A Retrospective Analysis of Strategic Management Practices in Local Government Authorities: Trends, Challenges, and Areas for Improvement

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Abstract

This study examines a retrospective analysis of the implementation processes of Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) in Local Government Authorities (LGAs) over the past decade. The study principally identifies trends, challenges, and areas for improvement in the implementation of SMPs in LGAs. A comprehensive review of literature and secondary data analysis of LGAs' strategic plans and performance reports were conducted. The findings revealed that LGAs have made significant progress in adopting SMPs, but challenges persist in implementing these practices effectively. The study identifies trends, including the increasing adoption of SMPs, the importance of leadership commitment, and the need for capacity building. Challenges include limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of stakeholder engagement. Areas for improvement include the need for more effective monitoring and evaluation, better stakeholder engagement, and more robust capacity building programs. The study concludes that SMPs are essential for improving the performance of LGAs, but their effective implementation requires addressing the identified challenges and areas for improvement.

1. Introduction
1.1 Background information

Strategic management is a deliberate and systematic process that enables organisations to assess their current position, evaluate alternative courses of action, and implement selected strategies to achieve future performance goals (Porter, 1980; Johnson et al., 2014). This process involves a trilogy of activities, namely, strategic analysis, strategic choice, and strategic implementation, allowing organisations to navigate complex environments, capitalize on opportunities, and mitigate threats (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Barney & Hesterly, 2012). By adopting a strategic management approach, organisations can enhance their competitiveness, achieve sustainable competitive advantage, and ultimately, drive long-term success (Hitt et al., 2012).

In today's rapidly changing global business environment, strategic management has become a crucial aspect of organisational success (Bartlett & Beamish, 2014). It provides a framework for organisations to analyze their position, evaluate alternative courses of action, and implement strategies to achieve future performance goals (Johnson et al., 2014). Strategic management is particularly relevant for organisations operating in emerging markets, where institutional voids and environmental uncertainties can pose significant challenges (Khanna & Palepu, 2010).

In the Asia-Pacific region, strategic management is crucial for organisations to navigate the complexities of the rapidly changing business environment. The region's growing economic importance, increasing globalisation, and technological advancements have created opportunities and challenges (Mathews, 2017). Strategic management is particularly relevant in Southeast Asia, where institutional weaknesses and environmental uncertainties pose significant challenges (Khanna & Palepu, 2010). However, the region's growing middle class and increasing consumer demand have created opportunities for innovative strategies and business models (Gupta et al., 2012).

In East Asia, strategic management is critical for organisations operating in countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea, where technological advancements and innovation drive economic growth (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). Strategic management enables organisations to navigate the complex business environment, build sustainable competitive advantage, and drive long-term success (Hitt et al., 2012). In response to regional trends and challenges, strategic management has evolved to incorporate new concepts such as digital strategy, innovation management, and ecosystem management (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). Strategic management remains a critical component of success for organisations in the Asia-Pacific region.

In Tanzania, strategic management is crucial for organisations to navigate the complexities of the country's business environment. The country's growing economy, increasing globalisation, and technological advancements have created both opportunities and challenges for organisations (Komba, 2017). Recent literature highlights the importance of strategic management in enabling organisations to adapt to Tanzania's unique characteristics, such as the growing informal sector, the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the need for sustainable development (Mrema, 2018).

In Tanzania's private sector, strategic management is crucial for organisations in industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism, where competition is increasing and market conditions

are changing rapidly (Mrosso, 2019). The country's growing middle class and increasing consumer demand have created opportunities for innovative strategies and business models (Komba, 2017). However, institutional weaknesses, corruption, and bureaucratic red tape pose significant challenges for organisations (Komba, 2017). To overcome these challenges, strategic management is essential for Tanzanian organisations to build sustainable competitive advantage (Mrema, 2018). New concepts and approaches such as digital strategy, innovation management, and ecosystem management have evolved to address these challenges (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). To succeed, Tanzanian organisations should focus on:

- Building partnerships to overcome institutional weaknesses (Komba, 2017)
- Developing innovative business models for the growing informal sector (Mrosso, 2019)
- Embracing digital technologies to improve operational efficiency and customer engagement (Bharadwaj et al., 2013)

By adopting a strategic management approach, Tanzanian organisations can enhance their competitiveness, achieve sustainable growth, and contribute to the country's economic development. Local Government Authorities (LGAs) also require effective Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) to deliver public services and promote economic development. SMPs involve a systematic approach to managing an organisation's strategy, including setting goals, identifying resources, and evaluating performance. By adopting SMPs, LGAs can plan, implement, and evaluate their strategies to achieve their goals and promote economic development.

1.2 Problem statement

Despite Tanzania's growing economy, the private sector continues to face significant challenges in terms of institutional weaknesses, corruption, and bureaucratic red tape, which hinder its ability to achieve sustainable growth and competitiveness (Komba, 2017). Furthermore, Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania face difficulties in delivering effective public services and promoting economic development at the local level due to inadequate strategic management practices (Mrema, 2018). As noted by Bharadwaj et al. (2013), the lack of effective strategic management can lead to poor performance and limited growth in organisations. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the role of strategic management in enabling Tanzanian organisations, including LGAs, to navigate these challenges, build sustainable competitive advantage, and contribute to the country's economic development (Hitt et al., 2012).

1.3 Objective of the study

This study aims to examine trends, challenges, and areas for improvement in Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) implementation in Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania, and develop an effective implementation framework

2. Review of Related Literature

The literature on SMPs in LGAs is vast and diverse. Studies have shown that SMPs are essential for improving the performance of LGAs (Bakar et al., 2011; Grant, 2013). SMPs enable LGAs to set clear goals, identify resources, and evaluate performance, leading to improved service delivery

and economic development. However, the implementation of SMPs in LGAs is not without challenges. Studies have identified limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of stakeholder engagement as major challenges (Ofunya, 2013; Theresia & Ludwig, 2015). Additionally, LGAs face challenges in monitoring and evaluating their strategies, which can lead to a lack of accountability and transparency (Javalgi et al., 2020).

