

**INFLUENCE OF OPERATIONAL PLANNING STRATEGIES
ON KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE IN KIAMBU DISTRICT,
KENYA**

By
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**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Award
of the Degree of Masters of Education in Educational Planning**

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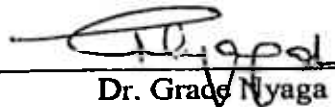
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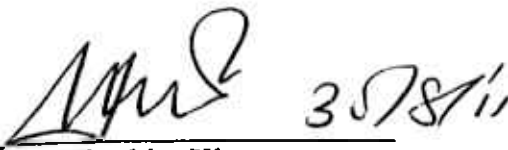
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife Christine and children – Davis, Grace and Regina.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

B.O.G	Board of Governors
D.E.B	District Education Board
K.C.S.E	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination
K.E.S.S.P	Kenya Education Sector Support Programme
M.O.E	Ministry of Education
N.G.O	Non Governmental Organization
P.D.E	Provincial Director of Education
P.E.B	Provincial Education Board
P.T.A	Parents Teachers Association
T.Q.M	Total Quality Management
T.S.C	Teachers Service Commission

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of operational planning strategies on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination performance in Kiambu District. The study aimed at investigating the influence of utilization of holiday assignments, use of opener examinations, early opening of schools, and streaming of learners as operational planning strategies and their influence on K.C.S.E performance.

The research design adopted in the study was the descriptive survey. A sample size of 30 schools, which constituted 23.4% of the total schools, was selected. All headteachers, N =30, participated in the study. Seventy five teachers (20% of 375 assistant teachers of the 30 schools), were sampled. Data for the principals and the teachers was collected through questionnaires.

After analyzing the influence of operational planning strategies on K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District, it has been found that use of holiday assignments for the students, early opening of schools after school holidays and opener examinations had high effects on K.C.S.E performance. Streaming of learners was the least used and least effective strategy. The study recommends that further research should be conducted to investigate factors affecting effective adoption of mainstreaming in public secondary schools.

A study should also be conducted to investigate challenges that headteachers face in implementation of strategies for improvement of K.C.S.E performance.

The study also concluded that though use of holiday assignments for the students, early opening of school after school holidays, and opener examinations after school holidays had high effect on K.C.S.E, there were critical issues that affected their effectiveness. Both the teachers and students did not understand the objectives of holiday assignments. Teachers also failed to conduct detailed and objective verifications to ensure students had done their holiday assignments. Similarly, early opening of the schools did not have the support of some of the teachers and students.

From the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education should train B.O.G members on strategic planning in schools. There is need to sensitize secondary school stakeholders on their role towards ensuring that the mission, vision, and values are realized and maintained. School administrations with the support of trained B.O.G members, should therefore conduct in-service training for the teachers on the objectives of all processes on improvement of operational planning strategies. Similarly, the school administration should take advantage of the available communication channels to effectively communicate to students the value of the various operational strategies enshrined in the plans.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Education is the knowledge of putting one's potential to maximum use. Education serves as the means to bring about the desired change in society. The fundamental purpose of education is to gain knowledge (Cawelti, 1987). An individual requires education and the acquisition of education must be planned strategically. The extent to which education acquisition has succeeded or failed is tested through various examinations at various stages of education, for example, through national examinations such as K.C.S.E in secondary schools. Schools have come up with strategies aimed at improving their K.C.S.E performance. From these strategies, operational strategic plans have been drawn in order to improve K.C.S.E performance.

Strategic planning has been defined differently by several scholars. Cawelti, (1987) defines strategic planning as a process deliberately designed to help leaders conceive what kind of institution they would like to create to serve their students. Bryson (1995) defines strategic planning as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. Wincek and O'Malley (1997) define strategic planning as a process that draws together the thinking of the

community and gives stakeholders an opportunity to articulate their hopes for the future of the school and address issues that need attention and come to agreement on priorities. The definitions show the role of strategic planning in improving a performance of a school. It guides educational stakeholders in coming up with operational planning strategies aimed at improving K.C.S.E performance.

The operational planning strategies that have been used to improve K.C.S.E performance in Kiambu District include; administration of opener examination, this examination are done by students immediately students resume school from the April, August and December holidays. The intention is to ensure students continue to study while at home for holidays.

