CHALLENGES FACING PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS IN GATUNDU NORTH DISTRICT, KIAMBU COUNTY

BY

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.

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To my dear wife Priscillah

Our children Joy, Roy and Jay

For their love, support and encouragement throughout the study

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ABSTRACT

School strategic planning is key to success of a school with regard to achievement of its mission, goals and objectives. This study sought to find out the challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: find out the proportion of secondary schools in Gatundu North District that engage in strategic planning; determine how participation of stakeholders in preparation of strategic plans influences implementation of the plans; assess how material, human and financial resources influence implementation of strategic plans; establish how school leadership influences implementation of strategic plans; and examine how government policy on school management influences implementation of strategic plans. The study employed a survey design, targeting all 36 secondary schools in Gatundu North District. The sample for the study comprised 30 secondary schools sampled through simple random sampling. The study participants comprised of 30 secondary school headteachers, 30 Board of Governors chairpersons and 60 Heads of Departments. Data was collected using two questionnaires for headteachers and heads of department, and an interview schedule for BoG chairpersons. Prior to the actual data, a pilot study was conducted to ascertain the reliability and validity of the instruments. Data was both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data collected was analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and means. The results were reported using frequency tables, pie charts and bar charts. Qualitative data was put under themes consistent with the research objectives. The study established that secondary schools in Gatundu North District had long term strategic plans, with a mission and vision statement; which if properly implemented, would benefit the stakeholders in schools. It was established that head teachers had long-term plans for their schools, which would enable them to have ample time to make and see the changes of their strategic plans before deciding whether to make any more adjustments or to continue with the same strategic plans. The study established that head teachers made an effort of including all the stakeholders in the implementation of strategic plans, to ensure that everyone's interests are met. The study also established that most of the schools lacked enough finances to implement their strategic plans, which showed that lack of resources adversely affected the implementation of strategic plans in schools. It emerged from the study that the schools had effective leadership, which had a positive effect on strategic planning in schools. Effective leadership in strategic planning plays the role of making plans for the future, providing better awareness of needs and of the facilities related issues and environment, defining the overall mission of the organization and focuses on the objectives, providing a sense of direction, continuity, and effective staffing and leadership. The study recommends that school administrators should sensitize BoG members, P.T.A members, teachers, local leaders and community members on the importance of strategic plans and mobilize their support in preparation and implementation of strategic plans; the Government should also ensure that school funds are released on time and that strategic plans are considered when determining the amount of money to be disbursed to each school. This could be done by making strategic planning mandatory as a condition for government funding. It could also be done by monitoring and evaluating schools' progress; among other recommendations.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BoG   :   Board of Governors

CEO   :   Chief Executive Officer

HoD   :   Head of Department

KEMACA   :   Kenya Education Management Capacity Assessment

KESI   :   Kenya Education Staff Institute

KESSP   :   Kenya Education Sector Support Programme

MoE   :   Ministry of Education

SPSS   :   Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TQM   :   Total Quality Management

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

During the past thirty years, interest in improving the quality of education has increased internationally, which has resulted in numerous countries introducing educational reforms (Harris, 2000). This has been done through government policies which focused specifically on school improvement. The focus on school improvement has stimulated the development of strategies directed towards improving the quality of learning and teaching. Within the international arena, every decade seems to have had a new perspective on the way in which schools could be improved. A review of the developments in the international arena suggests that in the mid 1960's, the focus was on the production and dissemination of exemplary curriculum materials as a means of improving the standard of education (Dalin, 1998).

During the 1970's, the focus shifted essentially to the restructuring of the distribution of power in schools. It became apparent that lack of consultation and top-down models of authority did not work. Thus, it was concluded that the implementation of school improvement strategies was a complex process and required a sensitive combination of strategic planning, equal sharing of power and a commitment to succeed (Hopkins, 1996).

By the mid 1980's, studies on school improvement focused on the process of change. Much was learnt about the dynamics of change processes, which was then used to introduce school improvement strategies. However, this was not sufficient to improve the

quality of education in schools. Nonetheless, this initiative laid the foundation to different educational policies in different countries by putting change at the focal point of school processes (Hopkins, 2000). Within this period, emphasis of strategic planning not only in industries but also in service industries began to gain ground.

Strategic planning is a management tool for organizing the present on the basis of the projections of the desired future. That is, a strategic plan is a road map to lead an organization from where it is now to where it would like to be in five or ten years. It is necessary to have a *strategic plan* for a company and/or department. **Strategic planning** comprises the procedures of defining objectives and creating strategies to attain those objectives. A strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal, as differentiated from tactics or immediate actions with resources at hand. The reason for **strategic or long-range planning** is to assist organizations in establishing priorities and to better serve the needs of the stakeholders (Bryson, 1995).

There are many types of planning; and Cook (1995) categorizes them into five: (a) comprehensive planning, which is limited to planning about what already is; (b) long-range planning, which examines the gaps between what an institution is and what it wishes to become and, without further study, makes adjustments accordingly; (c) program planning, which serves as a way to bring an idea into existence; (d) project planning, which is the identification of a task and the enumeration of the steps needed to accomplish it; and (e) strategic planning, which is the way in which an organization continually responds to change by re-inventing itself to accommodate change.

Strategic planning in the school situation has been defined differently by a number of writers. Basham and Lunenburg (1989) assert that there exist a number of definitions pertaining to educational strategic planning, and that there is lack of a uniform, discrete definition of educational strategic planning amongst the various prescribed planning models. Brown and Marshall (1989) define strategic planning as a process

that is designed to move an educational organization through the steps of understanding changes in the external environment, assessing the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization, developing a vision of the desired future for the organization and some ways to achieve that mission, developing specific plans to get the organization where it is to where it wants to be, implementing these plans and monitoring that implementation so that necessary changes or modifications can be made.

Bryson (1995) defines strategic planning as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what a school is, what it does, and why it does it. To deliver the best results, strategic planning requires broad yet effective information gathering, development and exploration of strategic alternatives, and an emphasis on future implications of present decisions. Cawelti (1987) on the other hand defines strategic planning as a process deliberately designed to help leaders conceive of the kind of institution they would like to create to serve their students.

In Kenya, the Education Master Plan for Education and Training 1997-2010 argues that quality is not mere passing of examinations or certification, but the development of independent, analytical, creative potential of the individual, including critical imagination, spiritual and ethical values. This implies standard agreed criteria for assessment (Republic of Kenya, 1998). Saitoti (2003) posited that the major determinants of quality education include curriculum content, relevant instructional materials and equipment, physical facilities, conducive learning environments, the quality of teaching force and assessment and monitoring of learning achievements. He further concurs with the Master Plan's view that quality education should shift from merely passing exams to

encompass the discovery of talents, development of analytical, cognitive and creative potential. This is enhanced by efficient and effective management and prudent utilization of resources, which can only be realized through strategic planning.

There are many challenges facing strategic planning in organizations, one of which is lack of training for leaders. Writers such as Robbins (2003) and Sedisa (2008) have shown that effective administrators are those who have acquired certain basic skills to cope with the demands of their management tasks. Robbins (2003) grouped these skills into three broad categories, namely technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills. Such skills are necessary for school managers to effectively implement strategic plans.

Lack of resources is another factor that could affect the implementation of strategic plans. Verspoor (2008) has noted that most secondary schools in sub-Saharan Africa operate with inadequate resources due to poor funding. Most schools face inadequacy of textbooks, classrooms, sanitation facilities, teachers and other teaching/learning resources. In such situations, schools would be expected to plan for what is available. When schools become overambitious in the planning process, then implementation of strategic plans becomes difficult.

One of the key factors affecting implementation of strategic plans is stakeholder participation. The success of any strategic plan lies in the level of participation of all those who will be charged with the responsibility of implementing it. Therefore, active involvement of stakeholders at all levels is emphasized. Research by Swiderska (2001), shows that stakeholder participation plays a critical role in ensuring that strategic

planning efforts are successful and in preventing potential problems at the implementation stage. Stakeholder participation brings considerable benefits in terms

of building the conditions necessary to facilitate smooth implementation of strategic plans. Participation generates awareness and capacity amongst stakeholders, helps to build consensus and support for implementation of the plan, improved trust and collaboration and generates motivation to put policy into practice (Swiderska, 2001).

In Kenya, although the Ministry of Education has a requirement that secondary schools prepare strategic plans, and principals are occasionally trained on strategic planning, researchers such as Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero (2006) have shown that most schools in the country are operating without strategic plans. This suggests that school administrators are facing challenges related to strategic planning. This study showed that on the extent of practice of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Kenyan secondary schools, most schools did not have strategic plans. The researchers noted that even the schools with strategic plans are weak in systematic follow-up to ascertain the implementation of the plans. In addition, there seemed to be no deliberate attempts to do a formal internal evaluation with a view to ascertain the extent to which qualitative and or quantitative targets have been met. This implies that secondary schools are facing challenges in the implementation of strategic plans. Consequently, this study sought to establish the challenges facing public secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

School strategic planning is key to success of a school in terms of its mission, goals and objectives. It is, therefore, essential for schools to put in place mechanisms to ensure that strategic plans are in place and followed to guide daily actions. For this reason, the Kenya

Education Staff Institute (KESI) organizes training programmes to equip principals with strategic management skills. After the training, principals are expected to give effective leadership in strategic planning for their schools. However, 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 planning practices in schools (Githua, 2004). A study by Ngware, et al. (2006) has shown that even the schools with strategic plans rarely implement them. The result has been haphazard planning techniques that result in poor prioritization and failure to use the meagre resources available for the right projects. Most schools fail to achieve their goals and objectives, and this is reflected through poor academic performance. This study investigated the challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District, Kenya.

1.3   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the challenges facing public secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to address:

   i. How stakeholders in schools influence implementation of strategic plans.

  ii. How resources affect implementation of strategic plans.

 iii. The influence of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans.

1.4   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

   i. To find out the proportion of secondary schools in Gatundu North District which are implementing strategic plans.

ii. To determine the extent to which stakeholders participate in the implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District.

iii. To establish the effect of resources on implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District.

iv. To establish how school leadership influences implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer to the following research questions

i. What proportion of secondary schools in Gatundu North District, are implementing strategic plans?

ii. To what extent do stakeholders participate in the implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?

iii. How does material, human and financial resources influence implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District?

iv. What is the effect of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study findings may be of significant to principals, Ministry of Education, and scholars in a number of ways. The study shows the challenges experienced by secondary school managers in implementation of strategic plans, based on which recommendations may be made on measures that could be taken to enable school leaders come up with and implement strategic plans. If such recommendations are implemented, more schools

could implement strategic plans and this may translate into school effectiveness and efficiency, and the quality of secondary education for social economic development of the country.

The study also explored the leadership, institutional, policy and resource factors that limit secondary school managers from implementing strategic plans for their schools. This could influence policy at the Ministry of Education to seek ways of addressing such issues, thereby making it possible for schools to implement strategic plans. The study also adds to the body of knowledge on school strategic planning and provokes research in this area by proposing future studies related to strategic planning in the school situation.

1.7   Limitations

The study was limited by the fact that questionnaires and interviews were used to collect most of the data. The main limitation with this is that some respondents could have over-rated their schools on strategic planning effectiveness. Another limitation is that data was collected only from principals, heads of departments (HoDs) and board of governors (BoG) members. Due to time and financial constraints, other important stakeholders like parents and students were not included in the study. This is despite the fact that they also have views on school strategic planning.

1.8   Delimitations

The study sought to find out the challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans. The challenges investigated included those related to leadership, institutional factors, policy, and resource factors. The researcher recognizes that an organization is influenced by many internal and external factors, some of which

can easily be identified and others which are not easy to establish. This means that the study did not cover all the factors influencing implementation of strategic plans.

1.9   Basic Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following basic assumptions: It was assumed that most of the secondary school managers in Gatundu North District were aware of strategic planning. The study was also based on the assumption that school strategic planning is influenced by various factors, some of which relate with the schools' internal environment and others relating to the external environment. Another assumption was that if challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans are identified, it is possible to devise mechanisms to overcome such challenges for effective implementation of strategic plans. The study further assumed that principals, teachers, and BoG members were in a position to identify the challenges faced in strategic planning in their schools; and that the responses from principals , HoDs, and BoGs were a true reflection of the situation in their schools.

1.10   Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Garber's (2006) Strategic Planning Model. According to the study, strategic planning is a process for clarifying the aspirations of the organization. It establishes goals to be met by leaders and staff members, and identifies broad strategies to achieve the goals. Normally, the planning process begins by gathering information about the organization and its environment through discussion, interviews, focus groups, or other research methods. This information is used to identify the critical issues the organization will need to address in the next 3-5 years.

