no soldier was ready to tackle. The irony was that the King plus the soldiers came out in full combat outfit but were not willing to make a move—due to fear. Goliath, a three-meter-tall giant from the enemy camp, the Philistines, grew restless because no one from the camp of the Israelites was ready to come out and fight him. He repeatedly called them "cowards" because they offered no one to fight him. With a blasting voice that sent shivers among the Israelites he shouted, "this day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." (1 Samuel 17: 10 - 11). Young David upon hearing the giant's continued ridicule, took a risky venture to face him. David had not been part of the military squad before, therefore he had little knowledge on combat but with deep conviction he ended up being the one encouraging the King and the soldiers when he told them, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" (1 Samuel 17: 32). The result of his bold act—success! Such are the typical bold decision, leadership strategies, that a leader requires for an organization. A bold decisive move carefully thought out that will propel the organization to the next level.

Muthimi and Kilika (2018) in their work on "leadership strategy, behavioural focus and firm performance" advance a theoretical model that links leadership strategy, behavioural focus, and firm performance; we are now in a modern world where all these aspects may be relevant but then there seem to be a new dimension, where people and the use of technology seem to add an angle to the organizational outcome. What are these ideas brought about by "people and

technology" in determining the organizational outcome and are they effective? In an organization, there are three things that constitute the success of strategy implementation namely people, product, and process. These are like the proverbial African three-legged stool. The stool has three stands that all work together; you miss one and the other two are rendered functionless. When you talk about leadership strategy, you directly touch on systematic steps that an organization must follow to realize the vision. And as a leader, one must heavily put a lot of emphasis on these systematic approach to a plan, otherwise you run the risk of getting lost in the wilderness chasing fantasies with no sense of direction. In view of this and according to statement by Oginde (2020), this should be "modeled and reinforced systemically". Ideally it is on the premise of systematic approach that one can ensure the organization maintains focus on their vision making intentional steps on their leadership strategy. To create a strong leadership strategy, an organization should come up with a map that aligns investments in leadership development with the strategy, goals, and aspirations of the business (Center for Creative Leadership, 2020c). It is therefore important to understand that in the quest to have a strategy that will translate into the organization's success story, a leader ought to make explicit design plan on how to approach the strategy. This should include getting to know how to identify the type of leaders required, how many they should be, and where they are needed.

Strategy is key in leadership, and leadership strategy therefore is the meat behind excellence. Success of a strategic plan heavily depends on what the leader does, when and how. It is one thing to come up with a well thought out strategic plan, but it is another thing all together to hit the road running and realize that desired result. In this day and age, the aspect of using technology has taken a center stage in most decision making and therefore leadership strategy must not ignore this aspect. The use of technology in business, according to America's Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), "has taken a sudden but remarkable upsurge in the history of man" (SBDC, 2015).

According to Chandler (1962); Mintzberg (1987), "strategies are established to set direction, focus effort, define or clarify the organization, and provide consistency or guidance in response to the environment". Most scholarly material over a span of years seem to have maintained this definition. What then should be the focus attention of a leader in strategy implementation? How should leadership strategy, today refocus? An organization needs to have a plan that should consist of objectives, principles and tactics and this should incorporate new ways of doing things, faster ways of realizing results.

According to Cândido and Santos (2015) up to 50 to 90 percent of strategic initiatives fail, though they added that these figures are controversial. They sought to clear the air with facts from their research but ended up concluding that "the real rate of strategy implementation failure might be difficult to determine with certainty" (Cândido & Santos, 2015). Their conclusion then leaves us with a general term of "high failure" rate and therefore we use the 50 to 90 percent

which they quoted sources from Kiechel, Gray, Nutt, Kaplan, and Norton, Sirkin et al.

With the high failure rates noted, though controversial according to Cândido and Santos, the general view is that the rate often reaches as high as 90%. A look are probable causes to this, Cândido and Santos found out that "there are some 'types' of strategic initiatives that are easier to implement and succeed than others". Vermeulen (2017) on the other hand noted that "many strategy execution processes fail because the firm does not have something worth executing". There seem to be no university agreed cause as each scholar(s) have their view. But the common point is that the failures can be remarkably high. This paper takes cognizance of this fact and therefore tries to see whether using technology has added some element of success. New theories in technology, to address the gap could just be what organizations require. But this requires effective leadership. According to Center for Creative Leadership (2020a) "organizations succeed when leaders recognize the need to change *and* are able to implement changes effectively.

We no longer operate where one had to keep lots and lots of hard copy materials. The digital solution has offered file storage. There is no doubt that we live and work in a networked society (Castells & Cardoso, 2005), a file in Washington DC can be accessed in Nairobi just by a click of button. A church organization is networked across the globe and a business enterprises goes beyond just the geographical area of her physical address. The world over, we live in a networked society! While COVID-19 pandemic has caused most business to operate virtually due to social distancing, this trend was slowly and systematically being adapted across most companies. It is Maxwell (1993) who opines that "everything rises and falls on leadership," When Safaricom came up with the MPESA solution, the then CEO Michael Joseph is largely praised for the great revolution in the money transfer business that has caught up the entire world like born fire, little is said about the person who came up with this innovation. Leadership strategy gives organization the shape and the competitive advantage.

With success, there are always challenges along the way. The absence of a challenge should worry a leader, according to Wheatley (2006), "throughout the universe, order exists within disorder and disorder within order". Problem may just be the best opportunity for the organization to rise to the next level. Wheatley (2006) averred that "experienced managers try to determine if a problem is familiar or novel, and for familiar ones they can apply experience and learned procedures to determine the best course of action. However, failure to classify a problem accurately is likely to result in a poor decision on how to resolve it". Classifying a problem will help a leader know who to handle it and how.

