

Service Delivery of Non-Governmental Organizations in Somaliland: The Role of Strategy Implementation Drivers

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between strategy implementation and service delivery among Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Somaliland. This study is motivated by the increasing need for sustainable NGOs capable of effectively fulfilling their mandates and the lack of empirical evidence on strategy implementation in Somaliland. The research focuses on key drivers of strategy implementation: financial resources, organizational leadership, organizational structure, and organizational culture. The theoretical framework of this paper is anchored in the resource-based view theory and institutional theory. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study surveyed 86 respondents from Save the Children, a leading NGO in Somaliland. Using a sampling formula, these respondents were selected from a target population of 110 employees. Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential analyses were performed using SPSS version 27. The findings indicate that organizational structure significantly influences service delivery among NGOs. Additionally, organizational leadership plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of service delivery. Financial resources also have a substantial impact on influencing service delivery. Lastly, organizational culture is identified as a critical driver of strategy implementation, significantly affecting service delivery. The study concludes that strategy implementation is a vital determinant of how well NGOs deliver their mandates, with its success heavily reliant on the supporting drivers of implementation.

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organizations, Service Delivery, Strategy Implementation, Strategy Implementation Drivers

A. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of the 21st Century, strategic management remains crucial for all types of organizations, significantly influencing their ability to fulfill their mandates, whether profit-oriented or not-for-profit (Tawse and Tabesh, 2021). According to (Friesl et al., 2021), strategic management entails a systematic process that includes the development, planning, execution, and oversight of organizational strategies. These strategies may address external environmental changes, such as market fluctuations or policy shifts, as well as internal adjustments, including structural reforms or comprehensive corporate transformations. The primary aim of any strategy is to enable an organization to navigate these changes effectively or enhance its efficiency in achieving its overarching goals and objectives (Ritala et al., 2021). Strategic management involves several critical phases, each of which is pivotal in guiding organizational success through the effective implementation of strategies. However, as (Vigfússon et al., 2021) note, the strategy implementation phase has not received adequate attention in practice and empirical research. This oversight may explain why many organizations fail to achieve their intended outcomes despite having well-formulated strategies. Consequently, this study focuses on the crucial aspect of strategy implementation.

(Doelman et al., 2022) describe strategy implementation as actualizing a formulated strategy by allocating the necessary resources and aligning all systems to accommodate upcoming and ongoing changes. This phase encompasses the practical application of strategic plans and their impact on organizational success, whether direct or indirect. According to (Hantiro and Maina, 2020), the successful execution of a strategy is crucial for achieving its objectives. The primary drivers of successful strategy implementation, as detailed by (Aladag et al., 2020), include organizational culture, leadership, and structure. These elements are critical in determining an

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organization's capacity to effectively carry out its strategic plans. Additionally, (Wabulasa and Kihara, 2023) emphasize that financial resources are vital to successfully implementing strategies.

The origins of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Africa date back to the pre-independence period of African nations (Poppy et al., 2021). Initially, these NGOs were primarily engaged in relief work. However, after 1980, many NGOs expanded their mandates to include development activities, responding to numerous countries' challenges in providing essential services due to pervasive poverty across the continent. Consequently, NGOs began focusing on development, addressing short-term basic needs such as healthcare and education. Since 1991, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) have been active in Somaliland. Similar to other international entities, these INGOs often operate across multiple countries. Those in Somaliland are typically headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, and they implement programs and projects in collaboration with local communities, governmental bodies, UN agencies, and various local organizations and individuals. Their activities range from emergency response initiatives to development projects.

The significance of strategy implementation within strategic management cannot be overstated. For NGOs to thrive, efficiently executing their strategies is imperative to enhance service delivery to the community. As (Kihara et al., 2016) noted, an organization's strategy implementation approach can determine its success, continuity, or failure. Establishing budgets and procedural guidelines is a critical step in the strategy implementation process, involving the practical application of plans, standards, and objectives. This process is a vital component of strategic management. Without effective implementation, a strategy remains merely an unfulfilled vision, as highlighted by (Schuler et al., 2023).