With this knowledge, the strategic planning team creates or reviews organizational values, vision statement, and mission statement. After this the next step is to develop the goals the organization will achieve by the end of the planning period and the broad strategies it will employ to achieve them. Performance indicators are identified for each goal and strategy. The study also states that in most organizations, the executive director and staff develop the annual objectives and tactics related to programs and services of the organization. The board develops annual objectives and tactics related to its governance goals. Depending upon the organization, the board, staff, or both may develop strategic objectives and tactics for fundraising. Figure 1.1 shows Garber's (2006) Strategic Planning model.

*Figure 1.1: Garber's (2006) Strategic Planning Model

Strategic
plan

Values
What the organization believes is right and
important; guiding principles

Vision
How the community will be
changed (very long term goals)

Mission
Broad statement of what you
will do to achieve vision

Goals
Broad general results to be
achieved by the end of planning
period (3 – 5 yrs)

Strategies
General description of actions
you will take to achieve goals

Domain of the Board

Domain of the Manager

Operational
plan

Objectives
Measurable, time-limited results
leading to achievement of goals
(1 – 3 yrs)

Activities/Tactics
Programs, services,
administration to implement
strategies and achieve objectives

Ends

Means

As the plan is implemented, the board monitors the performance indicators so that goals, strategies, objectives, and tactics adapt to unforeseen events, and changes in the organization and environment. In this way, the organization can continue to operate strategically. The board's role derives from its responsibility for overall governance of the organization and the recognition that board members are volunteers with limited knowledge of the operations of the organization. In the planning process, the board is responsible for clarifying organizational values, defining the vision and mission of the organization as a whole, setting medium-to-long-range goals for the organization, and selecting strategies that will enable the organization to achieve its goals while remaining faithful to the beliefs and principles that guide organizational behaviours. The role of management is to develop shorter term objectives and operationalize the strategies. This process, which includes developing annual objectives, budgets, service plans, and performance measures, can be called operational planning (Garber, 2006).

The strategic planning model by Garber (2006) is applicable to the school situation, whereby the board of governors (BoG) are responsible for the overall governance of the school, clarifying the school values, vision and mission, as well as setting medium and short-term goals that give direction to the school. In Kenya the role of BoG is spelt out in the Education Act (Republic of Kenya, 1980). The Act spells out the following roles of school governors as: planning and management of physical facilities for the purpose of learning/teaching in school; sourcing and management of school finances which includes receiving all fees payable by students, grants out of public funds, donations made to the school and any other income to the school and shall be responsible for the expenditure of

all monies belonging to the school; preparation, approval and implementation of both the recurrent and development budgets of the school; directing, supervising and monitoring approved projects and programs of the school; and regulating the admission of students, subject to the direction of the Director of Education among others.

The school principal, as the manager, on the other hand, works closely with the heads of departments, teachers and students to set shorter term goals and operationalize the strategies set by the board.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

The purpose of the study was to identify and determine the challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District, Kenya. Figure 1.2 presents the conceptual framework of the study.

*Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework
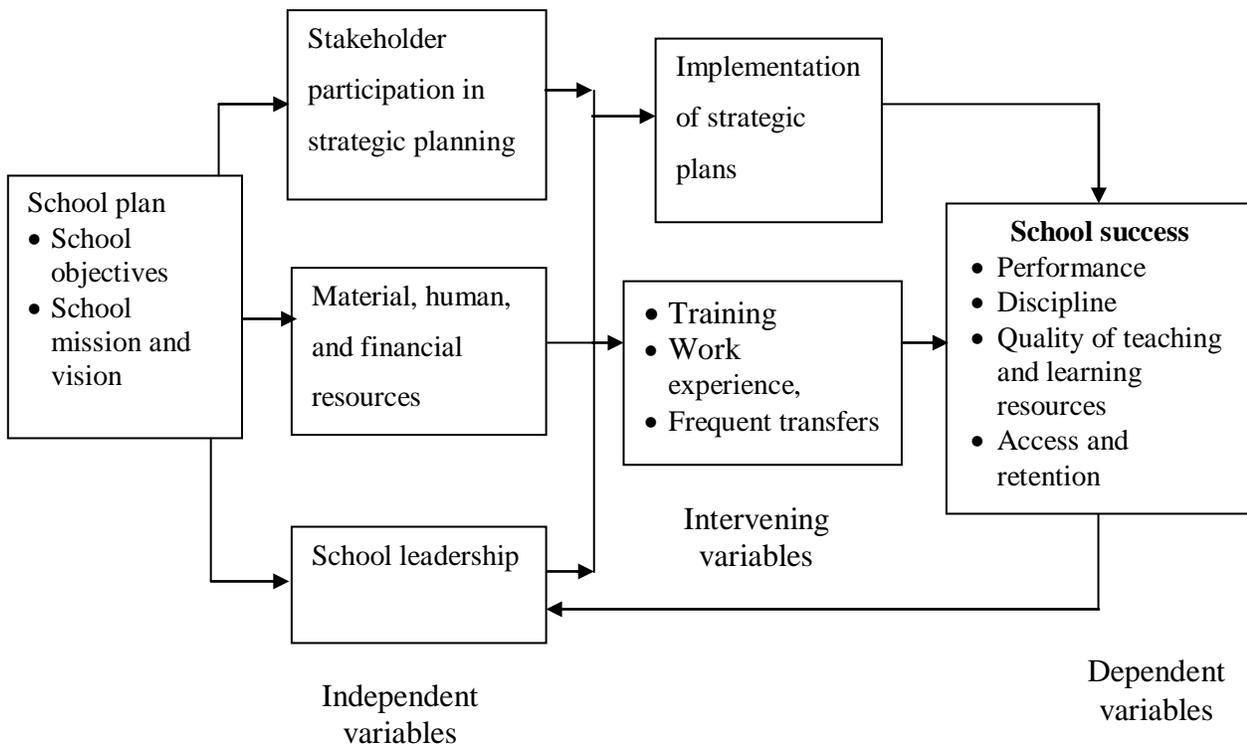
In the study, the researcher perceived the implementation of school strategic plans to be faced by various challenges as shown in Figure 1.2. Schools develop strategic plans in consideration of school objectives, vision and mission. As noted by Swiderska (2001), stakeholder participation plays a critical role in ensuring that strategic planning efforts are successful and in preventing potential problems at the implementation stage. Stakeholder participation brings considerable benefits in terms of building the conditions necessary to facilitate smooth implementation of strategic plans. Therefore, the researcher expected that stakeholder participation in strategic planning influences implementation effectiveness. A strategic plan normally is a plan on how resources are to be mobilized and utilized to meet organizational goals and objectives. According to Garber (2006), as the plan is implemented the board should monitor the performance indicators so that goals, strategies, objectives, and tactics adapt to unforeseen events, and changes in the organization and environment. School leadership is also an important determinant of effectiveness of implementation of strategic plans. Leadership is the most important factor in the success of an organisation. It is the leadership that develops annual objectives and tactics on governance goals. If the administrators fail to do their work effectively, then the implementation phase is bound to face problems (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000).

For schools that have prepared strategic plans, there could be challenges of effective implementation of strategic plans. Such factors, which are the independent variables of

the study, may have an impact on the implementation of strategic plans, which is the dependent variable of the study. The outcome of implementing strategic plans is school performance as measured in terms of academic performance, students' discipline and quality of teaching and learning resources. There are also intervening variables in the study, which could affect the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Some of the intervening variables to be considered include training of principals in strategic planning, principals' work experience, and frequent transfer of principals.

1.12 Definition of Terms

Implementation: This refers to execution or operationalization of a strategic plan so that it guides the day-to-day activities of the school. It also involves monitoring and evaluation to determine the extent to which objectives are being met.

Leadership: This refers to the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. In school, the principal, deputy principal, and heads of departments are leaders whose behaviour can influence implementation of strategic plans.

Resources: It includes such facilities as school buildings, school grounds and the equipment needed in instruction and making the learning environment comfortable.

School Management Tasks: These are the operational areas of school administration. They are grouped into categories, which include curriculum and instruction, Staff personnel, pupil personnel, the material and physical resources, finance and business, and school community relations.

Staff and Personnel: This refers to officers carrying out various tasks in the school including both teaching and non-teaching staff.

Stakeholders: Refer to the persons, group, organization, or system, who affect or can be affected by an organization's actions. In a school, stakeholders include students, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, government officials (such as the Ministry of Education), local leaders and the community.

Strategic Plan: A list of actions so ordered as to attain over a particular time period, certain desired objectives derived from a careful analysis of the internal and

external factors likely to affect the school, which will move the school from where it is to where it wants to be.

Strategic Planning: An approach to establishing the long-term future of a school and then moving that school in an appropriate direction to achieve the future state to which its members aspire.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter gives a review of literature related to the study on challenges facing secondary school managers in the development and implementation of strategic plans. The chapter covers the following: overview of strategic planning in schools, strategic planning in secondary schools in Kenya, steps followed in school strategic planning, and challenges faced in school strategic planning.

2.2   Overview of Strategic Planning in Schools

Strategic planning is the process of matching the school's activities to the current and emerging environment, bearing in mind what can feasibly be achieved with the resource base which can be generated. According to Johnson and Scholes (1989), the process of school strategic planning can be seen to encompass three stages: strategic analysis, strategic choice, and strategic implementation.

In strategic analysis, the aim is to form a view of the strategic position of the school and the key factors which will influence it in both the short and long term. These factors will affect the choice of strategy. To appreciate fully the strategic position of the school it is necessary to understand how a wide range of stakeholders, such as pupils, staff, employers, governors and the community, view the situation which the school faces and its possible direction. The information will usually be assembled by the senior management team (Davies and Ellison, 1998).

Strategic choice involves the identification or generation of options, the evaluation of those options and the selection of an appropriate strategy. At this stage, three groups of questions should be asked in order to evaluate the appropriateness of each option which has been generated. These three groups of questions relate to the suitability, acceptability and feasibility of each option:

- Suitability. Does the proposal overcome difficulties identified in strategic analysis, exploit the school's strengths and opportunities and integrate with the school's aims and objectives?

- Acceptability. This involves the school's value system and considers whether the proposal is in accordance with the school's values.

- Feasibility. Can the option be funded? Can the school perform at the required level? Can the necessary market position be achieved? The final decision on choices would normally be made by the governors, in consultation with the principal or with the whole senior management team (Davies and Ellison, 1998).

The third stage, strategic implementation, involves planning how the choice of strategy can be put into effect and managing the necessary changes. Also referred to as school development planning, strategic implementation is seen as the critical stage at which those within the school develop a plan for achieving the options which have been chosen. At this stage, there should be realism about the balance between new developments and the maintenance of the existing activities, otherwise there will be work overload and a lack of resources. If the plans are to come to fruition, it is important to consider both the process of creating the strategic plan and the nature of the document itself. In too many cases, the document has become so detailed and unwieldy that it cannot be used as a

working document. At the strategic planning stage, Davies and Ellison (1998) advise that a useful phrase to remember is "the thicker the plan the less it affects classroom practice". It should, therefore, be set out in an easily read format.

2.3   Extent of Strategic Planning in Secondary Schools

Strategic planning in schools is well advanced in developed countries. In the United States of America for instance, Knoff (2005) states that virtually every state and school district in the country has worked in the area of school improvement in order to improve the academic and social-behavioral outcomes of all students. Prompted in the 1980s by the business community's demand for a more prepared workforce, in the 1990s by eight National Education Goals (National Education Goals Panel, 1999), and in the new millennium by the No Child Left Behind legislation, school-wide efforts to hold educators accountable for student outcomes are now required, continuously monitored, and reported annually. However, the Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (2006) in the US argues that while a number of school improvement models exist, their outcomes have varied, largely due to the interdependency between these models' ability to adapt and respond to local school and district conditions, and the local acceptance of a particular model along with a commitment to its sound implementation.

Planning in schools has been categorized in a number of ways. For example, Wallace (1994) argues that, at both regional and national level, frameworks for planning have been produced based on cycles of review, planning and implementation. At institutional level MacGilchrist et al. (1995) claimed that four different types of school plans could be identified: i) the rhetorical, which had no credence within the school; ii) the singular, produced by the principal alone; iii) the cooperative, produced by a group of staff and

focusing on finance and staff development; and iv) the corporate, produced by the staff working together and focusing across an agreed range of the school's priorities. Bell (2002) says that neither of these typologies of strategic planning in Europe and the US takes into the account either the real nature of planning in schools or the extent to which such plans are determined by external factors.