According to Todeva (2006), "although social, political, technological and business networks hold our modern world together, we still lack a good understanding of what business networks are, and the language of network analysis that we may apply to solve our common everyday problems". If we can learn to

understand more accurately the patterns of networking and the dynamics of network relationships, "we can begin to tap their full potential for decision-making and for coordination of collective action" opines Todeva (2006). According to Yukl (2012) most leadership theories are "leader-centered, and they emphasize the influence of the leader on followers". That is why it is important to base this on a leadership theory one that result in followers feeling better, accomplishing more, and helping the organization prosper (Northouse, 2016). Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory, according to Northouse (2016) addresses leadership as a process centered on the interactions between leaders and followers. Lussier and Achua (2016) explain that leader-member exchange is one theory that examines how leaders influence member behaviours. Breukelen, Schyns and Le Blanc (2006) identified some LMX challenges in their work one of them being that there could be a "differential treatment on the part of the leader and perceptions of fairness and justice by followers". This notwithstanding the fact that leaders with high emotional intelligence are the ones who succeed. A research conducted among more than a million people, found that 90% of top performers are skilled at managing their emotions in times of stress in order to remain calm and in control. One of their greatest gifts is the ability to neutralize difficult people (Bradberry, 2016).

1.2. Problem Statement

A lot of literature on Leadership Strategy emphasises strong foundational background based on leadership as the main construct. Quite a number of materials are available on strategic leadership, but little focus has been put on leadership strategy. In fact, a search on "leadership strategy" returns more of strategic leadership, giving the impression that researchers have done a lot in the field of strategic leadership. The challenge therefore is, despite this strong emphasis on strategic leadership and with great strategic plans, how come strategic plan implementation failure rate remains high? According to some scholars this is as high as up to 90% failure as mentioned by Cândido and Santos (2015). Safari and Mazdeh (2018) citing research by Harvard Business School, put the failure rate to be between 60 and 90 percent. This could be on existing organizations/business or an already established organization. Deane (2022) digs even deeper to check at which stages these happens. Citing research done by Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Dean posit that "approximately 20% of new businesses fail during the first two years of being open, 45% during the first five years, and 65% during the first 10 years. Only 25% of new businesses make it to 15 years or more" (BLS Data, 2020). Therefore, while the pattern seems to cut across, be it on a beginning organization, midway, or even mature ones, evidently the failure rate is relatively high. But in this 21st century of a technology driven world, how can a leader effectively and apply technology to address high failure rates?

This document is a review of previous and current scholarly materials linking leadership strategy and organizational outcome. Materials include academic jour-

nals, information from company websites and relevant leadership books, with a view of drawing a new conceptual framework that has been pointed to work successfully. It is the general idea that theses will assist organizational leaders to have a better practice. The aspect of modern technology in an effort to improve efficiency has a key role in determining organizational outcome. Could this the solution? Technology use may have disrupted the way we work such as limiting physical interactions, confusion on which option works best but, even with these hurdles, society's attitude to technology seems to be drastically changing according to Fisher (2020) as most people are more readily embracing digital ways of doing everyday things—from online meetings while working at home to virtual schooling and doctor's appointments. Gone are the days when parents used to feel uncomfortable leaving phones in the hands of their children, online learning has just opened up that space.

With several options of technology use, organizations require innovative minds with innovative ideas though these according to Allio (2012), are hard to find; corporate planners are quite rare. Those who are "willing to detail the successes and failures of innovations in practice, the academics who do original field research aimed at helping executives perform and the consultants who are willing to expand the boundaries of knowledge by sharing their secret sauce" (Allio, 2012) are rare. This paper seeks to expand that space, by reviewing extant conceptual and theoretical literature on leadership strategy and its emerging phenomenon. On top of that, it is also to review the extant empirical literature on leadership strategies that will help in identifying emerging and conceptual theoretical and empirical gaps. The outcome of which proposes a suitable a theoretical model to guide scholars and future researchers. Morrison (2015) mentions that organizations must adapt to survive!

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Review

2.1. Methodology

The methodology was based on a systematic approach demonstrated by Figure 1.

Materials reviewed spans across over ten years from 2002 to 2021.

The aspect of leadership strategy is to successfully steer an organizational strategic plan in order to have a desired outcome. Strategic plan implementation therefore is the cord that defines a leader's ability to successfully navigate the organization. However, since most strategic plans fail, the few that are successfully implemented are what gives a leader great leverage. In Figure 2, a lot of materials reviewed were found to be in the year 2019, whether by mere coincidence or there is specific reason is not quite clear, but one thing that is for certain, is that most scholars do agree that the reason for a strategic plan failure is mainly due to the leadership. A leader who does not own the process or does not create a buy-in among his team is most likely not going to see the success of the organizations' strategic plan. A leadership strategy therefore must be intentional
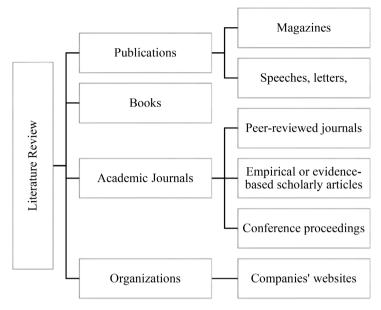
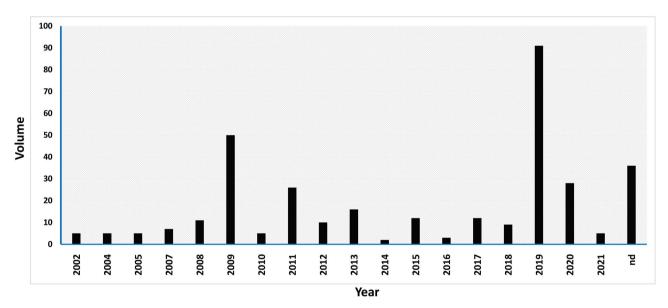**Figure 1.** Summary of the reviewed literature.

Figure 2. A graph of volume of materials on a yearly basis from 2002 to 2021.

in making sure that organization resources are on board.

