EFFECT OF STRUCTURE SPECIALIZATION ON STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAHATI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

Few researches have focused on the effect of institutional structure on strategy implementation independently. Many focus on institutional structure among other factors thus not giving clear view of the importance of structure on implementation. This gap prompted the undertaking of this study to investigate the effect of institutional structure on strategic plan implementation. The study reviewed literature on structure specialization and theories that relates to strategy implementation. Descriptive correlational research design was employed in the study. Structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data which the researcher relied on for his study. The study's population was derived from schools in Bahati sub-county, Nakuru County, Kenya. A census was conducted of all the 31 principals of the public secondary schools in the area. Data collected was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) Version 21. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected. Pearson correlation

coefficient showed the relationships between the independent and dependent variable. It was concluded that structure specialization enhances strategic plan implementation. It was recommended that the ministry of education review public schools structures to enhance strategy implementation. Further the school principals should embrace specialization of the school structure to facilitate the process of strategy implementation.

Keywords: Institutional structure, Structure specialization, Strategic planning, Strategy implementation.

INTRODUCTION

A strategic plan highlights processes undertaken in order to develop a range of strategies that will contribute to achieving the organizational direction (Tapinos, Dyson, & Meadows, 2005). Fehnel (2000) aptly noted that strategic planning involves systematic process in which an organization assesses its basic reason for being, what its strengths and weaknesses are, and what opportunities and threats it might face in the immediate and foreseeable future. The organization then uses this assessment to decide whether or not to make changes in what it does, how it does it, and with whom it interacts in order to fulfill its purpose. Yepwi (2007) concluded that strategic planning is a comprehensive statement of an organization's mission, objectives and strategies, adding that it is a detailed roadmap that an organization intends to follow in conducting its activities. Strategic planning and thinking involves making choices and decisions about the long–term future of an organization (Pearce & Robinson, 2007).

The purpose of strategic planning is maintaining a favorable balance between an organization and its environment over the long run. It provides a systematic process for gathering information about the big picture and using it to establish a long-term direction and then translate that direction into specific goals, objectives, and actions. It blends futuristic thinking, objective analysis, and subjective evaluation of goals and priorities to chart a future course of action that will ensure the organization's vitality and effectiveness in the long run. Smit, Cronje, Brevis and Vrba (2007) defined strategic planning as a process of proactively aligning the organization's resources with threats and opportunities caused by changes in the external environment. According to Smit et al. (2007), the main focus of strategic planning is on the changing future not the past or the present. This definition is supported by Batemen and Snell (2002) as they defined strategic planning as the process of making decisions about the organizations long term goals and strategies. The process results in strategic plans that require implementation or implementation under the stewardship of strategic behavior norms.

Although formulating a consistent strategy is a difficult task for any management team, making that strategy work is even more difficult (Hrebiniak, 2006). A myriad of factors can potentially affect the process by which strategic plans are turned into organizational action. Various studies have focused on institutional related factors affecting implementation of strategies in organizations. For instance, Yang (2008) referred the highest management team in an organization as senior leaders who included the organizations Presidents, stakeholders, executive and senior level managers. Hrebiniak and Snow (1982) findings indicated that, the participation and the interventions among the highest level of management in an organization promotes greater commitment levels in the implementation of a firms vision and strategies which in turn promotes success in the implementation of a firms selected strategy.

Smith and Kofron (1996) believed that the senior management played a major role not only in the formulation, but in the implementation of the strategy. Unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation is often seen as something of a craft, rather than a science, and its research history has previously been described as fragmented and eclectic (Noble, 1999). Strategic implementation is the action phase of the strategic management process. It is defined as the process that turns strategic plans into a series of action tasks, and ensures that these tasks are executed in such a way that the objectives of the strategic plan are achieved (Lazenby, 2010). David (2007) concluded that strategy implementation is more difficult than formulation.

Some governments have made it mandatory for schools to formulate strategic plans in line with the national strategic plan. The government of Australia has gone a step ahead and made a guideline of what schools should include in their strategic plan (State of Victoria, 2010) and the United Kingdom government passed the 1988 Education Reform Act which gave the responsibility of planning to schools (Giles, 1995). Bell (2002) records that in 1989, the UK government put emphasis on the staff to develop their own priorities and come up with strategies to achieve them. Later the government used the strategic plans as focal points for national inspection framework. This means that the teachers were required to show their achievements during routine inspections using parameters they had set in the strategic plans. Bell (2002) reported that the UK government did come up with a system of deriving targets for schools from the national targets set for different categories of schools.