In Kenya the Education Master Plan 1997-2010 (Republic of Kenya, 1998) conceptualizes school planning in terms of human resources, curriculum and financial resources. On human resources, first, the plan argues that in order to enhance quality management in secondary schools, it is imperative to have a well-qualified and highly motivated teaching force capable of understanding the needs of learners and the curriculum. Secondly, secondary school head teachers who are well versed in management are also essential for successful curriculum implementation, effective and efficient management and administration of schools. However the Plan observed that many secondary school head teachers had not been adequately trained in management and administration and were ineffective and lacking in accountability (Republic of Kenya, 1998). They should be the advisors in curriculum implementation in their own schools and should be well prepared for this role. Third, the plan deplores the poor terms and conditions of service that have led to poor morale. Some secondary school teachers who work in remote areas have inadequate basic amenities like housing, access to clean water and health facilities.

Lastly, the secondary school system is said to be marred by nepotism and corruption allegations in the promotion of teachers (Republic of Kenya, 1998). Such malpractices are likely to affect teachers' morale, performance and commitment to strategic planning

as non-performers are rewarded. The quality of secondary schools in Kenya is also reflected in financial and other resources. 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. The quality of education cannot be achieved and sustained if the resources and facilities are not available in sufficient quality and quantity (Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero, 2006).

Ngware et al. (2006) are of the opinion that the schoolteacher must establish the context in which students can best achieve their objectives. Continuous improvement that results from students, teachers and Board of Governors working together must be harnessed. Teachers should concentrate on literacy and teaching that provides a leadership framework that support continuous improvement in the learning process. Padhi (2004) calls it the most important element in Total Quality Management (TQM), arguing that leadership appears everywhere and requires the manager to provide an inspiring vision, make strategic decisions understood by all and to instil values that guide the subordinates.

According to Okumbe (1998), leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically toward objectives. It involves developing a vision for the organization that will encourage employees to work with a passion. The school management should emphasize teamwork and collaboration which are essential components in provision of quality education. Good leadership should embrace the principles of management which bring about continuous improvement and which guide the students, teachers and Board of Governors (BoG) in working toward the achievement of the organizational objectives.

The Kenya Education Management Capacity Assessment (KEMACA, 2008) conducted a survey aimed at ascertaining capacity weaknesses in the Kenyan education system, which might impede the proper execution of the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP). The survey established that 27% of the schools did not have an action plan at all. In addition, of those who claimed they did, only

49% were able to produce the action plans. School action plans were frequently not focused on pedagogical issues such as materials acquisition, peer teaching, assessment, and so on, but on more generic issues and infrastructure. So, the survey concluded that there is clearly a problem with school planning skills. On strategic planning, mission and vision statements for Kenyan schools tend to be rather general and not sufficiently focused on outputs and outcomes. The ability to strategize in order to turn the mission and vision into operational plans is not yet optimal. Plans often read more like lists, with little apparent sense of prioritization. Top leadership is clear and able to prioritize, but mid-level management does not seem to have the skills needed, or the tradition, to turn top-level visions into operational plans.

A study conducted by Ngware et al. (2006) to determine the extent of practice of TQM in Kenyan secondary schools revealed that most schools did not have strategic plans. Among the few schools that showed evidence of strategic planning, the strategic plan acts not only as the roadmap but also as a tool to communicate quality expectations to all employees. The researchers noted that unfortunately, such schools are weak in systematic follow-up to ascertain the implementation of the plans. In addition there seemed to be no deliberate attempts to do a formal internal evaluation with a view to ascertain the extent to which qualitative and or quantitative targets have been met. Failure to do such an evaluation denies the organization the opportunity to reflect on the quality planning and inculcate a culture of quality assurance in schools.

The fact that schools are operating without strategic planning is an indication of a lack of commitment to quality management. Lack of quality planning may jeopardize the

provision of quality education services, which may in turn lead to low student achievement. It is important therefore for the school system to sensitize school managers to the importance of strategic management in education.

2.4   Steps Followed in School Strategic Planning

A strategic plan is a road map to lead an organization from where it is now to where it would like to be in five or ten years. According to Grant (2003), strategic planning is one step of strategic management, which is the process of defining the purpose and pursuits of an organization and the methods for achieving them. **Strategic planning** comprises the procedures of defining objectives and creating strategies to attain those objectives. A strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal, as differentiated from tactics or immediate actions with resources at hand. The reason for **strategic or long-range planning** is to assist organizations in establishing priorities and to better serve the needs of the stakeholders. A strategic plan must be flexible and practical and yet serve as a guide to implementing programs, evaluating how these programs are doing, and making adjustments when necessary.

A *strategic plan* must reflect the thoughts, feelings, ideas, and wants of the developers and mould them along with the organization's purpose, mission, and regulations into an integrated document. The development of a plan requires much probing, discussion, and examination of the views of those who are responsible for the plan's preparation. However, more often than not, the development of the plan is less complicated than is the implementation. Implementation, in essence, pulls a plan apart and diffuses it throughout an organization. Every unit within the organization which is involved must then accept the plan, agree to its direction, and implement specific actions (Bell, 2002).

In order to effectively and efficiently implement a plan, all individuals involved in its implementation must function as a whole or the plan is destined for failure. In this respect long range/strategic planning describes results that will probably take place. Strategic planning aims to build more desirable upcoming results either by adjusting current programs and proceedings so as to have more favourable outcomes in the external environment, or by influencing the outside world.

Strategic planning is essentially the determination by administrators of an enterprise to draw a picture of what they would like the organization to become, perform an environmental scan on resources it has or must acquire to become what they have envisioned, then formulate actions that will provide a pathway to the envisioned future. It is, fundamentally, a statement of belief that an institution can shape its own destiny by controlling the change it encounters daily (Fox, 2002).

Strategic planning, based on an analysis of available information, is something an organization uses in order to establish its position in the world of competitive rivalry. It is what makes a firm unique, a winner or a survivor and is intended to give an organization a competitive advantage over its rivals (Thomas, 1993). Strategic planning therefore can best be understood as matching the activities of an organization to its environment and to its resource capabilities (Johnson and Scholes, 1989). It has been argued that, in schools, developing strategy is a key management process, which draws together institutional values and goals and provides a framework for the quality of provision and the deployment of resources (Preedy et al, 1997).

2.5 Roles and Contributions of Stakeholders in Strategic Planning

Participation of stakeholders in strategic planning is important for the plan to gain acceptability and support in the implementation phase. Stakeholder participation encourages everyone in the organisation to work harder for their benefit and hence for the benefit of the organization. Participative management, when viewed optimistically, is perceived as a necessary and inevitable change to organizational structures to improve employee productivity and satisfaction (Lichtenstein, 2000).

Since the late 1970s many companies have implemented some form of employee participation program designed to improve workplace policies and develop and effect operational changes advantageous to both management and workers. Such programs, variously referred to as managed work teams, quality of work life groups, action committees or worker-manager committees, typically provide a forum in which employees may present proposals or ideas to management concerning workplace issues and obtain a management response (Sisson, 2000). Many managers believe that this type of worker-employer cooperation is highly beneficial to both parties and useful for the organization itself to compete in a global economy. Employee participation is defined as a process of employee involvement designed to provide employees with the opportunity to influence and where appropriate, take part in decision-making on matters which affect them (Quagraine, 2010). One way through which participation is achieved is through involvement in strategic planning.

Participatory planning is not new to schools and businesses. Writings began to emerge as early as the 1930s and by the fifties and sixties a number of authors were critical of the more traditional bureaucratic methods of management (Lawler, 1992). Likert (1967) studied the organizational and performance characteristics of management systems and

found that regardless of area, the best performing groups leaned toward the participative end of his scale, which extended across a continuum from exploitive-authoritative to participative practices. He found that the more participative the group, the more successful it was. Characteristics such as group involvement, mutual trust, information sharing, high degrees of teamwork, and group decision-making were evident in the most successful groups he studied (Likert, 1967).

One of the key stakeholders in a school is the teacher. Teachers are important actors as they are the ones who directly affect student achievement, mediate student encounter with content, control classroom activities most directly related to learning; in the absence of them even technology-based-innovations have little success of working (Chapman, Snyder, & Burchfield, 1993). Consequently, teachers are the ones who play a central role in the educative process through implementing the purposefully designed curriculum to achieve the desired national educational goals. They therefore need to be involved in strategic planning. Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb (1995) found that teacher involvement is closely connected to teacher learning and that such an approach may result in involvement becoming a part of the "normal" duties of teachers. Thus, leadership and involvement opportunities should be available to all teachers regardless of title or position. It is in this regard that this study seeks to find out the extent to which stakeholders such as teachers participate in secondary school strategic planning.

2.6 Effects of Leadership in Implementation of Strategic Plans

Another factor that could influence the success of strategic planning is school leadership. Often, when a school performs well the principal, as the school leader, is the first to be

congratulated, while poor performance leads to the principal receiving the blame. The school principal is the most important person in a school setting. As the chief executive of a school, he/she is charged with the responsibility of managing the day to day affairs of the institution, and ensuring that all members of the school community are moving in the right direction. A prime task of school heads is to exercise leadership of the kind that results in a shared vision of the directions to be pursued by the school, and to manage change in ways that ensure that the school is successful in realizing the vision. In a world of increasingly rapid change, what is the terra firma on which a robust concept of the principal as a leader and manager of change can be built? Sullivan and Glanz (2000) have proposed that the profession should adopt school improvement as its centre of gravity. This means that the principal, in making school-related decisions, should always have school improvement in mind.

Placing school improvement at the centre of the profession ensures that the job of the head is pedagogically and educationally grounded, and tied directly to the core business of schooling. It requires heads that have a solid knowledge of the learning process and of the conditions under which students learn in the school setting. It also places a premium on knowledge about educational change and school improvement. In short, it emphasizes the role of the head as a knowledge manager with respect to the core business of the school, namely teaching and learning, in a context of change and the ongoing imperative for improvement (Glanz, 2000). This implies that principals are at the centre of school improvement, and if they fail in this task then the entire school fails.

A key role of the principal is to ensure that each of the elements that contribute to improved student learning outcomes is present, working effectively and in alignment with

all other elements (Hill, 2006). This means that the principal is thus, as it were, the chief architect of the school, the one who has the overview of systems, processes and resources and how they combine to produce intended student learning outcomes. The principal therefore plays an important role in strategic planning.

The principal should be able to articulate the significance of all key elements of the strategic plan, to justify their design and configuration, and to be in a position to make judgments regarding the operational effectiveness of each element and of the total impact of all of the elements as they function in combination with one another. When outcomes are not being realized, or when evidence accumulates that particular elements are not working effectively, the head is responsible for ensuring that the redesign work is carried out (Hill, 2006). This could mean minor readjustments but, in cases of endemic failure to reach required standards, is more likely to involve transforming the whole ecology of the school in order to obtain the desired results.

2.7 Challenges Facing Implementation of Strategic Plans

Strategic planning in school settings, just like in the business sector, is dependent on leadership commitment and skills. In schools, the principal is the most important person in determining planning effectiveness. In spite of the important role played by principals in school planning and general management, many developing countries do not offer adequate training for their school heads. According to Osei (2006), school principals often work in poorly equipped schools and with teachers who are not adequately in-serviced. Yet, as Dessler (2002) advises, after the employee has been recruited, he or she must next be developed to better fit the job and the organization. No one is a perfect fit at the time of hiring, and some training and education must take place. Osei (2006) adds

that there is rarely any formal leadership training and principals are appointed on the basis of their teaching record rather than their leadership potential. Induction and support are usually limited and principals have to adopt a pragmatic approach to school management. Investing in training of school managers would help by equipping them with necessary skills for school planning.

Another challenge that school managers could face in strategic planning revolves around role conflicts between the principal and the BoG. The principal of a school is usually the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The differentiation of function between the BoG and the principal is a very simple one - the board is to formulate policy, the principal is to administer it. This formulation has a certain gross usefulness but upon examination it becomes apparent that most principals influence policy and that most BoGs table some hand in administration (Githongo, 2008). Both principals and the governors are partners in management of the school each with distinctive contributions to make. The principal is expected to cement this partnership and doing so is very challenging.

To the extent that the staff of the school organization and the BoG hold different expectations of principals, it is clear that the principal is caught in the middle. The principals role is complicated by the fact that he/she is expected to assist each group in understanding the positive and reasoning of the other during, for example, negotiation on salary and other welfare matters (Githongo, 2008).

The situation is further complicated when BoG holds meetings to pass resolutions and leave the principals to execute what has been recommended. The principals as the person solely responsible in day-to-day running of the school is expected to guide the BoG on what to do. This is not easy for the principals especially when the board members have

very little time for meetings. At times BoG members may attend meetings and pass resolutions in a hurry. Some matters may be left hanging leaving principals more confused than they were before. This confusion may be passed to the entire school administration and in turn affect school performance.

