



Implementation of Strategic Plan in Public Secondary Schools in Migwani Sub County in Kitui County Kenya

Dr. Charles Mulandi Zakayo

Senior Lecture, School of Business and Economics,
Kabarak University, Kenya

1. ABSTRACT

School strategic planning is the key to determine the school's success as it prepares to respond to ever changing academic landscape. This study intended to find out the roles of school stakeholders in the implementation of the school strategic plan in public secondary schools in Migwani sub-county. The specific objectives were:- To assess the extent to which strategic plans had been implemented in public secondary schools in Migwani sub- county, to find out the role of parents in implementation of the school strategic plan, to find out the role of government in implementation of school strategic plan and to find out the role of school management in implementation of school strategic plans in Migwani Sub-County. Descriptive survey study approach was used. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used for data collection. The population of the study comprised of 22 public secondary schools which had documented strategic plan in Migwani sub-county as per February 2017. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 66 respondents out of 286. The respondents were parents (PTA) members, school principals and BOG members. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The study found that the parents and government are the main financiers of all the school projects stated in the strategic plan. Government provides teachers and policies which are essential for implementation of strategic plan. BOG plan, budget and prioritize the items for implementation. An average of 34.59% of strategies had been implemented. There was no statistical difference in the role played by parents, government and school management (0.979).

Keyword- School stakeholders, school strategic plan and strategic implementation

2. INTRODUCTION

One of the main objectives of the government of Kenya is to provide quality education. To achieve this, government has introduced strategic planning in public secondary schools in Kenya. DEMA (2010) noted that adoption of strategic planning in secondary schools would decentralize school management for improved performance. Decentralization would require involvement of all the key stakeholders in development and implementation of school strategic plan.

Strategic planning process involves formulation of vision and mission statements of the school, situational analysis, strategy formulation and implementation (Pearce and Robinson 2008). Though strategic plan may be good, the success depends on how it is implemented. (Kamau 2008)

Strategic decisions align the organization with its external environment, increase organizational competitiveness and require in-put from all its functional areas (Shirley 1982). Unlike private schools public schools in Kenya have many stakeholders who influence the performance of a school adversely. These stakeholders include the parents, the government and school management and each stakeholder has a very important role to play in the school. The recent introductions of strategic plan in schools require the participation of all the school stakeholders in school strategy implementation.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at identifying the extent to which strategic plans had been implemented in public secondary schools in Migwani sub-county and the roles played by each of the key stakeholders namely parents (PTA), school management and the

government in the implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools in Migwani Sub- County

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy, resources, strength and operations to ensure organization is working efficiently and effectively toward achieving its objectives. Intended goals and means to achieve them are established. Adjustments are done to ensure appropriate organizational response to its changing environment. Strategic planning is a disciplined effort that produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, who it serves, what it does and why it does it, with a focus on the future (Olsen, 2012). Therefore, strategic planning is a systematic process of envisioning a desired future and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them. Various business analysis techniques are used in strategic planning such as SWOT and PERT. School strategic planning is the key determinant factor for school success and school strategic planning has been used for long in developed countries and brought drastic improved change in the performance of schools (Bryson 1995). Strategic planning leads to preparation of an organizational strategic plan. A strategic plan is a document prepared and used by an organization to communicate about its goals, the actions required to achieve those goals and all other critical elements developed during the planning exercise (Mckeown 2012). It is a deliberate attempt to organize and control organizational activities and services over a specified period of time (Ngware et al. 2006).

Once a strategic plan is developed implementation follows. Good strategic plan would be of no use if not effectively implemented. Strategic implementation is the process that puts plans and strategies into action to reach those goals. It is the process that turns strategies and plans into actions in order to accomplish organizational strategic objectives (Olsen 2012).

For efficient and effective implementation of strategic plan managers should involve all the essential stakeholders.

