

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

by

Hellen Nthoki Mathuva

A thesis presented to the School of Business and Economics

of

Daystar University
Nairobi, Kenya

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
in Strategic Management

October 2023

APPROVAL

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES KENYA: A CASE OF ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

by

Hellen N. Mathuva
21-0611

In accordance with Daystar University policies, this thesis is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Business Administration degree.

Date

Josphat Nzioki, PhD,
1st Supervisor

Mercy Njagi, MBA,
2nd Supervisor

Joseph Munyao, MSc,
HoD, Commerce Department

Evans Amata, PhD,
Dean, School of Business and Economics

Copyright © 2023 Hellen Nthoki Mathuva

DECLARATION

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any another university
or college for academic credit.

Signature: _____
Hellen N. Mathuva
21-0611

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my deepest gratitude to the Almighty God for the gift of life and good health, the opportunity to pursue my master's degree and his sufficient grace, wisdom and knowledge throughout my academic journey. To my first supervisor, Dr. Josphat J. Nzioki, and my second supervisor Mrs. Mercy Njagi, thank you for your guidance, professional suggestions, and invaluable support throughout the process of my thesis writing. To all other lecturers who taught and inspired me during my study period, their guidance and ideas provided the framework and foundation upon which this thesis is structured.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Francis Mutuku and my sons Baraka, Fadhili and Fahari, for their support and encouragement

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL	ii
DECLARATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xi
ABSTRACT	xii
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
Introduction	1
Background of the Study	3
Statement of the Problem	10
Purpose of the Study	12
Research Objectives	12
Research Questions	12
Rationale of the Study	12
Significance of the Study	13
Assumptions of the Study	14
Scope of the Study	14
Limitations and Delimitations of the Study	15
Definition of Terms	16
Summary	16
CHAPTER TWO	18
LITERATURE REVIEW	18
Introduction	18
Theoretical Framework	18
General Literature Review	22
Empirical Literature Review	41
Conceptual Framework	49
Summary	50
CHAPTER THREE	51
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	51
Introduction	51
Research Design	51
Population	51
Target Population	52
Sample Size	52
Sampling Techniques	53
Types of Data	54
Data Collection Instruments	55
Data Collection Procedures	56
Pretesting	57
Reliability and Validity of Data	57

Data Analysis Plan	58
Ethical Considerations	59
Summary	60
CHAPTER FOUR	61
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION	61
Introduction	61
Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation	61
Summary of Key Findings	78
Summary	81
CHAPTER FIVE	82
DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	82
Introduction	82
Discussion of Key Findings	82
Conclusion	86
Recommendations	87
Recommendation for Further Research	88
REFERENCES	89
APPENDICES	99
Appendix A: Introduction Letter	99
Appendix B: Questionnaire	100
Appendix C: Ethical Clearance	105
Appendix D: Research Permit	106
Appendix E: Plagiarism Report	107

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 3.1: Sample Size</i>	53
<i>Table 4.1: Response Rate</i>	61
<i>Table 4.2: Educational Level</i>	62
<i>Table 4.3: Working Experience</i>	62
<i>Table 4.4: Respondents Department</i>	63
<i>Table 4.5: Employee Engagement Practices</i>	64
<i>Table 4.6: Employee Development Practices</i>	67
<i>Table 4.7: Innovation Practices</i>	69
<i>Table 4.8 Academic Performance of St Paul's University</i>	72
<i>Table 4.9: Strategic Leadership Practices and Academic Performance</i>	75
<i>Table 4.10 : Pearson's Correlation Results</i>	77

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework..... 49

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CUE	Commission for University Education
DU-ISERC	Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee
HoD	Head of Department
NACOSTI	National Council for Science and Technology
SPU	St. Paul's University
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

Higher education institutions have survived and thrived in ever-changing environments. To manage the effects of the changing environment in which universities operate, various leadership practices have been adopted by private universities. Due to lack of capable strategic leadership practices, the academic performance levels have kept declining. The study assessed how the indicators of strategic leadership practices affect the academic performance of private universities; a case of St. Paul's University. . To achieve this aim, the study was guided by the following research objectives; to examine the strategic leadership practices adopted by St. Paul's University, to assess the level of adoption of strategic leadership practices at St. Paul's University and to establish the effect of strategic leadership practices on the academic performance of St. Paul's University. The theories adopted included the Resource-Based View theory, Upper Echelon theory and the Strategic Leadership Theory. The study employed a descriptive research design. Questionnaires were used as data collection instruments. A sample of 121 respondents randomly selected from an estimated target population of 173 respondents was used. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) version 24 program .The findings revealed a positive significant effect between strategic leadership practices and academic performance. The study concludes by establishing a significant positive effect of strategic leadership practices on academic performance of St. Paul's university. The study recommends a further study on strategic leadership practices on academic performance of public universities.