

Stakeholders' Participation as an Institutional Determinant of Strategic Plan Implementation in Public Secondary Schools in Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate institutional determinants of strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya. The study objective sought to determine the influence of the stakeholders' participation in school development plans on strategic plan implementation. The study used Descriptive survey research design. The study targeted 351 public secondary school principals, 1,404 class teachers, and 1,755 academic Heads of Departments from which a sample of 105 principals, 176 academic HoDs and 140 class teachers was derived. Stratified sampling technique was used to sample the respondents. A questionnaire and an interview guide were the data collection tools. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyses data. Data was presented by use of frequency distribution tables, and pie charts. Person's product-moment correlation Coefficient and multiple linear regression was used to analyze the inferential data. The set level of hypothesis testing was set at a 0.05 level of significance. This study may be significant to the school Board of Management members and policy makers in terms of know how skills on formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategic plans implementation in schools. This study found that stakeholder participation in school development plans have a positive and significant influence on the strategic plan implementation. Based on these findings, the study recommended that the stakeholders' need to honor the invitation to take part in the school development plans in the strategic plan and in essence parents ought to be part and parcel in formulating the school strategic plan, and ensure the strategic plan implementation through school fees payment in time. Likewise Constituency Development Fund as stakeholders need to perform its duty in order to ensure adequate strategic plan implementation. The researcher conducted Hypothesis testing using a multiple regression model at the 5 percent level of significance. The results of hypothesis testing gave a positive coefficient of 0.2519 on stakeholder participation in school development plans was realized with a p-value of 0.000 indicating a statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Hence we reject the hypothesis that, stakeholder participation in school development plans has an effect on strategic plan implementation. This indicates that, stakeholder participation in school development plans does have a statistically significant effect on strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County.

Key words: *Strategic Plan, Implementation, Public Secondary Schools, Kenya.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is taken globally as a basic human right for all children. This is in line with the United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO) that each child should enjoy right to education (UNESCO, 2009). Planning and implementing educational strategic plans in schools has proved to be a strong means of achieving sustainable development goals (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization, 2015). A strategic plan can be defined as systematic guide, formulated by a school to assess, actualize its set goals, and formulate its basis so that the whole school knows what will take place and what is expected of them (Mintzberg, 2004). Globally, strategic plan implementation is important for it dictates the success and failure in education. Schools use strategic plan to ascertain objectives and goals in education Alexander (1991). Many public and private organizations like ministries, parastatals, legal services, hospitals, financial services, and churches formulate strategic plans to track their performances. There are many shareholders in public secondary schools who take part in the process of making a strategic plan. The process of making a strategic plan involves the Board of Management, teachers, support staff, parents and the students. Moreover, the process requires an input of alumni, accreditation agencies, government agencies, benefactors as well as the community.

A study conducted by Reeves (2008) in United States of America showed that for schools to improve student results, leaders require guidance in the processes of strategic planning. While analyzing many schools' strategic plans in USA, Reeves discovered that successful planning and students' achievement are determined by leadership practices and leadership high expectations. The study also found out that more than 70% of the strategic plans are never implemented.

According to Deventer (2009) South African secondary institutions found out that the poor perspective of the stakeholders like teachers leads to failure of strategic plan implementation due to the use of poor methods. In addition, he asserted that political interference and Poor management are additional factors impacting strategic plan implementation in some schools in South Africa. Jooste and Fourie (2019), in a research study in South Africa showed that organizational performance is greatly influenced by the strategic leadership role during the implementation stage as giving direction is very vital.

The ministry of education introduced strategic plans in learning public institutions for them to effectively attain goals and objectives contained in the in the **Sustainable Development Goals Number 4 (SDG 4)**. The ministry of education initiated strategic management in all schools in line with the social pillar of Vision 2030. In line with the policy, (MoE, 2012) the Ministry gives the blueprint for strategic plans where all the schools must prepare a strategic plan. The strategic plan implementation in schools remains a big challenge. This will lead to a challenge of national realization of overall educational goals and objectives.

