

Dynamics of Information Communication Technology on Implementation of Strategic Plans in Public Secondary Schools, in Kenya

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Abstract: Effective communication is a fundamental requirement for any effective strategic plan implementation; organizational communication plays an important role in training, knowledge acquisition and retention during the process of strategic plan implementation. This study examined dynamics of information communication technology on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study was anchored on goal setting theory. The study was guided by a mixed method Research design. The study sample comprised of 9 sub-county education officials, 85 chairs Board of management, 85 principals and 85 senior teachers. The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling designs. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaire while qualitative data using interview. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive, for inferential statistics was through theme and narration. The findings of this study revealed that information communication technology have a significant relationship on implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools. The study concluded that information communication technology is an essential requires all levels, and all functions in the school should be generated through communication, involvement and commitment of people in school. The study recommended that the management on public secondary schools should consider adopting training programmes during strategic plans implementation, this will help the institutions to gather valuable information that will provide valuable insights in the strategic plans implementation. This study will be useful in formulating and developing network that would enable the schools to improve on strategic planning process.

Keywords: ICT, Dynamics, strategic plans, Implementation

INTRODUCTION

A strategic plan is a document developed to give a school focus and directions as it prepares for the future by continuously adjusting its academic direction. In response to a changing academic landscape, successful educational, economic and planning effort produce many benefits some of which Hellriegel and Slocum [1], identifies as: first, the promotion of strategic thought and action is based upon data gathered about the institution; systematic information gathering will result as a benefit of strategic planning; secondly, improved organizational decision-making. In strategic planning, vital issues and challenges must be identified and planned for; and lastly, improved organizational responsiveness and improved performance. Members of the institution will respond positively to an administration that works towards resolution of the issues facing it. Strategic planning helps organization to clarify future direction, to establish priorities, to diversify its products or services and to deal effectively with rapidly changing circumstances.

In this era of globalization where the world has undergone many rapid changes in all fields, the environment in which organizations operate is no longer stable and predictable. Networking dimensions then can provide an operational framework allowing organizations to lead changes and gain their competitive edge in strategic planning implementation [2]. According to Republic of Kenya [3], one factor that stands out as a key determinant in achieving quality education is school planning effectiveness. Strategic planning is a line of action designed by the school to achieve desired targets within a scale using available resources. Strategic planning has been used in schools in developed countries, leading to school improvement and advancement in education.

In Kenya school planning involves determining society and student needs, prioritizing school needs, preparing action plans, implementing and monitoring the plans [4]. In order to justify their

existence schools need to develop strategies that embrace changes by anticipating challenges sufficiently in advance and by planning timely response, increasing speed of implementing of response, being flexible and respond on time to surprises which could not be anticipated in advance. Schools guided by the national goals of education must set up specific objectives designed at helping every individual student achieve varied aspirations and hence develop society. According to the Kenya Education Master Plan for Education and Training [5] an education strategic plan should contain all important information about the school. This information includes the school aims which should be related to the national goals, school mission statement, description of school and the community it serves, school priorities, action plan for the next 3years, and information about the school community. Government of Kenya [6] outlined the major determinant of quality education as curriculum content, relevant instructional material and equipment, physical facilities, ideal learning environment, the quality of teaching force, assessment and monitoring of learning achievement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In a time of performance based management and education reforms in Kenya, strategic plans are very important tools to achieve desired education and academic goals. Different education institutions have therefore developed their own strategic plans depending on their status, needs and objectives. Kenya's Ministry of Education in the year 2013 made it mandatory for schools to develop their domesticated strategic plans to guide the school development, the ministry of education made its own strategic plan and further reinforced the need for each school to develop a domesticated strategic plan, some schools have attempted to make their own strategic plans while others are yet to embrace this idea. It is a ministerial requirement that all schools formulate strategic plans with a time frame of 3-5 years and action plans for each year. According to QASO, Bungoma County, it has been established that some schools rarely develop strategic plans leading to poor school management hence lowering the academic standards and poor school environment [7]. This is an alarmingly statistic despite the government policy to embrace performance based approaches. It was against this background that the researcher was motivated to carry out a study on the networking dimensions as

determinants of implementing strategic plans in public secondary schools in Bungoma County.

The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate dynamics of communication technology on implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kenya

Objectives of the study

- To investigate information communication technology strategies utilized to implement Strategic Plans
- To establish information communication technology framework for implementation Strategic Plans.