Inadequate decision-making authority is one challenge that could affect school planning authority. This is the case for countries with highly centralized education systems. Verspoor (2008) states that deconcentration of management responsibility for secondary education and diversification of sources of funding for schools are ways of transforming the way public schools operate, making them more accountable to students, parents, and communities. These reforms go by different names – school-based management, school autonomy reform, school improvement programs – but they all work toward administrative decentralization or deconcentration. The evolving approaches to governance and management of secondary education are resulting in (a) recognition of the school as the focal point for quality improvement and the unit of change in the drive toward the development of more effective schools, (b) increased autonomy and decision-making power at the school level, and (c) a new context for central direction and support.

School planning in Africa is faced with a number of challenges. While some school planning initiatives have succeeded others have not been successful. In South Africa, Chinsamy (2002) notes that after transition from apartheid, there was much interest from different educational constituencies in finding out the characteristics of effective and improving South African schools. A number of school development, school effectiveness, and school improvement initiatives were initiated, both by the government utilizing donor funding, and by nongovernmental organizations. The programmes

touched different aspects of school life in individual schools - school management, teacher development in subject content and teaching methodology, learner assessment, and organizational development. However, studies of school development projects in South Africa have revealed that they have not had a significant impact on teaching and learning and subsequent learners' performance (Christie and Potterton 1997).

Chinsamy (2002) suggests that one of the main reasons for the relative failure of these projects in South Africa, despite their good intentions and excellent content in many cases, was the implementation of single change programmes or the lack of integration of many programmes initiated in schools. In addition, it was generally found that those schools that did make improvements in some aspects, and whose learners subsequently improved their performance, could not maintain that improvement in subsequent years consistently. Many of these projects, aside from having single change programmes, tended to be "supply-push" interventions, either focusing on inputs or on improved schools processes and that was natural; they generally did not focus on "demand-side" and on accountability for final results. They were based on the notion that there was some input or process deficit, and that fixing that deficit would more or less automatically lead to better final results.

Ghana adopted the concept of Whole School Development (WSD) which seeks to promote the following: a) Child-centered primary practice in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving with the view to improve the quality of teaching and learning in basic school classrooms; b) Community participation in education delivery; c) Competencies of teaching and learning through school-based in-service training; d) Participatory planning and resource management at school and district levels; and e) Improve efficiency in

resource management (Akyeampong, 2005). At the heart of the WSD process in Ghana is the provision of support to principals and teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. In addition, he notes that WSD in Ghana is having the kind of impact expected from a school improvement initiative focusing its efforts on decentralized decision-making to enhance local community participation in school development, leadership training for principals, school infrastructure, local government support and capacity building to improve the quality of education.

2.8 Summary

The chapter covered literature related to the study. From the reviewed literature, it emerged that strategic planning in organizations is important in order to provide a road map for use by all members in moving towards the achievement of their mission and vision. The researcher did not come across any studies from Kenya on challenges facing implementation of strategic plans in schools.

From the reviewed literature, it emerged that implementation of strategic plans can be influenced by school leadership; material, human, and financial resources; and stakeholder participation in strategic planning. Only a few studies from Kenya in regard to school strategic planning were identified. A study by KEMACA (2008) showed that 27% of schools in Kenya did not have an action plan at all. Similarly, a study by Ngware et al. (2006) to determine the extent of practice of TQM in Kenyan secondary schools revealed that most schools did not have strategic plans. Yet strategic planning is recognized as an important tool that leads to organizational effectiveness. The study therefore sought to find out the challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District, Kenya. Specifically, the study determined how stakeholders in schools influence implementation of strategic plans, how resources affect implementation of strategic plans, and the influence of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans.

The study argues that stakeholders such as Board of Governors, parents, teachers, education officials, the business community and school alumni play an important role in strategic planning. That is why stakeholder analysis is an important strategic planning

element. Even when schools have prepared strategic plans, they need adequate resources – material, human and financial – to effectively implement the plans. School leadership is another important factor determining the implementation of strategic plans. The study sought to find out how each of these factors influences the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the procedures that were used to conduct the study. The chapter focuses on research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, and data collection and analysis.

3.2   Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey design to determine the challenges facing secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District, Kenya. Descriptive survey designs are used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho 2002).

Borg and Gall (1989) note that descriptive survey research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of the population that interest policy makers without manipulating any variables. The choice of the descriptive survey research design was made based on the fact that in the study, the researcher was interested in the state of affairs already existing in the field and no variable was manipulated.

3.3   Study Location

The study was carried out in Gatundu North District, Kenya. Singleton (1993) noted that the ideal setting for any study should be easily accessible to the researcher and should be that which permits instant rapport with the informants. Gatundu North District was

chosen because it is easily accessible to the researcher. In addition, no similar research to the best knowledge of the researcher has been carried out in Gatundu North District.

Figure 3.1: Map showing Gatundu North district

3.4 Target Population

The study population comprised of all the principals, BoG members and heads of departments (HoDs) in all secondary schools in Gatundu North District. There are 36 secondary schools with a population of 36 principals (Gatundu North District Education Office, 2010). The target population of the study was all the 36 principals, the heads of departments and the BoG chairpersons serving in the 36 public secondary schools in Gatundu North District.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample is a small portion of a target population. Sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population. Any statements made about the sample should also be true of the population (Orodho, 2002). It is, however, agreed that the larger the sample, the smaller the sampling error. The researcher employed simple random sampling to select 30 out of the 36 schools; two HoDs from each of the sampled school were also randomly selected to participate in the actual study. On the other hand, all the principals and BoG chairpersons from the 30 schools were purposively selected. According to Gay (1992) simple random sampling is preferred because it allows all members of the population an equal chance of being included in the study. The names of all the departments in each school were written on pieces of paper; the papers were then folded and put in a container. The researcher then selected two papers at random. The names of the departments whose papers were picked were used for the study. Therefore, the study sample comprised of 30 secondary school principals, 30 BoG chairpersons, and 60 HoDs.

3.6 Research Instruments

The main tools of data collection for this study were questionnaires and interview schedules. Two sets of questionnaires were used, one for principals and one for heads of departments. An interview schedule was used to collect data from BoG members. Details about each instrument are as follows:

3.6.1 Principals' and Heads of Department Questionnaire

The questionnaire for principals had two parts: part one collected demographic data of the principals and their schools. Part two collected data on various aspects of strategic plans and the procedures employed in strategic planning. The views of principals were sought on extent to which students and parents are involved in management practices. The third section gathered data on challenges facing implementation of strategic plans.

The questionnaire for HoDs had six parts. Each part collected data as stated: part one collected demographic data of the HoDs, including academic and professional qualifications, gender and responsibilities held in school; part two on extent of strategic plan in schools; part three on stakeholder participation in strategic plan implementation; part four on availability of resources for implementation of strategic plan; part five on leadership and implementation of strategic plan; while part six collected data on the challenges faced in the implementation process of school strategic plans.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule for BoG Members

The interview schedule was used to guide face-to-face interviews to be held with BoG members in relation to implementation of strategic plans. The interview schedule comprised of items addressing the objectives of the study.

3.7 Pilot Study

Prior to visiting the schools for data collection, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires using two schools in the District, which were not included in the actual study. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the validity and reliability of the instrument by identifying any items in the questionnaire that were unclear to the respondents and iron out ambiguity. The pilot study also enabled the researcher to familiarize himself with administration of the instrument.

3.7.1 Reliability of the Instruments

Borg and Gall (1989) define reliability of a research instrument as its level of internal consistency or stability over time. A reliable instrument therefore is one that constantly produces the expected results when used more than once to collect data from two samples randomly drawn from the same population. Reliability of a standard test is usually expressed as a correlation coefficient, which measure the strength of association between variables. Such coefficients vary between $-1 < r < +1$ and 1.00 with the former showing that there is no reliability whereas the later shows perfect reliability. Reliability coefficient shows the extent to which an instrument is free of error variance.

The technique for establishing reliability involved the split-half technique. Split-half technique is a method of reliability testing whereby the instrument being tested is administered only once to the pilot study respondents, and then the responses are divided into two equal halves, which are then subjected to reliability testing (Borg & Gall, 1989). Split-Half technique of reliability testing was employed, whereby the pilot questionnaires from the sample schools were divided into two equivalent halves (SH-1 and SH-2) and then a correlation coefficient for the two halves were computed. Table 3.1 shows the Split Half technique procedure.

*Table 3.1: Split Half Technique for Reliability Coefficient

Respondents	SH-1 scores (A)	Respondents	SH-2 scores (B)	D (A – B)	D²
1	3	2	2	1	1
3	5	4	5	0	0
5	4	6	4	0	0
7	1	8	1	0	0
9	4	10	5	-1	1
					$\sum(D)^2 = 2$

*Source: Researcher's Own (2011)

Procedure for Split Half is as follows

(i)
$$r = 1 - \frac{6\sum (D)^2}{N (N^2 - 1)}$$

Where:

r = Correlation coefficient

N = Sample,

$\sum$ = Summation of scores,

D = Deviation

$$SH = \frac{2r}{1 + r}$$

(Where Items are doubled)

(Spearman Brown Prophesy)

(ii)

———

Using the above formula for the sample data in Table 3.1 we obtain: -

A reliability coefficient of 0.94 was obtained and accepted as showing the instrument was reliable.

3.7.2   Validity of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. In other words, validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomena under study. Validity according to Borg and Gall (1989) is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure. Face validity and content validity were tested.

Face validity refers to the likelihood that a question will be misunderstood or misinterpreted. Pre-testing a survey is a good way to increase the likelihood of face validity. Therefore, the pilot study helped to improve face validity of the instruments.

Content validity refers to whether an instrument provides adequate coverage of a topic. Expert opinions, literature searches, and pre-test open-ended questions help to establish content validity (Borg and Gall, 1989). As such, the researcher sought expert opinion from the supervisors and lecturers whose expert opinions helped improve content validity. The questionnaires were constructed after a thorough review of literature to identify the factors that could influence implementation of strategic plans.

3.8   Data Collection Procedure

A research permit was obtained from the National Council for Science and Technology. Thereafter the office of the District Education Officer (DEO) for Gatundu North was

contacted before the start of the study. The selected schools were visited and the questionnaire administered to the respondents. The respondents were assured that strict confidentiality would be maintained in dealing with the responses. The filled-in questionnaires were collected after one week. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the principals and teachers, and conducted interviews with BoG members. The researcher booked appointments with BoG members on appropriate day to conduct interviews. Data collection process took a period of one month.

3.9   Data Analysis Plan

This study generated both qualitative and quantitative data; hence both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to analyze the data obtained. Qualitative analysis considered the inferences that were made from the opinions of the respondents. This analysis was thematically presented in narrative form and where possible tabular form. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) assert that the purpose of descriptive statistics is to enable the researcher to meaningfully describe a distribution of scores or measurement using a few indices or statistics.

Descriptive statistics involved the use of frequencies and percentages. Bell (1993) maintains that when making the results known to a variety of readers, percentages have a considerable advantage over more complex statistics. Similarly, Borg and Gall (1989) hold that the percentage is the most widely used and understood standard proportion. Frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs were used to enhance data presentation.

The process of data analysis required the use of a computer spreadsheet, and for this reason the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. As Martin and Acuna

(2002) observe, SPSS is able to handle large amount of data, and given its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposefully designed for social sciences, it is also quite efficient. Table 3.2 shows a summary of the data analysis procedures employed for each research question and the study variables.

Table 3.2: Summary of Data Analysis Methods

Research Question	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistics
What is the extent of strategic planning in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?	Preparation of strategic plans	Implementation of strategic plans	Frequencies, means, percentages, standard deviation
What is the role of stakeholders in preparation and implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?	Role played by stakeholders	Implementation of Strategic plans	Frequencies, means, percentages, standard deviation
What is the influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District?	Adequacy of resources	Implementation of strategic plans	Frequencies, means, percentages, standard deviation
What is the influence of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?	School leadership	Implementation of strategic plans	Frequencies, means, percentages, standard deviation

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and discussion of the study findings. The purpose of the study was to determine the challenges facing public secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District. The findings of the research are presented based on the four research questions:

i. What proportion of secondary schools in Gatundu North District, are implementing strategic plans?

ii. To what extent do stakeholders participate in the implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?

iii. How does material, human and financial resources influence implementation of strategic plans in Gatundu North District?

iv. What is the effect of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District?

The demographic data of the respondents is given first, followed by the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings on each of the four research questions.

