

**INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
SKILLS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS IN
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KANDARA SUB-
COUNTY, MURANG'A COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem: Resource mobilization skills are essential for implementing strategic plans in public secondary schools. However, many principals in Kandara Sub-County have faced numerous challenges in implementing strategic plans.

Purpose of the Study: To examine the influence of principals' resource mobilization skills on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kandara Sub- County, Murang'a County, Kenya.

Methodology: The mixed methodology and concurrent triangulation research design were used in this study. The target population consisted of 773 respondents, including 59 principals and 714 teachers, of whom 264 were sampled using Yamane's Formula. Based on the number of zones in Kandara Sub- County, stratified sampling was used to create eight strata. Purposive sampling was used to select two (2) principals from each zone. To avoid bias, 31 teachers were chosen from each zone using simple random sampling. The researcher was able to sample 16 principals and 248 teachers using this sampling procedure. Teachers' data was collected using

questionnaires, while principals' data was collected using interview guides. Based on the objectives, qualitative data were thematically analyzed and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, as well as inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis and presented in tables using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23).

Findings: The study found that levels of satisfaction among teachers and other stakeholders with the implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in terms of internal efficiency and realization of curriculum objectives are still low. It is also evident that principals' ability to engage in resource mobilization activities plays a significant role in effective implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

Recommendations: The study recommends that principals should continue engaging students and the entire school community in resource mobilization activities which can generate extra income without compromising time allocated for learning. The Ministry of Education should create a standard template for a strategic plan and train all school principals to implement it flawlessly based on a specific budget vote head.

Keywords: *Implementation of strategic plans, principals' resource mobilizations skills, public secondary schools.*

INTRODUCTION

Educating a nation remains the most critical tool for the development of the society throughout the developing world. For such educational aims and curriculum objectives to be realized, Grant (2011) opines that the quality of education delivered offered to students in any secondary school is dependent on a multiplicity of dynamics such as strategic educational planning. According to Hassan (2011), strategic planning in education entails the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of students and society. In the United Kingdom, Goddard and Leask (2012) posit that the successful implementation of strategic plans in schools largely depend on resource mobilization planning skills which principals or school heads have mastered.

The availability of resources plays a crucial role in the operation of the educational system, as its effectiveness and outcomes are contingent upon the provision of both human capital and materials (Shehnaz, 2011). Sergiovanni (2012) posited that resources within an educational institution encompass various components, such as students, personnel, physical facilities,

curriculum, and finance, thereby providing support for this assertion. The rate of educational development in a particular country is influenced by several key variables. The resource mobilization skills of principals encompass their capacity to identify potential donors for school projects, engage in fundraising efforts, and participate in alternative income-generating endeavors.

In a study carried out in the United Kingdom, Stacey (2013) established that successful implementation of strategic plans depends on the availability of resources. According to Stacey (2013), strategic plans that are clearly focused on results include an estimation of the scope and scale of the required response, and of the resources needed to implement that response. This implies that the success of implementation of school strategic plans depend on the resources available in schools and thus, school heads must have the ability to mobilize resources and ensure their prudent use. A study conducted in France by Bray and Lillies (2014) found that effective implementation of strategic plans in educational institutions necessitates the school principal to possess competencies in resource mobilization, financial management, and financial control. According to Bray and Lillies (2014), the concept of resource mobilization in the context of secondary schools typically emphasizes the generation of financial resources. However, it is crucial to recognize that resource mobilization should encompass not only fundraising efforts, but also the establishment of meaningful connections with potential donors and networks, as well as the cultivation of interest, support, and non-monetary contributions from individuals who hold significance for secondary schools. In numerous nations, the responsibility of providing financial resources lies with the government, albeit these resources are often insufficient to meet the educational needs of all students. Therefore, it is imperative for educational administrators to possess proficient resource mobilization abilities in order to secure additional funding to supplement government disbursements.