Research Questions

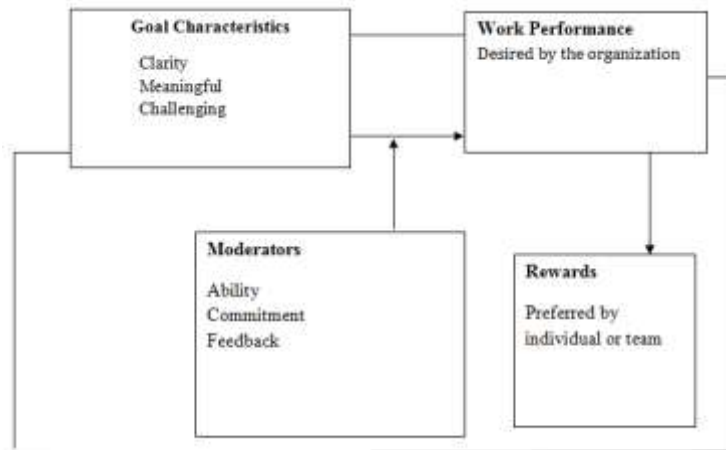
- Does information communication technology strategies affect implementation of Strategic Plans
- Does information communication technology framework influence implementation Strategic Plans.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between information communication technology and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Goal setting theory by Locke and Locke [8] who noted that a goal is a powerful management tool for enhancing work performance. The theory states that conscious, meaningful and challenging goals regulate and motivate behavior; especially when the goal setting is participative, in that it involves the manager and the subordinates from the onset. The theory also states that specific and clear goals lead to greater output than vague and general goals, for example goals like 'do your best'. This theory also advocates for enhanced employee participation in goal setting. Goal commitment is likely to be enhanced when goals are made public and when they are set by the individual rather than imposed externally [9].



Source; Locke, and Locke [8] Theory of Goal Setting

Fig-1.1: A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance

According to Locke & Locke [8], conscious goals result in higher levels of performance if these goals are accepted by the individual. In the figure above, goals motivate performance if they are clear, meaningful and challenging. Whether there is a relationship between goals and work performance is moderated by other factors such as ability, commitment and feedback. A person’s ability can limit his or her efforts to accomplish goals, especially if the manager sets a difficult goal and a staff lacks ability to accomplish it, there will be no accomplishments.

Cole [9] is of the view that specific goals have been found to be more effective than vague or general goals such as “do your best” as well as no goals at all. However, specific goals result in higher levels of performance. Besides clearly stated goals, performance targets should also be challenging rather than easy or routine. In the context of Bungoma county public secondary schools, the influence of information communication technology dimension influence implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools, it requires a positive determinant in the setting of specific and clear goals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The study adopted a mixed approach in collecting and analyzing data. In mixed methods

studies, researchers purposely integrate quantitative and qualitative data rather than keeping them separate so as to maximize the strengths and minimize the weakness of each type of data [10]. A mixed methods designs involves the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given priority, and involve integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research [11].

This study adopted a concurrent approach where both quantitative and qualitative data was collected at the same time and using the same respondents. It mixed both quantitative and qualitative research instruments by use of triangulation. Creswell, Plano, Gutmann and Hanson [12] noted that in concurrently collecting both forms of data at the same time, the researcher gets to contrast.

Population Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The main factor to consider in determining the sample size is the need to keep it as manageable as possible. This enable the researcher to derive from it data at an affordable cost in terms of time, finance [13], this study used a purposive sampling for the 9 sub-county educational officers and simple random sampling for the 85 Chair BOMs, 85 Chair PTA, 85 school principals and 85 Senior teachers.

Table-1.1: Population Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

Code	Group	Target population	Sampling Procedures	Sample Size
A	Sub-County Education Officers	9	Purposive sampling	9
B	Chairmen BOMs,	284	Simple random sampling	85
C	Chairmen PTAs	284	Simple random sampling	85
D	School Principals	284	Simple random sampling	85
E	Senior teachers	284	Simple random sampling	85
	TOTAL	1145		349

Source: Study 2017

Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires and interview -

Questionnaire

A questionnaire consisting of a number of questions printed or typed in a defined order or form. This is a method of data collection by which the questionnaires are mailed to respondents who are expected to read, understand the questions and write down the answers in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire [13]. The study considered the questionnaire because of its low cost, it is free from bias, respondents had adequate time to give well thought out answers and larger sample can be made use of and thus the results can be more valid and reliable. The questionnaire designed was meant for the 85 Chairmen BOMs, 85 Chairmen PTA, 85 school principals and 85 senior teachers to collect information based on the objective of the study.

Interview Schedule

Interview is a method of collecting data that involves presentation of oral verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral verbal responses [9].The research study used the respondent type of interview where the interviewer retains in control throughout the process of interview. The study settled on interview because this research tool provides high accuracy and explanatory power with high administrative convenience. The gathered information was meant to supplement the information received from the questionnaire. The interview schedule designed was meant for the Sub-County Education Officer. The interview schedule

enabled the researcher to collect the information based on the objective of the study and balance between qualitative and quantitative data.

