

# **EXPLORING THE BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN A PETROCHEMICAL ORGANISATION**

Author 1: Mr H S Ramokgadi

University of Johannesburg

Author 2: Mr D P Moreme

University of Johannesburg

Author 3: Dr D H Boikanyo

University of Johannesburg

## **Corresponding Author:**

Dr Dinko Herman Boikanyo

Department of Business Management, University of Johannesburg, Auckland Park Kingsway  
campus, D Ring 520, 1809, hermanb@uj.ac.za

Telephone number: 011 559 7446

E-mail address: hermanb@uj.ac.za

## **EXPLORING THE BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN A PETROCHEMICAL ORGANISATION**

### **ABSTRACT**

Organisations have increasingly become aware of how crucial developing strategies and plans are, in order to remain competitive. Organisations have in most cases been able to develop strategies, however one of their biggest challenges is during the implementation or execution of the set strategies. Without execution, strategies are deemed to be useless.

The aim of the study was to explore the barriers to effective implementation of strategy at a petrochemical organisation in South Africa. Based on its exploratory nature, the study was conducted using a qualitative research method. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used and the collected data was analyzed with the use of open, axial and selective coding techniques.

Four barriers to successful implementation of strategy were identified from the organisation. The barriers were lack of accountability, ineffective communication by the leaders, lack of appropriate resources and poor management of the change process.

Managerial recommendations were made to assist the organisation to overcome these barriers.

***Key words:** strategic formulation, strategy implementation, leadership, competitive advantage, performance measures, barriers.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This study focuses on exploring the barriers to effective strategy implementation in a petrochemical organisation.

The concept of strategy in business has been around for many decades and there has been a vast number of research studies and writings on the subject. A strategy is made up of an integrated set of choices about where and how to compete and it serves as a response to external opportunities and threats as well as internal strengths and weaknesses (Wells, 2012:3). Thus in order for any organisation to deliver superior sustainable business performance, it must develop good competitive strategies. According to Pisano (2015), business strategy is a commitment to a set of consistent, mutually strengthening policies or behaviours aimed at achieving a specific

competitive goal. Porter (2008) defines strategy as action plans for organisations to successfully attain their objectives. Zepša and Ribickis (2015) state that strategy identifies a pathway for an organisational development. There are various definitions of strategy, however based on a number of definitions; it is clear that when developing strategies, organisations draw a “roadmap” of where they desire to be and how they will reach the desired destination (Patten, 2015).

Strategic management is a broader term than strategy and can be viewed as a set of managerial decisions and actions of an organisation that can be used to facilitate competitive advantage and long-run superior performance over other organisations (Gamble, Peteraf & Thompson, 2016). The benefits of strategy management process are stated as improving co-ordination, controlling through reviewing performance and advancement towards achieving objectives, recognising and exploiting future markets and improving organisational performance (Aldehayyat & Anchor, 2010). Strategic planning process or strategic management is an inevitable requirement for organisations that hope to survive and flourish in the volatile 21st century environment (Schneider, 2015; Patten, 2015).

Numerous strategic management authors are in agreement on strategic management process which is, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and evaluating and controlling (Misankova and Kocisova, 2013; Gamble, Thompson & Peteraf, 2016; Van Der Merwe & Nienaber, 2013).

Abraham (2012); Gamble *et al.* (2016) and Porter (1998) all agree that within the strategy processes of planning (formulating) and implementation there are five phases. The mentioned phases are the creation of strategic vision, mission statement and core values, setting of organisational objectives, creating the strategy, implementing and executing the selected strategy and monitoring developments, assessing performance and instigating corrective adjustments. It is therefore clear that organisational strategy management requires a flow of crucial actions if an organisation is to reach its desired destination.

Venter (2014) and Ahoy (2011) posit that strategic planning (formulation) to be an intentional process in which top executives regularly would formulate the organisation’s strategy then communicate it down the organisation for implementation. Organisations also need to implement performance measurements in making sure that they are heading towards the intended strategic direction. This was supported by (Milanovic-Glavan, 2011; Uyar, 2010) who inform that every organisation ought to measure, monitor and analyse its performance.

Schneider (2015) informs that if an organisation fails to articulate strategies in a specific mainstay, this might result in flawed strategic plans thus weakening a vigorous risk mitigation

strategy. Schneider (2015) further states that a strategy which lacks fundamentals will avert an organisation from building on its strengths thus preventing it from managing its flaws, resulting in opportunities not being optimised and mitigation of strategies not being established for possible threats to the organisations. An organisation therefore needs to have a sound and exceptional strategy. This will enable the organisation to take advantage of its internal strengths and external opportunities and mitigate risks emitting from its internal weaknesses and external threats.