In light of this claim, Weihrich and Koontz (2015) conducted a study in India that unveiled a significant lack of formal managerial and resource mobilization training among the majority of principals. According to Jacobson (2015), principals need skills mobilize resources through alternative income generating activities and fund-raising since school budgets are coming under increasing pressure year after year. Jacobson (2015) asserts that secondary schools are unlikely to be able to rely wholly on government funding in order to attain the plans they have for growth, either in the short or long term. This indicates that resource mobilization skills are key since they enable school heads to come up with new ideas on how to raise resources for schools to fill the gap between funds allocation and school expenses.

In many countries in Africa, Lewin (2014) posits that, to mobilize resources to fill deficits in school budgets, schools have resorted to undertake alternative income-generating activities which schools undertake include, but not limited to, parents and Teachers' Association (PTA) levies, direct labor or work study programmes, sales of handicrafts, fund-raising, donor funding, hiring of school buses, farms, hire of classroom for use by churches and other social activities like ceremonies or crusades and farm activities where some schools raise vegetables and fruits for use, within and outside the school, clubs and societies among others. This requires principals to master resource mobilization skills.

In a study carried out in Nigeria, Kimuyi and Igwe (2014) established that the funds allocated to education sector by the government do not meet the requirement for improvement of quality education. This implies that, as the gap between funding allocation and school expenses grows, in order to meet the deficits in the school budgets, school management need to undertake prudent planning and think more innovatively and creatively about how they might bridge the gap to ensure that educational outcomes are not compromised. In Kenya, Miriti and Wangui (2014) assert that principals are required to undergo financial management training at the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) to equip school heads with skills such as resource mobilization skills. In the same token, Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero (2016) opine that the quality and adequacy of resources such as physical facilities, equipment, teaching and learning materials, all have a direct bearing on quality as they determine how effectively the curriculum is implemented. According to Ngware et al (2016), to achieve this, principals must manifest effective resource mobilization planning skills and acumen. Public secondary schools in Kandara Sub- County are also victims of ineffective implementation of strategic plans.

A study by Githire (2013) revealed that close 67.4% of public secondary schools do not have sound strategic plans with clear roadmap for implementation. According to Githire (2013), only 37.2% can successfully implement their strategic plans. To mitigate this, a study carried out in a sample of five secondary schools in Kandara Sub- County by Ngugi (2015) revealed that principals who have undertaken management courses at KEMI have witnessed an improvement in school management. Ngugi (2015) found that such principals understand the basic requirements of strategic planning. However, much still needs to be done since Ngugi (2015) as well as other reviewed studies have not interrogated how principals' resource mobilization skills influence implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Principals' resource mobilization skills are crucial in enabling them to develop and implement strategic plans in public secondary schools. However, in Kandara Sub- County, many principals have had numerous challenges as far as the implementation of strategic plans. As noted earlier, Githire (2013) indicates that many principals close 67.4% of public secondary schools do not have sound strategic plans with clear roadmap for implementation. According to Githire (2013), only 37.2% can successfully implement their strategic plans. Many secondary school principals do not meet deadlines for particular tasks as indicted in their strategic plans whereas majority do not understand what is expected of them in the strategic plans. Thus, much still needed to be done to assess the extent to which principals' resource mobilization skills influence implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To assess the status of implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kandara Sub- County
- ii. To establish the influence of principals' resource mobilization skills on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kandara Sub- County

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by the strategic planning theory which was postulated by Evans (2007) which holds that implementation of strategic plans in schools is guided by a 'strategic thinking' approach. This theory further holds that strategic planning focuses on its role in a particular milieu, that is, community, nation or society and are based on empirical study or experience of practice. Thus, the rationale of adopting this theory in this study is that it addresses what is common to all planning specializations and explicate characteristics of planning practice. In other words, it appreciates the fact that prudent educational planning should be collaborative and incorporates all elements aimed at achieving the foundational goals of education. The study was also guided by the theory of policy implementation which was postulated by Lindblom (1999). This theory is premised on the models of policy change that emphasize continuity, stability, and incrementalism.