Another strategy used by some schools where some institutions break the holiday early so that the teachers and students have more time to cover the planned curriculum in preparation for K.C.S.E. Streaming of learners as a strategy ensures that those who require more remedial tuition are grouped together for closer attention.

Lastly holiday assignments contribute greatly to better K.C.S.E performance.

Educational operational planning strategies can be traced back to Soviet Union in 1917-23, when Soviet Union formulated the first ever Five Year educational

strategic plan which was carefully planned and utilized. The strategies included compulsory education for all school going children amongst other strategies. These operational planning strategies transformed Soviet Union from two-thirds illiteracy to one of the most highly educated people in Europe (Namaswa, 1998).

A good operational strategic plan share these defining elements: a vision statement which paints a word picture of a desired future state, a mission statement that identifies purpose and is congruent with the vision statement is a statement of core values that articulates what motivates the community and how they relate with one another. The mission statement also is an identification of critical issues that must be addressed, a set of goals that operationalize mission and close the gap between the institution's current state and its future vision, strategies that work toward achieving each goal, objectives that advance each strategy and outcome measurements that are indicators of success, Cooper (1996). This definition by Cooper shows that utilization of operational planning strategies may help to achieve the stated goals, that is, transforming K.C.S.E grades.

The extent to which operational planning strategies are used is crucial for an institution which aims at succeeding in academic achievement; Bryson (1995) Strategies have been used in various parts of the world successfully. In Europe, strategies were used for the implementation of information and communication

technology (ICT) in Republic of Croatia (Schraeder, 2002). The Japanese managers have used operational planning strategies to transform their steel and motor vehicle industries. The American military had used strategies to defeat the Japanese army in the Second World War (Schendel, 1979). In Africa, the Nigerian military used strategies to win the Biafran war (Madiebo, 1980). While in Uganda, the Ministry of Education and Sports formulated strategies to help the ministry fulfill its mission, which is to promote quality education and sports in the Republic of Uganda (MOES, 2003). In Kenya, the first Education Commission (The Ominde Report, 1964) sought to reform the education system inherited from the colonial government to make it more responsive to the needs of the country. The Commission proposed an education system that would foster national unity and creation of sufficient human capital for national development.

The study on the influence of operational planning strategies by public secondary school in Kenya by education stakeholders is particularly useful in solving specific problems such as poor performance in K.C.S.E. It can be used to transform a school from one average grade to a higher grade, for example from grade D to B in K.C.S.E . This is what this study attempted to find out.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) performance in Kiambu district is poor for a province which has adequate human and other resources (K.N.E.C, 2009). Various strategies have been applied by some schools in the district. Some of these operational strategies include streaming of learners to ensure those who require remedial tuition are assisted, early school opening, opener examinations and holiday assignments. Despite all the effort and strategies, students in public secondary schools in Kiambu District continue to perform dismally. This study therefore sought to find out whether the operational strategies which the schools had adopted had any influence on K.C.S.E performance.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of operational planning strategies on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination performance in Kiambu District.

1.4 Objectives of the study

In order to fulfill the purpose of the study, the following objectives were formulated.

- i) To examine the extent to which holiday assignments as an operational planning strategy influence learners' performance in K.C.S.E in public secondary schools in Kiambu District.

- ii) To assess the extent to which sitting of opener examination by learners as a strategy affect K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu district.
- iii) To determine the extent to which early opening of schools influence K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District.
- iv) To assess the extent to which streaming of learners affect K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District.

1.5 Research questions

Following research questions guided the study.

- i) How does utilization of holiday assignments as an operational planning strategy influence learners' performance in K.C.S.E in public secondary schools in Kiambu District?
- ii) To what extent does opener examination as an operational planning strategy affect K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu district?
- iii) In what ways does early opening of schools as an operational planning strategy influence K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District?
- iv) To what extent does streaming of learners as an operational planning strategy affect K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District?

1.6 Significance of the study

The research findings have added to the body of knowledge another essential tool that can be used in influencing K.C.S.E performance in secondary schools in Kiambu district. The results can be used by educational planners in the Ministry of Education to influence performance in national examinations especially K.C.S.E. Headteachers in Kiambu district can also benefit from the study by involving their school boards of governors in the utilization of the operational planning strategies in order to influence the performance of K.C.S.E.