According to Alqahtani (2016) and Patten (2015) strategic planning (formulation) for any organisation is useless if not applied. Strategy implementation is the connecting loop between formulating and controlling strategy (Thompson and Strickland, 2014). Strategy implementation is a central ingredient of the broader strategic management process. Alqahtani (2016) further states that implementation is an essential component of the strategic planning process that requires superior attention. This was additionally supported by Patten (2015) who informs that organisations dedicate vast amount of time on developing strategic plans and often execution structure and processes are left unattended, thus creating inadequate implementation of those plans.

It is recognised that strategic formulation can be a challenging exercise. However the execution process has been identified as the major challenge to a successful strategic planning process (Radomska, 2014). Rajasekar (2014) similarly supports this by stating that eighty percent of companies have the correct strategies but only fourteen percent manage to successfully implement these strategic plans. It can thus be recognised that strategic execution is the Achilles' heel of a successful strategy management process and additional attention is warranted regarding implementation of organisational strategies. Aldehayyat and Anchor (2010) explain strategy implementation problem as an operational obstacle to goal achievement, which is understood to either have existed before implementation began and was not acknowledged or arose as an orderly reaction to circumstances of the implementation efforts due to poor preparation or systematic failure.

The study focuses on a petrochemical organisation which operates large production facilities in South Africa and supplies a range of chemicals to local and international markets. Its competitive advantage lies in its ability to implement its own strategies. Therefore, the general aim is to identify the barriers to strategy implementation and make managerial recommendations to assist the organisation in implementing the chosen strategies effectively and have a sustainable competitive advantage.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Shirley (2011), the strategy execution challenges can be summarised into three categories which are leadership roles, execution intricacies and organisational levels. The barriers of strategy implementation are related to corporate scorecard, key performance indicators, information technology, competence, performance appraisals, strategic management office, and financial support (Pella, Sumarwan, Daryanto & Kirbrandoko., 2013). The most identified critical factors associated with successful strategy implementation are systems and processes, leadership, performance measures and organisational alignment (Radomska, 2014; Patten, 2015; Ribickis, 2015 and Parisi, 2012). These are the barriers of strategy implementation that the study focused on due to the consistency in which they are mentioned by numerous authors.

### Leadership

Lussier and Achua (2010: 418) define strategic leadership as an individual's ability to foresee, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically and work with others to commence change that will produce a feasible future for the organisation. According to Lussier and Achua (2010: 419), failures of strategic leadership are contributed by top management desires to pursue personal interests and abandoning the interests of the organisation, when failure prone practices are used such as illogical organisational structures, engagement in unethical conduct and little attention is paid to productivity, quality, and innovation. Radomska (2014) informs that leadership tasks in strategy implementation process is to eradicate the gap between the strategy and employees everyday activities and to take steps in ensuring effective communication of the interrelation between operations problems and the pursue of the chosen strategic direction. Lussier and Achua (2010: 190) emphasise communication as one of the most crucial aspects of leadership. Venter (2014) states that leadership is about building relationships and this is based on communication, thus a positive relation between communication proficiency and leadership performance exists.

According to Montgomery (2012:12) leadership and strategy are inseparable. The author argues that all leaders should accept and own strategy as the heart of their responsibilities. Finkelstein, Hambrick & Cannella (2009:73) state that when formulating and implementing strategy, leaders have an impact on strategy through their personal leadership behaviour. Finkelstein *et al.* (2009:73) further suggest that leaders do not only affect organisations through their strategic choice, but also through their influence over others who make choices affecting the organisation's performance. Gamble *et al.* (2013: 227) state that for an organisation to implement its strategy in a truly competent manner and move towards operational excellence,

leaders have to take lead during the implementation process and personally drive the pace of progress. Gamble and others further explain that leaders need to be out in the field, observing for themselves how well operations are going, obtaining information first hand and measuring the progress being made. This was further highlighted by Sikomwe and Mhonde (2012), who found that relatively low leadership involvement in strategy implementation led to partial strategy success in the organisations studied. This implies that a lack of leadership involvement throughout the strategic management process hinders a successful implementation of the chosen strategy.