An Economist survey of 276 senior operating executives in 2004, found that a discouraging 57 percent of firms were unsuccessful at executing strategic initiatives over the past three years (Allio, 2005). According to the White Paper of Strategy Implementation of Chinese Corporations in 2006, strategy implementation has become the most significant management challenge which all kinds of corporations face at the moment. The survey reported

in that white paper indicates that 83 percent of the surveyed companies failed to implement their strategy smoothly, and only 17 percent felt that they had a consistent strategy implementation process. Most organizations attempt to ensure that their strategic plans drive decisions at all levels by requiring major divisions and subunits to develop their own strategic plans, annual plans, business plans, or action plans that support enterprise-level strategic goals and objectives (Hendrick 2000).

The Bergen Conference of European Ministers (BCEM) Responsible for Higher Education May 2005 adopted Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (Diamond, 2007). Education systems must have a powerful and coherent educational improvement strategy in order to improve student academic achievement (Childress, Elmore & Grossman, 2006; Childress, Elmore, Grossman & Johnson, 2007). The strategic management of human capital and the education system's educational improvement strategy are inextricably linked. Education systems must have a powerful and coherent educational improvement strategy in order to improve student academic achievement (Childress, Elmore & Grossman, 2006; Childress, Elmore, Grossman & Johnson, 2007). In Kenya, the education Act (GoK, 1980) did not clearly show whether schools must formulate strategic plans and as a result many schools have not followed suit (Ngware et al., 2006). Literature review has attributed this problem to availability of funds (Allio, 2005; Recklies, 2008), employee motivation of the staff (Recklies, 2008), support by top school leadership (Recklies, 2008), employee's know-how (Jackson, 2005; Drucker, 2004) and government policy (Recklies, 2008). Schools have several objectives to fulfill in line with the national and international goals of education.

Kenya is one of the countries, which signed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and one of the goals is Education For All (EFA) by year 2015 (Sinyolo, 2007). The achievement of these goals will depend on how well education programs are planned and implemented. This calls for preparation of a national education strategic plan upon which schools should base their strategic plans. The Kenyan government regularly formulates and implements strategic plans with the most recent one covering year 2006-2011. According to Pearce & Robinson (2013) implementation involves three key activities; Developing short term objectives which are implementable, developing functional tactics, and policies that empower action. Aldehyyat et al. (2011) and Ngware et al. (2006) pointed out that a school that formulates and implements strategic plan derives benefits such as having negotiated and agreed clear goals and objectives, communication of the set goals to various stake holders, providing a base upon which progress can be measured, building strong and functional teams in management staff who have clear vision on how the school will be in future, providing the school management with new ideas

which can steer the school to greater heights of excellence and lastly commits the school funds to a well-organized and coherent development agenda.

The best-formulated strategies may fail to produce superior performance for a firm if they are not successfully implemented, as Noble (1999b) noted. It is thus obvious that strategy implementation is a key challenge for today's organizations. There are many (soft, hard and mixed) factors that influence the success of strategy implementation, ranging from the people who communicate or implement the strategy to the systems or mechanisms in place for co-ordination and control. A survey of executives from 200 global companies with sales of more than US $500 million identified several inhibitors of strategy implementation (Muell & Shani, 2008). This included lack of sufficient resources, poor communication of the strategy down the organization, organizational structure not being aligned to the strategy, reward incentives systems not being aligned to strategic goals and poor leadership by senior management. A lot of research has been done on factors affecting implementation of strategy but little research to investigate effect of structural dimensions on the implementation of strategy globally and little or none has been done in Kenya and more specifically in Bahati sub-county, Nakuru County. Therefore this study sought to investigate the effect of institutional structure on strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools.

