

# Influence of Strategic Organizational Leadership on Project Implementation in Turkana County: A Case of Lokado in Turkana West Sub-County, Kenya.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of strategic organizational leadership on project implementation in Turkana County, Kenya, with a specific focus on the case of the Lotus Kenya Action for Development Organization (LOKADO) in Turkana West Sub-County. The primary objective was to examine how strategic organisation leadership influence the successful execution of NGO-led projects in resource-constrained settings. A descriptive research design was employed. The study targeted a population of 300 LOKADO employees and selected community members from the area where LOKADO is operating, from which a stratified random sample size of 171 respondents was selected. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and key informant interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression analysis, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. The findings revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship between strategic leadership practices and effective project implementation ( $r = 0.750$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Visionary leadership, participatory decision-making, and efficient resource mobilization were identified as the most influential factors contributing to project success. However, several challenges namely, donor dependency, frequent leadership turnover, and limited capacity-building efforts were found to impede optimal implementation. The study concludes that strategic organizational leadership plays a crucial role in aligning project objectives with community needs, enhancing accountability mechanisms, and ensuring the sustainability of outcomes. It recommends that NGOs enhance leadership capacities through continuous professional development, institutionalize inclusive decision-making frameworks, and pursue funding diversification strategies to reduce project disruptions. These findings hold significant implications for policy development, donor engagement, and organizational strategy within NGOs operating in marginalized and resource-limited contexts.

**Keywords:** Strategic leadership, Project implementation, NGO management, Turkana County, LOKADO, Organizational culture

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the success of project implementation by providing vision, direction, and an enabling environment for achieving organizational objectives. In the context of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), effective strategic leadership involves not only aligning projects with an organization's mission but also adapting to dynamic environmental, socio-economic, and cultural conditions. As Mena and Hilhorst (2021) note, project execution requires continuous monitoring and controlling to identify deviations from plans and implement corrective measures. However, without strong leadership to guide decision-making, allocate resources, and mobilize stakeholders, such mechanisms often fail to deliver optimal results.

Existing literature acknowledges the importance of leadership styles, sponsor expertise, and organizational culture in influencing project outcomes (Ardi et al., 2020; Li et al., 2019). Yet, much of this research focuses on leadership capabilities in isolation, neglecting the influence of contextual factors such as cultural dynamics, industry-specific challenges, and environmental stressors. In developing and resource-constrained contexts like Turkana County strategic leaders face additional hurdles, including funding limitations, donor dependency, and extreme climatic events that disrupt operations (Chen et al., 2021; Aadhar & Mishra, 2022).

Furthermore, while adaptive and collaborative leadership approaches have been shown to enhance project resilience and innovation, there is limited investigation into their role within NGOs operating in marginalized regions. The coordination of multiple stakeholder's government agencies, donors, and local communities remains a leadership challenge that directly affects efficiency and sustainability. Addressing these gaps requires exploring how strategic organizational leadership can drive project success by integrating adaptive management, stakeholder engagement, and innovative resource mobilization, particularly in complex environments such as Turkana West Sub-County.

### Statement of the Problem

Project implementation within non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in marginalized regions such as Turkana County continues to face significant challenges despite considerable investments from donors, development partners, and government agencies. **While the Lotus Kenya Action for Development Organization (LOKADO)** has undertaken various interventions in food security, water access, education, and conflict mitigation, the translation of strategic plans into tangible and sustainable outcomes has been inconsistent (LOKADO, 2023). Persistent issues such as delays, inefficient resource utilization, weak stakeholder coordination, and limited adaptability to changing socio-economic and environmental conditions undermine project success (Muthivha 2022).

