

Organization, People And Skills As An Enabler For Strategy Execution In Municipalities In South Africa

J. H. Leibbrandt, North-West University, South Africa

C. J. Botha, North-West University, South Africa

ABSTRACT

The formal organizational structure, including the control systems, is an important factor in strategy execution. The structure can be defined as the relationship between tasks, individuals, and formal and informal channels.

Getting things done in many organizations feels like walking in quicksand; there are too many meetings, too many reports, too much information and too many stakeholders. Business processes are not effective and decisions are delayed or unclear. Organizations are more and more complex and municipalities present the same trend and complexity currently. People and their skills are becoming an even higher strategic element in executing strategy in this complex environment.

Well-aligned business processes are crucial for the strategy execution process. Organizational restructuring will not automatically lead to improved performance and is not a quick solution. People with the right skills, capabilities and attitude toward execution are key and even when an organizational structure is not perfect, they will perform and deliver what is expected.

Keywords: Organization; People; Skills Strategy Execution; Municipalities

INTRODUCTION

*A*ntunes et al. (2010: 79) is of the view that there is no such thing as a perfect organization and MacLennan (2011: 161) argues that in most large organizations, structure changes are common when performance is suffering, specifically after the arrival of new leaders. There seems to be a common assumption that structural changes can improve organizational performance. Some organizations and departments seem to bounce between one structural model and another over the years, never really finding out how to make it work but causing a great deal of turmoil with every change.

Ashkenas (2010:38) is of the view that the organization and its processes should be designed from the customer's perspective as to ensure that it is easy to do business with the organization.

Pearce and Robinson (2011: 310) point out that restructuring can be defined as the redesigning of an organizational structure with the intent of emphasizing and enabling activities most critical to the organization's strategy and enabling it to function at maximum effectiveness. At the heart of restructuring is the view that some activities within an organization's value chain are more critical to the successful execution of the strategy than others. Organizations are successful, in part, because they designed the structure to emphasize and support critical strategic activities.

The size and complexity of large organizations forces managers to formulate a well thought through strategy; the conceptual framework assists them to consider resource and market interactions. Well-defined business processes assist structures to work. Successful organizations serve more customers, employ more people and

produce more products and services, and they expand their environments by introducing new products, expanding into new geographic areas and using new channels (MacLennan, 2011: 15).

Hanley (2007: 17) argues that it is important to establish a project management office (PMO) with a senior manager in charge to ensure consistency, to track resource allocation, assess progress, and to communicate execution updates on a regular basis. The PMO manager is also responsible to standardize planning and reporting templates.

People are the process owners (individuals and teams) and are accountable to customers and suppliers for the processes they own and should be empowered to effectively improve and amend these processes if the need arises (Pryor et al., 2007: 12-13). Michlitsch (2000: 28) argues that strategy execution is best achieved through high-performing people.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organization, People And Skills

Nielsen et al. (2008: 1) argues that a brilliant strategy will put the organization on the competitive map, but only effective execution will keep it there. Most organizations battle with execution and unfortunately over rely on structural changes because moving lines on the organizational chart seems obvious and changes are visible to address and enhance the organization's ability to execute its strategy. The structure affects execution indirectly through its influence on information, control and decision processes (Heide et al., 2002: 219; Crittenden and Crittenden, 2008: 302-303).

Structural change produces only short-term gains and does not deal with the root causes of the inefficiencies being how people make decisions and are held accountable and ensuring that information is available where it is required.

Hrebiniak (2005: 25) is of the opinion that managers must know who's doing what, when, and why, as well as who's accountable for the key steps in the execution process. Without clear responsibility and accountability, strategy execution will not succeed.

Kaplan and Norton (2006: 2 & 3; 2007: 151; 2001: 3) point out that strategy execution requires all business divisions, support units and employees to be aligned and linked to the strategy. Most organizations and its managers are guilty of 'silo-based' thinking and mal-coordination and conflict. Projects are an effective mechanism for overcoming some of the organizational constraints and have the ability to be run across structural boundaries, bringing together expertise and resources from many disciplines and subunits. Project management is crucial to ensure that critical activities happen (MacLennan, 2011: 154).