PUBLIC SCODARY SCHOOLS AND STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTION

Public secondary schools in Kenya are managed by the principals and Board of governor members who

are appointed by the ministry of education. These are the school management and they operate under the policies given by the ministry of education. As per the stakeholder theory, parents, school management board and the government are stakeholders due to their capacity to affect the schools' performance and growth (Milles 2012). All school stakeholders should actively take part in implementation of school strategic plan.

5. RESOURCE DEPENDANCY THEORY

This theory conceptualizes an Organization as being a dependant on resources in its environment for its survival. Due to Organization's dependency on the scarce resources, management does not have unbridled strategic choice and choices should be made within internal and external constraints (Andrew 1971, Child 1972, Pfeffer 1982, Oliver 1991). The Organization can manage its external dependencies by adapting to its environment by altering constraints through changing the legality of its environment (Pfeffer 1982). Therefore Organization should be concerned with issues of stakeholder groups who control the critical resources for its survival (Agle, Mitchak and Senenfield 1999, and Kreiner and Bhambas 1991)

6. RESOURCE BASED THEORY

Resource based theory views Organization resources as the core to Organizational survival and growth and the stakeholders are the ones who provide, allocate and manage organizational resources (Barney 2001a, 2001b, Bovard 20005, Hoopes, Madsen and Walker 2003). These resources should figure prominently in strategy formulation and implementation in the organization (Kraatz and Zefac 2001). Implementation of strategic plan requires tangible and non-tangible resources, that is, financial, human and skills.

7. STAKEHOLDER AND STAKEHOLDER'S MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Stakeholder in the Organization is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organizational objectives (Freeman 1984). There is high level of interdependency between the firm and its primary stakeholders and Organization cannot survive without the continuing participation of its primary stakeholders (Donaldson and Preston 1995, Freeman 1984, Clarkson 1995). An Organization can adopt different approaches to deal with each primary

stakeholder group i.e., pro-action, accommodation, defense and reaction (Carroll 1979, Clarkson 1988, 1991 and 1985, Gatewood and Carroll 1981, Wartick and Cochran 1985). An Organization can use these approaches to address their economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities (Carroll 1979, Clarkson 1991, Wartick and Cochran 1985)

8. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Studies have reviewed that parents, School management and Government are crucial Public school stakeholders due to the role they play in the school.

9. ROLE OF PARENTS IN SCHOOLS

Parental role in schools are widely acknowledged in both developed and developing countries. (Brain and Reid 2003 and Kamba 2010), Parental involvement brings school effectiveness and improves Child performance in general (Clase 2007). Despite the educational background and social position of parents, parents' involvement is essential component for successful education and teaching at school and it is a mistake to underestimate the willingness and capacity of many parents to work with the school (Massey 1993). Parents' involvement sustains educational quality and cooperation between parents and teachers and this enhances pupils' performance (James 2010, Lin 2010, Kamba 2010) Parents Teachers Association (PTA) is very essential in the life of a school (Edward and Redfer 1988). Roles of PTA include;- involving parents in classroom decisions, promoting communications, social events, fundraising and lobbying the state and national legislatures on behalf of the students. PTA provides opportunity for parents and teachers to socialize and raise funds (Yahie 2000). In Kenya, PTA is responsible for management and provision of learning and teaching materials as well as monitoring school funds. PTA enhances the participation of parents in leadership and management of Public school educational affairs.

10. THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Government plays a crucial role in financing of public Schools' education. In 2007 Government of Kenya formed taskforce on affordable secondary education to look into ways and means of reducing the cost of secondary education on households (MOE 2008). Eddah Gachukia recommended among others government subsidiary of Kshs 10265 per child to meet the cost of instructional materials and other

support services. This had to be given to each child in every public secondary school in Kenya. This program was launched by the then president of Kenya His Excellence Mwai Kibaki. The government finances education through FSE, CDF and bursaries.

11. THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

School management consist of Board of Directors (BOG). The powers and responsibilities to govern schools have been transferred from local authority to individual schools and BOG and they have the mandate to take part in leadership of schools (Field 1993, Wilson 2001, Earley 2003). These school stakeholders, i.e the parents, Government and the School management are concerned with formulation and implementation of the School strategic plan and providing the necessary resources required in implementation of school strategic plan. The school with adequate resources is capable of implementing its strategic plan more effectively than the one with insufficient resources.