Service delivery is fundamental to NGOs operating across various sectors, including healthcare, education, poverty alleviation, and disaster relief. These organizations provide crucial services to vulnerable communities that frequently lack access to basic resources. However, the efficiency of service delivery by NGOs has been a topic of discussion, with some studies underscoring their successes and others highlighting their limitations. NGOs are often praised for their ability to deliver flexible and responsive services tailored to the specific needs of communities. For instance, a study on a child protection program in Nepal found that NGOs were more effective than government agencies in addressing the complex needs of vulnerable children (Pradhan et al., 2016). This effectiveness is attributed to NGOs' greater flexibility in adapting to the evolving needs of communities and their capacity to implement innovative solutions unhindered by bureaucratic constraints.

Problem Statements

The efficacy of strategic management is paramount for organizational success. The emphasis leaders place on strategy implementation is pivotal, as well-crafted strategic decisions significantly enhance an organization's capacity to achieve its objectives efficiently and effectively (Pradhan et al., 2016). Despite the critical role of strategy implementation in attaining organizational goals, concerns are mounting regarding the challenges NGOs in Somaliland face in executing their strategies effectively, which impedes their service delivery to target beneficiaries. NGOs in Somaliland encounter myriad obstacles in strategy implementation. For instance, a World Bank report (2019) indicates that over 70% of Somaliland's population lives in poverty, rendering it one of the continent's poorest nations. This situation poses significant challenges for NGOs regarding resource allocation, mobilization, and prioritization of assistance for the most vulnerable populations.

Strategic management is highly nuanced and influenced by factors such as profitability and geographical context. Consequently, there is a considerable research gap in the domain of strategic management within Somaliland. This study addresses these gaps by examining how international NGOs execute their strategies within Somaliland. The study aims to achieve several objectives regarding the operations of NGOs in Somaliland. Firstly, it seeks to evaluate the correlation between organizational structure and the effectiveness of service delivery within these NGOs. Secondly, the study intends to scrutinize the impact of financial capacity on the performance of NGOs operating in Somaliland. Thirdly, it aims to explore the influence of organizational leadership on the service delivery outcomes of NGOs in the region. Lastly, the study assesses the relationship between organizational culture and the successful delivery of services by NGOs in Somaliland.

Theoretical Framework

The study will be grounded in the resource-based view (RBV) and institutional theory. The resource-based view, introduced by (Wernerfelt, 1984), emphasizes the significance of internal resources in driving organizational effectiveness. These resources encompass financial assets, human capital, technological infrastructure, and specialized knowledge. Some resources may be rare, valuable, and difficult to imitate, while

others may be non-substitutable (Crook et al., 2008). The RBV presents an alternative perspective on why organizations engage with various stakeholders, positing that the scarcity of valuable resources is a motivating factor. Organizational resources are classified into tangible and intangible categories, and heterogeneity is identified as the foundation of the resource-based approach, contributing to the uniqueness of organizations. NGOs must strategize ways to cultivate and enhance these scarce resources to bolster their capacity for service delivery and adaptability to dynamic environments (Barney, 2012).

On the other hand, institutional theory elucidates how organizations adapt to diverse environmental conditions by modeling themselves after leading firms (Amenta and Ramsey, 2010). This implies that organizations adjust to changing environments by emulating management strategies employed by well-established entities (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008). The theory further explains how organizations formulate policies, modify structures, alter cultures, and align leadership to facilitate essential changes that enable them to conform to external environmental shifts. Therefore, to implement key strategies effectively, organizations, including NGOs, must adapt to pivotal changes that support implementing these strategies.

Empirical Review

Empirical inquiries into the implementation of strategies and their impact on organizational effectiveness and service delivery have explored various facets of strategy, with a significant focus on the drivers of strategy implementation (Nwachukwu et al., 2019; Ramadan, 2015). For instance, (Bukoye and Abdulrahman, 2023) investigated the nexus between strategy implementation and organizational success, particularly emphasizing the necessity of adequate financial resources to support organizational strategies. Their findings underscored the prevalent lack of financial resources within organizations and the importance of financial management for effective strategy implementation. Similarly, (Suri, 2022) delved into the core drivers of strategy implementation, highlighting the critical role of organizational resources, including financial capacity, in facilitating successful strategy execution. Their research revealed that an institution's financial strength significantly influences its ability to implement strategies effectively, ensuring sustained effectiveness.

(Elkamali and Elayah, 2020), in examining the correlation between organizational strategy and sustainability, they emphasized that strategy only contributes to organizational sustainability when successfully implemented. They stressed the importance of essential drivers such as well-designed structures and aligned cultures that support implementing new strategies. These assertions are echoed by Wabulasa and Kihara (2023), who advocated for the effective integration of key enablers such as organizational culture and a flexible structure to achieve successful strategy implementation. Moreover, (Kiriimi and Nambuswa, 2016) suggested that a flexible organizational structure and a cohesive organizational culture are instrumental in facilitating the streamlined implementation of organizational strategy, promoting organizational success.