2.1 The implementation processes of SMPs

The implementation process comprises several parts. Among these parts are resource planning and implementation logistics. The process addresses the problems facing the tasks that need to be carried out and also their timing. In allocating resources, changes are required to implement the strategies and decisions. Second, the organisational structure may need to be changed from its standard arrangements. Changes can happen from being hierarchical to being a matrix or centralized to being decentralized. Finally, the system employed to manage the organisation may be improved. This system provides information and operational procedures needed in the organisation. The new information management system can enhance leaders' ability to monitor the strategy's progress; at the same time, staff and other stakeholders can facilitate awareness of new employees during recruitment.

The value of strategies in an organisation is recognized when effectively translated into action. Internal and external environments challenge the implementation process of strategies in most cases. On this ground, the organisation must explore alternative ways to manage the implementation process. Lynch (2009) sees implementation as a process by which the organisation's strategies are implemented. For organisations to implement policies and strategies, more emphasis should be put on the design and management systems to enable them to integrate people, structures, processes, and resources to achieve organisational objectives. Implementation processes involve planning new activities, developing methods to control the implementation processes, and considering what benchmarks will be needed to access the strategy (Lynch, 2009). Organisations should ensure that their programs are adhered to. Pears *et al.* (2010) observed that short-term objectives must be identified and functional tactics initiated for the implementation processes to be successful. Formulating an appropriate strategy or developing an appropriate strategic plan is not enough. For effective strategy implementation, the strategy must be supported by decisions regarding appropriate organisational structure, leadership, culture, and systems for rewarding performance and monitoring and controlling organisational action (Pearce & Robinson, 1991). This study adopted the concept of implementation of SMPs as defined by Thompson and Strickland (2014). They define implementation as an executing strategy entailing converting an organisation's strategic plan into action and results. Management literature has conceptualized strategic implementation from different perspectives, and Dominic and Theuvsen (2015) define the concept as the management activity that aligns organisational actions with strategic intentions or plans.

Moreover, strategy execution or implementation involves good resource allocation planning and resolving operational issues. The strategy implementation is a sequence of interventions concerning organisational structure, vital personnel actions, and control systems designed to control organisational performance to meet the set goals. Sulle (2009) sees strategy execution as a process that changes plans to action assignments and ensures that such assignments are

implemented to attain the plans and the stated objectives. On the other hand, strategy execution involves turning the drawing board strategy into marketplace reality. At the execution stage, a policy must be made clear, and non-operational details and resources must be allocated accordingly without misallocating the planned budget. Generally, strategy implementation consists of all the decisions and activities required to turn the strategic choices into reality. Establishing the strategy execution phase involves converting strategy choices into an operational plan. It is a matter of implementation that all activities planned in the strategic management plan can be performed by the respective department based on the resources allocated, especially those aligned with frameworks. The study findings revealed that the council was following the specific steps in implementing strategic management practices as outlined in the strategic plan. Most council staff supported this by 88.9%, while only 11.1% argued that the council had no specific steps followed in the implementation processes of SMPs in MDC. This implies that the council successfully achieved its plan of allocating resources and service delivery based on the steps followed by staff in departments where the activities were practised.

3. Methodology

This study used a retrospective analysis design, analyzing secondary data from LGAs' strategic plans and performance reports over the past decade. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify trends, challenges, and areas for improvement in SMPs implementation in LGAs. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Data was collected from LGAs' reports and documents, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis. The study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of SMPs implementation in LGAs, highlighting trends, challenges, and areas for improvement, and informing policy and practice recommendations.

Data Analysis:

The data analysis revealed several trends and challenges in the implementation of Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) in Local Government Authorities (LGAs) over the past decade. The analysis showed an increasing adoption of SMPs, with more LGAs developing strategic plans and performance reports. Leadership commitment, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement were identified as critical factors in the effective implementation of SMPs. However, the analysis also revealed several challenges, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of stakeholder engagement, which hinder the effective implementation of SMPs in LGAs. These findings suggest that LGAs need to address these challenges and prioritize leadership commitment, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement to achieve better outcomes from their SMPs.

4. Discussion of findings
4.1 Extent of satisfaction with the Council's overall process
The strategic position of an organisation is well understood through SMPs by making strategic choices for the future and managing strategy in action. SMPs are concerned with making decisions and taking corrective actions to achieve an organisation's long-term targets and goals. Its significance is drawn from the relationship between strategic management and organisational performance. The implementation of SMPs improves the organisation's efficiency. This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of SMPs on the governance of LGAs by surveying and collecting

opinions from employees implementing strategic management activities in MDC. The data were collected by the researcher in the field using a questionnaire and an interview guide. The improvement of accountability and transparency within the council is the recommendation of staff practices in implementing a strategic plan to achieve the council's goal. The findings showed the actual situation and acknowledged the information collected from the key informants. The research findings showed that the council had effectively adopted SMPs in establishing plans and practices. The strategic plan that the council developed and implemented had a clear objective, a winning strategy to achieve the objective, and a sound mission statement to guide the council towards success. Moreover, the study identified that the council had good communication in terms of management and leadership due to effective follow-up by the leaders, especially heads of departments, and at the same time, practical review of the plans and proper allocation of resources for the implementation of activities of SMPs.

4.2 Organisational Implementation

John and Richard (2011) argue that implementing a good idea is usually more challenging than thinking it up. According to Lakein (2005), managing organisational change is the process of planning and implementing changes in such a way as to minimize employees' resistance and costs while simultaneously maximizing the effectiveness of the change effort. Dynamic competitive environments prompt leaders to transform their strategies (Mostovicz *et al.,* 2009). This is especially true in organisations where implementing a new practice requires many peoples' understanding, agreement, and willingness to act (Strickland, 1999). A study by Ngulube and Tafor (2006) on the impact of records management in the African public sector found that structure in countries was significant in effective sector management. However, the researchers observed that mechanistic structure in most public sectors in developing countries contributed to poor implementation of changes in most public institutions. A study on the relationship between structure and human capital (Maria, 2011) established that structure depends highly on the skills of the human resource handling the process. A study conducted by the World Bank (2000) identified effective service delivery and public accountability in development, and it found that the quality of any structured program was directly related to the quality of the personnel undertaking the planning process. The study established that a lack of consideration of the quality and quantity of staff often leads to ineffective structural changes. Ochanda (2005) shows that many implementation-related variables are essential in explaining the performance of enterprises.