Statement of the problem

Ungerer et al. (2007) stated that implementation is the ultimate source of competitive advantage. Strategic plans may fail to produce the desired results (Noble, 1999). Noble observed that the best formulated strategies may fail to produce superior performance for the firm if they are not successfully implemented. He argued that there was a growing recognition that the most important problems in the field of strategic management were not related to strategy formulation, but rather to strategy implementation and that the high failure rate of organizational initiatives in a dynamic business environment were primarily due to poor implementation of new strategies. Sterling (2003) argued that in spite of the importance of strategy implementation in organizations' success and the achievement of their goals, most of them fail to execute those strategies efficiently.

The ministry of education from the year 2003 has been implementing strategic plans that are aimed at improving the achievement of its mandate, the latest of the strategic plan being the 2008-2012 years plan. Public secondary schools in Kenya in following the ministries example have formulated strategic plans which form the basis of their operations. This is aimed at improving the performance and the achievement of the school's overall goals. Several factors influence the implementation of strategies and when a strategy is applied within an organization,

it is expected to build a strong relationship between structure and strategy (Chandler, 2002). The chosen strategy determines which objectives will be realized, and which tasks will be executed to reach these goals, and how the work should be broken down. In other words, structure needs to follow the strategy, logically (Amirkabiri, 2010). There are some studies on determining effect of strategy compilation on structure but the effect of structural dimensions on implementation of strategies has not been completely discussed, yet. On the other hand, most of the researchers have considered structure as one of the effective factors in strategy implementation, along with others, and some of them prioritized the effective factors and compared with the impact of structure. It is clear that in these studies the effect of structural dimensions are not evaluated independent of other factors, but they are relatively prioritized (Hamidreza S; Vahidreza M; & Ali J. 2013). Chandler (2002) points out that while structure follows strategy, there is also evidence that structure influences strategy in certain situations and hence the basis of this study.

Research objective

The study's broad objective was to explore the influence of structure specialization on strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya. Specifically, the study was guided by the following objective: To establish whether there exists a relationship between structure specialization and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools.

Research hypothesis

The study was based on the following research hypothesis:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between structure specialization and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools.

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study showed both the independent and dependent variables. The study conceptualized that strategic plan implementation is dependent on structure specialization. The framework is as illustrated below.

Figure 1: conceptual framework

Structure specialization	→	Strategy implementation
Independent variable		**Dependent variable**
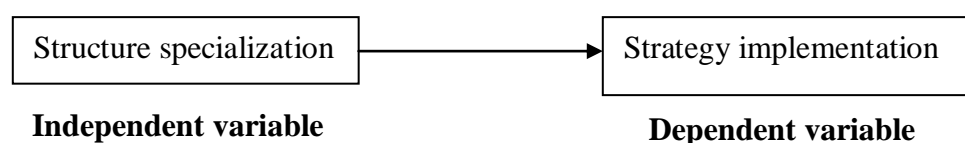
LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature

This study was guided by the five model system developed by Bourgeois and Brodwin (1984):

Five-Model System for Strategy Implementation

Bourgeois and Brodwin (1984) created a five-model system for strategy implementation categorizing strategy implementation practices. It shows different positions or viewpoints one might assume while implementing strategy; the commander model draws its influences from the military life, in the sense that the CEO wields absolute power. In this model the CEO is the rational agent behind the strategy decisions and plays no role in implementation. The CEO-model's works best with a powerful executive with few personal biases and vast and accurate sources of information. It is based on economic rationality and according to Bourgeois & Brodwin (1984) this model incorporates the concepts of both synoptic and incremental models because of the role taken by the CEO to direct the firm towards objectives defined at the apex of the organization.

The organizational change model is based on planned interventions in the organization's structure and systems, which sets off the desired behavioral outcomes. The model deals with strategy implementation and emphasizes how organizational structure, incentive compensation and control Systems can be used to facilitate the execution of a strategy. The CEO applies behavioral science techniques to manipulate his organization into compliance with his strategic plan. It employs several techniques for successful implementation such as using the structure and Staffing to effectively convey the firm's new priorities and focus attention on the desired areas, changing the Systems used for planning, performance measurement and incentive compensation and using cultural adaptation techniques to introduce system-wide change. The model creates the ability to carry out more complicated strategic plans than the commander model, but also creates an additional inflexibility for unanticipated events and changes of plan. Both of the two models may suffer from motivation problems.