According to Lindblom (1999), policy-making is characterized by reactive rather than proactive processes. The risk aversion of policy-makers and the need for political compromises

allows for only incremental changes of the status quo. This theory argues that policy changes also take place in the absence of electoral changes and that the standard model conflates the choice of policy issues with the choice of a policy solution given a policy problem. The relevance of this theory in this study is that implementation of strategic plans is critical to the success of secondary schools in realizing education of education objectives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted using a mixed methodology and a concurrent triangulation research design. The target population consisted of 773 respondents, including 59 principals and 714 teachers, of whom 264 were sampled using Yamane's Formula. Based on the number of zones in Kandara Sub-County, stratified sampling was used to create eight strata. Purposive sampling was used to select two (2) principals from each zone. However, 31 teachers were chosen from each zone using simple random sampling. This procedure was carried out on a sample of 16 principals and 248 teachers. Teachers' data was collected using questionnaires, while principals' data was collected using interview guides. Based on the objectives, qualitative data were thematically analyzed and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, as well as inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis and presented in tables using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings of the study based on the objective. It also outlines the methods of presentation of the study findings and discussions.

RESPONSE RATE

The researcher distributed 248 questionnaires to teachers, and 241 questionnaires were filled out and returned. In addition, the researcher interviewed 13 principals. This resulted in the response rates shown in Table 1

Table 1: Response Rates

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Achieved Return Rate (%)
Principals	16	13	81.3
Teachers	248	241	97.2
Total	264	254	96.2

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 1 shows that principals registered a response rate of 81.3% whereas teachers registered a response rate of 97.2%. This yielded an average response rate of 96.2%, which is consistent with the assertions of Creswell (2014) that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate. This information was important since it allowed the researcher to generalize the study outcomes to the target population.

Status of Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to assess the status of implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kandara Sub- County. This was measured by rating the levels of teachers' satisfaction with implementation of strategic plans. Results are shown in Table 2

Table 2: Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools in Kandara Sub- County

Indicators of Implementation of Strategic Plans	Levels of Satisfaction		
	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Not Sure
Internal efficiency	28.2%	68.1%	3.7%
Realization of curriculum objectives	39.4%	43.2%	17.4%

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 2 shows that only 68(28.2%) of the teachers were satisfied with the implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in terms of internal efficiency, 164(68.1%) were not satisfied whereas 9(3.7%) were not sure. 95(39.4%) of the teachers were satisfied with realization of curriculum objectives in public secondary schools, 104(43.2%) were not satisfied while 42(17.4%) were not sure. However, during the interviews, the principals responded on the contrary. They stated that implementation of strategic plans has been smooth. Principal, P1, noted;

In my secondary school, despite lack of adequate resources, we have been able to develop a template of a strategic plans and ensure its actualization to realize curriculum objectives.

Despite these contradictions, these findings underscore the vitality of strategic plans in public secondary schools and thus, their effective implementation is crucial for schools' success. These findings support the assertions of Mwita (2017) that implementation of such plans has not been smooth and there have been concerns expressed by government bureaucrats, politicians and a big proportion of the public over what they perceive as lack of and/or

inadequate implementation of strategic plans in schools. This supports the findings of Ngugi (2015) that implementation of strategic plans in schools has been very problematic and requires management attention across all level of organization. These findings affirm the fact that implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools is significant, though the process has not been without its fair of challenges. In other words, internal efficiency has not been fully achieved with realization of curriculum objectives being still a problem.