Scores on a Likert scale revealed that the extent of satisfaction with the council's overall process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategies was a means of measuring employee satisfaction in MDC. As the scores were pooled together, responses showed a very high extent of implementation of activities. This was revealed by 61% of the total pooled responses. Thus, the council adopted the overall process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategies to develop the strategic management plan and implementation. On the other hand, some of the findings indicated that the high satisfaction was 22.5%, the moderate extent was 12.3%, and 4% was indicated in adopting SMPs. In this regard, the council adopted the implementation process to a high extent in managing development activities.

Table 1: Extent of satisfaction with the council's overall process of SMPs

Extent of satisfaction	Frequency	Per cent
Very high	215	61.3
High	79	22.5
Moderate	43	12.3
Very low	14	4.0
Total	351	100.0

Source: Field data 2020

Findings from the study on the extent of satisfaction with the council's overall processes of formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategies showed that workers involved in implementing SMPs were delighted. The same observation was argued by one of the critical informants during the interview by stating:

> "… It has been almost ten years since 2010; I experienced our council establishing council strategies. I was involved in the team when the council formulated, implemented, and evaluated its strategies. This has changed my mind set; earlier, I thought that the central government assigns everything the council does, but I have realized that at the local government level, we have to follow what has been decided upon by the central government. When I participated on several occasions, I realized that most decisions originated from the district when they prepare and project annual budgets each financial year" (HoD on 20/12/2020).

4.3 Steps followed in implementation processes of SMPs

The findings in this study show that strategy monitoring was followed by the council by 21.2%, while strategy implementation was followed by the council by 20.9%. On the other hand, multiple responses revealed that situational analysis was followed by 19.8%, and the remaining steps were strategy formulation and strategy evaluation, followed by 19.0% each. Based on percentage cases, the study revealed that the council was implementing SMPs; through the steps, monitoring and follow-up were done effectively, and the performance in each step enhanced the implementers to reform changes as a result of the improvement of accountability and transparency in the allocation of resources and service deliverance.

Table 2: Steps followed by the council in implementing SMPs (n 351)

Steps followed in the implementation of SMPs[a]	Responses*		Percent of
	n	Per cent	Cases (%)
Situation analysis	275	19.8	78.3
Strategy formulation/planning	264	19.0	75.2
Strategy implementation	290	20.9	82.6
Strategy monitoring	293	21.1	83.5
Strategy evaluation	264	19.0	75.2
Total	**1386***	**100.0**	**

*351 respondents gave 3137 responses
**The per cent does not add up to 100% because multiple responses were allowed

4.4 Staff training on strategic management practices in the study area

Findings from the study showed that the council was conducting training through induction and orientation of new employees to gain self-confidence and understand the SMPs well. Moreover, most newly employed staff in LGAs did not know how to perform their duties (Sulle, 2009). In that case, the council frequently trained their staff to improve their performance. An analysis from this study in Table 3 shows that 90.9 % of the respondents said that the council was undertaking

frequent training sessions; the rest, 9.1%, said that the council was not training the new employees. This finding corresponds with the study by Hillman and Kein (2001), who assert that investment in employee skills development can make their jobs more effective. Training and development programs may focus on individual or team performance linked to the core activities.

Table 3: Whether the council conducts training before implementation (n 351)

Whether the council has training	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	319	90.9
No	32	9.1
Total	351	100.0

Source: Field data 2020

About training of employees, one of the respondents said:

> "Council provides training to employees using external experts from LGTI-Hombolo by involving department representative staff. Staff involved in training are assigned to share the knowledge obtained with other staff. By doing so, the council enhances and strengthens skills for competence. These practices by the council enable each other in all assigned duties and responsibilities to improve skills for competence purposes, hence improving teamwork in the council."

During a critical informant interview, one participant added by saying that;

> "Our council is responsible for training all staff on issues concerning SMPs. I am responsible for discussing this with some officers in the planning office and from the Department of Human Resources. I assure you all staff know what the council has planned in the strategic plan" (20/12/2020).

However, another observation was identified in the analysis that, apart from training, the display of essential report meetings on the council board and uploading important information on the council website increased staff awareness to position their assigned duties so that departments could meet the targets of what was assigned to implement within a given timeframe.

4.5 The scope and areas of SMP training conducted

According to Hillman & Keim (2001), investment in developing employees' skills can make them more efficient and effective in their jobs. Literature shows that, for organisations investing in improving the knowledge and skills of their employees, the investment is returned in the form of their employees being more productive (Hax & Masluf, 1996). Most of the training and development programs done by the government and other organisations focus on individual or team performance linked to the core organisation (John & Richard, 2011). This requires organisations to recognize that employees will have different needs that change over time as they continue their careers (John & Richard, 2011). The emphasis on knowledge sharing is that power will reduce the tendency on the employees' side to hoard knowledge (Kaplan & Norton, 2009). From a cultural perspective, the top management is responsible for educating its employees on the importance of knowledge management, not only for the organisation's bottom line but also for its employees (KIPPRA Report, 2013).

Knowledge management stores and shares an organisation's wisdom, understanding, and expertise on techniques and operations (Kaplan and Norton, 2013). Strickland (1999) acknowledges that knowledge management facilitates the flow and sharing of information to improve the efficiency

of individuals for organisational development. Njenga (2006) noted that, at Nairobi Hospital, the SMPs lacked teamwork, change management agents, and adequate resources, which were obstacles to change management. However, the study focused on research, human resources, and systems but did not focus on training and leadership. However, the study focused on the challenges of strategy implementation but did not focus on training on change implementation.

Table 4: Training fields of SMPs (n = 351)

Issues on which SMP training conducted	Responses		Per cent of Cases (%)
	n	Per cent	
Situation analysis	284	25.4	83.0
Strategy formulation/planning	270	24.2	78.9
Strategy implementation	293	26.3	85.7
Strategy evaluation	269	24.1	78.7
Total	**1116***	**100.0**	**

*351 respondents gave 1116 responses
**The percentage does not add up to 100% because multiple responses were allowed
Source: Field data (2020)

4.6 Strategic Meetings on SMPs in MDC

Meetings inform people about issues that need to be implemented in the organisation. In the same context, this study reviewed the strategic meetings held by the council to enhance the effective implementation of the planned activities. This study focused on whether the council conducted strategic meetings as part and parcel of their daily tasks and departmental requirements of the council. The results showed that 90.9% of the responses showed that the council conducted strategic meetings to inform employees what had been planned and how they would involve the staff in implementing the planned activities within the relevant time frame and allocated resources. However, 9.1% of the responses concluded that the council was not conducting strategic meetings on SMPs. This implies that the implementation of SMPs was associated with meetings and training to facilitate the staff's power and bring awareness to the council on how to achieve the intended goal of the council based on the written strategic plan. Research findings also show that employees received frequent training on SMPs implemented in the council, and staff reported that they were guided by the information and instruction provided in official meetings on how they could execute those plans assigned at the departmental level. Findings show that accessibility of the relevant information to council staff successfully implemented activities in this context aligned with the emphasis of resource-based theory.