1.7 Limitations of the study

There were various limitations to the study on the influence of operational planning strategies of various schools on K.C.S.E performance. They included the geographical distance between institutions- some schools will not reveal the extent to which they utilize strategies due to administrative mistrust towards education officials. The researcher however assures the respondents that their identity would remain anonymous and all information they provide would be used for research purposes only.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study limited itself to public secondary schools in Kiambu district. The study did not focus on schools whose students had not yet attempted K.C.S.E for at least three years.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The study was based on the following basic assumptions:

- i) That the participating headteachers had stayed in the schools for at least three years
- ii) That all the respondents co-operated and gave honest responses.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

Academic- relating to education, educational studies, an educational institution, or the educational system

Administration- management staff: the staff of a business, organization, or institution whose task is to manage its affairs

Evaluation - assessment of value: the act of considering or examining something in order to judge its value, quality, importance, extent, or condition

Examination - test, assessment, exam, paper, question paper, theory test

Outcome- result: the way that something turns out in the end

Performance- manner of functioning: the manner in which something or somebody functions, operates, or behaves

Plan is any typically any diagram or list of steps with timing and resources used to achieve an objective.

Stakeholders -somebody or something with direct interest: a person or group with a direct interest, involvement, or investment in something operational

Strategic plan refers to an organizations process of defining its strategy or direction and making decisions on allocating resources to pursue this strategy.

Strategy refers to plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal.

Utilization-refers to making use of something: to make use of something, or find a practical or effective use for something

1.11 Organisation of the study

The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one, consists of the background of the study, statement of the problems, purpose of the study, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study , assumptions of the study and definitions of the significant terms. Chapter two constituted reviews related literature under the following sub-heading: Introduction, overview of operational planning strategies, strategic planning in the school situation, elements of operational planning strategies, strategic planning in Kenyan secondary school, summary of literature and finally the conceptual frame work. Chapter three covers research methodology, and included the following: introduction, research design, the study locale, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis plan. Chapter four covers data analysis and presentation of the findings. Chapter five comprises of summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendation and recommendation for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section covers a review of the literature related to the study. First an overview of the strategic plans is given after which literature on strategies in strategic planning in the schools and the need to utilize strategic plans are highlighted. Then key elements of strategies in strategic planning, and studies done on strategies in strategic planning in Kenya schools are reviewed.

2.2 Overview of operational planning strategies

The term strategy has military origins and is derived from Greek word for generalship. Its meaning evolved to encompass a coherent set of actions- the plan usually concealed from the enemy- intended to achieve a specific military objective. The strategy was to be implemented by using a series of tactics and immediate measures conducted in the presence of the opposition. Strategy and the development of strategic plans constitute an important weapon in the armory of the modern manager, Bell (2002).

At its simplest, strategy may be understood as an approach of establishing the long term future of an organization and then moving that organization in an appropriate direction to achieve the future state whose members or at least its key members aspire.

Strategic plans comprise the procedure of defining objectives and creating operational strategies to attain those objectives. A strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal. The reason for strategic or long-range plans is to assist organizations in establishing priorities that can better serve the needs of the stakeholders. An operational strategic plan must be flexible and practical and yet serve as a guide to implementing programs, evaluating how these programs are doing and making adjustments when necessary.

A strategic plan must reflect the thoughts, feelings, ideas and wants of the developers who mould them along with the schools purpose, mission and regulations into an integrated document. The development of a plan requires much probing, discussion and examination of the views of the leaders who are responsible for the preparation of the plan. The development of the plan is less complicated than its implementation. Implementation in essence, pulls a plan apart and diffuses it throughout a school. Every unit within the school, which is involved, must then accept the plan, agree to its direction and be able to implement specific actions. In order to effectively and efficiently implement a plan, all individuals involved in its implementation must function as a whole or the plan is destined for failure. In this respect long range operational planning strategies describes results that will probably take place, Whipp (1998).

Strategic plans aims at building more desirable upcoming results by either adjusting current programs, proceedings so as to have favorable out comes in the external environment or by influencing the outside world. Strategic planning within business may provide a general direction for the strategic management to a company or give specific direction in such areas as marketing strategy, human resource, development of school strategies, information technology deployments and financial strategies. Strategic management is that set of managerial decision and actions that determine the long-run performance of a school. It includes environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and evaluation and control.

Quinn, (1980) emphasizes the interconnectedness between strategy, planning and the future development of the school. He says that the role of strategic plans is to integrate a school major goal, policies and actions into a cohesive whole. Thus strategic planning is ‘... a list of action so ordered as to attain over a particular period certain desired objectives derived from a careful analysis of the internal and external factors likely to affect the school, which will move the school from where it wants to be,....’ Puffit, (1992).