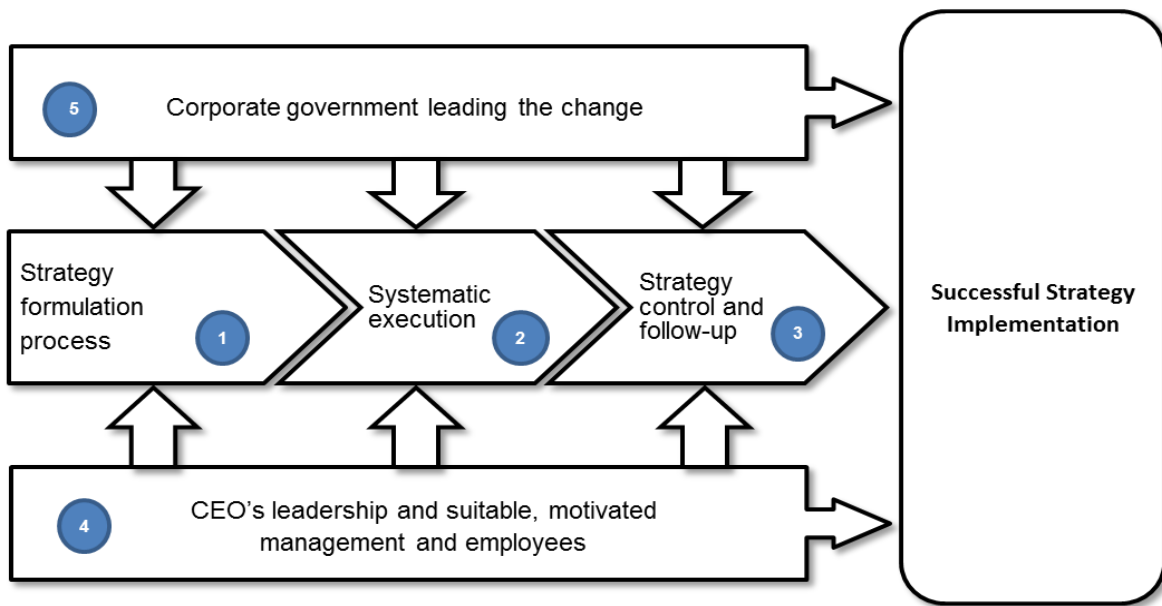
Sheehan (2010: 25) argues that one of the key lessons from the recent recession is that organizations that take on risk without being adequately prepared for these risks will suffer poor performance and, in the worst case, become insolvent. If organizations are to survive, and even thrive, in a post-recession world, they must adopt a risk-based approach to the execution of their strategies. The primary benefit of a risk-based approach to strategy execution is that it allows managers to focus on the opportunities outlined in their organization's strategic plans, while at the same time minimize the potential impact of any threats.

Brenes et al.'s Five (5) Dimensions Framework For Strategy Execution

Brenes *et al.* (2008: 591) identified five key dimensions required for successful strategy execution, which include the strategy formulation process; systematic execution; implementation control and follow-up; the CEO's leadership and suitable, motivated management and employees; and, finally, corporate governance (board and shareholders) leading the change.

Strategy Formulation

This dimension of the framework has to do with the mechanisms and process used by the organization to formulate the strategy. The first element of the process deals with the extent to which the strategy formulating process was developed and whether or not the environment, the industry, and the competitors have been surveyed in an extensive, systematic, and analytic manner. The second element deals with the degree of internal stakeholder involvement. The contribution of the stakeholders in formulating the strategy is important, but even more important is their commitment and buy-into the vision and strategy of the organization. Thirdly, the strategy formulation process should be catalyzed by the presence of advisors external to the firm. Rather than just making recommendations, they should play the role of facilitators, which is central in diagnostic processes aimed at formulating the business strategy (Brenes, 2008: 591). In Figure 1, one can clearly see the five key dimensions and their role towards successful strategy implementation.