The collaborative model extends the power of strategic decision-making from the CEO to the organization's management team. The CEO makes use of group dynamics and brainstorming techniques so that managers with differing opinions can air their views during the strategic decision making process. According to this model the role of the CEO is that of a co-coordinator who facilitates the interaction among the decision makers resulting in the acceptance of all good ideas. This model helps to motivate the managers and also provides the strategic decision making process with more information and cognitive capital. The problem of this model results from the fact that collaboration does not reach beyond top management.

More decision making also means more politics and conflicts of interest, which may mean less rationality.

The cultural model is based on molding the organization's culture to ensure the acceptance of a shared vision. The CEO guides the organization by communicating and instilling his vision and allowing the staff members to participate in designing their work procedures in tune with that vision. The role of the CEO is that of a coach who encourages staff members to take decisions in order to determine the operating details of executing the plan. This model is based on all organizational members' participating in decision making directed to perpetuate the vision. The main problem of this model is the vast amount of time it requires. It also presupposes an intelligent and responsible workforce and may lead to suppressing homogeneity in the organization.

Taking into account the problems and strengths associated with the former four models the authors suggest a fifth model called the crescive model. In this model the strategic decisions are created bottom up by the organization's members and the role of the CEO is to act as judge and premise-setter and ensure an organizational context (structure, systems and culture) that will promote openness and innovation. This model suggests that the CEOs of large divisionalized firms should generate and implement strategies that maintain an open attitude to new information, use a general strategy to guide the firm, encourage bottom-up strategy formulation by making necessary changes in the systems and structures, intervene in the logical incrementalist (Quinn, 1980) manner and change structure and staff for minimizing aberrations. The crescive model offers a rather tempting standpoint from an organization psychological perspective. It offers to make full use of the organizational members' knowledge and effort in the strategy process, encouraging participation. This model is relevant to this study because it describes the characteristics of different administrative practices which are as a result of the type of the structure adopted by the school administration.

Empirical Literature Review

A well formulated strategy, great product, or breakthrough technology can put an organization on the competitive map, but only solid implementation can keep it there. Organizations have to be able to deliver on their intent. Unfortunately the majority of companies aren't very good at it. In a recent survey (Neilson, Martin, & Powers, 2008), employees at three out of every five companies rated their organization weak at implementation-that is, when asked if they agreed with the statement; important strategic and operational decisions are quickly translated into action, the majority answered no. many organizations are able to generate innovative strategic plans, but few are able to successfully execute these plans. Some researchers note that

organizations fail to execute up to 70% of their strategic initiatives (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Miller, 2002). Additionally, other studies have been done in line with the factors affecting implementation of strategic plans in many other countries in the world. The study reviewed literature on structure specialization and strategic plan implementation.

Structure Specialization

Specialization of departments and employees refer to the level of horizontal integration existent within an organization. In other words, it is the degree to which departments and employees are functionally specialized or integrated. Low levels of horizontal integration reflects an organization in which the departments and employees are functionally specialized, whereas high levels of horizontal integration reflects an organization in which departments and employees are integrated in their work, skills, and training (Vonderembse, Ragunathan, & Rai, 1997). Given that cross-trained employees tend to be responsive to changes in customers' needs (Vonderembse et al., 1997), managers can use horizontal integration to address fast changing environments. At the same time, a great variety of specialists in a horizontally integrated organization may provide a broader knowledge base (Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981), increasing cross-fertilization of ideas (Aiken & Hage, 1971). Researchers have found that educational specialization heterogeneity of top management team was a significant predictor of organizational change (Wiersema and Bantel, 1992).

Workers in an organization with different and specialistic competences affect the incentives within the organization. For example, having managers with the same qualifications improves the congruence (Dessein, 2002). This should be reflected in higher delegation and ameliorated coordination. The lower informational asymmetry may help the decision-making process and help to generate more information and provide more expertise. On the other hand, different qualifications may make it more difficult to reach coordination. At the same time, the area of competence of the manager is critical. Indeed, a manager specialized in currencies would have a different view of the world with respect to managers whose core competency is just fixed income.

