

STRATEGIC PLANNING PRACTICES AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TANZANIA

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author RI was responsible for conceptualization, writing the original draft, data collection and analysis, reviewing and editing, and approved the final draft for submission. Authors NK and FK worked on conceptualization, supervised the study, critically revised the manuscript, reviewing and editing, and approved the final version for submission. All authors read and approved the final manuscript

ABSTRACT

Aims: *This study sought to investigate the nature of strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools in enhancing school performance in Tanzania. Specifically, it determined the extent to which the adopted strategic options in the school management reflect strategic analysis practices; examined the extent to which the adopted strategic options in the school management reflect strategic choice practices; and evaluated the extent to which the adopted strategic options in the school management reflect strategic implementation practices.*

Study Design: *The study employed a concurrent triangulation design within the framework of a mixed methods approach.*

Place and Duration of Study: *The study was conducted in two Districts of Mwanza Region namely: Nyamagana and Magu in which data were collected from public secondary schools between August 2022 and January 2023.*

Methodology: *The sample size involved a total of 354 respondents including 266 members of the School Management Teams (SMTs), 76 members of the School Governing Boards (SGBs), 10 Ward Education Officers (WEOs) and 2 District Education Officers (DEOs). Research data were collected through questionnaire, interview and documentary review. The quantitative data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics in terms of mean values and skewness, while the qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis.*

Results: *The results revealed that, strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools reflect strategic analysis practices by (22.2%, $M=1.27$); strategic choice practices by (25.7%, $M=1.24$); and strategic implementation practices by (55.5%, $M=1.94$).*

Conclusion: *The study concluded that, the nature of strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools is compatible with the strategic planning process advocated by the Johnson and Scholes model.*

Key Words: Strategic Planning, Strategic analysis, Strategic Choice, Strategic Implementation, School Performance.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Strategic planning is widely advocated as an effective managerial tool for enhancing performance both in public and private sector organisations (Elbanna, Andrews, & Pollanen, 2016). Evidence from empirical studies show that, strategic planning practices enhance efficient use of organisation's resources (Momanyi, 2020; Ceptureanu, Ceptureanu & Marin, 2017). Notably, it aids in the selection of strategies that enable organisations to effectively allocate their resources and exploit their strengths relative to the opportunities in their external environment (Schlebusch & Mokhatle, 2016; Kariuki, Maiyo & Ndiku, 2017). It therefore leads to successful implementation of strategic decisions which are critical for the achievement of organisational performance (Elbanna, Thanos and Colak, 2014).

In order to be effective and ensure their sustainability, both public and private sector organisations should strive to formulate and implement relevant strategies through a well-organized strategic planning process (Arasa & K'Obonyo, 2012; Okwako, 2013). In line with this argument, Nyamboga and George (2014) advocate for the adoption of a strategic planning model by Johnson & Scholes as an effective framework for enhancing organisational performance. Like any other business organisations, public secondary schools as well, strive to optimise their limited resources to provide quality education service to their clients (Bruns, Filmer, & Patrinos, 2011). Hence, their management systems need to adopt an effective strategic planning framework in order to be effective and achieve higher levels of school performance (Schlebusch & Mokhatle, 2016).

As a measure of goals and objectives attainment, organisational performance depends on how effective the strategic planning process is put in place (Rintari & Moronge, 2014). According to Momanyi (2020), an effective strategic planning process should involve a detailed strategic

analysis of an organisation's environment; strategic choice of the available alternative options; and strategic implementation of the best chosen options. Likewise, Bryson (2018) posits that, organisations are mainly formed in order to achieve a specified set of goals in which strategic planning is critical for their attainment. This is in line with Jung and Lee (2013) and Bryson(2018) who argue that, setting goals is an essential step of an organisation's strategic planning process and therefore it forms an important antecedent of organisational performance.

Like any other country in the world, Tanzania has committed itself to various strategic initiatives aimed to improve the performance of secondary education through strategic planning practices. Among the major efforts adopted include introduction of the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) as a strategic initiative designed to bring about changes in the education sector. As an outcome of the ESDP, the Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) was adopted in order to implement the reform initiatives in the secondary education sub-sector (URT, 2018). As far as school management is concerned, among others, the focus of SEDP was mainly to improve the management efficiency of public secondary schools through strategic planning practices (URT, 2018).