There is limited research which has shown that strategic organizational leadership through setting a compelling vision, mobilizing resources, motivating teams, and fostering stakeholder engagement is a key driver of project success Ananyi & Ololube (2023). However, in many NGOs, leadership practices tend to be reactive rather than proactive, heavily dependent on donor priorities, and insufficiently adapted to local realities Salem, Quaquebeke & Besiou (2022). In Turkana West Sub-County, these weaknesses are exacerbated by logistical challenges, harsh climatic conditions, cultural complexities, and frequent disruptions caused by insecurity and migratory patterns (Gok. 2022). Despite the global and national evidence linking leadership to project performance, there is limited empirical research on the specific influence of strategic organizational leadership within NGOs operating in arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya. This knowledge gap limits effective policy formulation and leadership capacity-building in such contexts. Without understanding the leadership factors that drive or hinder implementation, NGO projects risk remaining fragmented, unsustainable, and misaligned with community needs (World Bank, 2020).

### Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to assess the influence of strategic organizational leadership on project implementation at LOKADO in Turkana West Sub-County.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Empirical evidence consistently links strategic organizational leadership to improved project implementation outcomes in NGOs, though persistent gaps in vision clarity, communication, and empowerment hinder success. Jones and George (2020), in a survey of 120 NGOs across East Africa, reported that 67% of staff experienced uncertainty over project priorities due to inconsistent leadership communication. Their multivariate analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between vision ambiguity and project success ( $\beta = -0.41$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, Martinsuo and Ahola (2017) found that reactive leadership in volatile environments reduced project success rates by 23% compared to proactive, structured approaches.

Leadership communication and empowerment emerged as critical enablers. Korsakienė et al. (2020), through interviews and organizational data analysis, showed that ineffective communication and low team empowerment led to a 30% drop in staff implementation indicators, while clear goal cascades improved coordination and reduced resource duplication.

Administrative structures also shape implementation outcomes. Korsakienė et al. (2020) found that excessive hierarchy slowed decision-making in crisis contexts, while flatter structures increased adaptability by 1.7 times

( $p < 0.05$ ). Jones and George (2020) observed that although bureaucratic systems improved compliance, they restricted innovation and staff autonomy, contributing to stagnation in 40% of reviewed projects. RezaHoseini et al. (2020) similarly noted that decentralized decision-making improved responsiveness by 18% across multi-dimensional success metrics.

Troubleshooting capacity is another determinant. Nanono (2022) reported that NGOs with formalized problem-solving protocols resolved operational bottlenecks 28% faster and achieved higher completion rates. Hansbrough and Schyns (2018) found that structured root-cause methods improved issue prevention, while Puni et al. (2018) linked inadequate communication channels to escalated project risks ( $\beta = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Bratton (2020) highlighted that weak organizational learning systems led to repeated mistakes in over 40% of subsequent projects.

Community participation significantly influences sustainability. Kebede (2021) found that projects failing to integrate community priorities achieved 31% lower success rates. Douglas et al. (2022) reported that underrepresentation of women and youth reduced project relevance, while Hassan et al. (2017) showed that excluding local labour increased costs by 22% and reduced continuity by 17%. Wanjia (2017) further observed that weak capacity-building continuity limited post-project impact.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Transformational leadership theory, first introduced by Downton (1973), emphasizes a leader's capacity to inspire and motivate followers to transcend their personal interests for the benefit of the organization. Burns (1978) advanced this concept by distinguishing between transactional and transformational leadership, arguing that transformational leaders aim to elevate both themselves and their followers through engagement with shared values, a collective vision, and long-term goals. Bass (1985) further operationalized the theory by developing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), identifying four core components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

In project management contexts, transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in influencing outcomes. Zwikaël and Meredith (2019) emphasize that in dynamic and complex project environments, transformational leaders set a compelling vision, foster innovation, motivate teams, and drive positive organizational change. Within non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in fragile contexts such as Turkana County, this leadership style is particularly relevant. Leaders who articulate a clear mission can mobilize staff commitment and sustain implementation momentum despite challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, scarce resources, and cultural diversity.

Unegbu, Yawas, and Dan-asabe (2020) highlight that transformational leaders cultivate dedication and resilience by providing individualized support, encouraging problem-solving, and adapting leadership styles to the local socio-cultural context. This study applies the theory as a lens to examine how leadership influences project implementation in NGOs like LOKADO, where project success relies on both inspirational leadership and locally responsive strategies.