More functional competencies improve information and help to develop "original thinking" and "unique solutions". However, they also make coordination and consensus reaching more difficult (Dessein 2002). For example, Van den Steen (2005) argues that shared beliefs within an organization decrease agency problems, lower the need to monitor and facilitate coordination. Adams, Almeida and Ferreira (2005) analyze the impact of board diversity/similarity on firm value. In general, the idea is that the main benefit of a diverse team is that team members are able to provide different perspectives on important issues, which may

reduce the probability of complacency in decision making. Diversity may add value by bringing different perspectives, experiences and opinions to the table (Adams, Almeida & Ferreira, 2005).

According to Burns and Stalker (1961), specialization increases coordination costs and decreases the flexibility of an organization and therefore its ability to react to environmental changes. The relationship between specialization and performance has received little attention from empirical researchers and is still undetermined (Dalton et al., 1980). Functional specialization allows organization members to concentrate on the execution of specified and narrowly defined tasks and to accumulate task-related knowledge, and thus it enhances information- processing capabilities (Thompson, 1967).

Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation is an integral component of the strategic management process and is viewed as the process that turns the formulated strategy into a series of actions and then results to ensure that the vision, mission, strategy, and strategic objectives of the organization are successfully achieved as planned (Thompson & Strickland, 2003). Strategy implementation has received increasing attention in literature (Beer & Eisenstat 2000). However, no coherent research paradigm seems to exist, main reason being the diversity of perspectives that have been taken in defining the concept (Noble 1999).

Strategy implementation involves iterative work of taking action, reconciling and adapting organizational dimensions to a strategy; experimenting ways to effectively execute the strategy and managing strategy to fit the environment, which then leads to increased performance (Homburg et al. 2004). Strategy implementation is becoming more difficult rather than strategy formulation and top management is required to keep in mind three levels of strategic planning process context of the organization, content of strategy and procedure of implementation (Lau 1999). Failure of strategic plan implementation consists of sixteen factors which have been discussed in (kalali et al, 2011). Crittendens (2008) relate the problem to somewhere in the middle of this strategy-to-performance gap, with a more likely source being a gap in the formulation-to-implementation process.

The implementation of strategy is viewed as separate from the formulation of strategy and is regarded as an activity that only begins once a strategy has been formulated (Campbell & Garnett, 2000). Homburg et al. (2000) believes that the implementation of strategy is critical. In the volatile contemporary business environment, characterized by high levels of uncertainty, turbulence and discontinuous change, a formulated strategy may be obsolete by the time it has been implemented (Zagotta & Robinson, 2002). Therefore, strategy formulated must take into

account the means by which it will be implemented, and it is only through its implementation that a strategy can be refined and reformulated (Grant, 2002).

Henry (2008) stated that unless key individuals and groups, within and outside the organization, accept the rationale for strategic change; any proposed implementation will be suboptimal at best. Dransfield (2001) stated that effective communication systems are needed in implementing strategy to make sure that everyone within the organization shares the vision, mission, objectives and values and has a good grasp of the strategy and how it relates to their own efforts. Multi-channel flows (in which information and ideas flow in all directions) of communication are helpful in creating a shared sense of ownership of corporate strategy. Thus, while managers should be careful to develop an appropriate and effective strategy, they should assign the large portion of their attention and resources to activities and tasks which are related to implementation. In order to facilitate the successful implementation of strategy, effective top management teams recognize the importance of considering strategy implementation issues during the formulation of strategy (Freedman & Tregoe, 2003). In this regard, Campbell and Garnett (2000) stated that strategy formulation and strategic control that do not take into account the problems associated with the implementation of these strategies run the risk of being ineffective.

There is clearly reported in the white paper of strategy implementation of Chinese corporation in 2006 that strategy implementation has become a great challenge for the management of all kinds of organizations. The survey also described that out of 100% surveyed organizations 83% organizations fail in implementation of their strategy smoothly and only 17% organizations were successful in implementation. Implementation of the strategic plan is more important than formulation; otherwise it is nothing more than a well-documented piece of paper in an organization (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). Strategic plans may fail to produce the desired results as noted by (Noble, 1999) who said that the best-formulated strategies may fail to be successfully implemented.

Strategic planning and thinking involves making choices and decisions about the long–term future of an organization (Pearce & Robinson, 2007). The process results in strategic plans that require implementation or implementation under the stewardship of strategic behavior norms. Miller (1990) found in his research that the victories and strengths of companies can often be the cause of their future strategic failure. Miller delineated four major causes of strategic failure: leadership traps, monolithic cultures and skills, power and politics, and structural memories. All of these causes emerge while an organization is experiencing success-especially in its strategic initiatives.