Strategic planning practices in Kenyan secondary schools were introduced by KESSP between 2006 and 2011. KESSP was a five year program of the ministry of education in Kenya. Its aim was to improve the provision of education in Kenya as education governance devolves to county level under the new constitution. The Decentralized Education Management Activity (DEMA) provides technical support to KESSP to strengthen the capacities of education personnel particularly at sub-county and school level for the efficient delivery of education services in Kenya.

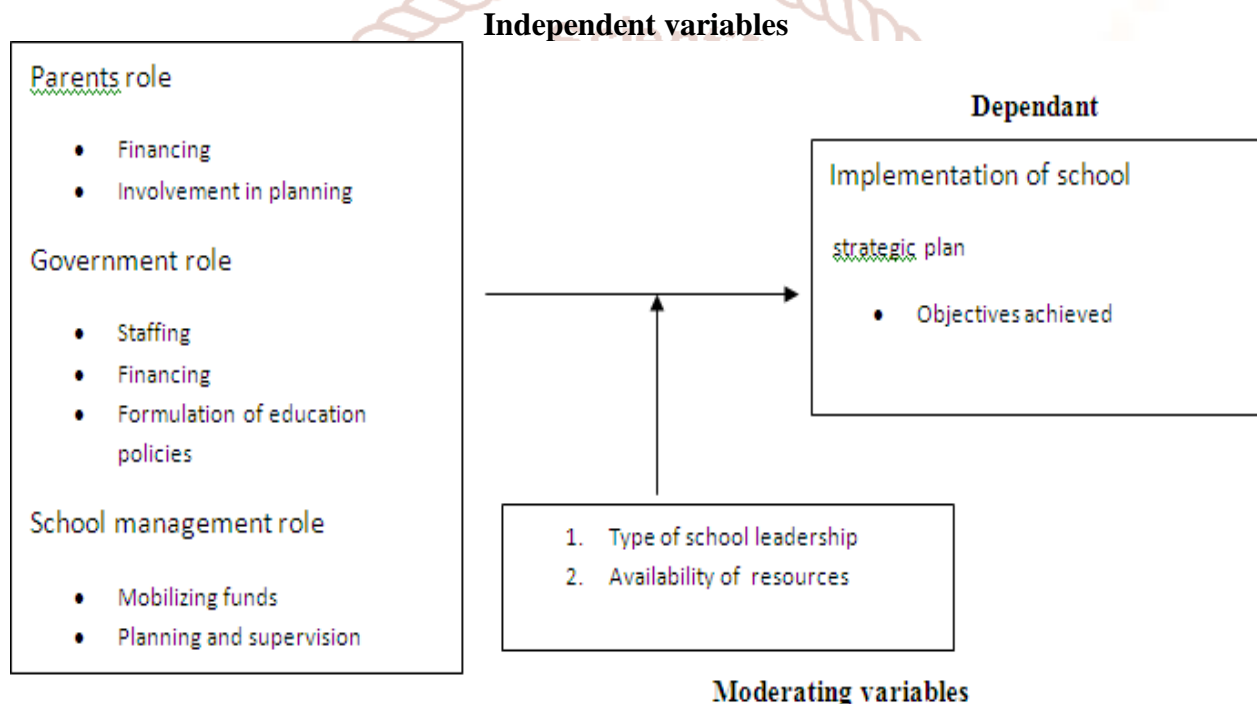
This was done by promoting decentralization of education by supporting secondary schools to prepare district strategic plans and secondary school strategic plans. DEMA also assist in capacity building through training educators in strategic planning and performance-based management to empower schools to collect, analyze and use data for improved decision making, planning and management. DEMA also coordinates with the KESI in strategic planning to improve capacity building monitoring and coordination.