Strategies fail, leaders stumble along the way and organization suffer. From the materials reviewed as shown in **Figure 2**, several scholars give varying reasons why strategic plans fail, but out of all these, what is common across most of them is lack of teamwork that also include being unable to co-ordinate and control resources (Gregory, 2007). Lack of consensus among decision makers, unsuitable resources allocation as well as competing activities among people (Köseoğlu, Baraca, & Karayormuk, 2009) are some of the common reasons. Kalali, Anvari, Pourezzat, and Dastjerdi (2011) too did point out that resource limitation, disharmony and improper management team are some of the reasons strategic plans fail. All these point at leadership. If a leader, you do not own the

strategic plan implementation then you are in for a disaster. Some leaders often give the role to other managers who may lack leadership drive and skills to motivate the others to do the assigned tasks efficiently and effectively. These are known to result into the failure.

The extant material on the probable causes of failure to successfully implement strategic plan as outlined in **Figure 3** are summarized in eight causes: 1) Luck of Teamwork; 2) Luck of Ownership; 3) Inadequate prior planning; 4) Unclear strategy; 5) Poor Communication; 6) Unforeseen Internal/External disruption; 7) Not following the plan; 8) Inadequate Market research. While some materials from the likes of Dalum (2019) have argued that lack of resources is one of the main causes, this is mainly categorized under "Inadequate prior planning" or "Lack of teamwork" depending on the argument. It is Kerubo (2019) who best put the aspect of resources "strategic resource allocation"—in other words, an organization should strategically allocate their resources. Cândido and Santos (2019) looked at it even wider that limited available resources, committed resources in past decisions, withdrawal of resources are one of the reasons. Luck of teamwork is one key top factor identified, Haas and Mortensen (2016) opine that manager can achieve big returns focusing on the following factors for their team: give the team a compelling direction, this will energize, orient, and engage the members. Also, a leader should ensure the team operates within a strong structure and with the right support from the management. And in order to avoid a situation of "us versus them" it is important to establish a working environment of Shared mindset (Haas & Mortensen, 2016).

With the summary of eight reasons why it is highly likely to fail, a new dimension to address these gaps and to help leaders is the use of modern technology. While using technology in business has taken a sudden but remarkable upsurge in the history of mankind, leaders should also not ignore the fact that it is apparent
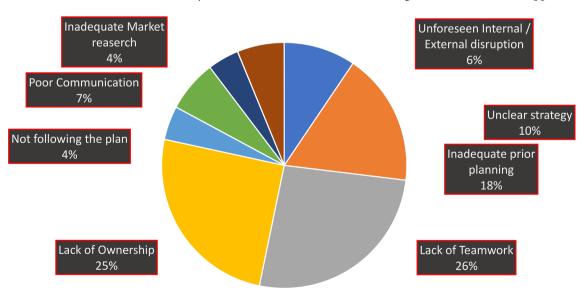

Figure 3. Causes of strategic plan implementation failures as summarized from materials sampled from 2002 to 2021.

that this has also caused some degree of disruption. Chidress (2017) opines that "leadership can't be taught, but it can be learned!" and therefore the findings in this paper are meant to exactly create that—a learning how it can be done better. A leader therefore must understand that in this modern world, there is so much pressure on the need to stand out. By focusing their attention outside themselves, and developing their ability to listen, respect all people, and empathize, leaders will be well-equipped to inclusively lead the way through these times and the times ahead" (Chidress, 2017).

Since the use of technology seems to have come in handy, it is important to trace the roots of leadership strategy so as to link these together. According to Yukl (2012), "opportunity of top executives to exert strong influence on the performance of an organization is greater for some situations than for others. It depends in part on the success of the organization's current strategies. Leadership strategies therefore need to be embedded within in order to build capacity as well as getting the tasks completed. The works of Pasmore (2015) and Muthimi and Kilika (2018), suggest five components of leadership strategies that are critical for any organization, these are: i) the quantity of leaders needed, as indicated by current and projected formal leadership positions depicted on an organization chart (number, level, location, function, business unit, reporting relationships, etc.); ii) the qualities desired in selection (demographics, diversity, background, experience level); iii) the skills and behavior that are needed to implement the business strategy and create the desired culture (skills, competencies, knowledge base); iv) the collective leadership capabilities of leaders acting together in groups and across boundaries to implement strategies, solve problems, respond to threats, adapt to change, support innovation, etc.; v) the desired leadership culture, including the leadership practices in use, such as collaboration across boundaries, engagement of employees, accepting responsibility for outcomes, creating opportunities for others to lead, developing other leaders, learning how to learn, etc.

According to Goleman (2013) the "primary task of leadership is to direct attention. To do so, leaders must learn to focus their own attention". A leader operates in an environment, there are distractors as well as great ideas—visible and hidden. Therefore, a leader should know how to filter the right information out of the maze. Goleman (2013) puts this focus into three categories: i) focusing on yourself; ii) focusing on others, and iii) focusing on the wider world. He calls it a triad awareness. "Focusing inward and focusing constructively on others helps leaders cultivate the primary elements of emotional intelligence. Once you handle your inward well the focus on others becomes easy; people with personal hurdles tend to spew it on others. Focusing constructively on others according to Turbiville (2020) will attract and retain top talent in your organization. In order to get the best for the organization, a leader must be people-focused, coaching-centered, and performance-driven (Turbiville, 2020).

A critical component of leadership strategy is to prepare the organization to

prepare a new team to takeover leadership roles so as to continue to expand the strategic reach. Leaders with the following quality of a leader (Center for Creative Leadership, 2021): 1) Integrity; 2) Ability to delegate; 3) Communication; 4) Self-awareness; 5) Gratitude; 6) Learning agility; 7) Influence; 8) Empathy; 9) Courage; 10) Respect. Kouzes and Posner (2017: p. 39) point out that people often want someone whose direction they would willingly follow one who honest, competent, inspiring, and forward-looking. Andrews (2018) on his part identifies seven qualities that a great leader should have as 1) Vision; 2) Courage; 3) Integrity; 4) Humility; 5) Strategic planning; 6) Focus; 7) Cooperation.