### **Information Technology**

Organisations are progressively applying sophisticated management information systems. These systems are to support employees with their jobs and in addition to helping the organisation's customers (Brown, 2011:197). Thus organisations need information systems to perform day to day operations. Pelsler and Prinsloo (2014) state that management of technology manages different disciplines to create strategy technological capabilities and apply them to accomplish strategic objectives. Patten (2015) informs that organisations should not only manage technology but should have a technology strategy that matches the overall strategy. According to (Brown, 2011), information technology improves that capability of an organisation to survive in a highly competitive environment. According to Gamble *et al.* (2013: 218), information systems need to cover five areas which are, customer data, operations data, employees data, suppliers/partner/collaborative ally data and financial performance data. Patten (2015) states that due to the fast pace in technological improvements, many organisations struggle to effectively manage the information technology aspects. The author further states that many organisations have excellent information technology plans, however they fail to convert these plans into a reality. Jafari (2014) informs that very few leaders understand the full degree in which their operations are relied on computer systems. Jafari (2014) further informs that the most notable approach in support of effective Information systems in strategic management is the IT strategic grid.

### **Organisational performance measurements**

According to Rastisvla and Silvia (2015) strategic performance systems are being used by a number of organisations to sustain performance planning, measurement and control. Pollanen (2014) informs that performance measures include developing quantitative indicators of performance, monitoring indicators and comparison of actual performance against strategic goals and objectives. It is now widely accepted that the use of appropriately defined measures can

guarantee the strategic alignment of the organisation and communication of the strategy (Milanovic-Glavan, 2011). Performance measures are therefore crucial as they support organisations in quantifying the organisation's position regarding its pursuing of the set strategies (Milanovic-Glavan 2011; Uyar 2010). However, Afonina (2015) reports in a study conducted that two out of sixteen management tools were found not to be aligned with performance. Milanovic- Glavan (2011) defines performance as an accomplishment of a mission measured alongside current known principles of accuracy, completeness, costs and speed. According to Peronja (2015), organisational performance is understood to have two categories, financial and non-financial organisation performance.

Traditionally performance evaluation has placed much emphasis on financial measures (Harden & Upton 2016; Ndlovu 2010; Peronja 2015; Uyar 2010). Madhavi and Prasad (2015) inform that organisations have come to understand that in order to perform well in a lively economy, wealth needs to be generated for their shareholder. The authors further state that organisations are judged to be performing well based on their financial indicators. However, in contrast (Ndlovu, 2010) informs that the financial performance evaluation is disapproved by academics and practitioners as it fails to capture important aspects of corporate performance when wealth creation is associated with intangible and non-financial resources within dynamic markets. In addition to contrasting literature regarding the success of financial performance evaluation, Lu and Taylor (2016) state that there are contradictory results between corporate sustainability performance and corporate financial performance. Ndlovu (2010) reports that developing models in performance measurements acknowledge that market changes require a different perspective to measurements. Ndlovu (2010) further states that the developing performance measurement paradigm tends to be focused around customer satisfaction, manufacturing excellence, quality, market leadership, reliability, responsiveness, technological leadership and the pursuit for greater financial results.

According to Uyar (2010) organisations in different industry are gradually applying non-financial performance measures. The author further explained non-financial measurement indicate information and analysis which are not articulated in monetary equivalency. Ndlovu (2010) and Uyar (2010) advise that organisations, instead of choosing financial or non-financial they should rather incorporate them as they complement one another. The Balance Scorecard as a performance tool is perceived to integrate both financial and non-financial performance measure. Pandit (2009) explains Balance Scorecard as a strategic planning and management tool which is intensively used by businesses in different industries to align activities of the

organisation with its vision and strategy. In addition, (Radomska, 2014) informs that balanced scorecards improve communication thus improving the strategy implementation process.

### **Organisational alignment**

According to Gupta and Singh (2014) organisations more frequently than ever before, change their business structure to adapt to the rapid environmental changes. According to Fauzi and Idris (2009) and Seip (2011), the success of strategy implementation process of an organisation is highly influenced by how healthy the company is organised. Gerow (2012) defines alignment as the level in which the needs, demands, goals, objectives and structure of one component are consistent with the needs, demands, goals, objective and structure of another component. Quiros (2009) supports this by stating that an organisation and its mechanism are means to implement strategy therefore the interactions between mechanisms imply mutual influence on each other and there is a need to adapt them to achieve intended results. Seip (2011) inform that the success of an organisation's strategy does not only entail productive competency but also include organisation's skills which are aligned with the strategies.