Education is a major priority of the government of Kenya in the Vision 2030. Education is considered as a driver of the success of other sectors in the economy in Kenya (Government of Kenya, 2007). In line with the Vision 2030 economic development strategy, several flagship projects have been put in place to ensure that the education system equips learners with the quality skills required for the growth of the country's economy. In order to develop the system of education, vision 2030 aims at attaining gender parity in the enrolment in public secondary schools and to realize a good regional distribution of schooling opportunities and training of teachers. Several studies have shown that a strategic plan is a tool for guiding a school's initiatives for future improvement (Fullan 2004). Steyn and Wolhuter (2010) argued that strategic plan aids in the school's evaluation in order to identify and plan for the strengths and anticipated future problems. Moreover, Eacott (2011) states the importance of strategic planning as a factor of strengthening the relationship between the school and its community. This is because it serves as an instrument of conveying information outside the school.

A good strategic plan implementation yields many benefits. In line with Bryson (1995), strategic plan implementation aids in predicting common purpose for future development in a school, triggers forward-thinking, enhances performance in a school, promotes teamwork and enhances responsiveness. Due to the

benefits attributed to strategic plan implementation, strategic plan has been adopted by schools in Machakos County. Stakeholders like parents do not actively participate in the strategic plan implementation. This is because they do not pay school fees in time. Most of the stakeholders like parents and teachers are not actively involved in the process of formulating the strategic plan. Some principals do not actively involve all the stakeholders like HoDs and the teachers in the implementation of the school development plans on the implementation of a strategic plan in public secondary schools in Machakos County.

Cabardo (2016) did a study to evaluate stakeholders' level of participation the school-initiated activities and strategic plan implementation of management of schools in selected primary schools in the division of Davao Del Sur in Philippines. The study found that the stakeholders' participation in strategic plan implementation was below standards. It also found out that the strategic plan implementation was significantly affected by the stakeholders' participation.

Moeng and Van (2016) conducted a research investigating the determinants affecting the strategic plan implementation in public primary schools of North West Province, South Africa. The research study results indicated that these schools confuse strategic plans and school improvement plans. It was also found that stakeholders' participation key in strategic plan implementation. Training of stakeholders such as teachers was necessary. It was also found that the framework, lack of proper leadership, nature and importance of strategic plans were not well understood by the stakeholders. In the strategic plan implementation should involve stakeholders like teachers and parents. The study found out that there are no meetings to discuss the phase of the strategic plan implementation in schools.

Weyama (2018) examined the influence of stakeholders' participation in public secondary institutions in public secondary schools in Migori County, Kenya. The research found out that strategic planning in public secondary institutions includes the stakeholders minimally because of limited time allocated for strategic plan formulation completion and implementation. This greatly affects the implementation stage. The researcher recommended that the stakeholders should be included in both the formulation and implementation stages.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Respondents' fear to give the necessary information and inadequate time to fill in questionnaires may limit this study. The respondents' workload may limit them from getting enough time for filling in the questionnaires. To mitigate this, the researcher gave the teachers enough time to fill in the questionnaires. The respondents may be unwilling to give some data due to the confidentiality policy of schools. This was mitigated by making assurance to the respondents that none of their responses will be shared with other parties

Research Objectives

This study was guided by the following objective;

1. To determine the influence of the stakeholders' participation in

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used Descriptive survey research design to analyze the data. The study targeted 351 public secondary schools, 351 principals in these schools, 1,404 class teachers, and 1,755 academic Heads of Departments from which 105 principals, 176 academic HoDs and 140 class teachers. Questionnaire and interview guide were used for data collection. Person's product-moment correlation Coefficient and multiple

linear regression was used to analyze the inferential data.

RESULTS

Influence of the Stakeholders' Participation in School Development Plans on the Implementation of a Strategic Plan

Variable		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. dev.
Parents are actively involved in formulating the school strategic plan	<i>f</i>	2	8	5	67	23	3.962	0.865
	%	1.9	7.62	4.76	63.81	21.9		
Teachers are actively involved in the strategic plan	<i>f</i>	23	18	5	57	2	2.971	1.297
	%	21.9	17.14	4.76	54.29	1.9		
Parents influence plan implementation by paying school fees in time	<i>f</i>	24	70	2	6	3	1.99	0.86
	%	22.86	66.67	1.9	5.71	2.86		
Other stakeholders like CDF do their role in supporting the Plan	<i>f</i>	45	22	3	34	1	2.276	1.334
	%	42.86	20.95	2.86	32.38	0.95		

The researcher sought to determine the effect of stakeholder participation in school development plans on the implementation of strategic plan where Table 1 and table 2 give the responses of principals and class teachers and HoDs on the various indicators of stakeholder participation in school development plans in public secondary schools in Machakos County. Stakeholder participation in school development plans was measured using three indicators for the class teachers and HoDs but four indicators were used for the school principals. Mean and standard deviation (SD) statistics for each questionnaire item were tabulated. The findings of table 1 and table 2 are as indicated respectively.