Culture of a leader is another aspect that an organization must tap into. According to Centre for Creative Leadership (2020b) leadership culture is the self-reinforcing web of beliefs, practices, patterns, and behaviors. Yukl (2012) aver that effectiveness of specific leader behaviors should include task-oriented behaviors; this is to ensure that people, equipment, and other resources are used in an efficient way to accomplish the mission of a group or organization. The culture should be embedded in people's minds. There are 3 types of leadership culture and their impact on your business according to Center for Creative Leadership (2020b) namely i) Dependent leadership cultures operate with the belief that people in authority are responsible for leadership; ii) Independent leadership cultures operate with the belief that leadership emerges out of individual expertise and heroic action; iii) Interdependent leadership cultures operate with the belief that leadership is *a collective activity* to the benefit of the organization as a whole. The aspect of a culture therefore requires a leader to create a climate of psychological safety and mutual trust. The leader can do this by encouraging members of the team or organization to suggest novel ideas.

The use of technology in leadership, Dimitrios, Sakas and Vlachos (2013: p. 280) did an "analysis of strategic leadership simulation models in non-profit organizations, they came to a conclusion that the past strategic management literature and research in dynamic simulation have provided evidence that several other factors besides leadership, such as organizational culture, R&D strategy, business environment and structure are related to firm performance, therefore their combined impact should be investigated in future studies". Aldawood and Skinner (2020) have noted that "with the changing landscape in the operation of businesses, digitalization is a must for most sectors and nearly all organizations".

While several organizations are working hard to implement technology but there is the threat of insecurity on the information going out there. This has called for cyber security which is also another very lucrative business angle in as much it offers very crucial protection to the organization. The impact of user awareness in managing cyber security incidents (Aldawood & Skinner, 2020) is crucial not just for an organization but even with individual users.

Technology is the substratum of making things move. When you are doing procurement, you need to track the process till the final stages; financial performance equally is the same; employee appraisal is best done using modern tech-

nology. But then, technology management takes place in a complex environment (Van der Hoven, Probert, Phaal, & Goffin, 2012: p. 32). Wreder (2008) sought to "contribute with understanding about how organizations can create good work environment". Werder's foci were on "two important aspects of contemporary organizations and working life, leadership and technology, and how these aspects can influence the working conditions" (Wreder, 2008). In his findings he made critical recommendations that could help to achieve maximum results while using ICT. These include: the need to clarify the purpose of the ICT and in particular describe the positive effects that it may bring to the employees and to the patients they are responsible for. "Adapt the ICT to the needs, capacity and competence of the users. The intended users should be involved as early as possible in the development of the applications and the workplace it is to be used in. Make sure the ICT functions as intended before it is introduced to the users. In case of problems, users should have easy access to fast support. Make sure that the changes in organization, structures, routines and resource needs that the new ICT necessitates the organization are adapted to the needs of the users" (Wreder, 2008).

Raman and Shariff (2017: p. 88) investigated "the relationship between technology leadership, ICT facility, competency, commitments and teachers practices on implementations with effective teacher's management tasks in schools". According to their research findings they concluded that "school leaders play a key role in ICT integration in schools. Leadership that practices high technology leadership features will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of ICT integration within the organization. The findings show that there is a significant relationship between technology leadership and the perception of the effectiveness of teacher management tasks in school".

Virtual meetings like conducting group Bible study have been made popular during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the impact of zoom meeting is still an area that requires further research in order to assess the impact. In this modern world where technology has taken a center stage "digital technology has changed organizations in an irreversible way" (Cortellazzo, Bruni, & Zampieri, 2019: p. 12).

2.2. Organizational Outcomes

An organization outcome has a framework of five major dimensions: Financial, Market, Process, People, and Future (Maltz, Shenhar, & Merino, 2003). They add that Balance Score Card (BSC) to the list of these and state that it "is one of the most popular new frameworks" (Maltz et al., 2003). Organizational outcomes can be enhanced by a 'strong culture' one that is consistent or integrated in the organization's mission, goals, members' beliefs, values, and behavioral practices. When an organization's workforce adopts a culture that positively impacts their deliveries, then it is inherent that the type of service/products will take cue. In addition to this, citing Ingram and Baum, Wright (2015) posited

that organizational outcomes depend on competitors' actions.

A leader's contribution to the organization is what essentially drives the outcome. According to Emmerling, Canboy, Serlavos and Batista-Foguet (2015), "research on job performance has demonstrated that job performance varies as a function of job complexity such that the more complex the job, the more performance variability there will be among individuals holding that job". Leaders often have to deal with multiple levels of complexity and Granucci (2015) quoting Benjamin Franklin's statement that "if you want something done, ask a busy person." To a large extent this is what shapes a leader into high performer.

2.3. Organizational Capability

Grant (1999) defines organizational capabilities as a firm's ability to perform repeatedly a productive task which relates either directly or indirectly to a firm's capacity for creating value through effecting the transformation of inputs into outputs. These are "the collective skills, expertise, and alignment of the people in your company" (Hawkins, 2016). Muthimi and Kilika (2018) opine that leadership strategy has its place in strategic management through the process of strategy implementation and that has been argued to play a key role in implementing a firm's business strategy. Hawkins (2016) explained that "competencies tend to be at an individual level while capabilities span across an organization. Organization capabilities are critical yet intangible assets that cannot be duplicated. These are all realized by great leadership, "everything rises and falls on leadership" (Maxwell, 1993). The importance of organizational capabilities, and their link with a firms competitive positioning have not only been documented and stressed in academic literature (Dosi, Nelson, & Winter, 2001), but also in business reports (Gryger, Saar, & Schaar, 2010). "It is generally agreed that capabilities operate quite differently and result in varying levels of competitive advantage and firm performance based on a number of internal and external factors" (Drnevich & Croson, 2013; Hoopes & Madsen, 2008).