Brenes et al. (2008: 591)

Figure 1: Brenes et al.'s Five (5) Key Dimensions Of Strategy Execution

Systematic Execution

This relates to the actions taken by the firm while executing its strategy. A key factor to consider is the degree to which the organization has established a prioritisation system for each action to be implemented. Other elements of this dimension include organizational structure and culture, work and information systems, and essential business processes. The key question here is whether or not these factors are aligned to the new strategy or whether they have been adjusted to that end. The final element in the systematic execution dimension is effective delegation for decision-making powers to individuals who are responsible for executing the various strategic actions required (Brenes, 2008: 591-592).

Execution Control And Follow-Up

The dimension of the framework considers the components the firm has created to regularly evaluate and control the strategy execution progress. These components comprise performance appraisal systems, monitoring tools, and a culture of top management periodic control and follow-up. Feedback on performance and continuous comparisons of performance against the original plan complete the performance chain. Organizations' continuous monitoring of their business environment must allow them to anticipate trends and/or strategy adjustments required, rather than reacting to constant pressure either from threats or opportunities (Brenes, 2008: 592).

CEO's Leadership And Suitable, Motivated Management And Employees

This dimension is also central in attaining success. The execution becomes very complex in the absence of the CEO's commitment, communication, and leadership in effective execution. Both managers and employees are responsible for executing the strategy. Communicating the strategy effectively and positive motivation leads to effectiveness in strategy execution (Brenes, 2008: 592).

Corporate Governance Lead Change

The fifth key dimension relates to a corporate governance system that is fully committed and in support of strategic change, to a point of driving and leading it. Significant investment will be required to support the many actions needed to shape the organization's future and the stockholders must be ready and committed to support management in this process (Brenes, 2008: 592).

The board of directors and their contribution to successful company growth is important and those boards of companies that succeed in executing strategy are characterized by playing their role and operating effectively. Some good practices of these boards include setting clearly-defined functions, formal participation in discussing the strategic plan and analyzing strategic topics, systematically monitoring compliance with these agreements, rewarding directors in line with their responsibilities while establishing appropriate evaluation mechanisms, and integrating professionals external to the firm bringing in impartial views as a function of a clear strategy (Brenes, 2008: 592).

PROBLEM INVESTIGATED

The launch of a new strategy requires staff members to do things differently. The leader is responsible to identify new skills, knowledge, or attitudes that staff members may need to successfully execute the strategy. In many organizations where execution failed, a common pattern was followed by running a generic organization-wide training program. The leader must identify specific training required and reinforce the training once it has been delivered (Speculand, 2009: 31).

Capabilities are important to strategy execution in that the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals are vital underpinnings to all organizational actions, strengths, and performance. The ability to take decisions and deliver the right activities in the right way affects everything (MacLennan, 2011: 194; Coughlin, 2005: 4 & 7). In order to execute a strategy, managers and employees must not only be aware of its existence but must also have the necessary knowledge and skills to execute it.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives were, firstly, to review the literature and determine the role of strategy execution as suggested in the framework of Brenes et al.'s Five (5) Dimensions Framework for Strategy Execution.

The second objective was to analyze the findings of the empirical study and to make recommendations towards the improvement of strategy execution within municipalities in South Africa if one put Organization, People and Skills under scrutiny.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After careful consideration of the various research approaches, it was decided to utilize quantitative research, which is exploratory in nature, as the primary data collection method for the purpose of this survey.