Principals’ Resource Mobilization Skills and Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to examine how principals’ resource mobilization skills influence implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools. Descriptive data were collected from teachers and results are shown in Table 3

Table 3: Teachers’ Views on the Influence of Principals’ Resource Mobilization Skills on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Principals have the skills of identifying donors to fund school strategic plans	60.2	9.5	3.9	7.8	18.6
Principals always manifest the ability to organize for fundraising to realize the objectives of strategic plans	53.7	9.1	3.0	12.1	22.1
To bridge the deficit in the school budget, principals usually lead the school in undertaking alternative income-generating activities	77.1	5.2	3.9	10.0	3.8
In public secondary schools, resource mobilization skills of the principals have seen actualization of strategic plans	46.3	8.2	4.8	35.1	5.6
Despite the inadequacy of resources, strategic plans in public secondary schools have been implemented due to principal’s resource mobilization skills	51.1	8.7	4.3	26.4	9.5

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 3 shows that 145 (60.2%) of teachers strongly agreed with the view that principals have the skills of identifying donors to fund school strategic plans as did 23(9.5%) who agreed.

However, 9(3.9%) were undecided, 19(7.8%) disagreed whereas 44(18.6%) strongly disagreed. Slightly more than half, 129(53.7%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that principals always manifest the ability to organize for fundraising to realize the objectives of strategic plans while 22(9.1%) agreed. However, 7(3.0%) were undecided, 29(12.1%) disagreed whereas 53(22.1%) strongly disagreed. These findings are consistent with the findings of a study conducted in India in which Wehrich and Koontz (2015) revealed that principals need skills mobilize resources through alternative income generating activities and fund-raising since school budgets are coming under increasing pressure year after year.

Jacobson (2015) asserts that secondary schools are unlikely to be able to rely wholly on government funding in order to attain the plans they have for growth, either in the short or long term. This indicates that resource mobilization skills are key since they enable school heads to come up with new ideas on how to raise resources for schools to fill the gap between funds allocation and school expenses. The study also revealed that 186(77.1%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, to bridge the deficit in the school budget, principals usually lead the school in undertaking alternative income-generating activities. On the same breath, 13(5.2%) agreed. However, 9(3.9%) were undecided, 24(10.0%) disagreed whereas 9(3.8%) strongly disagreed.

These findings support the assertions of Lewin (2014) that, to mobilize resources to fill deficits in budgets, schools have resorted to undertake alternative income-generating activities which schools undertake include parents and Teachers' Association (PTA) levies, direct labor or work study programmes, sales of handicrafts, fund-raising, donor funding, hiring of school buses, farms, hire of classroom for use by churches and other social and farm activities where some schools raise vegetables and fruits for use, clubs and societies among others. These findings are indicative of the fact that the ability of principals to engage in alternative income-generating activities to raise funds, though has not always been the case, is crucial for effective implementation of strategic plans.

The study further revealed that 111(46.3%) of the teachers strongly agreed that resource mobilization skills of the principals have seen actualization of strategic plans whereas 20(8.2%) agreed, 12(4.8%) were undecided, 85(35.1%) disagreed whereas 13(5.6%) strongly disagreed. These findings are consistent with the findings of a study undertaken in France by Bray and Lillies (2014) which revealed that, to ensure that smooth implementation of strategic plans, a school head require skills to mobilize financial resources, manage and control of finances. Bray and Lillies (2014) established that resource mobilization often focuses on generating funds,

however, it must also include building valuable donor contacts and networks, and earning the interest, support, and in-kind contributions of people important to secondary schools. This indicates that successful implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools has been, largely, hampered by the inadequacy of resources as well as the inability of the principals to mobilize the same.

The study found that 123(51.1%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, despite the inadequacy of resources, strategic plans in public secondary schools have been implemented due to principal's resource mobilization skills whereas a paltry 21(8.7%) agreed, 10(4.3%) were undecided, 63(26.4%) disagreed whereas 23(9.5%) strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the findings of a study carried out in the United Kingdom in which Stacey (2013) found that successful implementation of strategic plans depends on the availability of resources. According to Stacey (2013), strategic plans that are clearly focused on results include an estimation of the scope and scale of the required response, and of the resources needed to implement that response. This implies that the success of implementation of school strategic plans depend on the resources available in schools and thus, principals must have the ability to mobilize resources and ensure their prudent use.

In summary, this implies that the inability of schools to successfully implement their strategic plans has been occasioned by lack of resource mobilization skills among principals. In other words, principals lack the planning skills and acumen to think more innovatively and creatively about how they might bridge the gap to ensure that educational outcomes are not compromised.