According to DEMA report of 2011, education managers in all sub-counties and 4000 schools across the country had acquired capacity to plan strategically and to base management of education on performance and results. A total of 4522 education stakeholders

including teachers, principals, deputy principals, BOG members and PTA members had received training in strategic planning and performance based management by 2011 (DEMA , 2011). School strategic planning and implementation is the key to success of a school with regard to achievement of its mission, goals and objectives. Large percentage of the public secondary schools in Kenya have already developed strategic plans. Muriuki (2010), According to Yabo (2010 strategic thinking and decision making are the key to strategic management and should be directed towards three fundamental things :- first determining strategic direction and long term performance of the firm, secondly providing asset of

managerial decisions and finally deciding the priority use of resources and internal managerial decisions. Formal strategic planning practices call for the analysis of the key strategic factors, identifying the major strategic issues and generating alternative strategy. It should be noted that unless the strategic plan is effectively implemented it cannot cause any impact on the performance of the school Kitonga (2012). The main challenges in implementation of school strategic plans are:- shortage of funds, government educational policies, poor staffing and lack of teacher motivation. These challenges emanate from failure of stakeholders to play their roles effectively in strategy implementation.

13. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



14. THE KNOWLEDGE GAP

Though strategic management is widely practiced in public secondary schools in Kenya there are no documented study finding on the role of parents, government and school management in the implementation of school strategic plan and the extent to which they influence implementation process. This study was taken to fill up this knowledge gap.

15. METHODOLOGY

The study applied descriptive survey design. This was found to be more appropriate due its ability to collect information from respondents on attitudes and opinions in relation to the roles of parents, government and school management in implementation school strategic plans

The study targeted all the 25 public secondary schools in Mwingi Sub-county in Kenya which had documented strategic plans as per April 2017. Census technique was applied. 22 schools successfully participated in the study. Principals, Board of Governor (BOG) members and Parent Teachers Association (PTA) members of these schools constituted the respondents. Census technique was used to select the 25 principals but simple random technique was used to select 1 BOG member and 1 PTA member who was not a teacher out of their respective population 8 and 4 respectively from each participating school. This indicated in the table below

| RESPONDENTS | POPULATION | SAMPLE | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------------|------------|--------|------------|
| Principals | 22 | 22 | 100 |
| Parents(PTA members) | 88 | 22 | 25 |
| BOD members | 176 | 22 | 12.5 |
| Total | 286 | 66 | 23 |

Source: Researcher 2018

Primary data was collected using questionnaire but secondary data was collected from report records from office of District education officer Migwani Sub- County Kenya. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

16. FINDINGS

Extent of The Implementation of School Strategic Plan

The school under study had developed their strategic plan between 2010 and 2016.

95.5 % of the Principals had participated in development of their school strategic plan. The study found that all these schools were in the process of implementing their strategic plans. Implementation of strategic plan had started in different years as indicated in the table below.

| Number of years | Number of Schools | Percentage |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | 5 | 23 |
| 2 | 4 | 18 |
| 3 | 10 | 45 |
| 4 | 2 | 9 |
| 5 | 1 | 5 |
| Totals | 22 | 100 |

Source: researcher 2018

These schools as per April 2017 had been implementing their strategic plans for a minimum period of 1 year. Therefore they had enough time to assess the role of each stakeholder in implementing school strategic plan. This is summarized in the table below.

| Percentage implementation extent | Number of schools (Distribution frequency) | Class mid-point | Summation mean |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------|----------------|
| 1-25 | 9 | 13 | 117 |
| 26-50 | 7 | 38 | 266 |
| 51-75 | 6 | 63 | 378 |
| 76-100 | 0 | 88 | 0 |
| Total | 22 | | 761 |

Mean % extent of implementation: $761/22 = 34.59\%$

Source: Researcher2018

The table shows in 9 schools the implementation was rated at a percentage range between 1 and 25 %. Implementation level of 7 schools was between 25 and 50% while the remaining 6 schools the implementation range was between 51 and 75%. In average the overall extent of implementation was determined as 34.59%. This shows implementation extent was below average hence indication of challenges in the implementation.