Bearing in mind the position of a school as the initial planning unit in the education system, URT (2018) recognizes the role of School Management Team (SMT) as an organ responsible for school development planning process. Therefore, in order to ensure school performance, each secondary school was required to develop and implement its own school development plan (ibid.). As a systematic approach of strategic planning practices, school development planning draws together the school vision, mission, goals and values as an effective framework for resource deployment in schools (Bryson, 2015).

Through implementation of SEDP, several strategic interventions were adopted at the school level in order to enhance school performance. Among the adopted interventions, include capacity building programs aimed to improve school management efficiency (URT, 2018). Accordingly, a number of capacity building trainings on school development planning were provided to the SMTs and SGBs in order to enhance their capacity for effective school development planning (URT, 2018). Scholars such as Kwaslema and Onyango (2021) argue that, if well adopted in the

management of public secondary schools, strategic planning can positively influence school performance.

Nevertheless, despite the adopted strategic interventions aimed to enhance school performance through strategic planning practices, the status of school performance in public secondary schools in Tanzania is still not promising. This leaves a lot of doubts on the effectiveness of strategic planning as an effective means of enhancing school performance in public secondary schools. Notably, it was assumed that, the strategic planning process may probably not be effectively adopted in the management of public secondary schools in Tanzania, especially by devoting less emphasis on some of its key aspects whose influence is significant to school performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Like any other business organisation, public secondary schools strive to optimise the use of their limited resources to provide quality education service to their clients. In this case, their management systems must abide to the principles of an effective strategic planning model. Similarly, in Tanzania, like many other countries in the world, the education planning system is decentralized to the school level. Moreover, schools are required to adopt strategic planning approaches in their planning process (URT, 2018). Nevertheless, it is not clearly known whether the school development planning process in the public secondary schools is really featured within an effective strategic planning model. Hence, in order to address this gap, the current study investigated the nature of strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools in relation to the extent of their alignment with the Johnson and Scholes model. The findings from this study are expected to provide insights to the policy makers and education practitioners on the effectiveness of the strategic planning process in the management of public secondary schools.

1.3 General Objective of the Study

This study examined the nature of strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools in enhancing school performance.

1.4 Specific Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study intended to:

- i) Determine the extent to which the adopted strategic options for enhancing school performance reflect strategic analysis practices.
- ii) Examine the extent to which the adopted strategic options for enhancing school performance reflect strategic choice practices.
- iii) Evaluate the extent to which the adopted strategic options for enhancing school performance reflect strategic implementation practices.

1.5 Research Questions of the Study

In order to achieve the intended objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions:

- i) To what extent do the strategic options adopted in enhancing school performance reflect strategic analysis practices?
- ii) To what extent do the strategic options adopted in enhancing school performance reflect strategic choice practices?
- iii) To what extent do the strategic options adopted in enhancing school performance reflect strategic implementations practices?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Strategic Planning Practices

There are numerous definitions of strategic planning, and there are different approaches that can be adapted to undertake it. Nevertheless, most definitions focus on the alignment of the organisation's resources within the uncertain environment. Ginter, Duncan and Swayne (2018) define strategic planning as the process of identifying the long-term organisation's goals and objectives and thereby developing strategies and actions to achieve the identified objectives. Building on this definition, Summers (2011) views strategic planning as a systematic process through which an organisation builds a stakeholders' commitment to priorities that are essential to its mission. As an effective managerial tool, strategic planning helps an organisation to focus on its vision and priorities in response to the changing environment and ensure that its members are working towards the same goals (Bryson, 2018).

Tracing back, Steiss (2019) defines strategic planning as a set of decision rules which guide the organisation's resource allocation process, taking into account both the short-term and long-term, with an emphasis on allocating resources in uncertain conditions to achieve future objectives. As

an effective tool of organisational management, strategic planning is viewed as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organisation is, what it does, and why it acts as it does (Bryson, 2018). As used in this study, strategic planning practices is defined as the adoption of strategic planning approaches in the school development planning process. Essentially, it involves matching the school's activities to the current and emerging school environment bearing in mind what can feasibly be achieved with the available school resources (Bryson, 2018). Accordingly, the adoption of strategic planning approaches in the school planning process is assessed in three dimensions as proposed by Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2005) namely: strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation.

2.2 The Nature of Strategic Planning Practices

In this study, the nature of strategic planning practices refers to the bundles of strategic options or activities that comprise the overall strategic planning process in the management of public secondary schools (Leithwood, 2012). According to Johnson *et al.*, (2005), the strategic planning process is composed of three main bundles of strategic practices namely: strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation practices.