Transformational leadership also fosters innovation and critical thinking within teams, enabling NGOs in resource-constrained settings to address complex and evolving challenges. Nguyen and Akhavian (2019) argue that this leadership style promotes continuous improvement, adaptability, and responsiveness to change, which are essential for sustaining impact. Similarly, Viswanathan, Tripathi, and Jha (2019) stress the value of visionary leadership in aligning project objectives with organizational missions, ensuring staff work with a strong sense of purpose and direction. Shrimali (2018) adds that transformational leaders motivate teams through effective communication and by setting high expectations, thereby enhancing employee commitment and performance.

Furthermore, stakeholder engagement is a critical dimension of transformational leadership. Auster, Barr, and Brazier (2022) observe that transformational leaders actively listen to and address stakeholder concerns, thereby fostering trust, legitimacy, and cooperation all of which are essential for successful project delivery. Mwakajo and Kidombo (2017) note that such leaders also create an enabling culture for innovation, empowering teams to

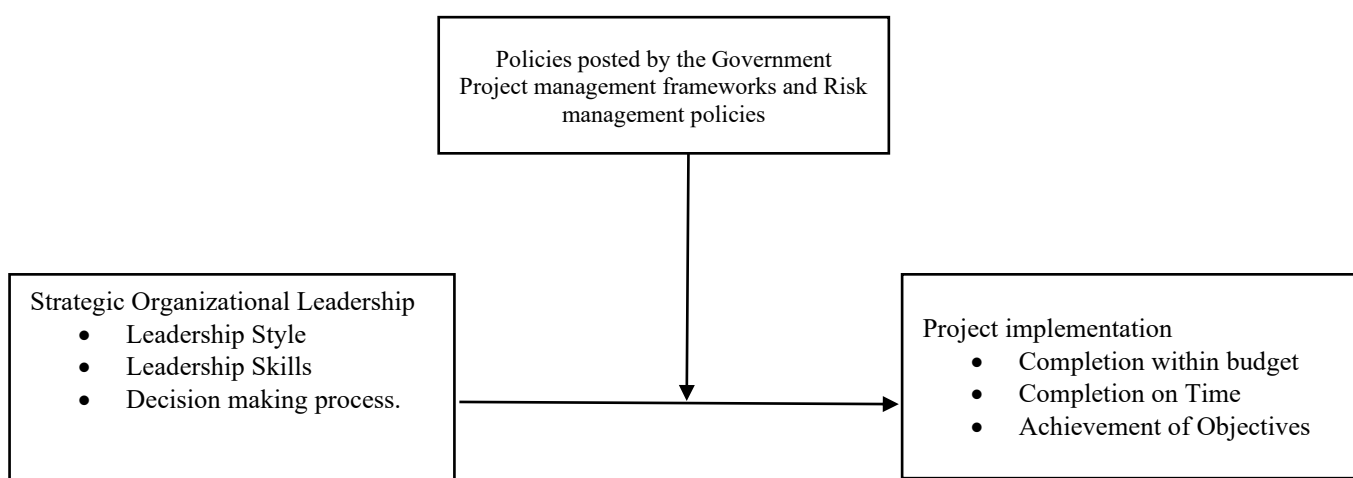
develop creative solutions and adapt strategies throughout the project cycle. Transformational leadership theory underscores the significance of inspiration, empowerment, innovation, and supportive organizational climates Gachira & Ntara (2024). In the context of Turkana County NGOs, transformational leadership positively shapes organizational factors such as team cohesion, adaptability, accountability, and stakeholder inclusiveness. These factors are fundamental in achieving sustainable and community-driven project outcomes.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework is shown in the figure 2.1. It consists of independent, dependent and moderating variables. The independent variables consist of organizational factors such as Strategic organizational leadership. The dependent variable was project implementation in the organization and moderating variables are government policies, project management frameworks and risk management policies.