Structured Questionnaire

A quantitative research approach was utilized and a structured questionnaire with closed questions was chosen as the preferred tool and method to arrive at the expected results.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish the municipality's current state and ability to execute strategies. "*Strategy Execution*" in this questionnaire refers to the execution or implementation of strategies, plans and policies of the municipality. The questionnaire was handed out at the survey sessions. The participants were willing to be honest as their anonymity was assured (Salkind, 2007: 138). The questionnaire posed the questions (statements) on a four-point Likert Scale with a fifth "*Don't Know*" option. The participants had to consider the following options and respond to each statement:

- "Strongly Agree" (1)
- "Somewhat Agree" (2)
- "Somewhat Disagree" (3)
- "Strongly Disagree" (4)
- "Don't Know" (5)

A factor analysis was used to identify the structure and factors of the enabler *organization, people and skills* and through this process, the structural validity of the survey was also determined (Pietersen and Maree, 2007: 219). According to Pietersen and Maree (2007: 219), the purpose of a factor analysis is to determine which statements (items) belong together due to the fact that it measures the same factor.

Target Population

The population of this study comprised of all the senior and middle managers in the Metropolitan, District and Local Municipalities. The targeted population consisted of those senior and middle managers responsible for strategy formulation and planning, execution and service delivery, as well as two union leaders (shop stewards) representing the two largest unions per municipality. The target population comprised of 351 targeted participants.

Sampling

To ensure sample adequacy, it was decided to use the entire target population as the study sample. All Metropolitan, District and Local Municipalities and the targeted role players within South Africa will thus form part of the survey.

The target population consisted of 412 people. A total of 379 completed questionnaires were collected and the 379 who responded formed the study population.

RESULTS

The frequency and descriptive statistical results of the "*Organization, People and Skills*" enabler are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequencies And Descriptive Statistics

Statement	Organization, People And Skills Statements	Strongly Agree %	Somewhat Agree %	Somewhat Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Don't Know %	Number Missing	Mean	Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5			
Q4.1									
1	The structure is fully aligned to the key service delivery processes.	20.6	34.8	17.7	24.3	2.6	0	2.47	1.08
2	The existing organizational structure supports the execution of the strategy.	15.6	34.8	21.4	25.6	2.6	0	2.58	1.04
3	The number of decision making levels contributes towards successful strategy execution.	19.0	34.0	20.1	20.6	6.3	0	2.45	1.05
4	The morale of the employees is high.	3.2	12.7	27.2	53.8	3.2	0	3.36	0.83
5	Managers responsible for strategy execution are skilled and competent.	13.5	37.7	26.1	18.5	4.2	0	2.52	0.96
6	Knowledge is well managed in the municipality.	9.2	25.1	31.7	30.6	3.4	0	2.87	0.97
7	Human Resource Management plans are in support of effective strategy execution.	7.1	19.3	30.9	35.9	6.9	0	3.02	0.95
8	The Skills Development Plan is in support of strategy execution.	8.4	23.2	30.3	30.1	7.9	0	2.89	0.97
9	There are adequate human resources to execute the strategy.	5.8	17.4	30.9	41.4	4.5	0	3.13	0.92
10	All funded vacancies are filled within 3 months.	2.9	11.1	20.1	63.6	2.4	0	3.48	0.81
11	The municipality has invested in a management development program.	11.3	30.1	19.5	26.4	12.7	0	2.70	1.04
12	The municipality has invested in a project management training program.	12.7	30.1	23.0	22.2	12.1	0	2.62	1.01
13®	The best applicants are not appointed in important positions due to political interference.	36.4	22.4	15.6	15.8	9.8	0	2.12	1.13
14	The municipality has a culture of urgency in execution.	15.0	33.5	27.4	20.1	4.0	0	2.55	0.99
15	The municipality has a culture of continuous innovation.	10.8	29.8	29.8	25.3	4.2	0	2.73	0.98
16	Execution is the primary focus of the municipality.	18.7	33.2	27.2	16.9	4.0	0	2.44	0.99
17	The municipality has a culture of dealing decisively with non performers.	5.5	17.2	29.6	43.5	4.2	0	3.16	0.92
18	Human resources at operational level are sufficiently skilled.	7.9	25.1	30.3	31.7	5.0	0	2.90	0.96
19	The municipality has a Human Resource (HR) Strategy in support of the Growth and Development Strategy (GDS).	8.4	15.0	21.4	30.1	25.1	0	2.97	1.03
20	There is a clear implementation plan for the HR Strategy.	6.3	13.2	26.6	33.8	20.1	0	3.10	0.95
21	Talent is well managed in the municipality.	3.2	9.5	28.8	53.3	5.3	0	3.39	0.80