2.2.1 Strategic analysis

This is the process of determining the strategic position of the organisation in terms of its internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats (Ifediora, Idoko & Nzekwe, 2014). According to Grant (2021), strategic analysis involves a critical understanding of the school's stakeholders in terms of how they view the situation facing their school and its possible direction. As an initial stage of the strategic planning process, strategic analysis entails determination of the key factors which may influence the school both in the short-term and long-term and hence affect the choice of strategy. Lynch (2015) posits that, strategic analysis involves an analysis of the organisational environment both internal and external; analysis of resources which includes skills and capabilities; and identification of vision, mission and objectives.

In the context of this study, strategic analysis is defined as a systematic examination of the school's internal and external environment that informs the strategic managerial decision-making. As one of the key variables of strategic planning process, strategic analysis enables the school's stakeholders to analyze the internal and external school environmental factors so as to

get a clear picture of what they have to work with and also what needs to be addressed when developing a plan for the school success (Wheelen, Hunger, Hoffman&Bamford, 2018). Strategic analysis produces information that school managers need in order to develop appropriate strategies for their school success. Notably, a good strategy should use the school resources and capabilities to stake out a position that enables it to successfully achieve its long-term objectives.

2.2.2 Strategic choice

This is the process that involves identification or generation of options, evaluation of those options and the selection of an appropriate strategy (Johnson *et al.*, 2005). According to Bryson (2018), strategic choice is defined as the decision to select from among the grand strategies considered, the strategy that will best meet the organisation's objectives. The decision involves focusing on a few alternatives, considering the selection factors, evaluating the alternatives against these criteria and making actual choice (*ibid.*). At this stage, three groups of questions related to suitability, acceptability and feasibility of each option should be considered in order to evaluate the appropriateness of each generated option (Johnson *et al.*, 2005).

In the context of this study, strategic choice is defined as the process of selecting the most appropriate strategy from among several alternatives, which will best achieve the long-term objectives of a school. Once the clear picture of the school environment has been established and various strategic alternatives are identified, it is imperative for the school management team and other stakeholders to make final decision on the strategy to be undertaken considering its suitability, acceptability and feasibility (Lynch, 2015). The process of strategic choice involves four main steps namely: focusing on strategic alternatives; analyzing the strategic alternatives; evaluating the strategic alternatives; and choosing from among the strategic alternatives (Karanja&Wario, 2015).

2.2.3 Strategic implementation

Strategic implementation is defined as the process of effectively implementing the organisation's chosen strategy to create competitive advantage and better performance (Wheelen, Hunger, Hoffman, & Bamford, 2018). Hill, Jones and Schilling (2015) posit that, strategic analysis and strategic choice constitute the strategy formulation. In the same perspective, strategy

implementation is viewed as the task of putting strategies into action, which includes taking actions consistent with the selected strategies of the organisation; allocating roles and responsibilities through the design of organisational structure; allocating resources; setting short-term objectives; and designing the organisation's control and reward systems (Hill, Schilling & Jones 2017).

In this study, strategic implementation is defined as the process through which the school's chosen strategy is translated into action plans and activities within the framework of its strategic direction. It involves the design and management of the school systems to achieve the best integration of people, structure, processes and resources in achieving the school objectives (Wheelen *et al.*, 2018). For effective articulation of school objectives, the school management should develop, utilize and integrate organisational structure, control systems and culture to implement strategies that lead to a competitive advantage and better performance (Harris, 2002). Bryson (2018) argues that, having a good strategic choice is half a battle won. The other half is worn through effective strategy implementation.

2.3 The Concept of School Performance

The term "school performance" is conceptualized differently by many authors. Nevertheless, many authors view it in terms of organisational performance which is defined as the effectiveness and efficiency with which an organisation's goals and objectives are achieved (Jenatabadi, 2015; Jung & Lee, 2013). Based on this perspective, Caldwell and Spinks (2021) define school performance as the effectiveness and efficiency of the schooling process. Similarly, Zajda (2021) equates school performance with the fulfilment of objectives by the school: that is, if the school is able to attain its objectives, then it is said to be effective. In line with this view, the term effectiveness refers to the accomplishment of the school's objectives while efficiency indicates whether the school objectives were accomplished in a timely and costly manner.

