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Journal Name:	Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies
Manuscript Number:	Ms_AJESS_96787
Title of the Manuscript:	Influence of Principals' Planning Skills on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools in Thika Sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya
Type of the Article	RESEARCH

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PART 1: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<p>Compulsory REVISION comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the manuscript important for scientific community? (Please write few sentences on this manuscript) 2. Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title) 3. Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? 4. Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate? 5. Do you think the manuscript is scientifically correct? 6. Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestion of additional references, please mention in the review form. <p>(Apart from above mentioned 6 points, reviewers are free to provide additional suggestions/comments)</p>		
<p>Minor REVISION comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications? 	<p>Principals' planning skills are crucial in enabling them to develop and implement strategic plans in public secondary schools. However, in Thika Sub-county, many principals have had numerous challenges as far as the implementation of strategic plans. Thus, the purpose of this study was to assess principals' planning skills and their influence on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Thika Sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was guided by the strategic planning theory and the theory of policy formulation. The study adopted mixed methodology and concurrent triangulation research design. Target population was 773 respondents which comprised 59 principals and 714 teachers in public secondary schools from which 264 respondents (16 principals and 248 teachers) were sampled using Yamane's Formula. Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers whereas interview guides were used to collect data from principals. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23) and presented using tables and charts. The study established that implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Thika Sub-county has been a very difficult and problematic undertaking for principals. This is because many school heads have limited planning skills, which has compromised the implementation process. Many principals lack the ability of principals to mobilize resources, involve stakeholders, identify trained and experienced staff as well as undertake monitoring and evaluation are crucial activities for successful implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools. Thus, the study recommends that the Ministry of Education and education stakeholders should organize seminars and training programmes where principals can be equipped with strategic planning skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PASSIVE VOICE MISUSE - WORDY SENTENCES - UNCLEAR SENTENCES - PUNCTUATION IN COMPOUND/COMPLEX SENTENCES - WORD CHOICE <p>Educating a nation remains the most critical tool for the development of the society throughout the developing world. For such educational aims and curriculum objectives to be realized, Grant (2011) opines that the quality of education delivered offered to students in any secondary school is</p>	

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	<p>dependent on a multiplicity of dynamics such as strategic educational planning. According to Hassan (2011), strategic planning in education entails the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of students and society.</p> <p>In the United Kingdom, Goddard and Leask (2012) posit that the successful implementation of strategic plans in schools largely depend on planning skills which principals or school heads have mastered. In keeping with these assertions, Cook (2010) point out that principals' planning skills entail the abilities of secondary school principals to set educational goals, deciding on actions to achieve those goals and mobilizing the resources needed to take those actions. In other words, a principals' planning skills describes how education goals and curriculum objectives will be achieved through the use of available resources. However, many public secondary schools have had numerous challenges as far as the implementation of strategic plans. A report by Cortina (2017), for example, indicates that, in Haiti, 68.4% of secondary schools do not effectively implement their strategic plans, 78.3% do not meet deadlines for particular tasks whereas 67.3% do not understand what is expected of them in the strategic plans. This state of affairs calls into question the effectiveness of principals' planning skills.</p> <p>In many secondary schools in Mexico, Hanson (2012) asserts that principals' planning skills are considered as the capabilities of school heads to provide tools, organize workshops and effectively implement school's strategic to realize academic goals. According to Hanson (2012), such planning skills include resource mobilization, involvement of stakeholders, identification of trained staff and ability to undertake monitoring and evaluation. McDonnell (2014) opines that principals have roles in implementation of schools' strategic plans in addition to other roles such as teaching and ensuring students' discipline, respecting cultural diversity, establishing reciprocal relationship with families and creating a caring community of learners. In the implementation of schools' strategic plans, principals' ability to plan, personal and environmental factors are critical.</p> <p>In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, strategic planning is considered as panacea to all management challenges bedeviling secondary schools. In Lesotho, for instance, secondary schools which adhere and implement strategic plans, realize 76.8% of their curriculum objectives (Ntho, 2013). According to Ntho (2013), such secondary schools witness improved human resource relations, prudent use of financial resources, prudent time management, effective utilization of curriculum support materials and maintenance of facilities. In Ghana, Agosiobo (2015) avers aver that, for any school to achieve its objectives, school heads must implement their strategic plans as the focal point of any organization and operation. However, Agosiobo (2015) asserts that implementation of schools' strategic plans is often very difficult and problematic and requires the attention of school management.</p> <p>An assessment report by Hope and Timmel (2016) shows that, in Zimbabwe, many secondary schools fail to implement their strategic owing to the inadequacies of school heads. Hope and Timmel (2016) note that many secondary school principals lack the ability to mobilize resources, not able to identify and involve stakeholders and trained staff and above all, undertake monitoring and evaluation skills as strategies for achieving school objectives. This implies that strategic planning in education is key in the attainment of educational objectives and realization of quality education. Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero (2016) opine that the quality and adequacy of resources such as physical facilities, equipment, teaching and learning materials, all have a direct bearing on quality as they determine how effectively the curriculum is implemented. According to Ngware et al (2016), to achieve this, principals must manifest effective planning skills and acumen. In other words, secondary school principals should have resource mobilization skills, ability to involve stakeholders, identify trained staff to actualize the school strategic plans and manifest ability to undertake monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>In Kenya and Thika Sub-county, there is recognition of the efficacy of school principals in actualization and implementation of strategic plans, which are regarded as key ingredients and determinants of schools' performance. In Kakamega County, for example, Mukabi, Olel and Gogo (2020) note that skills which principals have in both strategic planning and implementation are critically important to the success of secondary schools. Mukabi et al (2020) noted that, when trying to assess the reasons for failure of strategic plans in secondary schools, one of the possible reasons is poor planning and the other is poor implementation. In the same token, public secondary schools in Thika Sub-county are also victims of ineffective implementation of strategic plans. A study by Githire (2013) revealed that close 67.4% of public secondary schools do not have sound strategic plans with clear roadmap for implementation. According to Githire (2013), only 37.2% can</p>	
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successfully implement their strategic plans. Despite these assertions, few empirical studies have interrogated the extent to which principals' planning skills influence implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