® Reversed Statement

Benchmark for each Statement

The benchmark (ideal) in terms of responses for every statement is marked (filled with grey) in Table 1. In this section, the response benchmark for all the statements is one (1) “*Strongly Agree*”, except for the reversed statement 13 where the benchmark is four (4) “*Strongly Disagree*”.

The results in Table 1 confirm that municipalities experience challenges when it comes to “*Organization, People and Skills*” - the majority of the statements calculated a mean above 2.5 and below 2.5 in the case of the reversed statement (13). This supports the literature where it was highlighted that the organizational structure, people and skills could be stumbling blocks in the strategy execution process. The detail results of the enabler will be discussed as part of the factor analysis.

Factor Analysis

A factor analysis was conducted on the 21 statements of the “*Organization, People and Skills*” enabler as to explore the factorial structure.

The results of the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy, P-value of Bartlett’s Test of sphericity and the Determinant of Correlation Matrix are reported in Table 2.

Table 2: KMO, Bartlett’s Test And Determinant Of Correlation Matrix

KMO, Bartlett’s Test and Determinant of Correlation Matrix	Value
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO)	0.925
P-Value of Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	<0.001
Determinant of Correlation Matrix	4.214E-006

The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy measured 0.925 (superb according to Field, 2009: 647) which suggests that there are sufficient data to perform a factor analysis. The P-value of Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity returned a value smaller than 0.05, indicating that correlations between statements were sufficiently large. The Determinant of Correlation Matrix measured < 0.00001, which is an indication that multicollinearity could have been a problem in the factor analysis.

After exploring various multifactor solutions, it was decided to use five factors to explain the “*Organization, People and Skills*” section. The five factors each had eigenvalues above Kaiser’s criterion of 1.0 (Field, 2009: 671) and, in combination, cumulatively explained a favourable 67.2% of the variance. The five-factor solution also made theoretical sense. The results of the factor analysis for the “*Organization, People and Skills*” enabler are reported in Table 3.

Table 3: Pattern Matrix^a

Enabler: Organization, People and Skills						
Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	
Q4.1	Human Resource Planning	Organizational Structure	Morale, Skills Fit and Performance	Skills Development	Culture of Execution	Communalities
20	.810	-.031	.074	-.016	.196	.817
19	.773	-.084	.240	.085	.122	.731
8	.667	-.117	-.085	.062	-.049	.616
18	.635	-.014	-.029	.064	.082	.537
7	.583	-.244	-.266	-.058	-.060	.707
21	.381	.028	-.340	.010	.221	.537
9	.348	-.095	-.224	.271	-.135	.432
2	-.001	.975	-.015	-.035	-.056	.889
1	-.030	.919	.059	.035	.013	.803
3	.048	.636	-.023	.026	.131	.575
4	.152	-.057	.568	.105	.046	.566
6	.217	-.035	.490	.008	.240	.613
5	.128	-.131	.458	-.029	.196	.506
13@	.116	.052	.428	-.020	-.030	.191
17	.265	-.052	.307	.023	.286	.518
10	.235	-.052	.239	.218	-.048	.297
11	.027	-.007	-.021	.723	-.006	.554
12	-.049	-.018	.052	.639	.075	.409
14	.044	-.073	-.006	-.019	.673	.529
15	.064	.005	-.050	.215	.652	.667
16	.004	-.128	-.140	.099	.568	.582
Cronbach's Alpha	0.902	0.891	0.769	0.651	0.813	
Factor Mean	3.05	2.50	3.04	2.65	2.57	
Factor Standard Deviation	0.73	0.958	0.66	0.903	0.836	

All the statements on each factor loaded above 0.3, except for statement 10. The enabler mean calculated at 2.87, which is an indication that the respondents tended to disagree with the statements contained in this section of the questionnaire.

