Effect of Leadership Style on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Kenyan Public Secondary Schools

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Abstract: Evaluation of strategies in Kenya may be done either quantitatively or qualitatively. This is to ascertain whether the process of implementations will succeed in attaining the objectives or not. The specific objectives of the study were to determine existing leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County.and to evaluate alternative school leadership style for implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County. The study used descriptive research design to get the information under investigation. The target population consisted of 31 Principals of public secondary schools, 31 BOM chairpersons, and 31 PTA chairpersons. The study used simple random sampling to select 10 Principals, 10 BOM chairpersons, and 10 PTA chairpersons to be given Questionnaires. The research instruments used to collect data was questionnaires. The questionnaires were made up of close-ended questions. Data collected was analyzed quantitatively, for descriptive statistics, frequency tables and percentages were used. The findings of the study show that for effective strategic plans implementation educational stakeholders must ensure that there is good leadership from the top to the bottom to ensure there is good coordination in all aspects, also effective decision making should be inclusively so that it that does not bring disputes along the way. The Education policy makers would find this study useful in formulating educational policy that would enable the schools to improve on strategic planning process and also in addressing the critical issues that may be affecting secondary school education.
Keywords: Leadership Style, Implementation, Strategic Plans, Schools

INTRODUCTION

Transformational leadership is defined as a type of leadership in which the leader motivates the followers and increases their commitment. Transformational leadership factors yields leadership outcomes. Leadership outcomes are the final results of leadership that include the following three factors [1]. This is the leaders' ability to increase followers' desires to succeed and willingness to try harder, this is how satisfied followers are with their leaders and their job. This is the leaders' abilities to lead an effective group and meet the followers' job related needs.

Transformational leaders work to awaken dormant needs of the followers and challenge them to reach a collective higher purpose. Thus, these leaders must have a desirable level of emotional understanding and proper personality traits [2]. Transformational leaders use intellectual stimulation skills and their own individualized considerations in actualizing these issues. Understanding the emotion through relevant emotional cues and managing these emotions are vital skills for a transformational leader. These leaders choose their followers and enhance their performance through personal communication [3]. Showed in their research that there is a positive linear relationship between the three factors of transformational leadership (individualized influence, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation) and leadership outcomes. Similarly, Noble [4] found out that there is a significant positive relationship between the transformational style of leadership and leadership outcomes.

Extra effort is an ultimate variable of leadership. Extra effort of a follower is measured by their tendency for stronger effort, achievement beyond what is expected of them and ample enthusiasm for success. Leaders who make great use of transformational leadership can manage extra effort through understanding, utilization and management of emotions. Noble [4] reported that transformational leadership is followed by extra efforts of the followers for achieving organizational goals.

Govindarajan [5] showed in his research that there is a significant relationship between job satisfactions of nurses and the transformational leadership of managers (r = 0.38). Wong and Law [6] found in their research that transformational leadership has a relationship with employee's satisfaction. Similarly Noble [4] found out a significant relationship between transformational leadership and satisfaction in the managers of physical education.

Hrebiniak [7] focusing on importance of strategy implementation and school based management, points out that 80% of the organizations directors believe that they have good strategies but only 14% of them believe that they can implement them. Chandler [8] points out that most of the organizations strategies of over 65% fail to get implemented effectively. David [9] notes that 10% of formulated strategies are successfully implemented while 90% of well formulated strategies fail at the implementation stage but he did not give an elaborate reason why this is the case.

Secondary schools as independent organizations operate in complex environments and they therefore have to consider many factors including competitors, technological change, government regulations and end results among others. Each secondary school in this case needs a strategy in order to co-ordinate its activities in its calendar to achieve optimal results. This can only be achieved through strict adherence to the drawn strategic plan by all stakeholders. For any meaningful change to take place, the managerial structures and processes adopted are intended to lead to cooperative behavior and attitude necessary for implementation [10].

Sessional paper No. 1 of 2005, the government of Kenya realizes that there are challenges in education sector and therefore there is need to develop a sector wide strategic plan to counter these challenges. The Ministry formulated its own strategic plan (2006- 2011) and thereafter became a policy that each institution with the Ministry develop own plan as strategic means of enhancing results based management and efficiency in their operations and resource allocations. Strategies are essential elements in schools functions, but whereas most schools have good strategies, successful strategic plan implementation remains a major challenge.