Independent variables (s) Moderating variables Dependent variable (s)

**Figure 2. 1** Conceptual framework



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was adopted to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. This approach was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to provide a systematic and factual description of the current state of organizational factors and their influence on project implementation at LOKADO Casteel & Bridier (2021). The design incorporated the essential components of the research process, including data collection procedures, measurement tools, and data analysis techniques. The target population was 300 respondents consisted of employees and community members linked to LOKADO, UNHCR. (2022). However, the sample size of the target population was 171. Furthermore, the main instrument of data collection was a questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Gender of Respondents

Gender is a critical demographic variable that can influence access to opportunities, leadership roles, and perspectives on organizational practices. This study aimed to determine the level of inclusivity and gender parity within project implementation teams. The findings are shown in Table 4.1

**Table 4.1** Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	91	53.2

Female	80	46.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2024)

As shown in Table 4.1, the sample had a relatively balanced gender representation, with 53.2% male and 46.8% female respondents. This suggests that both genders were fairly represented in project implementation roles within the study area.

### Age of Respondents

The age of respondents can influence work experience, adaptability to change, and leadership responsibilities. This study assessed whether project implementation is primarily driven by youth, middle-aged, or older staff. The distribution of respondents by age group is presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2** Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Below 25 years	24	14.0
25–35 years	58	33.9
36–45 years	61	35.7
Above 45 years	28	16.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2024)

Table 4.2 indicates that respondents aged 36–45 years formed the largest group ( $n = 61$ , 35.7%), followed closely by those aged 25–35 years ( $n = 58$ , 33.9%). Respondents aged above 45 years accounted for 16.4% ( $n = 28$ ), while the youngest group, below 25 years, comprised 14.0% ( $n = 24$ ).

### Work Experience of Respondents

The working experience of respondents is presented in Table 4.3. In table 4.3 the results show that the majority of respondents ( $n = 59$ , 34.5%) had between 6 and 10 years of experience, closely followed by those with 1–5 years ( $n = 58$ , 33.9%). A notable proportion ( $n = 28$ , 16.4%) had worked for over 10 years, suggesting a considerable level of organizational tenure among the respondents.

**Table 4.3** Work experience of Respondents

Work experience of respondents	Frequency	Percent (%)
Less than 1 year	26	15.2
1–5 years	58	33.9
6–10 years	59	34.5
More than 10 years	28	16.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2024)



## Project Affiliation of Respondents

The study also sought the project affiliation of the respondents and the results are shown in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4** Distribution of Respondents by Program/Project Affiliation

Program/Project Affiliation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Cross-border Sport for Peace	29	17.0
Cross-border Trauma Healing & Social Reconciliation	46	26.9
Governance	62	36.3
Community Management of Disaster Risk Reduction	34	19.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2024)

As indicated in Table 4.4, Governance was the most represented program ( $n = 62$ , 36.3%), followed by Trauma Healing ( $n = 46$ , 26.9%), Disaster Risk Reduction ( $n = 34$ , 19.9%), and Sport for Peace ( $n = 29$ , 17.0%). This distribution highlights the diversity in programmatic focus among the respondents.

## Education Level of respondents

The study assessed the education level of respondents to understand their capacity to interpret project frameworks, contribute to planning, and implement technical components effectively. The findings are shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5** Education level of respondents

Highest Level of Education	Frequency	Percent (%)
Secondary Certificate	4	2.3
Certificate	14	8.2
Diploma	69	40.4
Undergraduate Degree	62	36.3
Master's Degree	22	12.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field data (2024)

The results in table 4.5 shows that majority of the respondents have diplomas ( $n = 69$ , 40.4%) followed by undergraduate degree ( $n = 62$ , 36.3%), reflecting a moderately skilled workforce. A smaller percentage had postgraduate qualifications ( $n = 22$ , 12.9%), with minimal representation from certificate ( $n = 14$ , 8.2%) and secondary level ( $n = 4$ , 2.3%) holders.

## Influence of Strategic Organizational Leadership on Project Implementation

The role of strategic organizational leadership whether influences project implementation at LOKADO, the results are shown in table 4.6.