DISCUSSION

The individual factors will be focused on next.

Factor One (1): Human Resource Planning

Statements 7, 8, 9, 18, 19, 20 and 21 loaded on factor one (1) and are related to the “*Human Resource Planning*” factor. Statements 7, 8, 18, 19 and 20 have factor loadings of above 0.5, whilst statements 9 and 21 also loaded satisfactorily with factor loadings above 0.3 on this factor. The communalities for statements are all above 0.3.

The factor mean calculated at 3.05, which is an indication that the respondents tended to disagree with the statements contained in the factor. This result could point towards a problem area.

According to the item-level results presented, it seems that the respondents tended to disagree that human resource management plans (mean of 3.02) and skills development plans (mean of 2.89) are in support of strategy execution, that human resources are adequate (mean of 3.13), that staff at operational level are sufficiently skilled (mean of 2.90), that the human resource plan is in support of the strategy (mean of 2.97), that there is a clear implementation plan for the human resource strategy (mean of 3.10), and that talent is well managed (mean of 3.39).

The “*Human Resource Planning*” factor shows good reliability with a Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of 0.902.

Factor Two (2): Organizational Structure

Statements 1, 2 and 3 loaded on factor two (2) and are related to the “*Organizational Structure*” factor. Statements 1 and 2 have factor loadings of above 0.9, whilst statement 3 also loaded satisfactorily with a factor loading of above 0.6 on this factor. The communalities for statements are all above 0.3.

The factor mean calculated at 2.50, which is an indication that an even number of respondents disagreed and agreed with the statements contained in the factor.

According to the item-level results presented, it seems that the respondents tended to agree that the organizational structure is aligned to the key service delivery processes (mean of 2.47) and that the number of decision levels contributes towards strategy execution (mean of 2.45).

Respondents, however, tended to disagree with the statement that the existing organizational structure supports the execution of the strategy (mean of 2.58).

The “*Organizational Structure*” factor shows good reliability with a Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of 0.891.

Factor Three (3): Morale, Skills Fit And Performance

Statements 4, 5, 6, 10, 13 and 17 loaded on factor three (3) and are related to the “*Morale, Skills Fit and Performance*” factor. Statements 4, 5, 6, 13 have factor loadings of above 0.4, whilst statement 17 also loaded satisfactorily with a factor loading of above 0.3 on this factor. Statement 10 (“*All funded vacancies are filled within 3 months*”) loaded at 0.239 and does not load substantially on any other factor but will be retained due to the fact that the statement is relevant to the factor.

The communalities for statements are all above 0.3, except for statement 10 (0.297) and reversed statement 13 (0.191).

The factor mean calculated at 3.04, which is an indication that the respondents tended to disagree with the statements contained in the factor.

According to the item-level results presented, it seems that the respondents tended to agree with the statement that the best applicants are not appointed due to political interference (reversed statement mean of 2.12).

The respondents tended to disagree that managers responsible for strategy execution are skilled and competent (2.52) and that knowledge is not well-managed (mean of 2.87), that the morale of employees is high (mean of 3.36), that funded vacancies are filled within three months (mean of 3.48), and that there exists a culture that deals decisively with non-performers (mean of 3.16).

The “*Morale, Skills Fit and Performance*” factor shows good reliability with a Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of 0.769.

Factor Four (4): Skills Development

Statements 11 and 12 loaded on factor four (4) and are related to the “*Skills Development*” factor. Both statements have factor loadings of above 0.6 on this factor. The communalities for statements are all above 0.3.

The factor mean calculated at 2.65, which is an indication that the respondents tended to slightly disagree with the statements contained in the factor.