The idea of strategy implementation might seem to an extend quite straight, that is only formulated then implemented, on the contrary transforming strategies into action is unbelievably becoming a difficult, complex and challenging undertaking and not easy as many may tend to assume . The main critical phase in any plan is translating it into action [11].

Once strategic plans have been formulated, they have to be implemented for the school to attain its intended objectives. The implementation perspective forces the school to confront what is actually happening in practice. It makes the organization pay more attention to getting results [12]. These strategies need to be translated from high level conceptual terms into detailed policies that can be understood at the functional level of the school like; Curriculum delivery, schools development participatory approach and finance mobilization. Secondary schools face many unpredictable challenges that make the implementation of strategic plans difficult, a well thought strategy may be rendered irrelevant and fail to take off due to many factors.

Heide [13] noted that although strategic planning is not a new phenomenon, the implementation which is an essential component for production of results deserves closer attention. MacMillan [14] noted that while implementing strategy is such an important activity it is not easy as it remains one of the difficult areas of management. Other challenges however, in the way of strategic implementation may be the incapability of school principals to effectively communicate strategies to their staff and students where culture is hostile to change and structures are not compatible with the strategy to be implemented.

Due to the aforementioned dynamics of strategic planning and performance-based management implementation but not exhaustive, this study seeks to further investigate the dynamics of leadership style on strategic plans implementation in Masaba North Sub-County Secondary Schools, a case of Masaba North Sub-county, Nyamira County.

Statement of the Problem

The Ministry of Education circular MOE/plan Policy No12/04/2001 instructed that all public secondary schools should develop strategic plans and submit copies to the permanent secretary. Leading by example the Kenyan ministry of Education developed a five year strategic plan (2006-2011). In the Strategic plans, Schools are expected to define what they want to be, whom they will serve and how, with a focus in the future. However, according to the Sub-County education Officer in Masaba North Sub-County, even those schools that have this documents in place have left them to gather dust on the shelves due to various challenges they encounter in an attempt to implement them [15]. In most research studies, strategic plans are only made availed to Quality Assurance and Standard officers when they visit schools [16] this study therefore seeks to determine existing leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County and to evaluate alternative school leadership style for implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County, Nyamira County, Kenya.

Research Objective
a) To determine existing leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County.
b) 2. To evaluate alternative school leadership style for implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County

Research Questions
a) What is the influence of leadership style on strategic plans implementation in Masaba North Sub-County Secondary Schools?

Significance of the Study
        The research banks on hopes that the findings of this study was help stakeholders as follows. Educational planers are spearheading a campaign to foster a positive attitude among leaders who are implementation strategic plans in secondary schools, therefore the lessons learned would guide the Education planners, economists, Policy-makers and stakeholders to be aware of these leadership style dynamics prior to implementation hence the need to make available all the requisite information for successful implementation of strategic plans in Kenyan Public Secondary Schools

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS
        The study used descriptive research design to get the information under investigation. The method was ideal for this study because it emphasizes on the discovery of ideas and insights, flexible enough to provide opportunity for considering different aspects of the problem under study [17]. The design was selected because of the nature of investigation that was to be carried out: to investigate leadership style dynamics influencing the implementation of strategic plans in Kenyan secondary schools: a case study of Masaba North sub-county, Nyamira County.

        This study used questionnaire, the researcher constructed closed ended questionnaires, which was administered. The researcher used questionnaires because of its low cost, and its being free from bias. Respondents were given adequate time to give well thought out answers and large samples were made use of and thus the result was made more dependable and reliable, Questionnaire was meant for the Principals, BOM Chairpersons and PTA Chairpersons

Ethical Considerations
        According to Israel and Hay [18], researchers need to protect their research participants; develop trust with them; promote the integrity of research: guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on the researcher and university and cope with new, challenging problems. The following ethical issues helped to enhance ethics during the study.

