

## ABSTRACT

Strategic leadership continues to gain prominence in organization's management within unpredictable operating environment of the 21st century. Today, Corporate Social Performance (CSP) which is also allied to organizations has spread to all sectors, until it has become practically global. Universities around the world thus tend to embrace strategic leadership styles and integrating corporate social performance into their research and teaching mission statements, particularly to cope with the uncertainties and enhance institutional performance. Despite the spread of public universities in western Kenya, their effect on CSP and the communities are unknown. Moreover, it is uncertain whether the universities effectively integrate social, environmental, and economic objectives into their strategic management to achieve sustainable social goals. The study aimed at determining the effect of strategic leadership on CSP in public universities in western region of Kenya. The specific objectives were to; establish effect of responsible leadership on CSP in public universities in western Kenya; examine effect of authentic leadership on CSP, and investigate effect of servant leadership on CSP. The study was founded on especially stakeholder theory. The sample size used was 118 respondents drawn from five public universities in western Kenya with 112 actual responses representing 94.91% response rate. Structured multi-factor questionnaire employed showed reliability of between 0.796 and 0.901 Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Validity was established through expert review. Descriptive and regression analysis test of relationship between strategic leadership styles on corporate social performance was conducted. Results established a positive effect of responsible leadership on CSP ( $B_1 = .383, p = 0.000$ ) authentic leadership on CSP ( $B_2 = .458, p = 0.000$ ) and servant leadership on CSP ( $B_3 = .480, p = 0.000$ ). Overall,  $R^2$  value of 0.473 was obtained indicating moderate explanation on the relationship between the dependent variables (authentic, responsible and servant leadership) with corporate social performance. Similarly, servant leadership was found to have the greatest positive effect on CSP. The study established that all public universities in western Kenya had an element of CSP in their objectives and mission statements, although few implement them. Based on the findings the study recommends that universities leadership should focus on identifying their social values and adjust institutional operations for the successful implementation of CSP activities. Finally, the results of the study may be useful for institutions policy makers particularly in selection processes and training leaders. The study adds to the body of knowledge on strategic leadership and urges future research on Public Universities' CSP.