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

In order to examine the information collected from the field with a view to making deductions and inferences, data collected was classified, categorized and analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were used. The adaption of multi-methodology strategy was used in the interpretation and understanding of the key research issues

Ethical considerations

First, the respondents was assured of privacy and confidentiality of the information obtained from them. No information revealing the identity of any individual was included in the final report or in any other communication prepared in the course of the study. Additionally, honesty was observed. There were no fabrications, falsifications or misrepresentation of data. However, the researcher also guaranteed integrity by keeping promises and agreements and also acted with sincerity. Furthermore, the respondent’s participation was voluntary and free and there were no promises of benefits for participation

Summary of findings and Discussion

The study sought to investigate information communication technology strategies utilized to implement Strategic Plans. The results were as presented in the table 1.2.

Table-1.2: Responses on influence of communication technology

Statements	F	SD	D	U	A	SA	TOTAL	MEAN	S Dev
There is clear communication of strategies and the reasons behind them in our school activity	F	0	0	2	165	162	336	4.46	0.55
	%	0	0	2.4	49.7	47.9	100	89.2	
Project uniqueness may lead to varied methods for communicating the plan or progress report	F	0	4	0	166	163	336	4.32	0.60
	%	0	2.4	0	49.7	47.9	100	86.4	
Executives need a standard procedure currency that has the same meaning on every project plan to avoid confusion for management	F	0	5	9	164	148	336	4.31	0.71
	%	0	3.0	5.3	49.1	42.6	100	86.2	
Identifying and using relevant and appropriate technology enhance successful implementation of strategies	F	0	0	6	173	158	336	4.44	0.55
	%	0	0	3	50.3	46.7	100	88.8	
Development of appropriate information systems and programs aid in successful implementation of strategies	F	0	5	5	178	141	336	4.33	0.68
	%	0	3	3	52.7	41.4	100	86.6	

Key: SD=1, D=2, U=3, A=4, SA=5, %=Percentage, F=frequency, S Dev=Standard Deviation

The study results indicated that 2.4% of the respondents were undecided that there is clear

communication of strategies and the reasons behind them in our school activity, 49.7% agreed that there is

clear communication of strategies and the reasons behind them in our school activity while 47.9% strongly agreed that there is clear communication of strategies and the reasons behind them in our school activity. The study findings on the influence of communication technology on implementation of strategic plan revealed that 89.2% (mean=4.46) were of the view that there is clear communication of strategies and the reasons behind them in our school activity.

The study results revealed that 2.4% disagreed that project uniqueness may lead to varied methods for communicating the plan or progress report, 49.7% agreed that project uniqueness may lead to varied methods for communicating the plan or progress report while 47.9% strongly agreed that project uniqueness may lead to varied methods for communicating the plan or progress report. 86.4% (mean=4.32) were of the view that project uniqueness may lead to varied methods for communicating the plan or progress report

The study findings indicated that 3.0% disagreed that executives need a standard procedure currency that has the same meaning on every project plan to avoid confusion for management, 5.3% were undecided that executives need a standard procedure currency that has the same meaning on every project plan to avoid confusion for management, 49.1% agreed that executives need a standard procedure currency that has the same meaning on every project plan to avoid confusion for management whereas 42.6% strongly agreed that executives need a standard procedure currency that has the same meaning on every project plan to avoid confusion for management. 86.2% (mean=4.31) were of the view that executives need a standard procedure currency that has the same meaning on every project plan to avoid confusion for management;

The study results showed that 3.0% were undecided that identifying and using relevant and appropriate technology enhance successful implementation of strategies, 50.3% agreed that identifying and using relevant and appropriate technology enhance successful implementation of strategies while 46.7% strongly agreed that identifying and using relevant and appropriate technology enhance successful implementation of strategies. 88.8% (mean=4.44) were of the view that identifying and using relevant and appropriate technology enhance successful implementation of strategies.

The study results indicated that 3.0% were undecided that development of appropriate information systems and programs aid in successful implementation of strategies, 52.7% agreed that development of appropriate information systems and programs aid in

successful implementation of strategies while 41.4% strongly agreed that development of appropriate information systems and programs aid in successful implementation of strategies. The study results showed that 59.8% agreed that detail plan is the framework for translating strategic goals into school accomplishment while 40.2% strongly agreed that detail plan is the framework for translating strategic goals into school accomplishment. 86.6% (mean=4.33) were of the view that development of appropriate information systems and programs aid in successful implementation of strategies; This finding is also supported by views held by respondents in the Sub-County Education Officers who were interviewed on the influence of communication on implementation of strategic plans;