4.2 Demographic Information

The study targeted 30 principals, 30 BoGs and 60 HoDs from 30 public secondary schools in Gatundu North District, a total of 120 participants. Out of the 60 HoDs who took part in the study, 30 (50.0%) were male and 30 (50.0%) were female. Table 4.1 shows professional qualifications of both principals and HoDs.

Table 4.1: Level of Education

Level of education	Principals		HoDs	
	F	%	F	%
Master's Degree	3	10.0	12	20.0
Bachelor's Degree	24	80.0	34	56.7
Diploma	3	10.0	14	23.3
Total	**30**	**100.0**	**60**	**100.0**

Table 4.1 shows that, 10.0% of the head teachers were Masters Degree qualifiers, 80% of them had Bachelor's Degree while the other 10.0% of them were Diploma holders. On the other hand, 20.0% of the HoDs had Masters Degree qualifications, 56.7% of them held Bachelor's Degree while 23.3% of them were Diploma holders. This is an indicator that principals and their technical assistants (HoDs) had attained high levels of education and would therefore have the necessary qualifications to identify and deal with the challenges facing school managers in the implementation of strategic plans. Previous government reports such as the Master Plan on Education and Training (Republic of Kenya, 1998) reported that many secondary school heads had not been adequately trained in management and administration and were ineffective and lacking in accountability. Quality education is important for teachers and principals to engage in strategic planning. Training the personnel in strategic planning would improve their skills resulting in effective strategic plans.

Work experience is the period of time an individual performs an activity in a work setting (whether paid or voluntary) to the programme of study. Table 4.1 shows years of work experience of the principals and HoDs.

Table 4.2: Years of work experience

Experience	Principals		HoDs	
	Years served as H/T		Years served as HoD	
	F	%	F	%
Below 5 years	4	13.3	14	23.3
6-11 years	8	26.7	6	10.0
12-17 years	13	43.3	40	66.7
18-23 years	4	13.3	0	0.0
Above 24 years	1	3.3	0	0.0
Total	**30**	**100.0**	**60**	**100.0**

In relation to work experience the study established that, 13.3% of the principals had served below 5 years as principals, 26.7% of them had served between 6-11 years, 43.3% of them had served between 12-17 years while 13.3% of them had served between 18-23 years. There was only one principal who had served as a school administrator for 24 years and above. On the other hand, 23.3% of the HoDs had served below 5years, 10.0% of them had served between 6-11 years while 66.7% of them had served between 12-17 years. These findings imply that majority of the respondents had worked for long periods, which shows that they had wealth of experience which would enable them not only to contribute to the research adequately, but also to make and implement strategic plans for their schools. This is in agreement with a study by Moini (2009) who established that work experience of teachers/administrators influence their attitude towards their area of specialization and more experienced teachers/administrators tend to perform better than novice teachers/administrators.

4.3 Extent of Strategic Planning in Schools

The first research question of the study sought to determine the proportion of secondary schools in Gatundu North District which are implementing strategic plans. To answer this question, the principals were asked whether their schools had vision statements, mission statements and strategic plans. Their responses are shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Head teachers' responses on the extent of strategic planning in schools

Statement	Yes		No	
	F	%	**F**	%
Do you have a vision statement?	29	96.7	1	3.3
Do you have a mission statement for your school?	29	96.7	1	3.3
Have you formulated a strategic plan in your school?	21	70.0	9	30.0

Table 4.3 shows that 70% of the schools had formulated strategic plans in their schools while 30% of them had not. This is an indicator that most of the schools had strategic plans, which if properly implemented, would benefit the stakeholders in schools. Similarly, the teachers and BoGs also reported that the schools had vision and mission statements, as well as strategic plans. These findings contrast with those in a study by Ngware et al. (2006) on the extent of practice of TQM in Kenyan secondary schools, which revealed that most schools did not have strategic plans. The researchers noted that even the schools with strategic plans are weak in systematic follow-up to ascertain the implementation of the plans. In addition there seemed to be no deliberate attempts to do a formal internal evaluation with a view to ascertain the extent to which qualitative and or quantitative targets had been met.

The head teachers and teachers were asked how teachers, parents and students are involved in the formulation of the mission and vision of the school in order to own it. In response, the indicated: participating in coming up with new ideas on the vision and mission of the school through an open forum among parties involved; holding parent and staff meetings in order to formulate school strategic plans; students present their ideas for school mission and vision statements in their classes, so that their input is also incorporated in the strategic plans; and the school organizes workshops where all parties participate fully.

Responses given by principals regarding the time frame for their strategic plans is presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: **Head teachers' responses on time frame for strategic plan**

Time frame	F	%
Between 3 and 5 years	13	43.3
Between 5 and 10 years	8	26.7
No strategic plan	9	30.0
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Table 4.4 shows that out of the 30 head teachers who participated in the study, 43% reported that the time frame for their schools' strategic plan was for 3-5 years while 26.7% of them indicated that their schools' strategic plan was for $5 - 10$ years. This is an indication that the head teachers had long-term plans for their schools, which would enable them to have ample time to make and see the changes of their strategic plans before deciding whether to make any more adjustments or to continue with the same

strategic plans. It also shows that the head teachers were focused on making the schools excel by coming up with good strategic plans that would serve them well over the years. This is in contrast to previous findings by Ngware *et al.* (2006) who established that most schools in Kenya are operating without strategic plans. The findings are also contrary to those by KEMACA's (2008) assessment which showed that most school administrators had problems with school planning skills, and that mission and vision statements for Kenyan schools tend to be rather general and not sufficiently focused on outputs and outcomes.

Further, the head teachers, HoDs and teachers were asked to list the stakeholders responsible for the preparation and implementation of strategic plans in schools. They responded as shown in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Stakeholders involved in implementation of strategic plans

Stakeholders	Head teachers		HoDs		BoGs	
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
BoG members	6	20	12	20	6	20
PTA members	11	36.6	22	36.6	11	36.6
Students	2	6.7	4	6.7	2	6.7
Principal	1	3.3	2	3.3	1	3.3
Subordinate staff	1	3.3	2	3.3	1	3.3
No strategic plan	9	30	18	30	9	30
Total	**30**	**100.0**	**60**	**100.0**	**30**	**100.0**

Table 4.5 shows that 36.6% of the respondents indicated that members of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) had the highest number of representatives in the implementation of strategic plans, followed by the BoG members. This is an indicator

that head teachers made an effort of including all the stakeholders in the implementation of strategic plans, to ensure that everyone's interests are met. One of the key factors affecting implementation of strategic plans is stakeholder participation. The success of any strategic plan lies in the level of participation of all those who will be charged with the responsibility of implementing it. Therefore, active involvement of stakeholders at all levels is emphasized.

This is in agreement with findings of a study by Swiderska (2001) that stakeholder participation plays a critical role in ensuring that strategic planning efforts are successful and in preventing potential problems at the implementation stage. Stakeholder participation brings considerable benefits in terms of building the conditions necessary to facilitate smooth implementation of strategic plans. Participation generates awareness and capacity amongst stakeholders, helps to build consensus and support for implementation of the plan, improved trust and collaboration and generates motivation to put policy into practice (Swiderska, 2001).

The BoGs were asked the frequency with which they met with the principals and PTA members to discuss school development and improvement matters. Their responses are shown in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Frequency of meetings to discuss school development

The chart shows "No. of BOGs" on the y-axis (0 to 20) against "Frequency of meetings" on the x-axis with the following values:
- After every month: 3 (10%)
- Once per term: 18 (60%)
- Any time they are available: 2 (6.7%)
- Twice per term: 5 (16.7%)
- Annually: 2 (6.7%)
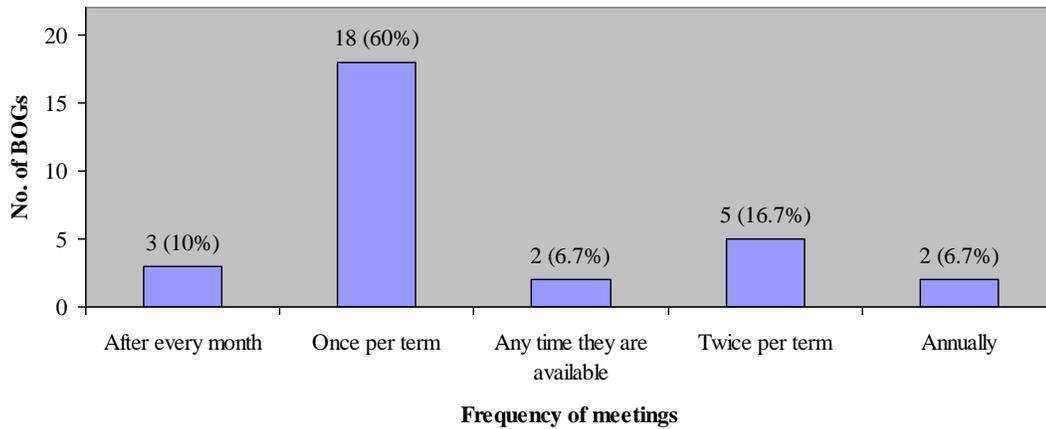
Figure 4.1 shows that the majority 60% of the BoGs indicated that they met with the PTA members and principals to discuss school development and improvement matters once a term, 16.7% of them held the discussions twice per term while the least number of BoGs 6.7% held discussions with PTA members and principals any time the members were available and annually respectively. This shows that the BoG members actively took part in the development and improvement of their schools, which they did by meeting with the stakeholders in order to come up with sound development and improvement plans. The BoG members also reported that in the meetings, all the other members actively contributed ideas regarding school improvement.

In Kenya, the role of BoG is spelt out in the Education Act (Republic of Kenya, 1980). The Act spells out the following roles of school governors as: planning and management of physical facilities for the purpose of learning/teaching in school; sourcing and management of school finances which includes receiving all fees payable by students, grants out of public funds, donations made to the school and any other income to the school and shall be responsible for the expenditure of all monies belonging to the school;

preparation, approval and implementation of both the recurrent and development budgets of the school; directing, supervising and monitoring approved projects and programs of the school; and regulating admission of students, subject to the direction of the Director of Education among others.

In their interview, the BoGs were also asked whether they found it necessary to have strategic plans for their schools. All the 100% BoGs reported that it was necessary to have school strategic plans. Their reasons for the necessity of having strategic plans in schools included: strategic plans act as a guide for future developments in the schools; for academic improvement and achieving intended goals; students are molded to be responsible citizens through careful laying down of school rules and regulations; realization of individual careers; and for the proper running of day to day activities in the schools.

4.4: Extent of Stakeholders participation in Implementation of Strategic Plans

The second research question of the study sought to find out the extent into which stakeholders participate in the implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Gatundu North District. To establish this, the head teachers and the HoDs were given a list of items in a table regarding stakeholders' participation in the preparation and implementation of strategic plans. They were required to rate their agreement levels with the items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The means and standard deviations of their responses are presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Stakeholder participation in strategic plan implementation

Statement	A		U		D		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Parents are consulted during school development planning	63	86.3	8	11.0	3	4.1	4.27	0.768
The principal regularly communicates to parents on quality improvement issues	62	84.9	8	11.0	3	4.1	4.21	0.799
Views from parents on school improvement are considered when planning	62	85	8	11.0	3	4.1	4.18	0.839
Inputs of teachers are always welcomed concerning quality initiatives and process improvement.	64	87.7	7	9.6	2	2.8	4.16	0.764
Collaboration among employees to improve the quality of programs and services is encouraged.	65	89.1	6	8.2	2	2.7	4.11	0.657
Important changes in school activities are communicated to students	60	82.2	8	11.0	5	6.8	4.05	0.926
Teachers are allowed to make decisions and instigate action	61	83.6	5	6.8	7	9.6	4.00	0.898
I feel free to take risks in an effort to improve the quality of my work performance	58	79.5	10	13.7	5	6.9	3.99	0.874
Team initiative and innovation by employees are encouraged in my school	57	78.1	8	11.0	8	11.0	3.89	0.921
All staff in the school are provided with an opportunity to participate on quality assurance teams.	53	72.6	14	19.2	6	8.2	3.79	0.897
The BoG chairperson promotes employee authority act.	48	65.7	20	27.4	5	6.8	3.74	0.898
Employees in the school are given freedom to act without fear of retribution	48	65.7	14	19.2	11	15.1	3.62	0.922
All members of staff are involved in strategic plan implementation	43	58.9	18	24.7	12	16.4	3.58	1.026
Changes have been made to our school organizational structure to facilitate employee empowerment	43	58.9	21	28.8	9	12.3	3.55	0.913
Student's views are sought in school strategic planning	40	54.8	18	24.7	15	20.5	3.45	1.068

The school has a strategic plan in which all stakeholders participate in developing	35	48.0	23	31.5	15	20.5	3.42	1.105

Key: A – Agree; **U** – Undecided; **D** – Disagree; **M** – Mean; **SD** – Standard Deviation; **f** – Frequency

Table 4.6 shows that the mean scores ranged from 4.27 to 3.42. The principals and HoDs scored highly on the statements that parents are consulted during school development planning and the principal regularly communicates to parents on quality improvement issues. On the other hand, the principals and the HoDs scored low on the statements that student's views are sought in school strategic planning and the school has a strategic plan in which all stakeholders participate in developing. Failure to involve all stakeholders in the strategic planning process could negatively affect the implementation process. A study by Lichtenstein, 2000 revealed that participation of stakeholders in strategic planning is important for the plan to gain acceptability and support in the implementation phase. Stakeholder participation encourages everyone in the organisation to work harder for their benefit and hence for the benefit of the organization. Participative management, when viewed optimistically, is perceived as a necessary and inevitable change to organizational structures to improve employee productivity and satisfaction.