Table 5: Whether the Council conducts strategic meetings on SMPs (n 351)

Conduct of strategic meetings	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	319	90.9
No	32	9.1
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

4.7 Existence of councils' SMP meeting

The Adoption and implementation of SMPs align with strategic meetings to enhance the dissemination of essential information activities in the strategic management plan. The study aimed to understand how frequently MDC conducted meetings on SMPs. This study collected information from respondents to understand how frequently the council held strategic meetings. The results showed that 46.2% of the respondents noted that the council conducted SMP meetings

monthly. In comparison, 34.5% said that often the council conducted meetings, and 16.2 % noted that strategic meetings were carried out sometimes. Only 3.1% said the council was not conducting strategic meetings, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency of conducting councils' SMP meetings

Frequency of meetings	Frequency	Per cent
Always	162	46.2
Often	121	34.5
Sometimes	57	16.2
Never	11	3.1
Total	351	100.0

Source: Field data 2020

4.8 The steps involved in SMPs

In strategic planning, key people are of vital importance in the process of developing the council's strategic plan. From the literature, effective strategic planning allows several members to participate in that planning process; hence, they can plan important roles in demining the organisation's direction. Sound tactical and operational decisions are aligned with the desired direction when employees and other members are fully involved in the planning and implementing of the strategic activities from the beginning of the plans. The findings of this study noted four specific steps that stakeholders were involved in to ensure the council decisions were well made to achieve the general goal; they were situation analysis, planning and budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. It was further found that the implementation steps were to be followed accordingly, and situation analysis planning and budgeting involved individuals, particularly heads of departments in the unit. When members of an organisation or council, especially employees, who are the primary implementers of the strategic plan, feel a sense of involvement, they feel that they are part of the strategic plan and its achievement; so if the goals are achieved, they are impressed as they are as well focusing on the goal achievement by their organisation and even the individual commitment of the employees to perform better could be increased. Table 6.7 shows that, in the implementation of SMPs, staff were more involved by 30.3% since, at that step, activities planned in the strategic plan are put into practice in each department. On monitoring and evaluation, it was found that 25.5% of the staff had been involved. In situation analysis, the study found that staff were involved by 24.2 %. In contrast, staff involvement in planning and budgeting was less involved since, at this step, only heads of departments and units were representing their departmental budget. This observation has been reported by one of the staff from the department of finance said:

> "SMPs in our council are about effectively using strategic plans and information from the central government. Suppose councils do not consider instructions given by the central government and the ruling party's election manifesto in a financial year. In that case, the Controller and Auditor General's (CAG's) report will conclude that the councils generally are not performing according to the right expectation, and what the councils have done in that financial year cannot identify the scope for improvement. The Council's Strategic management plan can be a mirror (Interviewed in 2020).

Table 7: Steps in which staff involve in SMPs

The steps the staff involved in SMPs[a]	Responses*		Percent of Cases
	n	Per cent	
Situation analysis	245	24.2	70.2
Planning and budgeting	202	20.0	57.9
Implementation	307	30.3	88.0

	258	25.5	73.9
Monitoring and evaluation			
Total	**1012***	**100.0**	****

*351 respondents gave 1116 responses
**The per cent does not add up to 100% because multiple responses were allowed

4.9 Council resource allocation for strategic management planning

The study set out to determine council resource allocation for planned activities; the aim was to determine whether the allocated budget could be managed to implement assigned projects. Implementation of the strategic plan was found to be affected by small budget MDC. The respondents were asked to indicate their rating on whether the council allocated resources for strategic management planning. Table 6.8 shows the result, as 77.2% indicated that the approved budget from the government was allocated for strategic management planning. In comparison, only 22.8% concluded that the approved budget was not allocated for strategic management planning. This analysis revealed that MDC had allocated the resources for the strategic plan; as a result, implementation among workers was appreciated based on the responses collected by the council.

Table 8: Resource allocation (n 351)

Whether the Council allocates resources for SM planning	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	271	77.2
No	80	22.8
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data (2020)

4.10 The council follow-up of SMP implementation processes and practices

Scores on a Likert scale revealed the extent to which MDC followed the strategic plan implementation processes. As the scores were pooled together, responses showed moderate follow-up of implementation processes. This was revealed by the mean score scale of all SMPs, whose mean was moderate (precisely 3.54 out of 5.0) for situation analysis, 3.15 for strategy formulation, 3.68 for strategy implementation, and 3.58 for strategy evaluation. Thus, the implementation process was yet to be thoroughly followed at the third-tier level of government in MDC. Table 6.9 indicates that the implementation of the strategic plan should align with the implementation processes that relevant experts of SM have suggested. Improvement in the effectiveness of implemented SMPs depends upon the processes followed to enhance the council's general performance to achieve the council's goal.

The scale of mean score interpretation was as follows:
- 3.76-5.0 Follow-up to a large extent
- 2.60-3.75 Follow-up to a moderate extent
- 1-2.59 Follow -up to some extent

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics of the Implementation Processes (n 351)

Implementation processes	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Situational analysis	3.54	1.148	Follow-up to a moderate extent
Strategy formulation	3.51	1.105	Follow-up to a moderate extent
Strategy implementation	3.68	1.053	Follow-up to a moderate extent
Strategy evaluation	3.58	1.079	Follow-up to a moderate extent

Source: Field data 2020

The study assessed the extent to which MDC adopted SMPs. It is essential to consider the specific context and challenges the council faces. The council has made significant progress in adopting SMPs to a moderate extent. For instance, 51.6 per cent was moderate, while the most significant extent was 35.5 per cent. The high percentage of uncertain responses in some tables could indicate a need for better communication and transparency in certain aspects of strategy implementation. Additionally, the analysis suggests that the council should continue monitoring and evaluating their strategies, ensuring they remain adaptable and responsive to changing environments and emerging opportunities. Regular evaluation can help identify areas where adjustments or improvements can be made to enhance the overall effectiveness of their strategic management practices.