- WRONG VERB FORM
- CORRECT SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT
- SPELLING
- CHOICE OF WORDS
- CORRECT PRONOUN USAGE
- WORDING
- CHANGE NOUN FORM
- CORRECT ARTICLE USAGE
- CHANGE PREPOSITION
- ADD MISSING VERB

Principals' planning skills are crucial in enabling them to develop and implement strategic plans in public secondary schools. However, in Thika Sub-county, many principals have had numerous challenges as far as the implementation of strategic plans is concerned. As noted earlier, Githire (2013) indicates that close to 67.4% public secondary schools do not have sound strategic plans with clear roadmap for implementation. According to Githire (2013), only 37.2% can successfully implement their strategic plans. Many secondary schools do not meet deadlines for particular tasks as indicated in their strategic plans whereas majority do not understand what is expected of them in the strategic plans. Efforts to mitigate these challenges have not yielded much remarkable progress. Thus, much still needs to be done to assess the extent to which principals' planning skills on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.

- WORD CHOICE
- WORDY SENTENCES
- UNCLEAR SENTENCES
- PASSIVE VOICE MISUSE
- PUNCTUATION IN COMPOUND/COMPLEX SENTENCE

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To assess the status of implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Thika Sub-county.
- ii. To determine how principals' planning skills influence implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Thika Sub-county;
 - PASSIVE VOICE MISUSE

This study was guided by the strategic planning theory which was postulated by Evans (2007) which holds that implementation of strategic plans in schools is guided by a 'strategic thinking' approach. This is a less fixed design that is more a flexible learning process that relies on school managers constantly listening and synthesizing what they hear and learn from all sources. The theory assumes that educational planning that propose models or strategies for educational planning practitioners to consider or use, the subject or objects of the educational planning undertaking, addresses what is common to all educational planning specializations and explicate characteristics of educational planning practice. The strategic plan in this scenario is simple and concentrates on very few targets over a relatively short period of time. These plans may be developed using a strategic thinking process which occurs over a series of faculty meetings and a board retreat, which may result in the development of a rolling sequence of project-based reviews and change, focusing each year on one or two departments, key focus areas or program areas. Thus, the rationale of adopting this theory in this study is that it addresses what is common to all planning specializations and explicate characteristics of planning practice. In other words, it appreciates the fact that prudent educational planning should be collaborative and incorporates all elements aimed at achieving the foundational goals of education.