(Keya, 2019) directed attention to the effectiveness of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Kenya through continuous strategy implementation. The study highlighted the dependency of NGOs on well-defined strategies, emphasizing that successful implementation of these strategies leads to more efficient operations and enhances organizational success. Similarly, (Siele and Kagiri, 2017) focused on organizational structure as a key facilitator of strategy implementation among NGOs in Kenya. Their findings underscored the integral role of organizational culture in determining the success of NGOs by supporting the effective implementation of strategies. These findings are corroborated by (Muriithi et al., 2019), who posited that strategies adopted by NGOs are effective in enhancing organizational success only when implemented effectively through the integration of essential enablers such as resources, supportive culture, and a flexible organizational structure.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework for this research, visually depicting the independent and dependent variables and their operationalization.

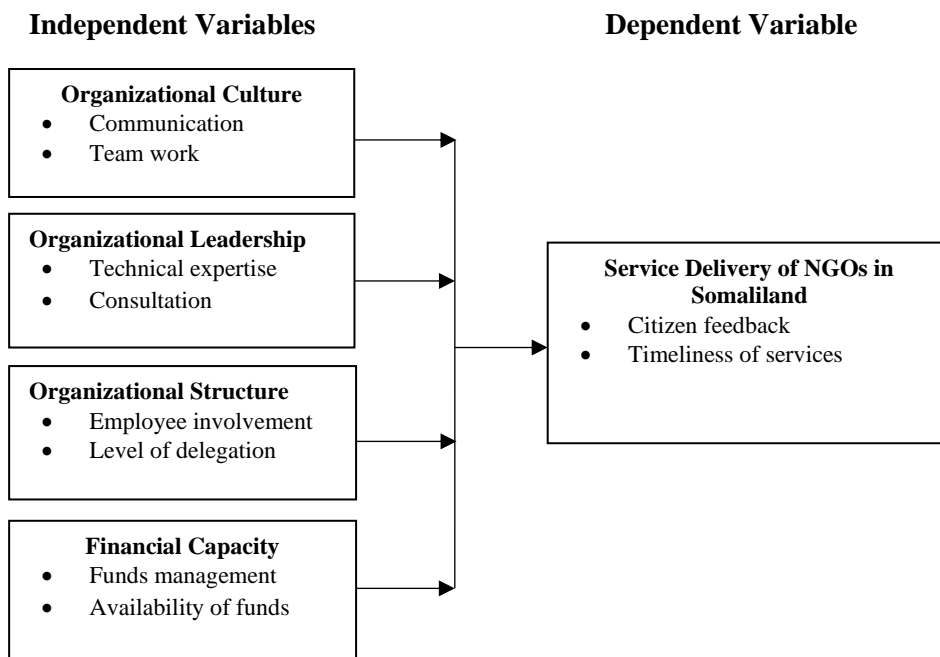


Figure 1. Research Framework

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The research employed a descriptive research design to investigate the correlation between strategy implementation and service delivery among NGOs in Somaliland. This design facilitated comprehensive data collection and analysis, allowing for a thorough exploration of the research inquiries. The study focused on employees at the Save the Children offices in Hargeisa, Somaliland. Currently, the organization employs over 110 staff members, including local and international professionals and support staff. These employees are involved in national projects and are stationed in operational program offices. The study specifically targeted divisions such as finance, control, audit, administration, and human resources within the organization.

The research employed Yamane's formula for determining the sample size, as initially proposed by (Yamane, 1967) and cited in the study conducted by (Kasiulevičius et al., 2006). According to Yamane's formula, the recommended sample size, considering a probability (p) of 0.5 and a 95% confidence level, is given by:

$$n = \frac{n}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Considering the population size (N) of 110 and the precision level (e), the study's target population was carefully considered in determining the sample size. Assuming a probability (p) of 0.5 and a 95% confidence level, the resultant sample size is represented by:

$$n = \frac{110}{1 + 110(0.05^2)} = 86$$

The research study employed the stratified random sampling method as its sampling technique. This method involves dividing the population into subgroups or strata based on specific characteristics, such as job roles or departments. Samples are then randomly selected from each subgroup to ensure the representation of the population.