The respondents' overall scores on their agreement levels were computed as shown in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Overall scores on stakeholder participation in strategic plan implementation
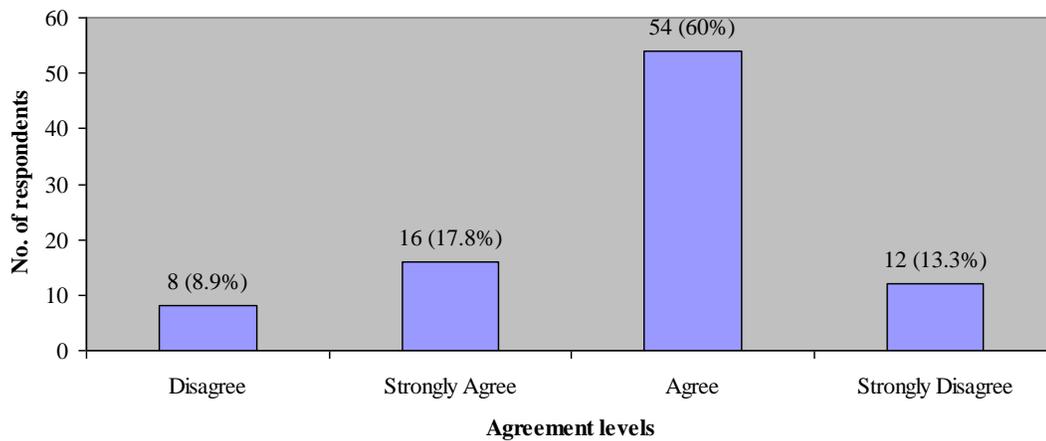
Figure 4.2 shows that 60% of the respondents agreed that stakeholders participated in the preparation and implementation of strategic plans, 17.8%)of them strongly agreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed while 8.9% disagreed. This is an indication that in most schools, stakeholders took an active duty in the preparation and implementation of strategic plans, which would enable the schools to meet their goals.

The princiapals and HoDs were asked ways in which stakeholder participation has influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools. Their responses are as shown in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Stakeholder influence on strategic plan implementation
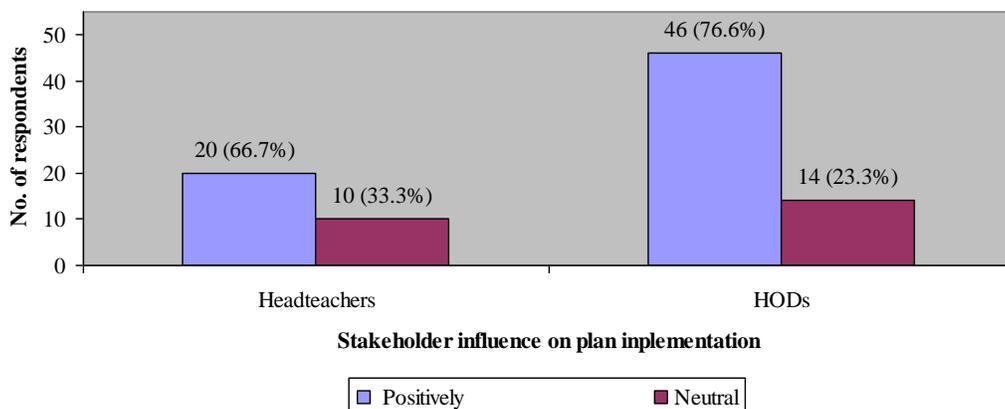
Figure 4.3 shows that 66.7% of the principals and 76.6% of the HoDs indicated that stakeholder participation positively influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools while 33.3% of the principals and 23.3% of the HoDs were neutral. This is an indication that stakeholder participation was important in the implementation of strategic plans in schools.

The head teachers and HoDs further reported that stakeholder participation has positively influenced the implementation of strategic plans such that: parents agree to put up new classes and also contribute some money in order to motivate students, there is enough support especially by teachers and BoG members, teachers guide the administration on the best projects that will improve learning and the recognition of the input by individual and groups of stakeholders encourages them to own the process and take up respective responsibilities.

Similarly, Likert (1967) studied the organizational and performance characteristics of management systems and found that regardless of area, the best performing groups leaned toward the participative end of his scale, which extended across a continuum from exploitive-authoritative to participative practices. He found that the more participative the group, the more successful it was. Characteristics such as group involvement, mutual trust, information sharing, high degrees of teamwork, and group decision-making were evident in the most successful groups he studied.

The BoGs were also asked to state the role of stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of strategic plans in schools. In response to this, they stated the role as: give suggestions and ideas on how to implement the plan, guide the school manager with ideas on how to improve the school; provide financial support when need be; guide the

students morally and spiritually and Identifying the areas they need to develop and improve then analyzing the priorities.

4.5: Influence of Material, Human and Financial Resources on Implementation of Strategic Plans

The third research question sought to find out the influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic planning in secondary schools in Gatundu North District. The principals and HoDs were given a list of items in a table and were asked to state their agreement levels on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The means and standard deviations of their combined responses are shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Availability of resources for implementation of strategic plan

Statement	A		U		D		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Lack of finances has hindered implementation of our strategic plan	55	75.4	10	13.7	8	10.9	3.99	1.086
Changing enrolment trends in the school has forced us to change the school budget thus affecting the implementation of the strategic plan	50	68.5	13	17.8	10	13.7	3.78	1.083
Some projected sources of funds have changed necessitating changes in the strategic plan	44	60.3	19	26.0	10	13.7	3.60	1.024
I have come to realize that the strategic plan cannot be implemented the way it was designed	29	39.8	28	38.4	16	21.9	3.27	0.961
We do have adequate human capacity to implement our strategic plan	26	35.6	23	31.5	24	32.9	2.97	1.054
We have adequate resources to facilitate effective implementation of the strategic plan	22	30.2	15	20.5	36	49.3	2.78	1.228

Key: A – Agree; **U** – Undecided; **D** – Disagree; **M** – Mean; **SD** – Standard Deviation; **f** – Frequency

Table 4.7 shows that the mean score obtained from availability of resources for implementation of strategic plan ranged from 3.99 to 2.78. Mean scores above 3.0 indicate that most school administrators agreed that lack of finances; changing enrolment trends in the schools and change in some projected sources of funds have hindered the implementation of the strategic plan. However, mean scores below 3.0 indicate that most school administrators disagreed with the statements that they had adequate human capacity and inadequate supply of the resources have hindered effective implementation of the strategic plan. This shows that most of the schools lacked enough finances to implement the strategic plans. Lack of resources has been shown to be one of the main

factors affecting school development and education quality in developing countries (Verspoor, 2008).

The head teachers and HoDs were asked the ways in which the availability or lack of resources influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools. Their responses are as shown in figure 4.4.

**Figure 4.4: Influence of lack of resources on implementation of strategic plans**
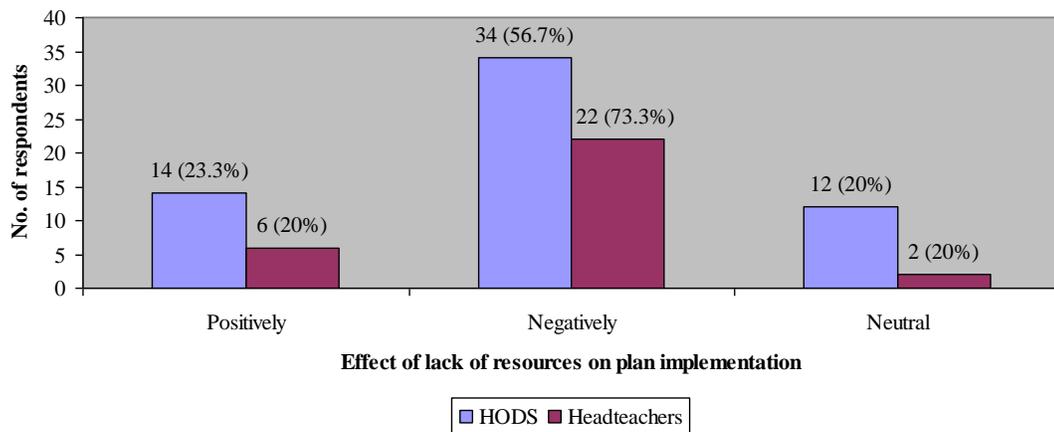
Figure 4.4 shows that 56.7%) of the HoDs and 73.3%)of the head teachers reported that lack of resources negatively influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools. On the other hand, 23.3%) of the HoDs and 20% of the head teachers reported that lack of resources had a positive influence on the implementation of strategic plans. This is an implication that lack of resources adversely affected the implementation of strategic plans in schools. Further, the principals and HoDs reported that due to lack or unavailability of resources, some projects have been left pending. On the other hand, they also reported that availability of resources has led to creation of a positive attitude especially in sciences and mathematics.

In agreement with this finding, a recent study unveiled that the quality of secondary schools in Kenya is also reflected in financial and other resources. 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. The quality of education cannot be achieved and sustained if the resources and facilities are not available in sufficient quality and quantity (Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero, 2006).

The BoG in an interview schedule were also asked the influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic plans in schools. They reported that: lack of enough teachers makes it impossible for the students to have adequate attention from their teachers, which they need in order to perform well in their studies; lack of material resources makes it hard for the students and teachers to accomplish their goals, which impacts negatively on the schools' performance; lack of financial resources makes it difficult for the head teachers to run the schools effectively and discipline may be affected by lack of human and material resources, since students may become unruly due to idleness and lack of enough books to read.

They also added that even with strategic plans, the government should ensure that schools are allocated adequate finances and that the funds for free secondary education should be released on time.

4.6: Effect of School Leadership on Implementation of Strategic Plans

The fourth research question of the study sought to establish the effect of school leadership on the implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools. To establish

this, the principals and HoDs were presented with various statements about leadership and implementation of strategic plan. They were required to state their agreement levels with the statements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table 4.8 shows the combined mean and standard deviations of their responses.

Table 4.8: Leadership and implementation of strategic plan

Statements	A		U		D		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
I always ensure that staff and students are aware of the school mission	66	90.5	3	4.1	4	5.5	4.36	0.856
I constantly ensure all staff and students are aware of the school vision	64	87.7	4	5.5	5	6.9	4.29	0.905
Practices of principals regularly demonstrate and communicate commitment quality improvement	64	87.7	8	11.0	1	1.4	4.23	0.698
The day to day practices of school administration demonstrate commitment to strategic management principals	59	80.8	12	16.4	2	2.7	4.10	0.767
I communicate my commitment to student focus and quality values to all employees	55	75.3	14	19.2	4	5.5	3.99	0.890
I ensure different parties are involved in implementation of the strategic plan	56	76.7	12	16.4	5	6.8	3.89	0.891
I articulate the strategic plan to all members of the school community	51	69.8	14	19.2	7	9.5	3.79	0.948
I regularly ensure that each element contributing to improved learning outcomes is present in the strategic plan implementation process	48	65.7	19	26.0	6	8.2	3.77	0.906
The BoG chairperson utilizes strategic management principles in leading the schools	47	64.5	20	27.4	6	8.2	3.74	0.943
We regularly measure performance outcomes in line with the strategic plan	42	57.5	23	31.5	8	10.9	3.60	0.954
I ensure there is continuous revision of the strategic plan for effective implementation	41	56.2	26	35.6	6	8.2	3.60	0.862
Students participate actively in school decision-making	46	63.0	13	17.8	14	19.1	3.55	1.014
Employees who pursue training in quality methods beyond the scope of that offered by the school are rewarded through leadership opportunities	39	53.4	21	28.8	12	16.4	3.54	1.047
The BoG chairperson measures school success by the quality of programs and services provided rather than the unit cost	37	50.7	26	35.6	10	13.7	3.45	1.014

Key: A – Agree; **U –** Undecided; **D –** Disagree; **M –** Mean; **SD –** Standard Deviation; **f –** Frequency

Table 4.8 shows that the responses on leadership and the implementation of strategic plans ranged from 4.36 to 3.45. The respondents scored high on the statements that: I

always ensure that staff and students are aware of the school mission and I constantly ensure all staff and students are aware of the school vision. The respondents on the other hand scored low on the statements that: the BoG chairperson measures school success by the quality of programs and services provided rather than the unit cost and the employees who pursue training in quality methods beyond the scope of that offered by the school are rewarded through leadership opportunities. This is an indicator that the schools had good leadership, which had a positive effect on strategic planning in schools.