Most of them noted that communication is the key to gaining stakeholders' involvement and significantly reducing their level of uncertainty in the activities of the schools. It is the life hood of an institution and without effective communication; the pattern of relationships that we call schools cannot serve anyone's needs. Communication should be a regular rather than a one-off exercise and should be pursued through various channels that school management deem fit to access the staff. Stakeholders need to be involved in the strategic plan implementation and hence a continuous message effectively communicated will energize them into fully participating in the organization activities

This finding implies that competence in school activities requires all levels of people and all functions in the school generated through the communication, involvement and commitment of people inside the school. When knowledge, experience and other abilities are shared through communication with each other in the school it leads to the creation of sustainable competitive advantage and ease in the implementation of strategic plans. Drejer *et al.*, [14] agrees that communication competency is very critical in strategic planning leadership. Planning is intensive in communications, especially speaking and writing skills. An institution wants team members who are articulate and confident in their speaking abilities. Good planning reports are written by persons who know and able to be brief, focused and understood by people who are not planning specialists. Strategic planners should be able to communicate effectively using a variety of methods, with a variety of audiences and individuals from diverse background and select and apply the most appropriate and effective communication means to meet situational needs. Planning team should be able to lead and empower employees to deliver effective high quality planning, establish effective strategies for performance

management and lead work teams with clear direction and effective communication.

Communication makes the plan a ‘living’ document and no one should bound and shelved ‘for the record’[15]. Effective communication is at the executive level. The rest of the stakeholders are mainly informed during the annual general meeting. The planning document is seen as an end in itself. According to kor, [16] communication is essential for motivating implementation of SSPs. It is through communication that the principal can give necessary guidance and transfer ideas. It draws stakeholders’ belief and commitment to SSPs and gives reason for commitment.

Hypothesis Testing

In this section, the study sort to establish the relationship between the study variables. The study used Pearson correlation analysis to test the relationship between the study variables;

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between information communication technology and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools at $p \leq 0.05$ significance level. The hypothesis of the study was tested using Pearson Correlation Coefficient at $p \leq 0.05$ significance level. Table 1.3 shows the interpretation of the strength of the correlation coefficient.

Table-1.3 Relationship between information Communication Technology & Implementation of Strategic plans

Correlations			
		Communication Tech	Implementation of s. plans
Information Communication technology	Pearson Correlation	1	.591**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	336	336
Implementation of strategic plans	Pearson Correlation	.591**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	336	336

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

Table 1.3 shows that there was a significant relationship between communication technology and implementation of strategic plans ($r=0.591$, $p=0.000$). Comparing this value (0.05) with alpha, in this case 0.000; since the "sig." level is less than alpha, the results are significant. Therefore the researcher rejected the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between information communication technology and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools.

The alternate hypothesis there is a statistically significant relationship between information communication technology and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools was accepted. This implies that there was a significant relationship between information communication technology and implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools in Kenya. The positive nature of the relationship between information communication technology and implementation of strategic plans implies that increase in adoption of information communication technology leads to an increase in the implementation of strategic plan in public secondary schools in Kenya.

A clear communication of strategic awareness can act as a cohesive force and succeed in connecting those with ultimate responsibility for organizations with

those who directly implement policies at the sharp; communication is pervasive in every aspect of strategic management, and it is related in a complex way to organizing processes, organizational context and implementation objectives which, in turn, have an impact on the implementation process and also enhances timely feedback on the progress and challenges met in the process of strategic management. These findings are in line with Heathfield, [17] who observed that poor communications is a great challenge to strategic implementation and it seems to take many forms. The failure to communicate the vision and strategic objectives to stakeholders may mean that the developers of the strategy aren't getting out enough information for stakeholders to understand what they're supposed to do with it.

CONCLUSION

The study findings conclude that the information communication technology influence implementation of strategic plans majority of respondents noted that communication is the key to gaining stakeholders’ involvement and significantly reducing their level of uncertainty in the activities of the schools. It is the lifeblood of an institution and without effective communication; the pattern of relationships that we call schools were not serve anyone’s needs. Communication should be a regular rather than a one-off exercise and should be pursued through various

channels that school management deem fit to access the staff. Stakeholders need to be involved in the strategic plan implementation and hence a continuous message effectively communicated will energize them into fully participating in the organization activities. BOMs, PTA, principals and senior teachers who were of the view that there is clear communication of strategies and the reasons behind them in their school activity, this implies that competence in school activities requires all levels of people and all functions in the school generated through the communication, involvement and commitment of people inside the school. When knowledge, experience and other abilities are shared through communication with each other in the school it leads to the creation of sustainable competitive advantage and ease in the implementation of strategic plans.

Policy implication

Based on the findings, the study recommend that for effective implementing of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Kenya, should adopt Bottom up approach to communication in the organization structure to allow easy flow of information and sharing of across the entire organization. Effective communication channels must be developed by School managers, and make it mandatory in communicate progress in the newsletter and email.

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