The results in in table 4.6 shows that strategic leadership practices and their influence on project implementation, with an overall mean score of  $M = 3.40$  ( $SD = 0.902$ ). The highest-rated item, 'Our leaders involve staff in decision-making' ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ), highlights a positive perception of participatory leadership. Similarly,

‘Our leaders clearly define the organization’s vision and mission’ scored highly ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ), reflecting clarity in project direction. Moderate agreement was observed on leadership qualities such as ‘transformational leadership style’ ( $M = 3.67$ ) and ‘receptiveness to employee ideas and thoughts’ ( $M = 3.68$ ), suggesting areas for potential improvement in visionary and collaborative leadership. This finding resonates with Northouse (2018), who asserts that clarity of vision is a core element of strategic leadership, guiding project success.

Conversely, the lowest-rated statements were ‘Leaders mentor junior staff to enhance their professional and personal development’ ( $M = 2.39$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ) and ‘Organizations offer coaching programs to enhance staff skills’ ( $M = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ). These consistently low scores, along with relatively low standard deviations, point to significant perceived gaps in leadership support for professional development and capacity building among staff. The item ‘Our leaders ensure staff motivation through incentives’ ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ) also reflects mixed views, indicating inconsistent or inadequate motivational project. This mirrors findings by Armstrong and Taylor (2020), who stress that effective leadership must integrate coaching and mentoring as tools for staff growth. While the overall mean score suggests moderate satisfaction, strong areas like decision-making and vision-setting are offset by perceived weaknesses in mentoring, coaching, and staff motivation systems.

**Table 4.6:** strategic Organizational Leadership and Project Implementation

Statement	VU	U	N	I	VI	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Our leaders clearly define the organization’s vision and mission	0 (0.0%)	9 (5.3%)	11 (6.4%)	112 (65.5%)	39 (22.8%)	4.06	0.71
leaders set realistic goals	0 (0.0%)	11 (6.4%)	23 (13.5%)	111 (64.9%)	26 (15.2%)	3.89	0.73
Our leaders have the necessary skills to lead the organization	0 (0.0%)	7 (4.1%)	18 (10.5%)	89 (52.0%)	57 (33.3%)	3.39	1.06
Our leaders involve staff in decision-making	0 (0.0%)	11 (6.4%)	5 (2.9%)	90 (52.6%)	65 (38.5%)	4.22	0.79
Transformational leadership style	0 (0.0%)	41 (24.0%)	12 (7.0%)	81 (47.4%)	37 (21.6%)	3.67	1.07
Our leaders are receptive to employee ideas and thoughts	0 (0.0%)	40 (23.4%)	11 (6.4%)	84 (49.1%)	36 (21.1%)	3.68	1.06
Our leaders ensure staff motivation through incentives	0 (0.0%)	22 (12.9%)	7 (4.1%)	78 (45.6%)	64 (37.4%)	3.34	1.11
The relationship between our organization’s leaders and employees is positive	0 (0.0%)	11 (6.4%)	37 (21.6%)	71 (41.5%)	52 (30.4%)	3.24	0.96
Our leaders foster creativity and innovation among the staff	0 (0.0%)	7 (4.1%)	17 (9.9%)	82 (48.0%)	65 (38.0%)	3.18	1.00
Leaders in our organization mentor junior staff to enhance their professional and personal development	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	16 (9.4%)	24 (14.0%)	130 (76.0%)	2.39	0.75
Organizations offer coaching programs to enhance staff skills	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	25 (14.6%)	127 (74.3%)	18 (10.8%)	2.37	0.70
<b>Overall Mean</b>						<b>3.40</b>	<b>0.902</b>

**Source:** Field data (2024)

The inferential statistical analyses were conducted to determine the combined and individual effects of strategic leadership on project implementation at LOKADO. Based on the objective of the study both Pearson correlation

analyses and Multiple Linear Regression analysis were employed. Pearson correlation analyses were initially conducted to examine the bivariate relationships between each independent variable and project implementation. Subsequently, a Multiple Linear Regression analysis was as performed to assess the combined predictive power of these three independent variables on the single dependent variable, project implementation, and to ascertain the unique contribution of each predictor.