According to the item-level results presented, it seems that the respondents tended to disagree that the municipality did invest and/or participate in a management development (mean of 2.70) or project management training program (mean of 2.62).

The “*Skills Development*” factor shows a Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of 0.651 which could be regarded as a relatively low reliability factor (Field, 2009: 675). This could have been caused by the low number of statements (2) in the factor.

Factor Five (5): Culture Of Execution

Statements 14, 15 and 16 loaded on factor five (5) and are related to the “*Culture of Execution*” factor. All statements have factor loadings of above 0.5 on this factor. The communalities for statements are all above 0.3.

The factor mean calculated at 2.57, which is an indication that the statements contained in the factor are viewed by the respondents as evenly balanced between agree and disagree.

The results confirmed that the respondents tended to agree with the statement that strategy execution is the primary focus of the municipality (mean of 2.44).

Respondents tended to disagree that the municipalities lack a culture of continuous innovation (mean of 2.73) and tended to slightly disagree that the municipalities lack a culture of urgency in execution (mean of 2.55).

The “*Culture of Execution*” factor shows good reliability with a Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of 0.813.

Factor Correlation Matrix^a

The Pearson correlations between the extracted factors for the “*Organization, People and Skills*” enabler are reported in Table 4.

Table 4: Factor Correlation Matrix^a

Factors: Organization, People And Skills		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Human Resource Planning	1.000	0.550	0.390	0.454	0.496
2.	Organizational Structure	0.550	1.000	0.504	0.453	0.446
3.	Morale, Skills Fit and Performance	0.390	0.504	1.000	0.339	0.397
4.	Skills Development	0.454	0.453	0.339	1.000	0.375
5.	Culture of Execution	0.496	0.446	0.397	0.375	1.000

All factors within the “*Organization, People and Skills*” enabler had medium to large correlations.

Review Of Organization, People And Skills

The results supported the findings in the literature review and discussion in terms of the importance of organization, people and skills in ensuring successful strategy execution and the fact that it could be a barrier if not well resourced and effective. The “*Organization, People and Skills*” enabler is in the survey explained by five factors: (1) “*Human Resource Planning*”, (2) “*Organizational Structure*”, (3) “*Morale, Skills Fit and Performance*”, (4) “*Skills Development*”, and (5) “*Culture Of Execution*”.

The enabler mean calculated at 2.56, which is an indication that the statements contained in this enabler are viewed by the respondents as evenly balanced between positive and negative.

Areas that possibly require attention across the five factors are:

- Inadequate human resources
- Human resource plans
- Skills development plans
- Staff at operational level are not sufficiently skilled
- Human resource strategy is not aligned and in support of the strategy
- There is not a clear implementation plan for the human resource strategy
- Talent is not well managed
- Low morale of employees
- Inability to fill funded vacancies
- Absence of a culture that deals decisively with non-performers
- Existing organizational structure's lack of support to strategy execution
- Competencies and skills of managers responsible for strategy execution
- Political interference resulting in the best applicants not getting appointed
- Knowledge not well-managed;
- Investing in management development training
- Investing in project management training
- Creating a culture of continuous innovation
- Developing a culture of execution urgency

CONCLUSIONS

Organization, people and skills were identified as key enablers which are not specifically or well regulated in terms of legislation and regulations being:

- Leadership and Management
- Organization, People and Skills
- Systems and Technology
- Policies, Processes and Procedures

The human capital of a municipality is arguably the most important resource and enabler. The “*Organization, People and Skills*” enabler is critical for successful strategy execution in a municipality. The results reported earlier confirm that this enabler is not viewed by the respondents as entirely positive and under control.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the empirical results, it is recommended that municipalities implement the corrective measures as proposed. Some of the key organization, people and skills issues to address are:

- Human resource planning
- Organizational structure
- Morale, skills fit and performance
- Skills development
- Culture of execution and sense of urgency