This study collected primary data using a questionnaire structured into five sections. The first section focused on gathering demographic information, while the subsequent sections addressed each of the four specific

objectives of the study. The questionnaire was distributed and collected using the drop-and-pick method, wherein it was delivered to the respondents' work areas and retrieved once they had completed filling it out.

The collected data underwent cleaning, sorting, and coding using SPSS version 27 for analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in this study. Descriptive statistics comprehensively summarised the data, including standard deviation and mean scores. Inferential statistics were employed to explore the statistical relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This was achieved through a regression model represented as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- Y = Service Delivery (dependent variable);
- β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept);
- X_1 = Financial capacity (independent variable);
- X_2 = Organizational structure (independent variable);
- X_3 = Organizational leadership (independent variable);
- X_4 = organizational culture (independent variable);
- $\beta_1 \dots \beta_4$ = regression coefficient of four variables;
- ϵ = Error term.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

The sample comprised 86 individuals, with each receiving a questionnaire. As depicted in the figure below, out of the 86 questionnaires distributed to the participants, 74 were completed and returned, resulting in an 85.05% response rate deemed sufficient for the study. These findings indicate that the response rate meets the criteria established for the study. Moreover, the results align with the recommendation by (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003), who suggested that a sample size of 70% or higher is statistically adequate for research purposes.

Table 1. Response Rate

Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Response	74	85.05
Non-response	12	13.95
Total	86	100

Source: research data, 2024

Descriptive Results on Strategy Implementation and Service Delivery

The results indicate a consensus among respondents regarding the pivotal role of various elements of strategy implementation, including financial capacity, leadership, organizational structure, and organizational culture, in driving service delivery within Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These findings corroborate the research conducted by (Masua, 2017), who highlighted the significance of financial resource capacity in driving service delivery. Additionally, (Ngugi, 2014) emphasized the crucial role of organizational leadership in enhancing service delivery and organizational effectiveness in fulfilling its mandates. Addressing organizational structure as a component of strategy implementation (Wabulasa and Kihara, 2023) underscored the importance of establishing a supportive and flexible organizational structure to drive organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, (Vigfússon et al., 2021) found that strategy implementation, mainly through cultivating an appropriate organizational culture, was integral to facilitating effective service delivery.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Strategy Implementation and Service Delivery

Financial Capacity	Mean	Std. Dev.
The employees have received sufficient training on issues related to financial management when implementing strategies.	3.99	0.771
Departmental budgets are financed according to departmental needs.	3.01	0.801
Money is made available and distributed on schedule to support the implementation of strategies.	3.22	1.481
The department's strategic plan can be implemented with adequate funds.	2.56	0.664
There is much bureaucracy involved in obtaining financial resources for the department.	3.54	0.718
Organizational Leadership	Mean	Std. Dev.

Leadership creates an environment where people may participate fully in implementing strategies.	2.97	0.771
Organizational leadership establishes trust and eliminates fear in their subordinates.	3.02	0.691
Leadership considers the needs of all parties involved, including workers, investors, local communities, and society.	3.33	0.811
During the implementation of a strategy, leadership inspires, motivates, and values employee contributions.	2.88	1.544
The leadership is flexible and easily adapts to changes during strategy implementation.	3.12	1.601
Organizational structure	Mean	Std. Dev.
The organizational structure facilitates close coordination between departments during strategy implementation.	3.26	0.901
The organizational structure allows everyone in the department to communicate adequately and effectively about the organization's strategy.	2.62	1.561
Subordinates are involved in the decision-making process all the time.	2.91	1.713
The strategies made by departments are in line with the existing power structure.	3.37	0.609
Strict responsibility is allocated to specific individuals for strategy implementation.	3.06	0.827
Organizational Culture	Mean	Std. Dev.
Employees are ready to share knowledge with colleagues.	3.11	0.903
Managers trust information that comes from outside their departments.	2.98	0.867
There is innovation and constant emphasis on creativity for everyone in your department.	3.02	0.711
Department members feel comfortable when giving honest and open feedback.	2.71	0.694
There is professionalism in all aspects of the department.	3.36	0.822

Source: research data, 2024

Inferential Statistics on the Relationship between Strategy Implementation and Service Delivery

Inferential statistics, employing a regression model, were utilized to predict the statistical relationship between strategy implementation and service delivery among Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Somaliland. The results presented in Table 3 indicate an R-square (R^2) value of 0.803. This suggests that approximately 80.3% of the variation in service delivery can be attributed to strategy implementation through the four key aspects: financial capacity, organizational leadership, organizational structure, and organizational culture. Furthermore, the ANOVA results reveal an F-value of 7.589 at a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$. This signifies that the model is statistically significant in predicting the relationship between strategy implementation and service delivery among NGOs in Somaliland.