Inferential Analysis

To verify the influence of principals' resource mobilization skills on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools, data were collected on how often (Very Often = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2 and Never = 1) principals manifest resource mobilization skills and levels of satisfaction (Satisfied = 3, Not Satisfied = 2 and Not Sure = 1) with the implementation of strategic plans in the 13 sampled public secondary schools. Results are shown in Table 4

Table 4: How Often Principals Manifest Resource Mobilization Skills and the Levels of Satisfaction with the Implementation of Strategic Plans in Secondary Schools

How Often Principals Manifest Resource Mobilization Skills	Levels of Satisfaction with Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools
2	2
1	2
4	3
1	2
3	2
5	3
1	1
2	2
1	2
2	3
2	1
3	2
4	3

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 4 shows that, in public secondary schools where principals frequently manifest mastery of resource mobilization skills, implementation of strategic plans has been smooth with higher levels of satisfaction. This further indicates that, though not a full guarantee, resource mobilization skills which principals have help them to effectively implement strategic plans in public secondary schools. The results in Table 4 were subjected to Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis and the results are shown in Table 5

Table 5: Relationship between Principals’ Resource Mobilization Skills and Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools

		Principals’ Resource Mobilization Skills	Implementation of Strategic Plans
Principals’ Resource Mobilization Skills	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	13	
Implementation of Strategic Plans	Pearson Correlation	.660*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	
	N	13	13

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 displays the results of a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test Analysis, which produced correlation coefficients of $r = 0.660$ with a corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.014, which was less than the predetermined level of significance, 0.05, i.e. $p\text{-value} = 0.014 < 0.05$. Thus, the data show that principals' resource mobilization skills have a significant influence on the implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools. In other words, school leaders' ability to identify donors, organize fundraising activities, and engage in alternative income-generating activities is critical to the successful implementation of strategic plans by increasing internal efficiency and achieving curriculum objectives.

Thematic Analysis

During the interviews with principals, the interviewees, however, noted that they have the skills of identifying donors to fund school strategic plans. Principal, P2, stated;

I have the basic skills to source for donors and explain to them the reasons for them to support school projects and strategic plans. I understand how to source for funding for school programmes to bridge the gaps in the school budgets. I even ensure that my school engages in alternative income-generating activities to get extra funds for school programmes.

Similar to quantitative findings, this observation provides additional support for the notion that resource mobilization skills play a crucial role in enabling school administrators to generate innovative ideas for securing funds to bridge the gap between allocated resources and school expenses. These mixed findings underscore the value of financial resource sin actualizing strategic plans in any secondary school or learning institution. Though not a common practice and an expertise which substantive number of school heads do not possess, both quantitative and qualitative findings affirm the fact that their ability to engage in resource mobilization activities such as identifying donors, organizing fundraising programmes and engaging in alternative activities to generate extra income, plays a significant role in the effective implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study found that levels of satisfaction among teachers and other stakeholders with the implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in terms of internal efficiency and realization of curriculum objectives are still low. It is also evident that principals' ability to engage in resource mobilization activities such as identifying donors, organizing fundraising

programmes and engaging in alternative activities to generate extra income, plays a significant role in effective implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that principals' skills in resource mobilization have a meaningful impact on the successful implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools. The statistical data shows a significant positive correlation between the two variables, backed up by firsthand interviews with school principals. Essentially, the ability of school leaders to identify potential donors, organize fundraising events, and initiate other money-making activities significantly aids in achieving school goals and filling the gap between available resources and school needs. Both the numbers and the interviews affirm that these skills are crucial for implementing strategic plans effectively, despite not being common practice among all school principals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that principals should continue engaging students and the entire school community in resource mobilization activities which can generate extra income without compromising time allocated for learning. The Ministry of Education should develop a standard template of a strategic plan and train all school heads to implement it without any hitch based on a specific budget vote head.

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