### Pearson Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the direct linear relationships between each independent variable (strategic leadership) and the dependent variable, project implementation, at LOKADO. The results are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7** Pearson Correlation Between strategic Leadership and Project Implementation

Variables	Strategic Leadership	Implementation
Strategic Leadership	1.000	0.750
<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	-	0.001
<i>N</i>	171	171

**Source:** Field data (2024)

Table 4.7 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient (*r*) between strategic leadership and project implementation is 0.750. This indicates a strong positive linear relationship. The two-tailed significance value (*p*) is 0.001. As  $p < .05$  (and even  $p < .01$ ), this correlation is highly statistically significant. This finding suggests a strong direct positive linear association, indicating that higher levels of strategic leadership are strongly associated with better project implementation.

Recent empirical studies strengthen this evidence. Alqatawna (2022) found a significant positive correlation between strategic leadership and project success in development organizations, suggesting that leaders who engage in participatory decision-making and vision-sharing drive stronger implementation outcomes. Likewise, Dinh *et al.* (2023) demonstrated that strategic leadership fosters organizational adaptability, which in turn enhances project delivery in complex and uncertain environments. Additionally, Ahmed and Shepherd (2020) emphasize that leadership practices directly correlate with effective project outcomes, especially when leaders invest in communication, collaboration, and staff empowerment.

### Multiple Regression Coefficients

Multiple Regression Coefficients was applied in order to sought out the individual effects of Predictors on Project Implementation (Regression Coefficients). The individual contributions of organizational culture, human resources, and strategic leadership to project implementation within the multiple regression model were assessed through their regression coefficients and the results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8** Multiple Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig. ( <i>p</i> -value)	95% Confidence Interval for <i>B</i>
	<i>B</i>		<i>Beta</i>			Lower Bound
(Constant)	1.900	0.559	–	3.398	0.001	–



Organizational Culture	0.032	0.103	0.023	0.309	0.758	-0.205
Human Resources	0.142	0.048	0.129	1.716	0.048	0.000
Strategic Leadership	0.276	0.087	0.238	3.190	0.002	0.120

**Dependent Variable:** Project Implementation

**Source:** Field data (2024)

The individual regression coefficients within this multiple linear regression model provided insights into the unique contribution of each predictor, while controlling for the effects of the other predictors. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B$ ) for organizational culture was 0.032, indicating a very weak positive relationship with project implementation. However, this effect was not statistically significant ( $t = 0.309$ ,  $p = 0.758$ ). The 95% Confidence Interval for  $B$  was  $[-0.205, 0.212]$ , which includes zero, further reinforcing the lack of a statistically significant individual effect of organizational culture on project implementation when controlling for human resources and strategic leadership. The standardized beta coefficient ( $\beta=0.023$ ) suggests a negligible unique contribution. Human resources demonstrated a statistically significant positive influence on project implementation. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.142$ ) indicates that for every unit increase in human resource factors, project implementation is expected to increase by 0.142 units, assuming organizational culture and strategic leadership remain constant. This effect was statistically significant ( $t = 1.716$ ,  $p = 0.048$ ). The 95% Confidence Interval for  $B$  was  $[0.000, 0.331]$ , which does not include zero, supporting a significant positive effect. The standardized beta coefficient ( $\beta=0.129$ ) suggests a relatively small but significant unique contribution.

Strategic leadership also exerted a statistically significant positive influence on project implementation. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.276$ ) suggests that a unit increase in strategic leadership is associated with a 0.276 unit increase in project implementation, when organizational culture and human resources are held constant. This relationship was statistically significant ( $t = 3.190$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), indicating that strategic leadership is a strong and significant predictor of project implementation. The standardized beta coefficient ( $\beta=0.238$ ) highlights a moderate unique effect size, and the 95% Confidence Interval for  $B$  was  $[0.120, 0.461]$ , which does not include zero, further confirming the significant positive direction of its effect.