The regression coefficients provide insights into the beta coefficients for each aspect of strategy implementation along with their corresponding P-values. Notably, organizational leadership emerges as the most influential factor in service delivery, with a Beta coefficient (β) of 0.817 and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that a unit change in organizational leadership would result in a 0.817-unit influence on service delivery among NGOs in Somaliland. Following closely is organizational structure, with a Beta coefficient (β) of 0.813 and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, implying that a unit change in organizational structure would lead to a 0.813-unit increase in service delivery among NGOs in Somaliland. Financial capacity ranks third, with a Beta coefficient (β) of 0.804 at a significant level of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that a unit change in financial capacity would influence service delivery by 0.804 units among NGOs in Somaliland. Lastly, organizational culture exhibits a Beta coefficient (β) of 0.771 at a significant level of $0.000 < 0.05$, suggesting that a unit change in organizational culture would influence service delivery at NGOs in Somaliland by 0.771 units.

These findings prove that strategy implementation through financial capacity, organizational leadership, organizational structure, and organizational culture significantly impacts service delivery among Non-Governmental Organizations in Somaliland. This conclusion is consistent with the research by Hantiro and Maina (2020), who found that service delivery within organizations heavily relies on leadership, structure, and culture. Additionally, the findings align with those of (Tawse and Tabesh, 2021), who identified financial resources, effective leadership, and a flexible organizational structure as essential drivers of successful strategy implementation, consequently enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Table 3. Regression Model Results

Model Summary					
Model	R	R square	Adjusted r squared	Std. error of the estimate	
1	0.811 ^a	0.803	0.825	1.10152	
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Regression	801.022	20	40.0511	7.5890	.000 ^b
Residual	211.101	40	5.2775		
Total	1012.123	60			
Regression Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	4.101	1.020		2.275	0.000
Leadership	0.817	0.064	0.311	3.214	0.000
Organizational Structure	0.813	0.014	0.342	3.106	0.000
Finance Capacity	0.804	0.093	0.513	2.374	0.000
Organizational Culture	0.771	0.073	0.413	3.122	0.000

Source: research data, 2024

D. CONCLUSION

The study's findings underscored the significant influence of organizational leadership on service delivery within non-governmental organizations, mainly Save the Children. Notably, leaders within Save the Children were found to advocate actively supporting strategy implementation, indicating a notable commitment to this process. Furthermore, management leadership at Save the Children was observed to promote the institutionalization of initiatives across various departments, albeit to a moderate yet discernible extent. Moreover, the study revealed that Save the Children's organizational structure exerts a noticeable and significant impact on service delivery, contributing to improved outcomes. Basic yet crucial financial management skills among staff members were also identified, facilitating the effective management of strategic resources. Additionally, the organization's fund allocation process was found to be clearly defined, prioritizing the disbursement of funds based on specific requirements and priorities.

The study's conclusions highlight the imperative of enhancing organizational culture across all facets, including knowledge sharing and inter-departmental communication, to achieve effective and efficient service delivery at Save the Children Hargeisa. These enhancements are essential for ensuring accessible, timely, and enhanced services. Furthermore, the research underscores the significant impact of organizational culture on service delivery at Save the Children Hargeisa as a driver of strategy implementation. This impact is evidenced by the cultivation of professionalism, the facilitation of communication channels, and the fostering of innovation, all of which contribute to enhancing service provision.

Recommendations

The study offers several recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of Save the Children's operations. Firstly, it underscores the crucial role of leadership in taking ownership of strategy implementation and fostering effective communication across all departments. Moreover, it suggests establishing a clear organizational structure, framework, and engagement terms, involving employees in strategy planning and formulation to garner their support for implementation and long-term sustainability. The study advocates for the accountable, transparent, and efficient management of financial resources to bolster the organization's capacity for financing, implementing, and sustaining strategies. Finally, it highlights the significance of nurturing an organizational culture that consistently motivates and inspires employees, fostering active engagement in their work and interactions with colleagues. These recommendations aim to optimize Save the Children's effectiveness in delivering services and fulfilling its mission in Somaliland.

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