According to Patten (2015), critical factors of organisational alignment include having an adaptive culture and ensuring that the organisation has sufficient resources being shifted in support of strategy execution. Alfred (2014) suggests that the organisational structure is influenced by its strategies (Structure follows Strategy). Gamble and Thompson (2011) explain that structure consists of corporate hierarchy, division of labour, delegating and communications. Arabi (2012) advise that strategy implementing may involve changes in organisation's culture, structure and managerial system or maybe even a wide general change in all the mentioned fields. Gamble et al. (2013: 213) state that in the earlier implementation phase top management must determine what funding is needed to implement the new strategic plans, to support value-creating processes and to booster the organisation's capabilities and competencies. Srinivasan (2014) informs that an organisation can enhance strategy execution excellence by creating a culture of collecting and sharing best practices within and across the organisation. Quiros (2009) propose that structure, culture and strategy must be harmonised for effective organisational alignment. Pella et al. (2013) suggest that organisational culture is a vital organisation capability required to steer strategy execution and negative corporate cultures has an ability to hinder good strategy implementation. Seip (2011) explains that organisational structure should be flexible to enable it to adapt to environmental changes. Organisational structure is explained to reproduce how information and knowledge are dispersed within an organisation by so doing influencing the distribution of the business resources, the communication processes and the social interaction



between organisational members (Gupta & Singh, 2014). Seip (2011) informs that the search for the most optimal structure can be a challenging task due to the constant changes in the contemporary business environment.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The study is carried out in a petrochemical organisation which is failing in the execution of some of its strategies. It is evident that strategic plans are well formulated at the organisation, citing its current strategic plan of 2012- 2020. However, there seems to be barriers in the implementation process of these strategies as some areas have remained stagnant. One of the strategic objectives of the operations department is attaining an inclusive workforce and development of previously advantaged suppliers, however the operations are lagging behind on these objectives. The research sought to explore the barriers to execution of the strategies.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

### **Primary objective**

The main objective of this research was to explore the barriers to effective implementation of strategy at a petrochemical organisation.

### **Secondary objectives**

The secondary objectives of this study were as follows:

- Investigating the impact leadership has on achieving a successful strategy implementation.
- Understanding how organisational structure can be effectively managed in support of the strategy implementation process.
- Investigating to what extent Information and Technology enable business to attain their strategic objectives
- Understanding how performance measures can be used to improve the strategy implementation process.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study was conducted within a single business unit of a petrochemical organisation with no intention to generalise the findings. The study was of an exploratory nature and was therefore conducted using the qualitative approach. Qualitative approach is selected over quantitative due to the chosen interpretivism paradigm. Saunders, Thornhill and Lewis (2016) posit that qualitative research emphasises the quality of entities, processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency.

Therefore, qualitative approach was selected due to this study involving executives' and managers' views and perceptions which could be subjective due to variances regarding their background, cultures and social settings.

Purposeful sampling was used and the sample size was limited to two senior managers, two managers and six senior employees; this was based on the availability and willingness to participate.

The research data was collected using face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Bryman and Bell (2017) informs that semi structured interviews consist of interactional exchange of dialogue, thematic, topic-centred, narrative approach where the researcher has topics they wish to cover, but with a fluid and flexible structure. Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher could identify patterns. The interview data collection method assisted the researchers in understanding management and senior employees' realities with regards to execution of set strategies.

Content analysis was utilised regarding the study. Bhattacharjee (2012) posits that content analysis is a systematic analysis of the content of a text in a quantitative or qualitative manner. Bhattacharjee (2012) recommends the following steps for effective content analysis. The data analysis process of the study included three circles of coding. The data analysis commenced with open coding. The open coding process entailed creation of categories relating to certain sections of the text (Babbie & Mouton, 2015: 499). The second phase of coding involved axial coding, during axial coding the data obtained from open coding was placed back in a new method by making connections amongst categories (Babbie & Mouton, 2015: 500). Lastly selective coding was performed where essential categories were selected and analytically relating them to other categories (Babbie & Mouton, 2015: 500).

The organisation had granted permission for the study to be conducted. All participants were asked to suggest convenient places where the interviews could be conducted. All eight participants gave consent to audio recording and for the notes to be taken. All interviews took place at the participant's work offices.

Multiple techniques were utilized to ensure the credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity of the study, and in doing so ensure overall trustworthiness (Saunders et al., 2016). To satisfy the criteria of transferability and authenticity, a thick, descriptive background to the research was created. To this end, the discussion guide and a coherent explanation of the data analysis process followed were included. Comprehensive descriptions of the firms and individual participants were also included. To ensure confirmability, triangulation was employed to establish a clear link between the collected data and the reviewed literature. Finally, dependability was ensured by creating comprehensive

descriptions of the research design, the manner of its implementation, and the nature of the data collection.