Table 1 Responses of Principals on Influence of Stakeholder Participation in School Development Plans on the Implementation of Strategic Plan

The research results shown in table 1 indicated that 85.71 percent of the school Principals agreed with the statement that parents actively participate making the school strategic plan while 9.52 percent of the school Principals disagreed with the statement that parents are actively involved in formulating the school strategic plan. Moreover, 56.19 percent of the school Principals agreed with the statement that teachers are actively involved in the strategic plan while 39.04 percent of the school Principals disagreed with the statement that teachers are actively involved in the strategic plan. The school Principals who agreed with the statement that parents influence plan implementation through payment fees on time were only 8.57 percent while 89.53 percent of the school Principals disagreed with the statement that parents influence plan implementation by paying school fees in time. Furthermore, 33.33 percent of the school Principals agreed with the statement that stakeholders including CDF actively participate in the implementation of the strategic Plan while 63.81 percent of the school Principals disagreed with the statement that other stakeholders like CDF do their role in supporting the Plan. On average the rating for the school Principals ranged from 1.990 to 3.962. In particular, a mean rating of 3.962 for the statement “parents are participate seriously in making the institutional strategic plan” (SD=0.865). This indicates that the school Principals agreed with the statement

that parents are included in the process of making institutional strategic plan in public secondary schools in Machakos County. However, a mean rating of 1.990 for the statement “parents influence plan implementation by paying school fees in time” (SD=1.048), a mean rating of 2.276 for the statement “other stakeholders like CDF do their role in supporting the Plan” (SD=1.334). These indicates that the school Principals disagreed with the statement that parents impact plan implementation through payment of institutional fees in time, and stakeholders who involves CDF amongst other institutional stakeholders participate actively in the strategic Plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County.

This research sought to establish from class teachers and HoDs the influence of stakeholder participation in school development plans on the implementation of strategic plan, the outcomes are shown in the table 2.

Table 2: Responses of Class Teachers and HoDs on Influence of Stakeholder Participation in School Development Plans on the Implementation of Strategic Plan

Variable		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. dev.
The stakeholders are invited to participate in the school development plans in the strategic plan	f	155	42	4	50	43	2.265	1.573
	%	52.72	14.29	1.36	17.01	14.63		
The teachers are involved in making decisions and strategic plan development	f	33	96	3	118	44	3.15	1.326
	%	11.22	32.65	1.02	40.14	14.97		
Whenever things seem to go wrong we ask positive questions	f	59	65	2	82	86	3.241	1.557
	%	20.07	22.11	0.68	27.89	29.25		

The findings in table 2 have shown that 31.64 percent of the class teachers and HoDs agreed with the statement that the stakeholders are invited to participate in the school development plans in the strategic plan while 67.01 percent of the class teachers and HoDs disagreed with the statement that the stakeholders are invited to participate in the school development plans in the strategic plan. Moreover, 55.11 percent of the class teachers and HoDs agreed with the statement that the teachers are involved in making decisions and strategic plan development while 43.87 percent of the class teachers and HoDs disagreed with the statement that the teachers are involved in making decisions and strategic plan development. The class teachers and HoDs who agreed with the statement that whenever things seem to go wrong they ask positive questions were 57.14 percent while 42.18 percent of the class teachers and HoDs disagreed with the statement that whenever things seem to go wrong they ask positive questions. The average scale rating for the class teachers and HoDs ranged from 2.265 to 3.241. Specifically, a mean rating of 2.265 indicates that the class teachers and HoDs disagreed with the statement that “the stakeholders are invited to participate in the school development plans in the strategic plan” (SD=1.573). However a mean rating of 3.150 for the statement “The teachers are involved in making decisions and strategic plan development” (SD=1.326) and a mean rating of 3.241 for the statement “whenever things seem to go wrong they ask positive questions” (SD=1.557) indicates that the class teachers and HoDs were neutral with regard to statements for stakeholders participation save for the stakeholders invitation to participate in the school development plans in the strategic plan in public secondary schools in Machakos County.