2.4. Organizational Performance

According to Richard, Devinney, Yip and Johnson (2009), organizational performance encompasses three specific areas of firm outcomes: 1) financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.); 2) product market performance (sales, market share, etc.); and 3) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.). The concept of performance, according to Elena-Juliana and Maria (2016: p. 182) define more the idea of outcome, achieved goal, quality, and less the economic aspects of efficiency and effectiveness.

Sokolova and Lapalme (2009: p. 431), did a "systematic analysis of performance measures for classification tasks". In the study they analyzed twenty-four performance measures used in the complete spectrum of Machine Learning classification tasks: binary, multi-class, multi-labelled, and hierarchical". The result

is the measure invariance taxonomy with respect to all relevant label distribution changes in a classification problem. Just like in the case of Machine Language by Sokolova and Lapalme (2009), Kenny (2020) proposes critical approach that "a company should structure its key performance indicators around key stakeholder groups, such as customers, employees, suppliers, regulators, funding sources, and the communities in which they operate Thus with the advent of several technology solution, "when a manager can accurately measure his organization's performance, he is able to identify deficiencies in the organization and correct them" according to LaMarco (2019).

2.5. Emerging Conceptual Issues

Information is an increment in knowledge: it contributes to the general framework of concepts and facts that we know (Joshi, n.d.). Leaders are embracing the use of information technology but there are emerging conceptual issues like cyber securities, data protection as well as "fake information". What constitutes reliable information source is also emerging as a critical issue to address.

Leaders are inventing various means of mitigating problems and addressing them; however, it is quite unlikely that new invention will shift the theories of leadership. What is coming up as a new norm is the fact that innovative ideas blend into already existing structures; just like a tree with a budding branch, leadership strategies will equally bud out of a branch. COVID-19 pandemic has created a complete change in basic assumptions for most organization. Working from home made a huge demand on internet connectivity, the emergence of modern technologies like 5G, Artificial Intelligence coupled with globalization have all contributed immensely to emerging conceptual issues such as virtual team management. In the development of virtual teams, the role of the chosen leader is to simultaneously work in the development of these individuals so as to form a cohesive work unit with competences of self-management (Aziri, Mazllami, & Sulejmani, 2016).

2.6. LMX Theory

It is important to identify with the members of the organization in order for the leader to realize success. Amabile and Khaire (2008) support this by stating that "the first priority of leadership is to engage the right people, at the right times, to the right degree in creative work". That way they will align al their effort towards ensuring success. The leadership theory that closely relates to this is Leader–member exchange (LMX) theory. According to Northouse (2016) LMX theory "conceptualizes leadership as a process that is centered on the interactions between leaders and followers. The choice of LMX theory is because of its uniqueness since it is the only leadership approach that makes the concept of the dyadic relationship. And having identified lack of teamwork as a key contributor for strategic plan implementation failure, it is crucial to apply a dyadic relationship among the members of the organization.

2.7. Pasmore Model Theory

According to Pasmore (2015), "Organizations succeed when leaders recognize the need to change and are able to implement changes effectively". Pasmore at the same time paints the picture that it is quite unfortunate in as much as "knowing that change is needed, picking the right changes does not guarantee success in making it happen. Failing at change is all too common" (Pasmore, 2015). In other words, it is one thing to decide on change idea but is quite common that change initiatives often fail. Only good leadership strategy will guarantee successful change program. Thus, once the leader has bought the idea for a need to change and rallies the organization towards that course, then the chances of the change initiative being successful are more or less guaranteed.

Pasmore (2015) has explained three stages that I have equally found to be very practical: discovering, deciding, and then doing. Discovering: The objective of discovering is to identify viable opportunities for change. Thereafter, decisions can be made about which ones to pursue. When it comes to the next stage, the Deciding stage; Pasmore (2015) gives a nice illustration of an Olympic athlete focusing on one sport as he/she competes against the world's best of bests. This, opines Pasmore, is the reason a leader equally needs to focus on something, one crucial one and not to end up wanting to do everything. Once you make focus on a narrowed idea, resources put in place, and right team on board, then it is the leader who should ensure he/she rallies the team on his/her idea. The Doing stage is the actual step of ensuring the strategy is put on the road. The objective of Doing, according to Pasmore (2015) is to engage the organization in executing the change strategy.

2.8. Resource-Based View (RBV)

Rothaermel (2012) defines resource-based view (RBV) as "a model that sees resources as key to superior firm performance". The resource-based view (RBV) of the organisation is a strategy for achieving competitive advantage. The core idea of the theory is that instead of looking at the competitive business environment to get a niche in the market or an edge over competition and threats, the organisation should instead look within at the resources and potential it already has available.

RBV is an approach to achieving competitive advantage that emerged in 1980s and 1990s, after the major works published by Wernerfelt, B. ("The Resource-Based View of the Firm"), Hamel and Prahalad (2005) "The Core Competence of The Corporation", Barney, J. ("Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage") and others. The supporters of this view argue that organizations should look inside the company to find the sources of competitive advantage instead of looking at competitive environment for it.

In order to realize a successful execution of strategic plan, a leader's strategy should include "performing a resource gap analysis (O'Farrell, 2019). This is how an organization is able to realize and effectively tap into their resources and

"those resources needed to achieve its goals" (O'Farrell, 2019). Making this effectively or rather doing this efficiently puts an organization in a competitive advantage. This, according to Smith (2020) is realized by a four-question framework of value, rarity, imitability, and organization (VRIO). It is used to uncover "sustained competitive advantage." In order for a leader to realize leadership strategy implementation, it should be well understood that human beings above all tangible assets, are the most valuable. Therefore, for the organization to realize a competitive advantage, the organizations should strategically ensure that there is adequate investment on making appropriate VRIO analysis.