Sterling (2003) argued that in spite of the importance of strategy implementation in organizations' success and the achievement of their goals; most of them fail to execute those strategies efficiently. Effective strategy implementation has never been more important in the contemporary results-driven business environment. Zagotta and Robinson (2002) emphasized that the real value of strategic management lies in its implementation. Strategies formulated and not implemented serve little purpose (David 2001) and even the best formulated strategy is competitively irrelevant if it is not effectively implemented (Barney, 2002). However, research indicates that most organizations fail to implement their strategies effectively. More than half of the leaders surveyed in a recent study perceived a gap between their organizations ability to formulate and communicate sound strategies and their ability to implement this strategies. A further 64% of the respondents did not have complete confidence that their organizations would be able to bridge the gap between the formulation of strategy and the effective implementation of the strategy (Lepsinger, 2006).

Kalali (2011) revealed that the discussions on the problems and difficulties of strategy implementation in the recent years had been highly fascinated by the strategic management discourse since the implementation of strategic plans and decisions have not been as successful as their designers expected. For instance one of the greatest challenges for managers and decision-makers in organizations is to implement managerial strategic decisions while many strategic decisions fail; sometimes, despite sensitivities expressed in decision-making stage, they face with many problems to implement such decisions.

According to Porter (1985), competition is the core of the success or failure of firms. Competition determines the appropriateness of firms' activities that can contribute to its performance, such as innovations, a cohesive culture, or good implementation. Competitive strategy is the search for a favorable competitive position in an industry, the fundamental arena in which competition occurs. Competitive advantage aims at establishing a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industry competition. Baumol, Panzar, and Willig (1982) cited in Barney (1991), a firm's competition is assumed to include not only all of its current competitors, but also potential competitors poised to enter an industry in future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology provides a detailed discussion of the research design, location of the study, population, and data collection procedure and data analysis. The study employed a descriptive co-relational research design. The purpose of research design is to achieve greater control of the study and to improve the validity of the study by examining the research problem (Burns and Groove, 2005). The target population of the study included the principals of all the

public secondary schools in Bahati sub-county. The study adopted a census where all the 31 principals in the public secondary schools were taken as respondents. A census was found to be appropriate since the population involved was no too big to be sampled.

The Data

Data collected was processed and analyzed based on the objectives and research hypotheses using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. This was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies, and means) presented in tables were used to organize and summarize data and to describe the characteristics of the sample while Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test hypotheses.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The study involved a census of 31 principals of public secondary schools in Bahati Sub-county. The researcher administered questionnaires to 31 respondents. 27 of them filled and returned the questionnaires. This represented 87.09% response rate which was characterized to be very good. Babbie (1990) suggested that a response rate of 60% is good; 70% is very good.

Structure Specialization

The researcher in this case sought to establish how specialization influences the schools operations. The findings are illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Structure specialization

		N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	CoV
1.	Structure specialization enables cross trained employees respond to students needs	27	2	5	3.96	.706	18%
2.	Educational heterogeneity is an indicator of institutional change	27	2	5	3.93	.675	17%
3.	Structure specialization has facilitated delegation of duties	27	2	5	4.00	.784	20%
4.	In specialization, Different qualification strains coordination	27	2	5	3.93	.675	17%
5.	Specialization leads to original thinking and unique solutions	27	1	5	3.89	.801	21%
6.	In specialization different qualifications reduce complacency in decision making	27	1	4	3.19	1.210	38%
7.	Specialization increases coordination cost and reduce flexibility	27	2	5	3.74	.903	24%

From the table, it can be seen that all responses inclined towards a mean of 4.0 (agree). The responses in most of the aspects had a standard deviation of less than 1.00 which indicates that most of the respondents were in agreement as far as these aspects were concerned. Respondents tended to hold diverse opinions on the aspect of different qualifications reducing complacency in decision making thus registering a coefficient of variation of 38% and the largest standard deviation of 1.210 with a mean of 3.19.

Strategy implementation

The researcher intended to determine the progress of strategy implementation in public secondary schools in Bahati Sub-county. The results are as tabulated below.