The study was also guided by the theory of policy implementation which was postulated by Lindblom (1999). This theory is premised on the models of policy change that emphasize continuity, stability, and incrementalism. The risk aversion of policy-makers and the need for political

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	<p>compromises allows for only incremental changes of the status quo. This theory argues that policy changes also take place in the absence of electoral changes and that the standard model conflates the choice of policy issues with the choice of a policy solution given a policy problem. The relevance of this theory in this study is that implementation of strategic plans is critical to the success of secondary schools in realizing education of education objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- PASSIVE VOICE MISUSE- PUNCTUATION IN COMPOUND/COMPLEX SENTENCES- WORD CHOICE- WORDY SENTENCES- UNCLEAR SENTENCES <p>The study adopted mixed methodology and concurrent triangulation research design. Target population was 773 respondents which comprised 59 principals and 714 teachers in public secondary schools from which 264 respondents were sampled using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was applied to create five strata based on the number of zones in Thika Sub-county. From each zone, two (2) secondary school principals were selected using purposive sampling considering secondary schools which have had challenges with implementation of strategic plans and poor infrastructure development. However, from each zone, 31 secondary school teachers were selected using simple random sampling to avoid bias. This sampling procedure realized a sample of 16 principals and 248 teachers. Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers whereas interview guides were used to collect data from principals. Data analysis began by identifying common themes from the respondents' description of their experiences. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23) and presented using tables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- CORRECT ARTICLE USAGE- ADD AN ARTICLE- FIX THE AGREEMENT USAGE <p>This contradicts the findings of a study carried out in Colombia in which Hermalin and Weisbach (2016) revealed that strategic planning skills enable school heads to seek the input about strategic planning from stakeholders in meetings, through surveys, with targeted suggestion boxes, in newsletters. Hermalin and Weisbach (2016) revealed that principals, in instances where principals have mastered the skill of involving stakeholders in discussions for strategic planning to the greatest extent possible, schools tend to successfully navigate the process of implementation of strategic plans. This implies the ability of principals to identify the right stakeholders and tasks which they need to undertake through different approaches holds the key to the successful realization of the objectives of strategic plans.</p> <p>The study also revealed that 138(57.3%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that unsuccessful implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools is attributed to principals' lack of skills to identify trained and experienced staff while 22(9.1%) agreed. However, 18(7.5%) were undecided, 22(9.1%) disagreed whereas 41(17.0%) strongly disagreed. This is consistent with the assertions of Samstad and Pipkin (2013) that successful implementation of strategic plans depends on the quality of staff tasked to actualize the plans in secondary schools. According to Samstad and Pipkin (2013), principals must have the ability to identify trained and qualified staff to implement different components of strategic plans. This implies that principals, who have the ability to identify experienced staff, have their secondary schools successfully implement strategic plans. In other words, the success of every strategic plan in schools depends on the quality and quantity of its human and material resources.</p> <p>Table 3 shows that 116(48.1%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public secondary schools, principals do not have the skills to undertake monitoring and evaluation of how school strategic plans are being implemented whereas 45(18.7%) agreed. At the same time, 13(5.4%) were undecided, 22(9.1%) disagreed whereas 45(18.7%) strongly disagreed. These findings are consistent with the findings of a study carried out in Australia in which Cherrington, Hubbard and Luthy (2015) found that, in secondary schools where heads have M&E skills, implementation of strategic plans has been successful. According to Cherrington et al (2015), such</p>	
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	<p>skills have enabled school heads to look at what they set out to undertake, at what they have accomplished, how they have accomplished and what is remaining of the strategic plans. These findings further corroborate the findings of a study conducted in Kandara Sub-county by Nyambura Tanui and Kalali (2019) which revealed that principals who have had basic training on how to undertake monitoring and evaluation of projects have had their schools realize most of their strategic plans compared to secondary schools where principals are yet to undergo any formal training on M&E concepts. Nyambura et al (2019) found that implementation of strategic in many secondary schools in Kandara Sub-county because many principals the M&E skills to help them actualize the requirement of the plans and constantly review strategies for implementation and reporting procedures on a continuous basis. This implies that M&E skills are important to principals since they are tools which help them to know when strategic plans are not working, and when circumstances have changed. In other words, such skills give school heads the information they need to make decisions about the school projects and about changes that are necessary in strategy or plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WRONG VERB FORM - CORRECT SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT - SPELLING - CHOICE OF WORDS - CORRECT PRONOUN USAGE - WORDING - CHANGE NOUN FORM - CORRECT ARTICLE USAGE - CHANGE PREPOSITION - ADD MISSING VERB <p>From the study findings, it is evident that implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Thika Sub-county has been a very difficult and problematic undertaking for principals. This is because many school heads have limited planning skills, which has compromised the implementation process. Many principals lack the ability of principals to mobilize resources, involve stakeholders, identify trained and experienced staff as well as undertake monitoring and evaluation are crucial activities for successful implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>The study recommends that the Ministry of Education and education stakeholders should organize seminars and training programmes where principals can be equipped with strategic planning skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CORRECT ARTICLE USAGE - CHANGE SPELLING - INTRICATE TEXT - UNCLEAR SENTENCES - PASSIVE VOICE MISUSE 	
Optional/General comments	NONE	

PART 2:

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?	<i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i>	

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