This is an era where social media is struggling to integrate with consumerism and mobile phones primarily being used for "casual" pursuits by the general public rather than "business," "work" or "commerce" applications (Broberg, 2013). It is no longer the struggle of social media casually being used but rather business venture has found significant use in the social media environment. In this regard and according to the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2020 report (UN ESCAP, 2020), the world is on a transition towards cleaner production and less material-intensive lifestyles supported by enabling policies which is realized by the use of modern technologies coupled with clear policies and guidelines. The same should be the rallying call for the continent of Africa as well. In Kenya, for instance, the UN ESCAP (2020) report, indicates that "the economic outlook is moderately positive. Structural and skills gaps are addressed though the leadership strategy call.

2.9. BSC Model

An organization outcome has a framework of five major dimensions: Financial, Market, Process, People, and Future according to Maltz, Shenhar and Merino (2003). They also add new dimension of Balance Score Card (BSC) to the list of these and state that it "is one of the most popular new frameworks" (Maltz et al., 2003). The measures should be balanced between areas of expertise, perspectives, and time horizons and allow both effective implementation and continuous validation of the relevance of the whole action plan given the evolution of the competitive environment. Budgeting and processes of anticipation link, therefore, directly to the area of management now commonly described as the Balanced Score Card.

According to Kaplan and Norton (1992) a balanced score card (BSC), is "what you measure is what you get. Senior executives understand that their organization's measurement system strongly affects the behavior of managers and employees. Executives also understand that traditional financial accounting measures like return-on-investment and earnings-per-share can give misleading signals for continuous improvement and innovation—activities today's competitive environment demands. The traditional financial performance measures worked well for the industrial era, but they are out of step with the skills and competencies companies are trying to master today".

2.10. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology—UTAUT is a technology acceptance model formulated by Venkatesh and others in "User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified view" (Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003: p. 425). The UTAUT aims to explain user intentions to use an information system and subsequent usage behavior. The theory holds that there are four key constructs: "Performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI) and facilitating conditions (FC)" (Venkatesh et al., 2003). But then how does a leader apply UTAUT? Or rather how should leadership strategy find UTAUT useful?

Every customer's expectation is to have a product that meets a specific need. If it is a dress then it must be fashioned and tailored to the desire of the purchaser; likewise, if it is organization's security system then it must be equally known to be meeting the specifications as outlined at the design stage—something that should guarantee the safety of the organization's critical information as well as protection of consumers. Companies are using online payment methods such as Paypal, Amazon Pay, Google Pay, American Express, Apple Pay, Stripe, Square, Visa Checkout, among others. These online payment modes if not secured properly are quite risky and leave the consumer in a vulnerable situation. Therefore, performance expectancy will be what guides all these. At the same time, one has to at least put some effort in order to realize this big dream and then how is this solution going to socially impact the people around. These require, ultimately a favorable and facilitating condition in order to thrive.

2.11. Emerging Theoretical Issues

According to Worley and Feyerhem (2003) "not long after the call for papers went out, reported that the field has become so fragmented that its very relevance is in question. For years we have been hearing about the field's death, but the erosion of the value base has become of" "increasing concern. In a systematic study of theories in use by organizational development practitioners" (Piotrowski, Vodanovich, & Armstrong, 2001) "found that organizational development practitioners are primarily eclectic and rely on old well-known theories from a multitude of social science disciplines. This two-pointed attack of value drift and theoretical disorientation seriously erodes OD's credibility and must be addressed".

According to Lee (2014), talks of an "adapt or die" scenario, saying: "You have no choice but to operate in a world shaped by globalization and the information revolution." What is familiar in most organization especially when the organization tries to manage cost by attempting to reduce workforce are familiar terms such as "downsizing, rightsizing, outsourcing, reorganization, and reengineering". Lee (2014) posits that "reduction strategies that are strategically planned to increase the strength of the organization reflect the current everchanging busi-

ness environment and are encouraging the creation of more virtual work environments". Successful virtual project management is becoming more important and necessary in managing virtual human resources.

Martinelli, Waddell and Rahschulte (2017) posit that the reasons "why the pace of transformation to the new virtual project paradigm seem to be accelerating are because the transformation to virtual projects is testing the viability of many traditional project management practices and methodologies". This is crucial because there is the danger of ending up with a stalled or mis-managed project altogether. Martinelli et al. (2017) mention that "in 2009, the Economist Intelligence Unit, an organization that provides executives with practical business information on macroeconomics, conducted a survey of executives to evaluate the extent to which companies in Europe are using virtual teams. The survey included 407 firms from various industries with annual revenues of greater than $ 100 million. Of the survey participants, 78% indicated that they use virtual teams in their firms. The survey authors concluded that working in virtual teams is growing and that the majority of the business executives surveyed are positive regarding their use of virtual teams to perform the work of their firms. The authors also indicated that the use of virtual teams has enabled these firms to gain access to a global talent pool and has been a factor in improving their organizations' performance against their competitors. The advent of technology thus has created new approach and thus given new meanings to the existing theories.

Careful research study is therefore to be undertaken in order to capture this new paradigm.

Virtual Leadership is among the list of the most interesting topics in the study of leadership. The increasing practices of this form of leadership without a doubt create issues and complexities as regards the effectiveness of leading an organization. Traditionally close personal interaction has dominated as the only way to lead and cooperate with followers, however, internet and the emerging of communication tools that come with it, organizations nowadays are becoming dispersed. Recent research exclusively focuses on understanding how leadership evolves in meeting the demand of the businesses. Some like to believe that virtual leadership is simpler, efficient, and maybe even less expensive. Whereas the other group argues that it makes leadership more complex than the traditional leadership we all know. To understand the basic idea behind the concept of virtual leaders, it is essential that you first get a grasp of idea of what distinguishes the virtual leader from that of a traditional leader, who in essence functions in a shared room or environment with his team members.