The table below shows more information on the strategic plan implementation and its effects in schools studied.

| Statement | Mean | Percent | Standard deviation |
|---|------|---------|--------------------|
| School was in the process of implementing the strategic plan | 3.5 | 87.5 | 0.5 |
| Implementation of the strategic plan had led to increase in school facilities | 3.1 | 77.5 | 0.4 |
| Implementation of strategic plan had led to improved academic performance | 3.1 | 77.5 | 0.3 |
| Average | 3.2 | 80.8% | 0.4 |

Source: Researcher 2018

This revealed that implementation of strategic plan had impacted much on the improved growth and academic performance of schools. Percentage mean of 80.8%

Role of stakeholders in implementation of school strategic plan

| Statement | Mean | Percentage | Standard deviation |
|---|------|------------|--------------------|
| Parents had a role to play in implementation of strategic plan | 3.1 | 77.5 | 0.3 |
| The government had a role to play implementation of school strategic plan | 3.4 | 85 | 0.5 |
| School management had a role to play in implementation of school strategic plan | 3.5 | 87.5 | 0.5 |
| Parents, Government and school management played important role in implementation of schools strategic plan | 1.9 | 47.5 | 0.1 |

Source: Researcher 2018

Based on the data collected it was felt that parents had a role to play in the implementation of strategic plan at a percentage of 77.5%, Government at 85 % and school management at 87.5%. At the percentage mean of 47.5% it was felt that parents, government and school management were effectively playing their roles in the implementation of schools strategic plans.

The role of parents in implementation of strategic plan

The parents' role included funding school strategic projects, monitoring students and teachers and enhancing students discipline in schools as shown in the table below.

| Role | frequencies | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Funding | 19 | 86% |
| Students discipline | 7 | 31% |
| Motivating students and teachers | 10 | 45% |
| Average | 12 | 54% |

Source: Researcher 2018

The study found parents playing a great role in implementation of school strategic plan as financiers of school physical infrastructures with 86% frequency. Infrastructures were:- classrooms, laboratories, libraries, kitchen, stores, school land and other school assets which were mainly focused in the school greatly implementation of the strategic plan. Parents mobilized the society to provide required funds for the implementation of school strategic plans. The study found that the parents played a role in motivating students and teachers for higher academic

performance. (45% frequency) and enhancing students discipline (34% frequency).

Role of government in implementation of strategic plans

The study found government playing a great role in financing implementation of strategic plan at 86%, staffing school at 41%, formulating education policies at 50%, technical, technical supervision and advisory at 45% and at others 36%. This is summarized in the table below:-

| Role | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Financing | 19 | 86 |
| Staffing schools with teachers | 7 | 41 |
| Education policy formulation | 11 | 50 |
| Technical supervision and Advisory services | 10 | 45 |
| Others | 8 | 36 |
| Mean | 11.4 | 51.6 |

Source: Researcher 2018

The research found that the government of Kenya plays various roles in implementation of school strategic plan in public secondary schools. Financing schools 86%. It finances tuition, stationeries and books through free secondary school education funds. It also funds school infrastructures through constituency development fund (CDF). It formulates policy framework within which public secondary schools operate (50% frequency). This is a strong support to implementation of school strategic plan.

Role of school management in implementation of school strategic plan

The study identified the role of school management in the implementation of school strategic plan as:-

Mobilizing funding at 55%, planning and supervision at 59% and 41% frequencies, this is indicated in the table below:

| Role | Frequencies | Percentages |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Mobilizing funds | 12 | 55 |
| Planning and supervision | 13 | 59 |
| Others | 9 | 41 |
| Mean | 11.3 | 51.5 |

Source: Researcher 2018

The study found that BOG members in public secondary schools plan, oversee and supervise school resources during implementation of strategic plans. Funds are mobilized through fundraising and partnering with well wishers. BOG is also involved in disciplining both teachers and students and recruiting of staff in pursuit of school strategic plan implementation.