The head teachers and HoDs were asked the ways in which school leadership has influenced the implementation of strategic planning in their schools. Their responses are shown in figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Influence of leadership on implementation of strategic plans
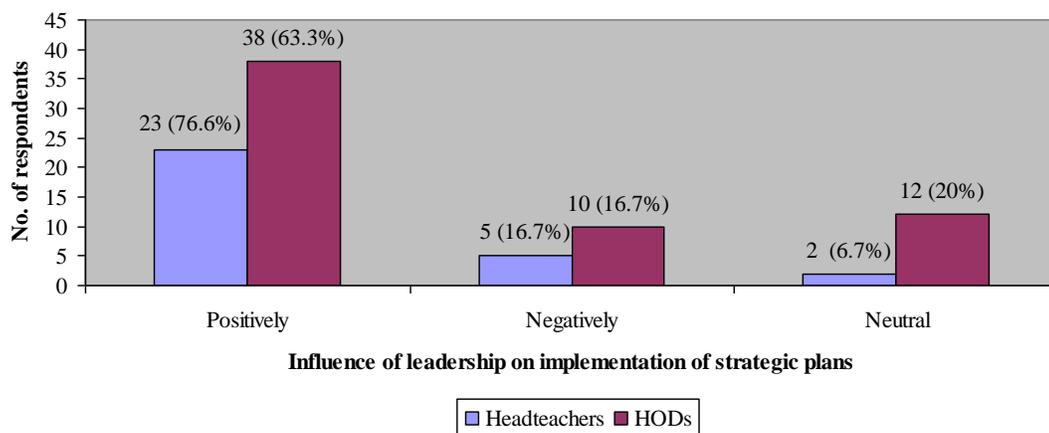
Figure 4.5 shows that 76.6% of the principals and 38 (63.3%) of the HoDs reported that the leaderships styles in their schools positively influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools. On the other hand, 16.7% of the principals and 16.7% of the HoDs indicated that the leadership styles in their schools negatively influenced the implementation of strategic plans. This is an implication that good leadership positively influenced the implementation of strategic plans.

According to Okumbe (1998), leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically toward objectives. It involves developing a vision for the organization that will encourage employees to work with a passion. The school management should emphasize teamwork and collaboration which are essential components in provision of quality education. Good leadership should embrace the principles of management which bring about continuous improvement and which guide the students, teachers and Board of Governors (BoG) in working toward the achievement of the organizational objectives.

The BoGs were asked the influence of school leadership on the implementation of strategic plans in schools. They gave their responses as: good leadership forces a look into the future and therefore provides an opportunity to influence the future, or assume a proactive posture; leadership provides better awareness of needs and of the facilities related issues and environment; good leadership helps define the overall mission of the organization and focuses on the objectives; provides a sense of direction, continuity, and effective staffing and leadership and that a good leader plugs everyone into the system and provides standards of accountability for people, programs, and allocated resources.

The principals and HoDs were asked to state the challenges faced in the implementation process of school strategic plans. Their responses are shown in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Challenges in implementation process of schools' strategic plans

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Inadequate finances	76	84.4
Inadequate resources	74	82.2
Inadequate number of teachers	51	56.7
Poor communication channels	48	53.3
Inadequate monitoring and evaluation of staff	42	46.7
Late payment of school fees	39	43.3
Inflation that bloats the initial projected cost of implementation	35	38.9

Table 4.9 shows that the biggest challenges faced by principals and HoDs in the implementation of strategic plans in schools were inadequate finances (84.4% and resources (82.2%). Other notable challenges include inadequacy of teachers (56.7%) and poor communication channels (53.3%). The least challenge experienced was inflation that bloats the initial projected cost of implementation (38.9%). This is an indicator that despite the fact that schools had strategic plans, the strategic plans were not perfect, and therefore needed to be polished to fit the actual cases in schools.

The BoGs gave the measures that could be taken to assist schools in preparation of effective strategic plans. They gave their responses as shown in table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Measures for ensuring effective preparation of strategic plans

Measures	Frequency	Percent
Involve all stake holders' visions for the school future progress	20	66.7
The Government should implement proper plans to support schools	24	80.0
Teachers should work together with students in order to uplift the school academically	19	63.3
Make good use of the resources provided	26	86.7
Involve the students in making some of the	17	56.7

school decisions		
Inviting other experienced personnel in the preparation of strategic plans	14	46.7

Table 4.10 shows that the majority 86.7% of the BoGs indicated that schools should make good use of the resources provided in order to ensure effective preparation of strategic plans. Eighty percent (80%) of the BoGs indicated that the government should implement proper plans to support schools. Forty six point seven percent (46.7%) of the BoGs indicated that experienced personnel should be invited to take part in the preparation of the school strategic plans.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study findings, conclusions and recommendations arrived at. The chapter also presents suggestions for related studies that could be carried out in the future.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The general objective of the study was to find out the extent of strategic planning in secondary schools in Gatundu North District. Data for the study was collected from 120 respondents, who included 30 princiapals, 60 HoDs and 30 B.O.G members. Data was analysed according to research objectives. Given below is a summary of the key study findings.

5.2.1 Extent of strategic planning in schools

The study established that all but one school had vision statements and also all but one school had mission statements. Among the visited schools 70% had strategic plans while 30% did not have. Similarly, the teachers and BoGs also reported that the schools had vision and mission statements, as well as strategic plans. The head teachers and teachers were asked how teachers, parents and students are involved in the formulation of the mission and vision of the school in order to own it. They responded as shown below: Participating in coming up with new ideas on the vision and mission of the school through an open forum among parties involved, Holding parent and staff meetings in order to formulate school strategic plans, Students present their ideas for school mission

and vision statements in their classes, so that their input is also incorporated in the strategic plans and the school organizes workshops where all parties participate fully.

It was established that out of the 30 head teachers who participated in the study, 43% reported that the time frame for their schools' strategic plan was for 3-5 years while 26.7% of them indicated that their schools' strategic plan was for 5 – 10 years. It also shows that the head teachers were focused on making the schools excel by coming up with good strategic plans that would serve them well over the years. Fifty three percent of the respondents indicated that the PTA members had the highest number of representatives in the implementation of strategic plans, followed by the BoG members.

One of the key factors affecting implementation of strategic plans is stakeholder participation. The success of any strategic plan lies in the level of participation of all those who will be charged with the responsibility of implementing it. Therefore, active involvement of stakeholders at all levels is emphasized. The majority 60% of the BoGs indicated that they met with the PTA members and principals to discuss school development and improvement matters once a term, 16.7% of them held the discussions twice per term while the least number of BoGs 6.7% held discussions with PTA members and principals any time the members were available and annually respectively. This shows that the BoG members actively took part in the development and improvement of their schools, which they did by meeting with the stakeholders in order to come up with sound development and improvement plans.

The BoG members also reported that in the meetings, all the other members actively contributed ideas regarding school improvement. In their interview, the BoGs were also

asked whether they found it necessary to have strategic plans for their schools. All the 100% BoGs reported that it was necessary to have school strategic plans. Their reasons for the necessity of having strategic plans in schools included: Strategic plans act as a guide for future developments in the schools, For academic improvement and achieving intended goals, Students are molded to be responsible citizens through careful laying down of school rules and regulations, Realization of individual careers, For the proper running of day to day activities in the schools.

5.2.2 Roles of stakeholders in preparation and implementation of strategic plans

The study found out that mean scores ranged from 4.27 to 3.42. The principals and HoDs scored highly on the statements that parents are consulted during school development planning and the principal regularly communicates to parents on quality improvement issues. On the other hand, the principals and the HoDs scored low on the statements that student's views are sought in school strategic planning and the school has a strategic plan in which all stakeholders participate in developing. Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that stakeholders participated in the preparation and implementation of strategic plans, 17.8% of them strongly agreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed while 8.9% disagreed. Most of the principals (66.7%) and HoDs (76.6%) were of the view that stakeholders' participation positively influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools while 33.3% of the principals and 23.3% of the HoDs were neutral.

The BoGs were also asked to state the role of stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of strategic plans in schools. Their responses are listed below. Give suggestions and ideas on how to implement the plan. Guide the school manager with

ideas on how to improve the school, provide financial support when need be, Guide the students morally and spiritually, identifying the areas they need to develop and improve then analyzing the priorities.

5.2.3 Influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic plans

The study established that the mean score obtained from availability of resources for implementation of strategic plan ranged from 3.99 to 2.78. Mean scores above 3.0 indicate that most school administrators agreed that lack of finances; changing enrolment trends in the schools and change in some projected sources of funds have hindered the implementation of the strategic plan. However, mean scores below 3.0 indicate that most school administrators disagreed with the statements that they had adequate human capacity and inadequate supply of the resources have hindered effective implementation of the strategic plan. This shows that most of the schools lacked enough finances to implement the strategic plans.

Lack of resources negatively influenced the implementation of strategic plan as reported by 56.7% of the HoDs and 73.3% of the head teachers. On the other hand, 23.3% of the HoDs and 20% of the head teachers reported that lack of resources had a positive influence on the implementation of strategic plans. Further, the principals and HoDs reported that due to lack or unavailability of resources, some projects have been left pending. On the other hand, they also reported that availability of resources has led to creation of a positive attitude especially in sciences and mathematics.

The BoG in an interview schedule were also asked the influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic plans in schools. They reported

that: Lack of enough teachers makes it impossible for the students to have adequate attention from their teachers, which they need in order to perform well in their studies, Lack of material resources makes it hard for the students and teachers to accomplish their goals, which impacts negatively on the schools' performance, Lack of financial resources makes it difficult for the head teachers to run the schools effectively., discipline may be affected by lack of human and material resources, since students may become unruly due to idleness and lack of enough books to read. They also added that even with strategic plans, the government should ensure that schools are allocated adequate finances and that the funds for free secondary education should be released on time.

5.2.4 Effect of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans

The study established that the responses on leadership and the implementation of strategic plans ranged from 4.60 to 3.83. The respondents scored high on the statements that: I always ensure that staff and students are aware of the school mission and I constantly ensure all staff and students are aware of the school vision. The respondents on the other hand scored low on the statements that: employees who pursue training in quality methods beyond the scope of that offered by the school are rewarded through leadership opportunities and also that we regularly measure performance outcomes in line with the strategic plan.

Majority of the principals (76.6%) and HoDs (63.3%) reported that the leadership styles in their schools positively influenced the implementation of strategic plans in their schools. On the other hand, 16.7% of the principals and 16.7% of the HoDs indicated that the leadership styles in their schools negatively influenced the implementation of

strategic plans. The BoGs were asked the influence of school leadership on the implementation of strategic plans in schools. They responded as shown below: Good leadership forces a look into the future and therefore provides an opportunity to influence the future, or assume a proactive posture, Leadership provides better awareness of needs and of the facilities related issues and environment, Good leadership helps define the overall mission of the organization and focuses on the objectives, Provides a sense of direction, continuity, and effective staffing and leadership and A good leader plugs everyone into the system and provides standards of accountability for people, programs, and allocated resources.

The biggest challenges faced by principals and HoDs in the implementation of strategic plans in schools were inadequate finances and resources. The least challenge experienced was inflation that bloats the initial projected cost of implementation. The majority 86.7% of the BoGs indicated that schools should make good use of the resources provided in order to ensure effective preparation of strategic plans. Majority of the BoGs (80%) indicated that the government should implement proper plans to support schools. The BoGs (46.7%) were of the view that experienced personnel should be invited to take part in the preparation of the school strategic plans.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the secondary schools in Gatundu North District had long term strategic plans, with a mission and vision statement; which if properly implemented, would benefit the stakeholders in schools. The findings of the study revealed that head teachers had long-term plans for their schools,

which would enable them to have ample time to make and see the changes of their strategic plans before deciding whether to make any more adjustments or to continue with the same strategic plans. The study established that head teachers made an effort of including all the stakeholders in the implementation of strategic plans, to ensure that everyone's interests are met.