Virtual team interaction occurs across the boundaries of geography, time, culture, organizational affiliation, and a whole host of other factors (Zigurs, 2003). In the development of virtual teams, the role of the chosen leader is to simultaneously work in the development of these individuals so as to form a cohesive work unit with competences of self-management. To achieve this, virtual leaders are required to invest time in orienting their team in one common goal

and shaping the mutual perceptions of the team mission. And then, once the required setting is formed, two leadership functions arise: performance management and team development (Hunsaker & Hunsaker, 2008). Another source claims that there are three roles in virtual leadership that stand alone from all the rest: the team liaison who is accountable for interpreting team events; the direction setter who guarantees that all activities have an identified purpose that is in line with the team's overall goal; and the third one is the operational coordinator role, which contains developing the right assets to challenge problems or tasks.

Communicating to the team in a strategic way improves their drive to act. "There's a famous experiment called the Xerox Study" (Osman, 2014) that was conducted back in the late 1970s. The idea was to discover if there was a best method for cutting in front of people who were waiting in line to use the photocopy machine. Three requests were used (with different people at different times): 1) "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine, because I'm in a rush?" 2) "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?" 3) "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine, because I have to make copies?"

According to Osman (2014), "the first request got a compliance rate of 94%. In other words, nearly everyone who was asked that question agreed to let the person use the photocopy machine ahead of them, maybe because they sympathized with the person who was in a rush. The second request got a 60% rate of compliance. This decrease in compliance was probably because the person who made the request didn't give a reason. The third request got a rate of 93%, nearly as much as the first. However, there is something unusual about that third request". What Osman (2014) notes is that "it wasn't the reason that mattered in influencing people, but the use of the single word because that did". Therefore, in order to effectively communicate with people giving reason as to why you are suggesting/proposing or instructing them to take such an action improves their drive to act.

Great ideas should result to even better ideas; technology innovation has been great; it is now time a leader takes a fresh look of how to make excellent use for this concept.

3. Review of Empirical Literature

Finding knowledge on this subject can be daunting task, it is through "conjecture, opinion, rational argument or anything belonging to the metaphysical or abstract realm" but in more specific contexts, the plural form is through empirical research. That is what this paper is all about; through a systematic review examining available literature on past empirical studies related to leadership strategies in answering gaps of strategic plan failures. Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs and Fleishman (2000) assert that effective leaders should be capable of solving complex social problems that arise in organizations. This ideally acknowledges the fact that there are problems in organizations some of which are

complex in nature. Whenever things are orderly and flowing well, be guaranteed there will be a moment of disruption; but as Wheatley (2006) puts it, "order exists within disorder and disorder within order". It is therefore imperative that as a leader the role is to bring some order in an environment where disorder is. This is the whole idea of this paper, trying to document order where disorder has thrived.

3.1. The Leadership Strategy

Organizations that are admired by most people tend to have some commonalities in terms of their capabilities. But these capabilities can neither be seen nor be touched, yet they can make all the difference in the world when it comes to market value argues Smallwood and Ulrich (2004).

What exactly are organizational capabilities? The definition by Salah (2017) breaks it down quite well; organizational capabilities are the unique combination of skills, processes, technologies, and human abilities that differentiate a company. On their part, Nayeemunnisa and Gomathi (2020) aver that these are the firm's ability to manage its resources effectively.

According to Shaligram (2014) capabilities can be sorted into three categories, depending on the orientation and focus of the defining processes. At one end of the spectrum are: 1) those that are deployed from the inside out and activated by market requirements, competitive challenges, and external opportunities. Examples are manufacturing and other transformation activities, logistics, and human resource management, including recruiting, training, and motivating employees; 2) those capabilities whose focal point are almost exclusively outside the organization. The purpose of these outside-in capabilities is to connect the processes that define the other organizational capabilities to the external environment and enable the business to compete by anticipating market requirements ahead of competitors and creating durable relationships with customers, channel members, and suppliers; 3) Spanning capabilities are needed to integrate the inside-out and outside-in capabilities. Strategy development, new product/service development, price setting, purchasing, and customer order fulfillment are critical activities that must be informed by both external (outside-in) and internal (inside-out) analyses, citing Day 1994 (Shaligram, 2014).

3.2. The Application of Technology

The use of technology in leadership strategy as a contributing factor on organizational outcome moves in a rather unfamiliar territory in leadership theory. And due to this it has come along with some ethical issues. Malcolm (2017) posit that leaders face a daunting task of keeping current with potential ethical issues that can impact their job and workforce on a daily basis while also juggling a variety of leadership styles that can clash with other leaders and subordinates. But even with this backdrop, it is apparent that technology has huge gains and a lot of scholarly materials have been produced to this effect.

One such area is the application of technology in schools and Tan (2010) found out that school technology leadership is a strong predictor of the level of technology use in schools. Leaders' strategy therefore needs emphasis on the position of technology in ensuring a secure future. This is often drive by the power of innovation, innovative minds are what will cause the firm to be outstanding. In this regard and according to Mano, Thoyib, Maskie and Djumahir (2014: p. 30) the application of information technology has a significant effect on leader innovation. The tech world as famously know, has platforms that are rich not just in accessing information but also with good speed. It is possible to purchase an item on the shelves somewhere in New York right at the comfort of your house in Nairobi. Mano et al. (2014: p. 30) focus may have been in schools but ideally the experience cuts across several industries.

On their part, Connally and Morris (2017) focused on the impact of emerging technologies on leadership development. Their findings were that "while technology disruption will continue to outpace technology adoption, organizational leaders must identify strategic ways to integrate technology advancements into leadership development". One of those strategic ways is to lay a lot of emphasis on leadership strategies. Connally and Morris (2017) allude to the fact that learner-centric and leader-centric approaches will enable organizations to withstand some shifts in workforce demographics. This is the way to go.