Table. 10: Extent of adopting steps of SMPs by council

The extent of adopting steps by the council	Frequency	Per cent
Low extent	46	13.1
Moderately	181	51.6
High extent	124	35.3
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

The study's findings indicated that 90% of the respondents moderately agreed that the council was executing the identified activities. The study further indicated that 9.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the council implemented the SMPs. One respondent disagreed, saying there was no performance of various activities in the council related to SMPs. This implies that the council's performance of SMPs as activities assessed in this study was moderate.

Table 11: Implementation practices of SMPs performed in the council (n 351)

Agreement on implementation of SMPs	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	1	.3
Moderately agreed	316	90.0
Strongly agreed	34	9.7
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

4.11 Implementation practices and activities

The study worked on the implementation practices done by the Mufindi District Council under situational analysis. Descriptive statistics were summarised for the activities implemented on situational analysis; the results are shown in Table12. The study findings show that the highest mean was 3.8, which was for the statement that the Council recognizes opportunities that will be useful for SMPs, and a standard deviation of 1.046. The statement with the lowest mean was that the council periodically gathers and analyzes information about SMPs adopted in MDC, with a mean of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 1.13. The activity, with a mean of 3.59, involved the council identifying external threats concerning SMPs with a standard deviation of 1.058. Other activities revealed included developing a list of strengths and weaknesses and a statement that the

council makes staff aware of the challenges and threats. They had standard deviations of 1.008 and 0.948, respectively. This implies that most of the activities implemented in strategy formulation had the activities that denote the council performs strategy formulation under SMPs.

Table 12: Situational analysis activities descriptive statistics (n 351)

Situational analysis activities	n	Mean	Std. deviation
Council periodically gathers and analyzes information about SMPs adopted	351	3.52	1.13
The council conducts training to inform staff about all opportunities for SMPs	351	3.69	0.996
The council develops a list of strengths and weakness	351	3.72	1.008
Council makes staff aware of the challenges and threats	351	3.72	0.948
Council identifies external threats concerning SMPs	351	3.59	1.058
The council recognizes opportunities that will be useful for SMPs	351	3.80	1.046
Overall mean	351	3.673	1.008

Source: Field data, 2020

The activities under situational analysis were assessed to find whether they were implemented. The results show that 66.7% of the respondents moderately agreed that the council performed the activities. The rest (32.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the council performed the activities. However, 0.9% disagreed with the activities having been done. These findings mean that the council had done situational analysis as part of SMPs, specifically through information gathering, staff training, identifying external threats, and recognizing opportunities that would be useful for SMPs. In Table 13, the findings reveal that the respondents agreed that the council had performed most of the activities of strategic management practices that the respondents were asked about. The level of agreement was 31.9%, while only 8.3% of the respondents said that the activities had not been performed in the council. In addition, the table shows that the majority of the respondents in the study were uncertain about the activities measured in the study, about 59.8 per cent.

Table 13: Activities on situational analysis

Agreement	Frequency	Per cent
Disagreed	3	.9
Moderately agreed	234	66.7
Strongly agreed	114	32.5
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

4.12. Implementation practices and activities on strategy formulation

The council formulated the strategic plan by defining the council's mission, specifying achievable objectives, developing strategies, and developing an implementation framework to guide SMPs.

The study findings in Table 14 show the highest mean score of 3.83 for the activity in that the Council develops strategic implementation frameworks to guide SMPs with a standard deviation of 0.977. The activity with the lowest mean score was corporate mission, with a mean score of 3.71 and a standard deviation of 1.13. Other activities include the Council developing strategies and specifying the achievable objectives with mean scores of 3.8 and 3.72, while their standard deviations were 1.17 and 1.056, respectively. These results imply that most of the activities implemented in strategy formulation denoted that the council performed strategy formulation under SMPs.

Table 14: Strategy formulation activities descriptive statistics (n 351)

Strategy formulation activities	n	Mean	Std. deviation
Council Defines the Corporate Mission	351	3.71	1.132
The council specifies the achievable objective	351	3.72	1.056
Council develops strategies	351	3.80	1.127
Council develops strategic implementation frameworks to guide SMPs	351	3.83	0.977
Overall mean		3.765	4.292

Source: Field data, 2020

The study collected opinions on the implementation activities done by the council during the formulation of the strategic plan. This aimed to assess the level of agreements for the formulated activities in the council. Findings show that the council formulated the strategic plan by involving staff members and heads of departments in presenting their plans. Table 5.30 reveals that 46.7% of the respondents agreed that strategy formulation activities were implemented in the council as a part of SMPs. The level of disagreement was 9.4% of the respondents, while 43.9% were uncertain.

Table 15: Opinions of the implementation activities performed in formulation (n 351)

Situation analysis	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	33	9.4
Uncertain	154	43.9
Agree	164	46.7
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

The above table presents the survey results on opinions regarding the implementation activities performed in formulation, with 351 respondents. The table focused on situation analysis, where frequencies and percentages of respondents who disagreed, were uncertain, or agreed with the statement are shown. The results revealed that 9.4% of respondents disagreed with the statement, indicating they did not believe the implementation activities were effectively carried out. 43.9% were uncertain, suggesting they were unsure about the effectiveness of the implementation activities. Most respondents (46.7%) agreed with the statement, showing their satisfaction with the implementation activities. These findings show the respondents' perceptions of the formulation process, with almost half expressing agreement, a significant proportion being uncertain, and a smaller group disagreeing.