The study however found out that most of the schools lacked enough finances to implement their strategic plans, which showed that lack of resources adversely affected the implementation of strategic plans in schools. It emerged from the study that the schools had effective leadership, which had a positive effect on strategic planning in schools. Effective leadership in strategic planning play the role of making good plans for the future, providing better awareness of needs and of the facilities related issues and environment, defining the overall mission of the organization and focuses on the objectives, providing a sense of direction, continuity, and effective staffing and leadership.

5.4 Recommendations

1. School administrators should sensitize B.O.G members, P.T.A members, teachers, local leaders and community members on the importance of strategic plans and mobilize their support in preparation and implementation of strategic plans.

2. The Government should ensure that school funds are released on time and that strategic plans are considered when determining the amount of money to be disbursed to each school. This could be done by making strategic planning

mandatory as a condition for government funding. It could also be done by monitoring and evaluating schools' progress.

3. Parents should work hand in hand with other stakeholders in preparing implementing strategic plans in schools. This will enhance ownership of the strategic plans, and parents will feel like part of the school and therefore strive to aid in meeting school targets by paying school fees on time to avoid their children from being sent home to avoid affecting the set targets.

4. The principals should make good use of the available resources in schools instead of asking for more resources when the ones available have not been exhausted or put to good use.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

1. A research study should be carried out in other districts in Kenya to compare the roles of stakeholders in preparation and implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools.

2. A study on the influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic plans of schools in Kenya should be carried out.

3. A research should be carried out about the effect of school leadership on implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools in Kenya.

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APPENDIX A

PRINCIPALS' QUESTIONNAIRE

You are kindly requested to give information concerning planning practices and implementation of school strategic plans in your school by filling this questionnaire. Response to these questions will be treated strictly confidential and only used for the study.

Section 1: Background Information

1. Your level of education

    [   ] Master's Degree

    [   ] Bachelor's Degree

    [   ] Diploma

    Other (**Specify**)……..…………...............................………………

2. Number of years served as a principal ………………. years

3. Number of years served as a principal in the current school …………years

4. Type of school

    [   ] Boys Boarding   [   ] Boys Day

    [   ] Girls Boarding   [   ] Girls Day

    [   ] Mixed Boarding   [   ] Mixed Day

    [   ] Mixed Day & Boarding

    Other (**Specify**) ………………………….……………………….

5. Category of your school

    [   ] National   [   ] Provincial   [   ] District

6. Size of school

    [   ] Single stream   [   ] Double stream   [   ] Triple stream

    [   ] Four streams   [   ] Above four

7. When was the school started? ………………………………

8. (a) School Enrolment

    Girls ………………   Boys ………………   Total ………………

    (b) Comment on the enrolment trend.

....

....

....

9. Estimate the average annual school fees collection

   [ ] Below 50%   [ ] 50% - 75%   [ ] Above 75%

10. What are the main sources of funding other than parents?

   [ ] School farm

   [ ] Other income generating projects e.g. school bus, livestock

   [ ] Houses for Rent

   [ ] Bursary

   [ ] Donor funds

11. Do you have formally constituted BoG   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

Section 2: Extent of Strategic Planning in Schools

Vision and Mission Statements

12. Do you have a vision for your school?   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

13. (a) Do you have a mission for your school?   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

14. How are teachers, parents and students involved in the formulation of the mission and vision in order to own it?

   Explain

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

School Strategic Plans

15. Have you formulated a strategic plan for your school?   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

16. Who are involved in their formulation?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

17. What is the time frame for your strategic plan?

 [   ] Between 3 and 5 years

 [   ] Between 5 and 10 years

Section 3: Stakeholder Participation in Strategic Plan Implementation

Using the scale below, indicate the extent of your level of agreement or disagreement by circling around the numbers below each statement.

SA - Strongly Agree   **A** - Agree   **U** – Undecided
D - Disagree   **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Stakeholder participation	SA	A	U	D	SD
Teachers are allowed to make decisions and instigate action					
All staff in the school are provided with an opportunity to participate on quality assurance teams					
Inputs of teachers are always welcomed concerning quality initiatives and process improvement					
Collaboration among employees to improve the quality of programs and services is encouraged					
The BoG chairperson promotes employee authority to act					
All members of staff are involved in strategic plan implementing					
Employees in the school are given freedom to act without fear of retribution					
Changes have been made to our school organizational structure to facilitate employee empowerment					
Team initiative and innovation by employees are encourage in my school					
I feel free to take risks in an effort to improve the quality of my work performance					
Parents are consulted during school development planning					
Views from parents on school improvement are considered when planning					
The principal regularly communicates to parents on quality improvement issues					
The school has a strategic plan in which all stakeholders participated in developing					
Students' views are sought in school strategic planning					
Important changes in school activities are communicated to students					

In which ways has stakeholder participation influenced implementation of strategic plan in your school?

        Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]   Neutral [   ]

Explain your answer briefly

………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 4: Availability of Resources for Implementation of Strategic Plan

Using the scale below, indicate the extent of your level of agreement or disagreement by circling around the numbers below each statement.

SA - Strongly Agree   **A** - Agree   **U** – Undecided
D - Disagree   **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Resources	SA	A	U	D	SD
Lack of finances has hindered implementation of our strategic plan					
Changing enrolment trends in the school has forced us to change the school budget thus affecting implementation of the strategic plan					
We have adequate resources to facilitate effective implementation of the strategic plan					
Some projected sources of funds have changed necessitating changes in the strategic plan					
I have come to realize that the strategic cannot be implemented the way it was designed					
We do have adequate human capacity to implement our strategic plan					

In which ways has availability (or lack) of resources influenced implementation of strategic plan in your school?

         Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]   Neutral [   ]

Explain your answer briefly

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 5: Leadership and Implementation of Strategic Plan

Using the scale below, indicate the extent of your level of agreement or disagreement by circling around the numbers below each statement.

SA - Strongly Agree   **A** - Agree   **U** – Undecided
D - Disagree   **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Leadership	SA	A	U	D	SD
I always ensure that staff and students are aware of the school mission					
I constantly ensure all staff and students are aware of the school vision					
I articulate the strategic plan to all members of the school community					
I ensure different parties are involved in implementation of the strategic plan					
We regularly measure performance outcomes in line with the strategic plan					
I ensure there is continuous revision of the strategic plan for effective implementation					
I regularly ensure that each element contributing to improved learning outcomes is present in the strategic plan implementation process					
Practices of principal regularly demonstrate and communicate commitment quality improvement					
I communicate my commitment to student focus and quality values to all employees					
Employees who pursue training in quality methods beyond the scope of that offered by the school are rewarded through leadership opportunities					
The BoG chairperson measures school success by the quality of programs and services provided rather than the unit cost					
The BoG chairperson utilizes strategic management principles in leading the school					
The day to day practices of school administration demonstrate commitment to strategic management principals					
Students participate actively in school decision-making					

In which ways has school leadership influenced implementation of strategic plan in your school?

Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]   Neutral [   ]

Explain your answer briefly

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

Challenges Faced in the Implementation Process of School Strategic Plans

18. What are the main factors that deter effective implementation of the school strategic

plan in your school?

(i) ....

....

....

(ii) ....

....

....

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX B

BOARD OF GOVERNORS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(a) Does your school have the following:

      i. Motto

      ii. Mission

      iii. Vision

(b) How often do you meet with the principal and other PTA/BoG members to discuss school development and improvement matters?

(c) In these meetings, do the other members actively contribute ideas regarding school improvement?

(d) Does your school have a strategic plan?

(e) Who are the persons involved in strategic planning in your school?

(f) Do you find it necessary to have a school strategic plan for the school? Explain why.

(g) What is the role of stakeholders in preparation and implementation of strategic plan in the school?

(h) What is the influence of material, human and financial resources on the implementation of strategic plan in the school?

(i) What is the influence of school leadership on implementation of strategic plan in the school?

(j) What challenges do you encounter while planning and implementing of the school strategic plan?

(k) What measures could be taken to assist schools prepare effective strategic plans?

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX C

HoDs QUESTIONNAIRE

You are kindly requested to give information concerning planning practices and implementation of school strategic plan in your school by filling this questionnaire. Responses to these questions will be treated strictly confidential.

Background Information

1. Your gender   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

2. Your level of education

    [ ] Master's Degree   [ ] Bachelor's Degree   [ ] Diploma

    Other (**Specify**)…….…………….....................................………………

3. Number of years served as a teacher ………………. years

4. Number of years served as a HoD in the current school …………years

Section 2: Extent of Strategic Planning in Schools

Vision and Mission Statements

1. Do you have a vision for your school?   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

2. (a) Do you have a mission for your school?   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

3. How are teachers, parents and students involved in the formulation of the mission and vision in order to own it?

Explain

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

School Strategic Plans

4. Have you formulated a strategic plan for your school?

    [ ] Yes   [ ] No

5. Who are involved in their formulation?

....

....

....

6. What is the time frame for your strategic plan?

[ ] Between 3 and 5 years

[ ] Between 5 and 10 years

Others specify……………………………………………………

Section 3: Stakeholder Participation in Strategic Plan Implementation

7. Using the scale below, indicate the extent of your level of agreement or disagreement by circling around the numbers below each statement.

SA - Strongly Agree   **A** - Agree   **U** – Undecided
D - Disagree   **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Stakeholder participation	SA	A	U	D	SD
Teachers are allowed to make decisions and instigate action					
All staff in the school are provided with an opportunity to participate on quality assurance teams					
Inputs of teachers are always welcomed concerning quality initiatives and process improvement					
Collaboration among employees to improve the quality of programs and services is encouraged					
The BoG chairperson promotes employee authority to act					
All members of staff are involved in strategic plan implementing					
Employees in the school are given freedom to act without fear of retribution					
Changes have been made to our school organizational structure to facilitate employee empowerment					
Team initiative and innovation by employees are encourage in my school					
I feel free to take risks in an effort to improve the quality of my work performance					
Parents are consulted during school development planning					
Views from parents on school improvement are considered when planning					

The principal regularly communicates to parents on quality improvement issues				
The school has a strategic plan in which all stakeholders participated in developing				
Students' views are sought in school strategic planning				
Important changes in school activities are communicated to students				

8. In which ways has stakeholder participation influenced implementation of strategic plan in your school?

Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]   Neutral [   ]

Explain your answer briefly

………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section 4: Availability of Resources for Implementation of Strategic Plan

9. Using the scale below, indicate the extent of your level of agreement or disagreement by circling around the numbers below each statement.

SA - Strongly Agree   **A** - Agree   **U** – Undecided
D - Disagree   **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Resources	SA	A	U	D	SD
Lack of finances has hindered implementation of our strategic plan					
Changing enrolment trends in the school has forced us to change the school budget thus affecting implementation of the strategic plan					
We have adequate resources to facilitate effective implementation of the strategic plan					
Some projected sources of funds have changed necessitating changes in the strategic plan					
I have come to realize that the strategic cannot be implemented the way it was designed					
We do have adequate human capacity to implement our strategic plan					

10. In which ways has availability (or lack) of resources influenced implementation of strategic plan in your school?

Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]   Neutral [   ]

Explain your answer briefly

………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section 5: Leadership and Implementation of Strategic Plan

11. Using the scale below, indicate the extent of your level of agreement or disagreement by circling around the numbers below each statement.

SA - Strongly Agree   **A** - Agree   **U** – Undecided
D - Disagree   **SD** – Strongly Disagree

Leadership	SA	A	U	D	SD
The principal always ensures that staff and students are aware of the school mission					
The principal constantly ensures all staff and students are aware of the school vision					
The principal articulates the strategic plan to all members of the school community					
The principal ensures different parties are involved in implementation of the strategic plan					
We regularly measure performance outcomes in line with the strategic plan					
The principal ensures there is continuous revision of the strategic plan for effective implementation					
The principal regularly ensures that each element contributing to improved learning outcomes is present in the strategic plan implementation process					
Practices of principal regularly demonstrate and communicate commitment quality improvement					
The principal communicates my commitment to student focus and quality values to all employees					
Employees who pursue training in quality methods beyond the scope of that offered by the school are rewarded through leadership opportunities					
The BoG chairperson measures school success by the quality of programs and services provided rather than the unit cost					
The BoG chairperson utilizes strategic management principles in leading the school					
The day to day practices of school administration demonstrate commitment to strategic management principals					
Students participate actively in school decision-making					

12. In which ways has school leadership influenced implementation of strategic plan in your school?

Positively [   ]   Negatively [   ]   Neutral [   ]

Explain your answer briefly

………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Challenges Faced in the Implementation Process of School Strategic Plans

13. What are the main factors that deter effective implementation of the school strategic plan in your school?

(i) …………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

(ii) …………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH PERMIT