17. Results of statistical difference of the role of parents, Government and school management

Table below shows the results of ANOVA statistical test performed.

| Source of variation between error | Sum of squares d. f | Mean squares F |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | 0.8606 2 | 0.4303 2.1007E-2 |
| | 163.9 8 | 20.48 |
| Total | 164.7 10 | |

Source: Researcher 2018

| | Role of parents | Role of government | Role of managers |
|--|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Number of items | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Items | 7.00, 10.0, 19.0 | 8.00,9.00,10.0,11.0,19.0 | 9.00, 12.0, 13.0 |
| Mean | 12.0 | 11.4 | 11.3 |
| 95% Confidence level | 5.974 thru 18.03 | 6.733 thru 16.07 | 5.308 thru 17.36 |
| For mean Standard Deviation | 6.24 | 4.39 | 2.08 |
| Hi | 19.0 | 19.0 | 13.0 |
| Low | 7.00 | 8.00 | 9.00 |
| Median | 10.0 | 10.0 | 12.0 |
| Average absolute Deviation from median | 4.00 | 2.60 | 1.33 |

Source: Researcher 2017

The study showed the probability of the results assuming null hypothesis was very high, that is 0.979. This indicates no statistical difference between the roles played by the parents, the government and the school management in the implementation of school strategic plan.

The extent in which the parents, the government and the school management have been playing their roles.

The study found that generally all the stakeholders studied were not effectively playing their roles in the implementation of school strategic plans. The average percentage annual fee defaulted by parents was found to be 24%. It was realized that the fee charged by all schools studied was not enough to meet the cost of implementation of strategic plan due to inflation and binding government policies. 72.7 % of the principals stated that the government was not playing its role effectively. Disbursement of government finances to schools is delayed. 90.9% of respondents stated that government financing affect implementation of strategic plans.

Factors affecting parents, government and school management in implementation of strategic plan

The following factors were found to have affected the stakeholders in playing their role in implementation of strategic plan. Parents low income, School management affected by political interference,

insufficient funding of schools, low education background and lack of time and commitment. Government role is affected by government fiscal year not coinciding with school calendar, inflation and mushrooming schools and lack of finances to employ teachers.

The parents and school management involvement in implementation of strategic plan

The study showed that 63.6% of parents were not involved in school strategic plan implementation, 54.54% of school management were not involved in implementation of school strategic plan

Suggested ways of enhancing implementation of school strategic plans

Parents and school management of public secondary schools should be involved more in the preparation and implantation of school strategic plans so as to enhance ownership of the plan. Also there is need for workshops to educate the stakeholders on the need and importance of school strategic plan and its implementation. There should be more timely funding by both parents and government in school strategic plan implementation and school stakeholders should avoid politicizing school programs and co-operate with school principals.

18. Discussions

Based on this study findings, the parents, the government and the school management are critical

Stakeholders in public secondary schools in Kenya, This is because the schools depend on them for provision of the resources for accomplishing the objectives outlined in their strategic plan.

Since the study did not find any statistical difference on the role of the stakeholders in implementation of the school strategic plans, the school management should seek their support and value them equally. The school principals should therefore incorporate them in key decision making to enhance their support for sustained school performance and survival. Dependence theory states that the extent to which an organization depends on its external environment and stakeholders depend on the importance of a particular resource to the organization, the degree to which those who control the resources have monopoly over the resource and the discretion they have over its allocation (Frooman 1999, Mitchell et al 1997, Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). Since implementation of school

strategic plans require the involvement of parents, government and school management, the performance of schools should be evaluated by analyzing the effectiveness of all the stakeholders' involvement.

19. Conclusion

The study concluded that parents, government and school management have important roles to play in implementation of school strategic plans.

20. Recommendation

The study recommends that there is need for more involvement of parents in preparation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in order to enhance ownership for easy implementation. The government should remit the FSE levies in time. Ministry of education should come up with policies which would enhance more autonomy for public schools to implement their strategies. School management also need more training on strategic management in order to align their strategic plans with the internal and external environment. This study focused of the three groups of school stakeholders that is , the parents, government and school management further study need to be conducted on the role of other school stakeholders such as teachers and students.

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