While students' academic achievement has traditionally been used to measure school performance, in recent years, an increasing attention has been drawn to consider school organisation and teacher performance as essential variables in the measuring of school performance (Cheng, 2005; Beth, 2018). This study takes a broader view of school performance

as perceived by Cheng (2005) which comprises three levels of school operations namely: organisational level, teacher level and student level. Accordingly, school performance is viewed as a multi-level construct which comprises school organisational performance, teacher performance and students' academic performance (ibid.). In particular, academic performance includes not only students' academic achievement but also students retention, students pathways and transition as well as staff and parent satisfaction (Upadyaya & Salmela-Aro, 2013).

2.4 The Johnson & Scholes Model of Strategic Planning

The Johnson & Scholes model of strategic planning was designed and developed by Johnson and Scholes in 1993 to be used as a sound framework that facilitates strategic planning process in organisations (Johnson *et al.*, (2005). The model suggests that, strategic planning process comprises of three key interlinked elements: strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation (Johnson, Whittington, Regnér, Angwin, Johnson & Scholes, 2020). Furthermore, the model suggests that, each of the key strategic planning elements comprises of three main variables. The Johnson & Scholes model is based on the assumption that, although each of the key elements might appear to operate in a sequence, in reality each is likely to interact with others (Johnson *et al.*, 2005) The model also assumes that, the strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation elements are interdependent and may occur simultaneously (Johnson *et al.*, 2020).

According to the model, strategic analysis involves an examination of an organisation's environment to determine its strategic position; analysis of the organisation's resource capability; and analysis of the organisational culture and stakeholders' expectations (Johnson *et al.*, 2020). Strategic choice involves generating, and evaluating strategic options available to the organisation, and selection of appropriate strategy for the future needs of the organisation. On the other hand, strategic implementation involves planning and allocating resources, designing an effective organisational structure and management of strategic change. At this stage, the organisation's chosen strategy is translated into action plans and activities within the framework of its strategic direction (Smith, 2020). For effective articulation of objectives, the organisation's management should develop, utilize and integrate organisational structure, control systems and culture to follow strategies that lead to a competitive advantage and better performance (Jonathan, Beatrice & Zachary, 2013).

The Johnson & Scholes model was adopted in this study based on its strength that, it articulates the basic aspects of strategic planning process that are essential for effective achievement of school performance. According to the model, in order to achieve higher levels of school performance, the school's strategic planning process should be framed in line with strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation (Okwako, 2013; Nyamboga & George, 2014). In practice, the model is in line with Bryson (2018) who calls for the need to address organisational problems based on strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation. The model was therefore suitable in this study because it describes how the influence of strategic planning practices should be assessed in regard to the context of school management. Notably, the variables addressed by the model are in line with the specific objectives of the study.

3 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted within the framework of a mixed methodology in which a concurrent triangulation design was employed to guide the process of data collection and analysis. The study targeted a population of 2417 teachers including Heads of Schools from all 51 public secondary schools in Nyamagana and Magu Districts. Thus, by using a Yamane's formula, a sample size of 342 respondents was determined. It comprised of 266 School Management Team (SMTs) members and 76 teacher representative members of the School Governing Boards (SGBs). In addition, the study sample also included 10 WEOs and 2 DEOs as the key informants. Since each school provided 9 respondents to the study sample (7 SMT and 2 SGB members), the sample subjects were derived from 38 secondary schools (342/9). To ensure effective representation, the sample size of 38 schools was shared between the two districts at a proportion of 0.745 (38/51) based on their sampling frames. The research data were collected by using survey questionnaire, interview and documentary review. The use of multiple methods was adopted in order to overcome the limitations of one method by the strengths of the other (Creswell, 2014). Notably, triangulation in the data collection ensured validity and enabled the researcher to get the reality of what was investigated (ibid.). Quantitative data were analysed by descriptive statistics in terms of mean and skewness while, the qualitative data were analysed through content analysis. Reliability of the data collection instruments was tested for internal consistency as determined by Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability while validity was ensured through content validity, criterion validity and construct validity. Moreover, ethical

issues were considered by observing protocol, informed consent of respondents and confidentiality of information sources.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to achieve the overall study objective, the respondents were given a list of strategic options in which they were required to indicate whether they were applicable or not applicable in the management of their schools. In this regard, the basic descriptive statistics used for data analysis were mean value and skewness as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Strategic Options Adopted by Public Secondary Schools in Enhancing School Performance