Table 2: Strategy Implementation

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	CoV
8. Strategy implementation decisions are based on strategic plan	27	1	4	1.93	.874	45 %
9. School has measurable performance standards for each plan element	27	2	5	4.11	.641	16%
10. Key stakeholders accepted the rationale for strategy change	27	1	4	2.04	.940	46%
11. For strategy implementation the school has effective communication systems	27	1	4	2.11	1.013	48%
12. The school has organized performance standard monitoring for implementation	27	1	4	1.85	.907	49%
13. A gap exist between schools' ability to formulate and implement sound strategy	27	2	5	3.89	.892	23%
14. The school has allocated sufficient resources for strategy implementation	27	1	4	2.04	.854	42%

The table shows that a majority of the responses inclined towards a mean of 2.00 (Disagree). A majority of these responses had a standard deviation of less than 1.000. Thus it appears that there was less disparity in the opinions of the respondents in regard to these aspects of strategy implementation. However it was noted that the aspect of school having set measurable performance standards for each plan element had the least standard deviation of 0.641. This indicated that the respondents tended to be in agreement in their response to this aspect. Greater coefficient of variation was noted on the aspect of the school having an organized performance standard monitoring system for implementation which was 49% given that its mean

was 1.85. This indicated that a majority of the responses were not in agreement in their opinion regarding the same matter.

The relationship between structure specialization and strategy implementation

In regard to this variable the researcher sought to establish the relationship between structure specialization and strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools. The responses were on a Likert scale and therefore Pearson correlation coefficient was used to analyze the data. The findings are as illustrated in table.

Table 3: Relationship between structure specialization and strategy implementation

	specialization	Implementation
specialization	1	.487[*]
		.010
	27	27
Implementation	.487[*]	1
	.010	
	27	27

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

The findings indicated a significant positive medium relationship (r = 0.487, p<0.05) between structure specialization and strategy implementation. This suggests that the more specialization is enhanced the strategy implementation is also enhanced and vice versa. Consequently, the third hypothesis H_{03} (there is no significant relationship between structure specialization and strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools) was rejected.

Summary of the Findings

In respect to structure specialization, most of the respondents opined that specialization enhances the operations of the school with most respondents averaging on a mean of 4.00 (agree). Respondents were indifferent or were not sure whether different qualifications reduce complacency in decision making or not registering a mean of approximately 3.00 (Neutral) and a standard deviation of 1.210. The majority of the respondents held negative views as concerns strategic plan implementation in their schools. The responses inclined toward a mean of 2.00 (Disagree). These results indicated low level of strategy implementation in the schools. Many of the respondents expressed diverse opinions on the extent to which the school forms effective communication system for effective strategy implementation. This aspect registered a mean of 2.11 (Disagree) with a standard deviation of 1.013.

The researcher noted that though the schools formulated strategic plans, they were not referred to in decision making thus rendering them irrelevant to what is being done in the school. The respondent were in agreement that their schools had set measurable performance standards on each planned element registering a mean of 4.11 (Agree) with the narrowest standard deviation of 0.641. Inferential statistics showed a significant positive correlation between structure specialization and strategy implementation. This showed that structure specialization enhanced strategic plan implementation.

CONCLUSION

The study highly led to the conclusion that structure specialization leads to better strategy implementation. Specialization allows a wide range of ideas and solutions of many problems which also gives the institution the ability to handle the operation pressures. Functional specialization allows organization members to concentrate on the execution of specified and narrowly defined tasks and to accumulate task-related knowledge, and thus it enhances information- processing capabilities (Thompson, 1967).

In view of the aforementioned conclusion, the researcher recommended that the school principals should enhance structure specialization in the school to improve on their effectiveness. This will lead to improved efficiency in the implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools have obtaining a competitive fit in the education sector. In addition, the school boards in consultations with the ministry of education should strive to develop school structures that are flexible enough as to adapt to the internal mechanisms of strategy implementation. The researcher further recommended that a study should be done to find out how aspects of structure specialization that is horizontal and vertical specialization influence strategy implementation in public secondary schools. Lastly further research should also address the possibility of a model of structure that quantifies the extent to which each of the dimensions of structure i.e. Formalization, centralization and specialization, contributes to strategy implementation in public secondary schools.

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