        The information gathered from participants was kept in confidence and was only used for the purposes of the study. This information was not revealed to anybody without the participants' consent. The participants were informed on the purpose of the research. The researcher preserved the anonymity of the informant by not writing the names of all those involved in the research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
        The objective sought to determine existing leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans and to evaluate alternative school leadership style for implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County. The findings are presented below.

The existing leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans
        The study sought to determine existing leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans in Masaba North Sub-County Secondary Schools. See Table-1.

Table-1: leadership style utilized by schools in implementation of strategic plans

		SA	A	UD	D	SD	TOT	M
We involve student leadership in decision making	F	6	13	9	3	0	31	2.3
	%	19.4	41.9	29.0	9.7	0.0	100	**46.0**
There is co-ordination and consultation	F	13	12	4	1	1	31	1.9
	%	41.9	38.7	12.9	3.2	3.2	100	**38.0**
Existence of proper delegation of institution leaders	F	5	13	10	3	0	31	2.4
	%	16.1	41.9	32.3	9.7	0.0	100	**48.0**
There is set procedure for implementing strategic plans	F	12	13	4	1	1	31	1.9
	%	38.7	41.9	12.9	3.2	3.2	100	**38.0**
Existence of competing activity	F	9	16	5	1	0	31	1.9
	%	29.0	51.6	16.1	3.2	0.0	100	**38.0**
There is involvement of and user in implementing	F	3	12	9	7	0	31	2.6
	%	9.7	38.7	29.0	22.6	0.0	100	**52.0**
There exist top management support in schools	F	12	15	3	1	0	31	1.8
	%	38.7	48.4	9.7	3.2	0.0	100	**36.0**

Form the study results revealed that 46% of the respondents supported the statement that they involved student leadership in decision making on some matters related to student affairs, 38% was of the opinion that there was co-ordination and consultation among the students, parents, Board of the school and the school teachers and principal, 48% of the respondents supported that there was existence of proper delegation of institution leaders, The study results conceded with Morgan's [2] findings. On his study on effective school management observed that the head teacher's leadership styles and general management is what causes a difference in academic achievement in schools. 38% supported that there was set procedure for implementing strategic plans for the betterment of the school, 38% supported that there was existence of competing activity that could distract implementation such as opposition from other stakeholders, 52% supported that there was involvement of and user in implementing the strategic plan by all stakeholder concerned and 36% supported that there existed top management support in schools faster implementation of the strategic plans. The results revealed that leadership in any school did play an important role in implementing the school's strategic plan. This was because strategic plan are made by the management and implementation had to be done by the same management. Good management had to fasten the implementation process so as to ensure that things was done in the right time and in the correct way minimizing mistake and loopholes for accountability.

The findings agree with Kingi [19], in a study on challenges facing Board of Governors˝ in the management of public secondary schools found out that the biggest challenge facing Board of Governors (BoG) is inadequate staff personnel, funds, and facilities, constant appraisal of curriculum and instruction, indiscipline among staff and students, frequent interferences from different quarters such as the community, sponsor among other things. He recommended that the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should make use of modern information technology to establish a database of all qualified unemployed teachers to enable the staffing division to recruit and post teachers as need arises to minimize the problem of staff personnel.

CONCLUSION
The study concludes that for schools to implement strategic plans it must consider every aspect that will affect the implementation by ensuring that all factors are examined broadly to ensure smooth running of schools. Implementation must ensure that there is good leadership from the top to the bottom to ensure there is good coordination in all aspects, decision making is all inclusivity so that it that does not bring disputes along the way. Accountability should be emphasised to minimize cases of theft and fraud. The study showed that Leadership in any school did play an important role in implementing the school's strategic plan. This was because strategic plan are made by the management and implementation had to be done by the same management. Good management had to fasten the implementation process so as to ensure that things was done in the right time and in the correct way minimizing mistake and loopholes for accountability.

Way Forward
The government should ensure that leaders who are responsible for the implementation of the strategic plans have knowledge, skills and experience that are required for implementing of strategic plans this could be achieved through regular training, seminars and workshops. The ministry of education should establish a National monitoring Education Centre (NMEC) with a board representing Sub-County and professional interests to drive forward strategic plans development across the education sector as envisaged in the policy framework

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