The unstandardized coefficient for the constant ( $\beta_0=1.900$ ) indicates the predicted value of project implementation when all independent variables (organizational culture, human resources, and strategic leadership) are zero. This constant was statistically significant ( $p=0.001$ ).

These results align with broader empirical evidence. For example, Mwajuma and Kihara (2025) found that strategic direction and human capital development significantly predict non-profit performance in Kenya, with comparable correlation strengths. Similarly, Alqatawna (2022) reported that leadership behaviors like goal alignment and participative decision-making were significant drivers of project success. Muriithia & Muriuki (2024) also documented the critical influence of strategic leadership on NGO performance in humanitarian settings.

### Multiple Linear Regression Model Equation.

Based on the unstandardized coefficients from Table 4.14, the multiple linear regression model can be formulated as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- $Y$  = Project Implementation (Dependent Variable)
- $\beta_0$  = Intercept (Constant)
- $X_1$  = Organizational Culture
- $X_2$  = Human Resources
- $X_3$  = Strategic Leadership
- $\epsilon$  = Error term

Substituting the calculated coefficients:

$$\text{Project Implementation (Y)} = 1.900 + 0.032(\text{Organizational Culture}) + 0.142(\text{Human Resources}) + 0.276(\text{Strategic Leadership}) + \epsilon$$

The study found out that strategic leadership has a strong, positive influence on project implementation at LOKADO. Most respondents agreed that leaders clearly define the vision and mission (mean = 4.06) and set realistic goals (mean = 3.89). Participative decision-making scored highest (mean = 4.22), with 91.1% affirming active staff involvement. However, mentorship (mean = 2.39) and coaching (mean = 2.37) scored low, indicating gaps in structured guidance.

Regression analysis confirmed a statistically significant effect of strategic leadership ( $B = 0.276$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ;  $r = 0.750$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), meaning improvements in leadership quality directly enhance project outcomes.

Qualitative data reinforced these findings: staff valued leaders' vision and inclusivity, which boosted ownership and morale, but noted a lack of formal mentorship programs. The results align with Transformational Leadership Theory, highlighting vision, inspiration, and participation as key strengths, while Situational Leadership Theory suggests tailoring guidance to staff needs could further improve implementation.

Regression analysis confirmed a strong, statistically significant influence of strategic leadership on project outcomes ( $B = 0.276$ ,  $t = 3.190$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), supported by a strong Pearson correlation ( $r = 0.750$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Qualitative insights echoed these results, showing that inclusive leadership fosters ownership, morale, and smoother project execution, whereas unclear or non-participative approaches cause confusion and low morale.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the influence of strategic leadership on project implementation within the Lotus Kenya Action for Development Organization (LOKADO). The findings indicate that elements of strategic leadership—particularly a clear organizational vision, goal-setting, and participatory decision-making—significantly contribute to the successful execution of projects. Nonetheless, the study identified gaps in mentorship and coaching, highlighting the need for more structured staff development initiatives.

The results demonstrate a strong positive correlation between leadership effectiveness and project outcomes, lending empirical support to both Transformational Leadership Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV). Specifically, the findings underscore the strategic value of vision clarity, employee involvement, and robust human resource practices in enhancing organizational performance.

While the study was limited to a single organization and relied on self-reported data, it offers practical recommendations for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) seeking to strengthen leadership and HR strategies. Key among these is the enhancement of strategic leadership capacity and the development of internal systems to support project implementation.

To improve development outcomes in Turkana West Sub-County, the study recommends greater collaboration between the County Government and NGOs to ensure alignment of project activities with county priorities.

Furthermore, the NGO Coordination Board is encouraged to revise its policies to promote accountability, transparency, and effective leadership through regular assessments, reviews, and capacity-building initiatives.

Future research should expand the scope to include multiple organizations, consider external contextual factors, and examine the long-term impact of leadership practices particularly mentorship and coaching on project sustainability and success.

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