4.4 Implementation practices and activities on strategy implementation

Situational analysis as an activity of implanting a strategic plan was carried out by MDC. The council was involved with various activities, particularly developing procedure manuals motivating employee's decision-making process, recruiting staff, budget allocation, and service delivery, as indicated by the study in Table 6.16

Table 16: Strategy implementation activities descriptive statistics (n 351)

Situational analysis activities	n	Mean	Std. deviation
Council develop3e operational, procedural manual	351	3.55	1.086
Council ensured procedures of work are fully communicated and understood	351	3.60	1.098
Council motivated employees to commit to the implementation of strategies	351	3.75	1.049
The council developed a decision-making process	351	3.72	1.060
The council recruited qualified staff to implement strategies	351	3.59	1.200
Council conducted training to staff for competent in the implementation of SMPs	351	3.72	1.033
The council allocated sufficient resources for SMP implementation	351	3.53	1.076
The council implemented the SM plan periodically	351	3.55	1.089
The council allocated sufficient time to implement SMPs sufficiently to attain a goal	351	3.67	1.117
The council set clearly defined and measurable performance targets for SMPs	351	3.58	1.088
The council followed a specific step in implementing SMPs	351	3.67	1.050
The council selected a special committee to control the implementation of the SM plan	351	3.72	0.897
The council conducted a performance review of SMPs that are implemented	351	3.82	0.920
The council conducted management activities based on council SMP	351	3.83	0.939
Council had uniform control of SMP activities	351	3.58	1.027
The Council reviewed and updated SMPs and SM plan	351	3.82	1.128
The council had disciplinary actions taken against employees failing to follow the plan	351	3.64	1.097
Overall average mean	351	3.67	17.954

Source: Field data, 2020

Table 17: Strategy implementation

Strategy implementation	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	28	8.0
Uncertain	245	69.8
Agree	78	22.2
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

Table 17 presents the responses of 351 individuals regarding their opinions on strategy implementation. The table provides insights into how the respondents perceived the effectiveness of strategy implementation within a particular context. The data shows that the majority of respondents, 245 people (69.8%), were uncertain about the effectiveness of strategy implementation. This indicates a lack of clarity or mixed feelings among a significant portion of the respondents. It suggests that they may have had concerns or reservations about the process or outcomes of strategy implementation.

Additionally, 78 people (22.2%) agreed with the statement, indicating their satisfaction or positive perception of strategy implementation. This group represents a smaller but still notable proportion of the respondents. On the other hand, a small minority of 28 people (8.0%) disagreed with the statement, expressing dissatisfaction or disagreement with the strategy implementation process or its results. The high percentage of uncertain responses could indicate a need for better communication, transparency, or involvement in the strategy implementation process. It may also suggest that the respondents felt that the strategy implementation could have been more effective or that they lacked sufficient information to form a definite opinion. Overall, the analysis of Table 6.17 highlights the varied perceptions and uncertainties surrounding strategy implementation, with a large portion of respondents expressing uncertainty and a smaller but still significant number expressing agreement or disagreement.

4.5 Implementation practices and activities on strategy evaluation.
The strategy evaluation was among the activities done by the council to monitor and evaluate the strategic plan activities to reflect the performance of achieving the council goal. From this stage, the performance appraisal of the council activities is being evaluated. The study analysis dealt with eight statements implemented by the council to evaluate the planned activities of SMPs. Table 6.18 indicates that the council evaluated SMPs and strategic plans, the involvement of the management team and employees, developing alternative plans, reformulating strategic plans, and managing time to meet the deadlines of the assigned duties to all employees. This aimed to assess the council's direction in performing the targeted service delivery goals and resource allocation by collecting the council staff's opinions.

Table 18: Evaluation activities descriptive statistics (n 351)

Strategy evaluation activities	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. deviation*
The council compared regular SMP activities with SM plans	351	3.52	1.080
The council involved both Management and employees in the evaluation	351	3.44	1.064
Council staff met the deadline for their assigned activities	351	4.03	3.643
Council always developed alternative plans	351	3.60	1.078
The council considered challenging metrics and timetable formulated in SP	351	3.69	1.038
Council-tested results in line with actual goals in the strategic plan	351	3.66	0.992
The council modified and reformulated the strategic plan in mid-review	351	3.56	1.048
Council regularly compared strategies with those of competitors	351	3.58	1.018
Overall average mean	351	3.765	?

Source: Field data, 2020

The analysis of strategy evaluation in MDC in Table 19 indicates that employees were uncertain about the evaluation done in the council. The majority of responses, 65.5%, noted that they were unsure of what was done for strategy evaluation based on how activities were tested by the researcher under the study. 25.1% of the responses agreed on activities held to evaluate SMPs in MDC. In comparison, the rest (9.4%) disagreed with the strategy evaluation that MDC did, as shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Strategy Evaluation

Strategy evaluation	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	33	9.4
Uncertain	230	65.5
Agree	88	25.1
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

4.11 Stakeholders' levels of participation in SMPs

Participation in development activities is termed the same as decentralization and is a critical element of the discussion concerning significant issues, particularly in allocating management resources (Cooker and Kothari, 2001). In the context of this study, participation looks upon employees involved in the implementation of SMPs and other actors who, in one way or another, can influence the effectiveness of the implementation of SMPs on the governance of the council. Therefore, participation as an aspect of governance was assessed to examine the extent of staff involvement in implementing SMPs. The findings in Table 6.20 show that the participation level of employees was moderate, about 60.7% of the respondents' responses. About a third (29.1%) said that employees' participation level in implementing SMPs was high, while 10.3% of the respondents said that the participation was low. These findings imply that staff involvement concurs with stakeholders in the council by helping to determine what they intend to accomplish in a specified period (Barry, 2015)

Table 19: Participation level of employees on implementation of SMPs (n 351)

Level of participation	Frequency	Per cent
Low extent	36	10.3
Moderate extent	213	60.7
High extent	102	29.1
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data (2020)

4.12 Stakeholders participation level in implementation processes

The District Executive Director (DED) heads the paid service in a district council. The director plays a central role in the management and administration of the LGA. He is the secretary of council meetings and the council's accounting officer. In this regard, although the Executive Officer has no voting rights, he does wield strong power. He influences council decisions on financial matters, planning, project evaluation, tendering, and general administration. In this study, DED was the primary stakeholder with power over what the council needed to implement in each annual budget. The study identified that the role of stakeholders in implementation processes was moderate at 70.4%. In the same vein, low extent was found to be 17.9%, while high extent was found to be only 11.7%. This implies that implementing SMPs enhanced different stakeholders who played significant roles in executing the strategic plan activities. Therefore, participation as one of the elements of good governance should be considered when councils plan and prepare council budgets to ensure the achievement of councils' goals.