Strategic Options	Mean	Skewness
Assessment of internal school capabilities	1.26	-2.021
Stakeholders' involvement in school's strategic decisions	1.51	-2.969
Determination of school vision, mission and values	1.41	-2.889
Clear and precise statement of school goals and objectives	1.23	-3.339
Analysis of school success with performance indicators	1.36	-2.021
Close follow-up of planned school activities	1.92	-3.237
Frequent consultation with school stakeholders	1.93	-1.069
Building team work spirit	1.92	-3.053
Proper coordination of school units and divisions	1.92	-3.237
Creating a responsible school environment	1.91	-2.969
Ensure optimal use of school resources	1.98	-2.610
Analysis of internal and external factors of the school environment	1.07	-2.225
Strengthen relationship between internal and external school communities	1.97	-2.488
Clear determination of school priorities	1.17	-2.324
Effective translation of school plans into actions	1.98	-2.324
Alignment of school goals with the future	1.05	-2.005
Setting and prioritizing school development targets	1.95	-3.978
Leadership commitment	1.95	-4.143
Average Values	1.64	-2.716

Source: Survey Data (2023).

The results presented in Table 1 show that, the overall mean value is (M=1.64) which is close to the maximum value (2), indicating a positive perception of the respondents on applicability of the given strategic options in the management of their schools. Besides, the average skewness (-2.72) indicates a negatively-skewed distribution which means that, most of the applicability values are distributed on the right side of the mean, while the non-applicability values are

distributed on the left side of the mean. This implies that, public secondary schools do adopt various strategic planning practices in their school management as a means of enhancing school performance. Moreover, in order to analyse the nature of strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools, the analysis results presented in Table 1 were further analysed to examine how each of the adopted strategic options is aligned with the major components strategic planning process. Accordingly, it was observed that, the nature of strategic planning practices adopted by secondary schools is consistent with the basic components of strategic planning process advocated by the Johnson and Scholes model. The following sub sections provides a detailed description on the extent to which the adopted strategic planning practices reflect the major components of the strategic planning model.

4.1 The Extent to Which the Adopted Strategic Options for Enhancing School Performance Reflect Strategic Analysis Practices.

The results presented in Table 1 show that, the school development planning process is characterized by strategic analysis of the school environment which is basically aimed to determine the school's strategic position. This observation is evidenced by the adoption of four strategic options which reflect the features of strategic analysis practices. A detailed analysis of the results revealed that, 4 (22.2%) out of the adopted strategic options are aligned with strategic analysis of the school environment. These are: assessment of internal school capabilities; determination of school vision, mission and values; analysis of school success with performance indicators; and analysis of internal and external factors of the school environment (see Table.1). Based on the quantitative analysis results, it was generally observed that, the school development planning process is featured within the strategic analysis practices by 22.2%.

Moreover, the study analysed qualitative data from interviews whose findings were used to complement the quantitative findings. Accordingly, the qualitative data from interview revealed that, some of the strategic options adopted in the school management systems reflected the features of strategic analysis practices. For example, when asked to comment on their participation in the school development planning process, the respondents clarified that, they are being involved in analysing school capabilities and the key challenges facing their schools. When responding to the matter at hand during an interview, one of the respondents commented that:

“...Basically, the management systems of our schools are collaborative..... as among the key stakeholders, we are actively involved in the school development planning process through various ways.....but most commonly, we are involved through attending school meetings and give out our opinions regarding the analysis of school problems and school success....”(Interview: WEO, January 2023).

A detailed analysis of the above comment revealed that, the two proposed strategic options: analysis of school problems: and analysis of school success are featured within the strategic analysis practices. Hence, it was concluded that, to a certain extent, the school development planning process is featured within the strategic analysis practices as one of the major components of strategic planning process.

However, a detailed analysis of descriptive results indicated that, the average mean for the adoption of strategic options related to strategic analysis practices is (M=1.27) which is relatively low compared to the overall mean (M=1.64). This implies that, though applicable, their adoption in the management of public secondary schools is relatively low. Notably, it is concluded that, the SMTs do not effectively utilize the potential effect of strategic analysis as an essential determinant of school performance.

4.2 The Extent to Which the Adopted Strategic Options for Enhancing School Performance Reflect Strategic Choice Practices.

The study analysed the descriptive results presented in Table 1 and observed that, 5(27.7%) of the adopted strategic options are linked to strategic choice practices. The observed options are: stakeholders' involvement in school's strategic decisions; clear and precise statement of school goals and objectives; alignment of school goals with the future; setting and prioritizing school development targets; and clear determination of school priorities. With this evidence, it was generally confirmed that, the school development planning process in public secondary schools is featured within the strategic choice practices as one of the major components of the strategic planning process.