## **RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

The participants of the study all have tertiary education ranging from MBAs, Honours degrees and Bachelor degrees. Their roles at the organisation range from supply chain business partner, supply chain analyst and managing executive. The level of knowledge and capability further validates the study. The open coding stemmed sixty-three categories from all the data collected. Axial coding reduced the categories to twenty-three and after the selective coding, four themes were identified.

### **Theme 1: Lack of accountability hinders the implementation process**

The mechanisms put in place with the intention of promoting implementation of obtaining BEE inclined suppliers have gaps. This happens when tasks are performed accordingly, however when these tasks move through the value chain of the company, ownership of execution is non-existent. One department would inform another department that final execution does not fall within that particular space. This had left this particular objective floating around with no human resource taking ownership for its execution.

The organisation has performance measures in place such as KPIs and employee contracts, however the current system of scoring or weighting does not promote accountability as the weights seem to inform employees of the importance of certain strategies. BEE inclined suppliers and diversity objectives have low weights which seem to inform employees that are tasked to execute these objective, that it might be optional to implement and achieve the said objective as the implications of not achieving these objectives hold minor consequences.

### **This below interview extracts validates this claim**

*SMI- there should be greater consequences on not achieving the targets especially regarding to employment equity, BEE and inclusiveness.*

*RI – so you are saying that the strategy does filter down and objectives are aligned to employees' contracts; it is just the consequence of not meeting those objectives that is a problem?*

*SMI- Yes, the weighting needs to be changed or the approach of the weights. As a senior manager I might apply it prudently because it matters to me, but the next senior manager may*

*not apply it the same, so it boils down to the application of the contracts and weighting that needs to change.*

**RI-** *Do you think there might be leadership approaches and actions at the company that might contribute towards hindering the achievement of set objectives such as Diversity, BEE and EE?*

**EMPI-** *well in terms of achieving set objectives and leadership approach what I have realised is that some things are important and some are not important. Our operations department has set objectives on BEE and every month I develop a report as a way to contribute towards achieving the objective and every month nothing happens with that report.*

## **Theme 2: Ineffective leadership communication is a barrier to strategy implementation.**

There is lack of understanding of how important the set objectives are, especially regarding diversity and BEE. The communication from top level management is that they are important, however the lack of resources and consequence of not achieving these particular objectives seem to suggest that, they are not as important. The actions of leadership seem to suggest that the achievement of these objectives is not a priority.

There is lack of performance reflection, meaning that the company does not practice reflecting on previous years. Reflection would provide employees or departments with input of what went wrong and why it went wrong, so they may be able to understand the needed improvements.

### **The below interview extract validates this claim**

**EMPI** – *The company uses a model where they develop key performance indicators which are normally derived from the group strategy. Every year the company comes up with a strategy and what happens is that on a business unit point of view, that strategy will then be brought down to departmental level, then it will be brought down to individual level. The problem that I have noticed is that every year we would draw up our departmental strategies but when the next financial year follows we do not reflect on those previous strategies. Then once again when the new financial year begins we just continue and develop new strategies for that year without having to look back on the previous year's strategies or reflect on the previous ones. It would appear that we do not have measures in place that will guide us and make us aware if we are meeting targets and where we are not and how we are going to improve on that.*

### **Theme 3- Lack of appropriate resources**

The organisation is lacking in terms of processes, systems and tools that can assist in tracking the implementation of the set objectives. The current information systems seem to fail to deliver what was said it would. Employees believe that there is lack of support in terms of information management. The company's leadership sets objectives, however they lack the ability to foresee the crucial technologies and resources needed to implement the set objectives. The lack of resources discourages employees thus weakening the implementation process of set objectives.

#### **The below interview extract validates this claim**

*R1- can you please elaborate on leadership approaches and actions that you believe might be barriers to implementing the set objectives*

*SM2 – the inability in making sure that you just not only have set goals but you also have supporting processes and tools that make sure that these goals or objectives can be achieved or will be achieved. You also need to make sure that you have resources allocated in making sure that you will achieve your objectives. When you set up a strategy, you need to make sure that you have resources and structure that are aligned to strategy*

### **Theme 4: Lack of good change management hinders implementation of strategy**

In the past few years, the organisation has been going through a restructuring that has created anxiety and uneasiness to some of its employees. The company later after a huge restructuring started implementing new information system, this seem to have added more anxiety to its employees. The timing of implementing new systems seemed inappropriate and displayed bad management of change. These changes are believed to have added to the barriers of successfully implementing set strategies or objectives.