It is recommended that clear guidelines be developed to guide and regulate this crucial enabler.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research stems from research done by J. H. Leibbrandt as part of his Phd studies at North-West University, Potchefstroom Business School.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Johannes Leibbrandt was awarded his PhD degree in Business Administration from the North-West University in 2013. He acted as the CEO of the Kempton Park/Tembisa Metropolitan Local Council and served in this position from 1989 to 2002. He was then appointed as the Deputy City Manager of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality and served in this position from 2002 to 2010. He is currently employed as a Director at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and currently works in Kenia (Africa) where he is the local government specialist advisor. Email: leibbrandt.johan@ke.pwc.com.

Christoff Botha was awarded his PhD degree in Industrial Sociology from the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. He is a Chartered Human Resource Practitioner and registered with the South African Board of Personnel Practitioners. He also specialises in gender studies and woman in mining. Apart from research and writing, for more than 20 years, he has been practicing Employment Relations on a part-time basis. He is currently in the position of Associate Professor at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Business School in South Africa. Email: Christoff.botha@nwu.ac.za.

REFERENCES

1. Antunes, C., Korda, C., Korda, P., & Mistry, S. (2010). *Leading strategy execution*. USA: Kogan Page Limited.
2. Ashkenas, R. (2010). *Simply effective: How to cut through complexity in your organization and get things done*. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation.
3. Brenes, E. R., Mena, M., & Molina, G. E. (2008). Key success factors for strategy implementation in Latin America. *Science Direct*, 61: 590-598.
4. Coughlin, D. (2005). Strategy, planning and execution: How to establish an effective strategy and execute successfully within it. *A Special Report on Business Acceleration*.
5. Crittenden, V. L., & Crittenden, W. F. (2008). Building a capable organization: The eight levers of strategy implementation. *Business Horizons*, 51: 301-309.
6. Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. 3rd edition. London: Sage Publication.
7. Hanley, C. A. (2007). The execution challenge: Translating strategy into action. *Bank accounting and finance*, 17-20, Oct-Nov.
8. Heide, M., Grønhaug, K., & Johannessen, S. (2002). Exploring barriers to the successful implementation of a formulated strategy. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 18: 217-231.
9. Hrebiniak, L. G. (2005). *Making strategy work: Leading effective execution and change*. Upper saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing.
10. Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2006). Why system, not structure, is the way toward strategic alignment: A historic perspective. *Balanced Scorecard Report*, 8 (4): 1-16, Jul/Aug.
11. Kaplan, R. S. & Norton, D. P. (2007). Using the balanced scorecard as a strategic management system. *Harvard Business Review*, 150-160, Jan/Feb.
12. MacLennan, A. (2011). *Strategy execution: Translating strategy into action in complex organizations*. New York: Routledge.
13. Michlitsch, J. F. (2000). High-performing, loyal employees: The real way to implement strategy. *Strategy and Leadership*, 28 (6): 28-34.
14. Nielson, G. L., Martin K. L., & Powers E. (2008). The secrets to successful strategy execution. *Harvard Business Review*. 61- 70, Jun.
15. Pearce, J. A., & Robinson, R. B. (2011). *Strategic management: Formulation, implementation and control*. New York: Mc Graw-Hill/Irwin.
16. Pietersen, J., & Maree, J. G. (2007). Standardisation of a questionnaire. (In Maree, J.G., ed. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
17. Pryor, M. G., Anderson, D., Toombs, L. A., & Humphreys, J. H. (2007). Strategic Implementation as a core competency: The 5Ps model. *Journal of Management Research*, 7(1): 51-68, Apr.
18. Salkind, J. (2007). *Exploring research*. 6th ed. Uppersaddle River, N.J.: Pearson.
19. Sheehan, N. T. (2010). A risk-based approach to strategy execution. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 32(5): 25-37.
20. Speculand, R. (2009). *Beyond strategy: The leader's role in successful implementation*. USA: Jossey-Bass.