Research findings on stakeholders’ participation in school development plans on the implementation of a strategic plan as presented in table 4.11 indicated that 85.71 percent of the school Principals agreed with the

statement that parents participate in formulating school strategic plan, although 89.53 percent of the school Principals disagreed with the statement that parents impact strategic plan implementation through payment of school fees in time. Moreover, 56.19 percent of the school Principals agreed with the statement that teachers are actively involved in the strategic plan although 67.01 percent of the class teachers and HoDs disagreed with the statement that the stakeholders are invited to participate in the school development plans in the strategic plan. Similarly, 55.11 percent of the class teachers and HoDs with the statement that the teachers are involved in making decisions and strategic plan development.

Further deductions from the interview guide revealed that all the respondents agreed that the board, the management, the staff, the parents and the students were involved in development of strategic plan. In addition the interview guide revealed that the average percentage of total fees collection per annum was 87.79 and on average the schools received KShs 1,606,818 from the government for development.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING FOR THE INFLUENCE OF THE STAKEHOLDERS' PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS

The researcher conducted Hypothesis testing using a multiple regression model at the 5 percent level of significance. The results of hypothesis testing gave a positive coefficient of 0.2519 on stakeholder participation in school development plans was realized with a p-value of 0.000 indicating a statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Hence we reject the hypothesis that, stakeholder participation in school development plans has an effect on strategic plan implementation. This indicates that, stakeholder participation in school development plans does have a statistically significant effect on strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Influence of the Stakeholders' Participation in School Development Plans on the Implementation of a Strategic Plan

Fourth objective determined effects of stakeholders' participation in school development plans on the implementation of a strategic plan in public secondary schools in Machakos County. The outcomes of the second objective are indicated in table 1, and table 2 that indicated that based results from the multiple regression produced a positive coefficient of 0.2519 on stakeholder participation in school development plans with a p-value of 0.000 and is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Hence we reject the hypothesis that, stakeholder participation in school development plans has an effect on strategic plan implementation. This indicates that, stakeholder participation in school development plans does have a statistically significant effect on strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County. This shows that an improvement in stakeholder participation in school development plans results to the advanced strategic plan implementation. This study findings agrees with those by Cabardo (2016) in Philippines who found out that the implementation of the strategic plan was significantly affected by stakeholders' participation. It is also in line with Moeng and Van (2016) study in South Africa which found that stakeholders' participation key in strategic plan implementation.

The school Principals disagreed with the statement that parents impact strategic plan implementation through the payment of institutional dues within the required time, and many participants for example CDF perform required duties to facilitate the strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County. However, the institution heads were in complement that parents participate tirelessly in making school strategic plan in Machakos County. In addition, class teachers and HoDs were neutral with regard to resource allocation save for disagreeing that the stakeholders invitation to participate in the school

development plans in the strategic plan Machakos County. They were undecided as to whether “The teachers are involved in making decisions and strategic plan development” and “whenever things seem to go wrong they ask positive questions”. Pertaining to strategic plan implementation, the class teachers and HoDs disagreed with the statement that the school has been in a position to implement projects timely through strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Machakos County. However, school heads were in complement that the institution has an active strategic plan and the school Principals agreed with the statement that the implementation of the strategic plan is within schedule in public secondary schools in Machakos County. Further analysis of interview guide revealed all the respondents agreed with the statement that “institution has been operating with a strategic plan which is being implemented successfully and the implementation of the strategic plan is on schedule with most projects in the strategic plan being on schedule”. Moreover, from the interview guide 90 percent of the respondents agreed that there is an existing strategic plan committee; 92 percent of principals were for the strategic plan committee comprises of representatives of BOM, 93 percent of targeted population were for strategic plan committee comprises of representatives of parents while 95 percent of the targeted population were for the statement that strategic plan committee comprises of representatives of teachers.

RECOMMENDATION

Emanating in line with study results and the conclusions thereof, this research made the following recommends that:

Stakeholders’ need to honor invitation to take part in school development plans in strategic plan and in essence parents ought to be part and parcel of formulating the school strategic plan, and impact positively strategic plan implementation through the payment of school dues without delaying, and likewise other school participants for example CDF need to perform their obligation in encouraging the strategic plan in public secondary schools in Machakos County.

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