#### **The below interview extract validates this claim**

*R1 – In your opinion how has information technology contributed in assisting with the successful implementation of your departmental objectives or do you perhaps believe that it has hindered the process itself, has it been helpful or it has created problems somewhat?*

*SMI – information technology is broad, so there are elements of it that I personally appreciate which I encourage staff to take advantage of but then you will find that there are systems or that they haven't heard of the system or it's just that they are intimidated by the systems and they do not use them. There have been new systems that have been implemented with good intention but the delivery of it did not meet the expectations. The system has created problems for my department to a point where we are actually worse off than before the implementation of the system. The problem I believe stems from the timing of the implementation of the system, this happened at a time when we were going through restructuring so it was generally bad timing. The other problem is the understanding of the functionality of the systems so we implemented all these systems but partially because there are still some of the applications of the system that are not functional.*

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Every organisation that intends to remain competitive needs a strategic plan. The notion of strategic planning seems to be well understood, however implementation of these plans still defy most organisations. The aim of the study was to explore the barriers of effective strategy implementation within a petrochemical organisation. The South African petrochemical organisation was used to conduct the study. Previous studies identified leadership, performance measurements, information technology and organisational alignment as some of the barriers of effective strategic implementation. The findings of the study yielded additional dynamics which contribute as barriers to successful execution of chosen strategies. These dynamics are lack of accountability, ineffective leadership communication, lack of appropriate resources and inappropriate management of change.

Conclusion regarding the objective of the study

- Investigate the impact leadership has on achieving a successful strategy implementation. The leadership understood the importance of achieving the set objective and have been able to successfully draw remarkable strategic plans, however their action seemed to propose that certain set objective are not vital. The communication from top down was unclear and the importance of achieving the set objectives got lost. When leadership failed to own and drive the set objectives, the implementation or execution process was compromised reducing the chances of success.

- Understanding how organisational structure can be effectively managed in support of the strategy implementation process.

The corporate structure went through a huge restructuring which filled the organisation's employees with uncertainty and in some extent confidence in top level management was lost. The organisation's inability to manage this change has contributed negatively on employees' efforts and morale.

- Investigate to what extent Information and Technology enable business to attain their strategic objectives.

The organisation had different information systems in place; however, these IT systems were not aligned to business needs. The organisation appeared to use the push rather than the pull approach. Technology seemed to be driving the business instead of business driving technology, hence the feeling amongst management that the available systems were not enabling business to attain its strategic objective.

- Understand how performance measures can be used to improve the strategy implementation process.

The organisation has performance measures in place, however the allocation of weights or scores left a lot to be desired. The allocation of weighting on performance measures appeared to cause miscommunication between top management and employees. Some strategic objectives had the lowest weights or score thus creating a perception that these objectives are inconsequential.

## **PRACTICAL MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

At each level, leadership need to clearly define the goals of the organisation to their employees and their role in achieving those goals. Leadership need to clearly and effectively communicate the reasons behind set objective. A clear picture of why the organisation need to pursue the planned objective need to be presented to all employees in order to avoid misunderstandings regarding the importance of objective.

Managers have to manage the whole change process in order to implement strategy effectively by using proper change management processes. Effective change management will not only remove all the concerns, but it will help keep them to an acceptable level and will allow the organisation to continue without significant loss of productivity.

Managers should make it possible for the employees to take part in the planning process and also take into account the suggestions of all those stake-holders who are going to be affected by the change. Participating in the planning process will help the employees to be clear about their roles and the goals of organisation.

The performance contracts of the employees need to be aligned with the strategic objectives. Employees must be accountable for not achieving their defined tasks. There should be a full mechanism for accountability so that employees may be evaluated, and be penalized or rewarded accordingly.

Once clear communication by leadership is accomplished and all employees understand why certain strategic objective are chosen, this could improve employees' morale as they will have a view of the 'bigger picture'. Based on the literature reviewed, leaders need to be constantly involved during the execution phase of the chosen objective, this enables them to identify gaps such as inadequate resources. The reviewed literature informs that Information Technology is crucial in achieving set objective, the organisation's top management team needs to ensure that the systems empower its employees and not frustrate them. This could be achieved through systems training.

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