3.3. Organizational Outcomes

A remarkably interesting view was advanced by Thompson (1956) that "despite differences in interpersonal abilities and behavior, operations executives held dominant positions". This was power, then! It was lethal and concentrated in one center—the leader. Ideas were only meant to come from the leader. The more abrasive the leader was with that idea the higher the chances of getting the results translating into a guaranteed better organizational outcome. However, as the world advanced, things changed and according to Smelser and Baltes (2001), gone is the idea of a supreme authority that determines organizational outcomes, whether they are 'legitimate' goals or subtle forms of domination. Instead, "a network of power relations or discourses captures the advantaged and disadvantaged alike" great ideas are no longer domiciled in one corner of the organization but rather these are spread across. You can easily pick great ideas right at the front office!

Fast forward and enters the modern age, Aurik, Anscombe and Jonk (2018) suggest the use of technology as a critical aspect. In this regard they suggest three principles to the application of modern technologies to boost organizational performance and augment leadership. The principles are: 1) Human centric using technology to boost human qualities of ingenuity, judgment, contextualization, creativity, and social interaction; 2) Full circle—To fulfil strategy, people must be able to effectively work together, and their experiences must be captured to create a source of shared learning that improves future efforts. 3) Follower-

ship—as leadership becomes more distributed, it morphs from the idea of a wise group at the top guiding willing minions, to a broad group of leaders in a collective enterprise (Aurik et al., 2018). The gap of all these still lies in the execution, it is like the cycle could be repeating itself. While things seem to have eased, it is inherent that the aspect of execution is still not fully explored.

3.4. Summary of Emerging Research Gaps

Cascio and Montealegre (2016) aver that we live in a global world where technology, especially information and communication technology, is changing the manner in which businesses create and capture value, how and where we work, and how we interact and communicate. Cascio and Montealegre (2016) considered five technologies that are transforming the very foundations of global business and the organizations that drive it to be as follows: cloud and mobile computing, big data and machine learning, sensors and intelligent manufacturing, advanced robotics and drones, and clean-energy technologies. These technologies are not just helping people to do things better and faster, but they are enabling profound changes in the ways that work is done in organizations. Given these rapid advances and the increased reliance on technology, one would expect that the strategic plan implementation failure rates would drastically reduce but then what exactly is the reason we still have the gaps? This article is an attempt to interrogate bot the leadership strategies and technology applications with a view of addressing the gap of high failure rates in strategic plans.

4. The Conceptual Framework (Variables on Leadership Strategies and Organizational Outcomes)

In Figure 4, line (1) Leadership strategies, is the cornerstone and it is the engine that drives successful implementations. According to Arians (2017) "the most successful leaders at a worldwide level are those who understood just how much technology can aid them in managing people". Evidently technology has not only facilitated freedom to employees of working with ease but has also empowered leaders to manage from a distance. Line (2) the moderating role of the use of technology by a leader is arguably the key in ensuring a reliable organization outcome. The unique combination of skills, processes, technologies, and human abilities that differentiate a company has every aspect of a leader's view. Application of technology connected devices, Artificial intelligence, Secure cloud business solutions and social media are all avenues of making leadership strategy more focused towards the vision. The organizational capabilities are the link between the strategy and organizational requirements the strategy demands (Kates & Galbraith, 2007). Line (3) The ultimate goal is to produce an outcome that addresses the society's needs so that a service can be provided to customers, through fostering purpose, deepening ownership, and enhancing visibility (Carucci, 2019). Line (4) The use of technology within an organization is so crucial in this modern world where the demand for efficiency, employee engagement
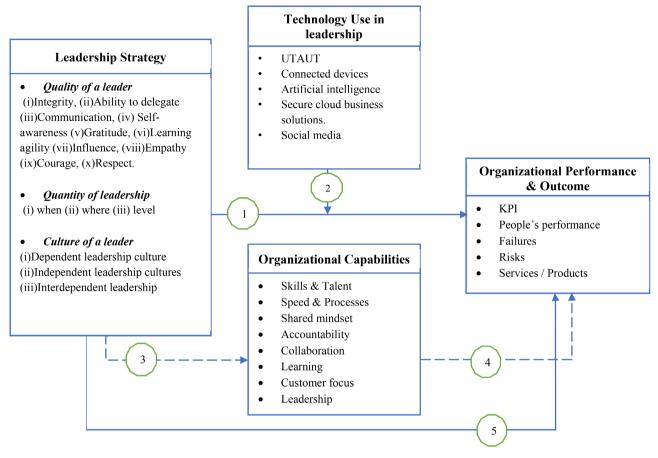
Figure 4. Diagram of variables.

and expanding the business is the determinant of the survival. This is what gives the guarantee of a better organization performance, line (5). It can only be a reality if all these reflect the organization capabilities which are built over a span of period.

Emerging Issues from the Reviewed Conceptual, Theoretical, and Empirical Literatures

Looking at various materials studied, what is coming out clear is that there are some great ideas and methods that have been applied by various leaders in order to come up with better organization outcome. What is not satisfactory addressed is why there still exists a huge failure rate as already seen. Despite various leadership theories being applied, what comes out as the crucial one is transformational leadership theory. Plus, to a significant extent there is LMX leadership theory that helps rally a team towards the goal.

Leadership strategies essentially require a new study dimension and especially within the hype of application of technology. Modern technology is a remarkable thing for any organization and as Sarokin (2019) puts it, "modern technology has had an amazing positive impact on business, from improving productivity, to opening new markets around the world for even the smallest of businesses, to

creating entirely new business models like Airbnb and Uber".

From emerging issues out of the empirical studies, advanced technology has its negatives as well, as over dependence on it can easily draw people away from physical interactions. However, while its negatives are there, a leader must carefully balance the gains vs the criticism. This study has carefully looked at leadership strategies and how technology should be applied to address the gap and what comes out clear is that the leadership style must go hand in hand with the type of technology application chosen.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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