The quantitative finding was further supported by qualitative data analysis results in which it was observed that, the adopted strategies were mainly focused on the analysis of the school challenges; assessment and selection of alternative strategic options to be implemented in the schools; and on determination of proper means to implement the chosen strategic options. In

response to the question raised during an interview, one of the respondents was quoted commenting that:

“...there is a variety of strategies that are being adopted in the schools depending on the nature of the school challenges and the future expectations...but the commonly adopted strategies are: identification of the most difficult subjects and subject topics, selection of subject areas/topics that are highly examined in the national exams and determining the better ways of teaching them through remedial programs...”(Interview: WEO, January 2023)

The above comment revealed that, most of the adopted strategic options were directed towards enhancing school performance in terms of student's achievement as measured by national examinations results. However, a critical analysis of the comment show that, the adopted strategic options revealed a reflection of strategic choice practices. Hence, it was confirmed that, some of the strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools in enhancing school performance were featured within the strategic choice dimension. As far as the strategic choice dimension is concerned, the findings from both quantitative and qualitative results were consistent with the researcher' assumption and that of Lynch (2015) insists on the SMTs to make final decision on the strategy to be undertaken by considering its suitability, acceptability and feasibility. However, a detailed analysis of descriptive results indicated that, the average mean for the strategic options related to strategic choice practices is (M=1.38) which is relatively low compared to the overall mean (M=1.64). This implies that, the public secondary schools do not effectively utilize the potential influence of strategic choice practices in enhancing school performance.

4.3 The Extent to Which the Adopted Strategic Options for Enhancing School Performance Reflect Strategic Implementation Practices

The descriptive results presented in Table 1 indicates that, 10 (55.5%) of the adopted strategic options are directly related to strategic implementation practices. Such options are: stakeholders' involvement in school's strategic decisions; close follow-up of school activities; consultation with school stakeholders; team work building; proper coordination of school units and divisions; creating a responsible school environment; optimal use of school resources; strengthen relationship between internal and external school communities; and effective translation of school plans into actions. Moreover, a detailed analysis of the descriptive results revealed that, the adoption of strategic implementation practices in the management of public secondary

schools is relatively higher as indicated by (M=1.94) which is relatively greater than the overall average mean (M=1.64). Based on the analysis of quantitative results, it was established that, majority of the strategic options adopted by public secondary schools in enhancing school performance are related to strategic implementation practices.

The quantitative findings are supported by the qualitative results obtained through interviews in which it was observed that, the strategies for enhancing school performance are adopted in various ways. However, majority of the adopted strategic options are focused on how the chosen school strategy can effectively be implemented. For example, when responding to the matter at hand during an interview, one of the key informants said that:

“...some Heads of Schools are very strategic....,they mainly involve their teams to analyse and select the most capable and committed teachers to teach form II and form IV classes...in addition, the school management sets remedial programmes in which teachers are required to focus mostly on the most strategic topics...in this case, the role of school management is to analyse the available opportunities so as to get resources and make sure that the resources are effectively used to achieve the school objectives...”(Interview: DEO, 2023).

The above comment reveals that, despite a wide variation in which the strategic options are adopted, a critical analysis revealed that, three strategic options namely: team involvement, school resources acquisition and effective use of school resources are mainly featured within the strategic implementation dimension. Furthermore, qualitative data obtained through documentary analysis revealed that, the school development plans adopt some aspects of strategic planning approaches in terms of strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation practices. Based on the evidence from both quantitative and qualitative data analysis results, it was concluded that, majority of the strategic options adopted by public secondary schools in enhancing school are featured within strategic implementation practices.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With respect to the study objectives, the study findings revealed that, strategic planning practices adopted by public secondary schools reflect strategic analysis practices by (22.2%, M=1.27); strategic choice practices by (25.7%, M=1.24); and strategic implementation practices by (55.5%, M=1.94). It was therefore concluded that, the nature of strategic planning practices adopted in public secondary schools is compatible with the Johnson and Scholes model as an effective strategic planning framework. Moreover, it was also concluded that, the strategic

planning model is not effectively adopted in the management of public secondary schools because its adoption undermines the potential role of strategic analysis and strategic choice as significant determinants of school performance. In response to the study findings, it is recommended that, the SMTs should ensure effective adoption of strategic analysis and strategic choice practices in the management of their schools so as to optimise the potential role of strategic planning in enhancing school performance.

Ethical Approval:

As per international standard or university standards written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been considered and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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