Table 20: Stakeholder roles in the implementation of SMPs (n = 351)

Roles of stakeholders in implementation	Frequency	Per cent
Low extent	63	17.9
Moderately	247	70.4
High extent	41	11.7
Total	**351**	**100.0**

Source: Field data 2020

4.13 Observed Practices in Implementing SMPs in MDC

This paper presents results for the implementation processes of SMPs in the Mufindi District Council (MDC) by assessing observed governance changes resulting from the implementation of SMPs on governance and finally propose mechanisms for effective implementation of SMPs in LGAs. Goal setting is the first step in the strategic management process through environmental scanning. This is the initial step that every organisation must start with to establish the organisational vision, mission, and goals. Moreover, the organisation defines long-term and short-term goals and targets in this step. This step is done by experts capable of analyzing the internal environment by conducting proper environmental scanning. This process clearly defines the problem statement before further strategic plan analysis.

The reviewed literature briefly highlights several factors associated with strategic plan implementation, precisely strategy context, structure, system, style, staff, skills, and subordinates as key implementation drivers acknowledged by Waterman et al. (2018). On the other hand, Waterman *et al*. (2018) failed to show the co-relationship of the factors during the execution of the activity plans. They failed to show the effectiveness of the managerial activity that aligns organisational actions with strategic intentions or plans when it involves good planning that

encompasses resource allocation and mechanisms for resolving operational issues. Strategy implementation is a sequence of interventions concerning organisational structure, vital personnel actions, and control systems designed to control organisational performance for the set goals. According to Dominic and Ludwing (2015), strategy execution is a process that changes plans to action assignments and ensures that such assignments are implemented in a manner that leads to the attainment of the plans and the stated objectives.

The research findings noted that the council had prioritized allocating resources and service delivery in adopting and implementing SMPs when governing LGAs in Tanzania. This is in line with the RBV as the results show that in MDC governance, the staff being accountable for their actions and accessibility of information were assured by awareness of Vision and Mission, measured by the study variables. The theory emphasized allocating tangible resources in the council, which was found to be allocated during SWOT analysis as among the SMPS adopted by the council when formulating strategic plans.

The efficiency of an organisation depends upon the practices of SMPs (Bakar & Razak, 2016). There is a high demand for and emphasis on LGAs adopting SMPs to achieve high performance. Also, SMPs have gained prominence and importance in public organisations (URT, 2018). This study shows that the council with experienced staff has enhanced accountability and transparency since they have been implementing SMPs for more than ten years.

In interviewing respondents about the council's adoption of SMPs, the findings showed that 94.3% argued that MDC had successfully adopted SMPs. This implies that, in adopting SMPs on governance, the council had effectively achieved its service delivery and resource allocation goal. Furthermore, the findings showed that adopting SMPs was influenced by various factors, including resource, institutional, and management factors, including leadership style, structure, and culture. The situational analysis is undertaken by the council or organisation so that before adopting a strategic plan, the requirements of the analysis must be met by the council. The findings were that the council conducted situational analysis so that the resources within the council were included in the established budget to increase the council's internal collection and reduce the challenges that affected service delivery. This concurs with the observation in the Resource Theory that properly utilizing organisational resources results in better performance.

Moreover, the findings revealed that MDC undertook situational analysis to gather data and information on the environmental condition it faced inside and outside the council. By undertaking this, the council could make the right decisions on its future by monitoring the trends and changes in the council. The study found that different vital stakeholders were involved in scanning the council environment. This was also observed by Feng (2018), who noted that there is a need for and that it is essential to involve critical stakeholders in situational analysis. The vision and mission of the council provide strategic direction for what to be in the future. The report on situational analysis in the council enables it to identify critical areas to improve its service provision.

Moreover, the information gathered in situational analysis helped the council plan for and provide services that meet the people's needs. Therefore, a stakeholders' analysis was conducted by the council in the preparation of the 5-year MDC's strategic plan to draw available potential stakeholders. Also, it was noted that those stakeholders, specifically the community, councillors,

central government, regulatory authorities, financial institutions, CBOs, NGOs, development partners, and potential investors, were fully involved in implementing council activities.

Performance review is another practice undertaken in MDC. This deals with assessing the implementation of the previous five-year strategic plan. This was done to determine how far the council achieved its target and possible factors considered for achievements. This was vital to inform the development of the next MDC 5-year strategic plan. The council used the previous strategic plan as a guiding tool for developing a new strategic plan for future long-term planning.

The study also found that during strategic plan formulation, the vision and mission were not frequently reviewed, but the plan was developed to reflect the council's mission and vision. The findings correspond with the conclusion by Anika (2016) that local government agencies do not frequently review their vision and mission statements. The findings also showed that the formulation of strategic planning based on the vision and mission statements of the council concurs with the stated objectives of service deliverance and resource allocation.

At the strategy implementation stage, the study revealed that MDC had a well-organized structure with various stakeholders involved. The activities planned by the council were implemented based on the policy guidance and frameworks that guide the responsible staff to work effectively. LGAs implement the strategies successfully when essential factors are considered at all council levels. This aligns with the findings by Dominic and Theuvsen (2015), who identified that strategies are implemented through organisational culture, resources, control systems, and tools adopted by the council. In addition, the study has documented that a strategic model creates a favourable environment for the effective implementation of activities planned by the council. The study further identified that the council needed more than 4000 staff, but only 2860 staff were there to implement the activities. Therefore, the council lacked enough personnel to undertake processes in the implementation of the council's strategic plan. The staff were assigned more duties, which in turn led to underperformance or delayed completion of the tasks assigned to individuals. This might adversely impact the quality of services derived by the council.

The study ascertained that the council undertook situation and problem analysis as part of environmental scanning practices. These were undertaken, among other activities, during the development of the strategic plan that was in place, which had been formulated through SWOT analysis. The study revealed that each year, the council analyzed the council situation in the district and set priorities. In terms of strategic plan formulation, the study established that the council had established a strategic direction with a clear vision, mission, and core values, which influenced the quality of the services. In implementing the strategic plan, the council had a well-established organisational structure from the policy level at the district level down to the operational level in departments. The study established that, while the departments developed good plans, implementation challenges affected the quality of services with the shortage of skilled staff, which was noted as a primary challenge. The strategy was evaluated by monitoring the performance by comparing achievements with set targets, but the shortage of resources was a significant challenge for the council. These findings show that the council adopted different SMPs to attain the highest possible governance status (accountability and transparency). The successful adoption of these SMPs has contributed to improving accountability and transparency, hence the existence of good governance in the council in general.

The findings of this study show that management, institutional resources, and requirements of good governance had influenced, to a large extent, the council's decision to adopt SMP through strategic models, specifically SWOT analysis. Moreover, the study has shown that stakeholders developed the council's strategic plan. Furthermore, it was found that SMPs and models were successfully adopted by the council, as evidence collected from council staff who participated in this study suggested. Therefore, MDC successfully developed its SM plan, reflecting the council's vision and mission of meeting its service delivery targets.

Moreover, the findings of this study indicate that MDC performed situational analysis by considering internal and external environments. This practice was found to be done in a participatory manner by taking into account both internal and external environments. The internal environment focused on establishing the current situation and respective council problems for every department/unit and was used to improve the next council strategic plan. Similarly, the council analyzed the external environment to mainstream different implementation frameworks guiding the council operations. The mainstreamed frameworks by the council included the National Five-Year Development Plan, Tanzania Development Vision-2025, Ruling Part Manifesto 2015-2020, Public Private Partnership (PPP) Policy 2009, and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs). When the council mainstreamed those frameworks, the council corresponded with SWOT analysis and stakeholders' analysis to draw up strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of the council and understand the position of the council in the subsequent five-year strategic plan. It was noted that the council was challenged by a shortage of skilled and supporting staff in most of their departments and units. The evidence has been documented in the MDC Report (2018), where the council established 4648 staff members to implement the strategic plan effectively. However, the available staff was only 2860, which resulted in a deficit of 1636.

The council's website was made accessible to council staff to increase awareness of what the council planned to undertake, and all instruments for workers to refer to have been uploaded. Every department and head of section/unit emphasizes that their subordinates should be referred to by the leaders when implementing their assigned tasks. This culture of accessing important information was commonly used to communicate with the council and other stakeholders. This implies that the council ran its activities linked with the instruments in managing the strategic management practices. All non-confidential documents are accessible to employees and are given when needed to refer to in implementing the council's strategic plans. The findings from most of the key informants, especially heads of department, had evidence that one of their tasks to their subordinates was to ensure the existence of the relevant documents to guide the implementation of activities. Findings indicate that the most commonly used strategic models/tools to develop strategic plans were SWOT analysis, strategic map, balanced scorecard, PESTEL, Porter's Five Forces, and issue-based strategic planning. The council mainly adopted the SWOT analysis due to its popularity in developing countries and projects funded by Developed countries like the UK. However, the high utilization of SWOT analysis may contrast with the lower utilization of PESTEL analysis, Porter's force, and others. All these tools focused on analyzing internal and external factors that can affect the implementation of SMPs. These tools allow the council to understand better and satisfy the needs of the council's customers. The research findings indicate the effective adoption of SMPs in implementing council activities among departments in MDC. It has been found that heads of departments adopted models, and there was a significant positive

relationship between strategic models and SMPs in governing the council. The study provides evidence of how SMPs influence the governance of the council.

4.14 The Implementation Practices in Mufindi Distric Council

The study aims to analyze the implementation processes of SMPs carried out by MDC. The capacity of MDC to achieve the expected performance of activities implemented in implementing SMPs was guided by specific implementation processes that the councils followed to achieve stated goals. Council staff were seen as responsible for implementing all steps. The proof of this statement can be seen in Table 5.17, which indicates all steps implemented by the council. Implementers in MDC adhered to these steps to achieve the stated objectives. The study employed Pearson's moment correlation to show the relationship between SMPs and governance. Analyzing points, this scored on governance between 2015 and 2020 against points scored in implementation practices of SMPs in the council. A 175-point index summited scale comprising 35 statements on which the respondents scored 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. On governance, a 16-point index summated scale comprised 16 statements on which the respondents scored either 0, 1, or 2. The scores on each statement were expressed as a percentage of the maximum possible scores, 175 and 16, respectively. The findings showed that MDC had its unique mechanisms to follow the implementation processes of SMPs and cover enforcing levels of adherence to the national code of ethics and conduct for the public service of MDC. Several findings have been established in this study, specifically on the implementation processes of SMPs carried out in MDC.

 The findings of this study have shown that most of the council departments were practising SMPs in implementing the strategic plan of the council, and the majority of the departments have clear objectives and winning strategies to achieve the objective of service deliverance and resource allocation toward success in accountability and transparency aspects for good governance. Most of the council staff claimed to implement their activities by following the implementation processes of the council's strategic plan, which was formulated by the council through the involvement of the council staff, especially heads of departments. The study also found that MDC could allocate council resources during the strategic plan formulation and when conducting a SWOT analysis. This concurs with the Resource View in its assumption that organisational resources should be allocated for successful performance to achieve the organisation's target.

Again, during the SWOT analysis, MDC identified the strengths and weaknesses of the council through human financial and management factors to create effective SMPs for governing the council to improve accountability and transparency. Furthermore, the study found that the council effectively implemented SMPs, attained from the high staff commitment to implementing activities to meet deadlines. Most of the employees were accountable for their actions due to the style of leadership adopted to manage resources effectively, as always recommended in CAG reports.

Also, an analysis of the study provides evidence that experienced workers in the council had a significant effect on the implementation of SMPs. Looking at multiple responses from the information collected, the majority of the scores indicated that employees who had worked with the council for more than ten years were aware of what practices were to be implemented first so that the performance of the council is improved in a way the sustain the needs of the citizens.

5. Conclusion and Recomendations

5.1 Conclusion:

This study has conducted a retrospective analysis of the implementation processes of SMPs in LGAs over the past decade. The findings reveal that LGAs have made significant progress in adopting SMPs, but challenges persist in implementing these practices effectively. The study has identified trends, challenges, and areas for improvement in the implementation of SMPs in LGAs. The study concludes that SMPs are essential for improving the performance of LGAs, but their effective implementation requires addressing the identified challenges and areas for improvement.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are made to improve the implementation of Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) in Local Government Authorities (LGAs), including investing in capacity building programs, engaging stakeholders effectively, establishing effective monitoring and evaluation systems, and demonstrating strong leadership commitment to SMPs. However, the study has limitations, including data limitations and methodological limitations. Future research directions are identified, including conducting in-depth case studies of LGAs that have successfully implemented SMPs and comparative analysis of LGAs that have implemented SMPs and those that have not. These studies can provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of SMPs in LGAs and their impact on LGA performance.

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