Strategic planning is essentially the determination by leaders of a school to draw a picture of what they would like the school to become, perform an environmental scan on resources it has or must acquire to become what they have envisioned,

then formulate actions that will provide a pathway to the envisioned future. It is fundamentally a statement of belief that a school can shape its own destiny by controlling the change it encounters daily, Fox (2002). Strategic planning is something a school uses in order to establish its position in the world of competitive rivalry. It is what makes a firm unique, a winner or survivor and is intended to give a school a competitive advantage over its rivals, Thomas (1993).

The benefits of operational planning strategies is through matching of the activities of a school to it's environment and to it's resource capabilities, Johnson (1989). It draws together the values and goals of a school and provide a framework for the quality of provision and the deployment of resources, Preedy (1997).

2.3 Operational planning strategies in the school situation

The role of operational planning strategies in the school situation has been outlined by a number of writers. Within educational institutions there may be a need to resolve pressing internal problems or to accommodate environmental changes Berge, (2000).

Cook, (1995) identified four such environmental changes that most affect public education and which must be accommodated. The unprecedented demographic shifts and reformations, transitions of a nation's economy due to technological advancement, the corresponding transitions in mainstream personal values, the

intensification of global competition and consequent redefinition of excellence. To these four, others can be added: to control costs , to react to a demanding and selective population to deal with government constraints on actions, to be competitive with like organizations, to ensure quality, or to react to concerns for the environment, Boar, (1993).

Planning can also be away to anticipate and accommodate trends that might affect the future of a school, Cook (1995). Successful operational planning strategies effort produces many benefits. Bryson, (1995) identified several of these: the promotion of strategic thought and action, strategic thought which is based upon data gathered about the institution. Systematic information gathering will result as a benefit of strategic planning. Another benefit is improved decision making. In strategic planning vital issues and challenges must be identified and planned for. Finally there is improved organizational responsiveness and enhanced performance. Members of the institution will respond positively to an administration that works toward resolution of the issues facing it.

2.4 Elements of operational planning strategies

There are five types of strategic plans in schools planning. Cook, (1995) speaks of: compressive plans which is limited to planning about what already is, long-range planning, which examines the gaps between what an institution is and what it wishes to become and, without further study, makes adjustments accordingly,

project planning, which is the identification of task, the enumeration of the steps needed to accomplish it and finally strategic planning which is the way an institution continually responds to change by re-inventing itself to accommodate change.

Julia, (1996) identified seven basic factors that were included in the planning process: Environment assessment, Institutional assessment, Values assessment, Program planning, Setting goals and objectives Priority setting and resource allocation, and Program review. These can be interactive ongoing, and accomplishing in a variety of ways depending upon the institution but are most often carried out in the steps of adopting core values. Others include drawing a vision of what the institution is to become, establishing a mission statement describing what the institution is about; Identifying strengths and weaknesses (internal assessment) and opportunities and threats (external assessments) that either assist or deter an institution in its achievement of the vision. There is also identifying strategic issues or gaps between where it is and what it wishes to become. Finally, formulating strategy to overcome the gaps and evolution the process with feedback used as input into the process for its improvement Boar, (1993) Bryson, (1995) Cassidy, (1998).

2.5 Effects of schools operational planning strategies in kenyan secondary schools

Operational planning strategies in Kenyan secondary schools have been conceptualized by the education master plan 1997-2010 in terms of human resources. Firstly the plan argues that in order to enhance quality management in secondary schools, it is imperative to have a well- qualified and highly motivated teaching force capable of understanding the needs of learners and the curriculum.

Secondly, secondary school headteachers who are well versed in management are also essentials for successful curriculum implementation, effective and efficient management and administration of schools. However, the plan observed that many secondary school headteachers had not been adequately trained in management and administration and were ineffective and lacking in accountability, Republic of Kenya (1998). Headteachers are expected to be advisors in curriculum implementation in their schools and should be well prepared for this role. Thirdly, the plan deplors the poor terms and conditions of service that have led to poor morale. Some secondary school teachers who work in remote areas have inadequate basic amenities like housing, access to clean water and health facilities.

Lastly the secondary school system is said to be marred by nepotism and corruption allegations in the employment and promotion of teachers, Republic of

Kenya, (1998). Such malpractices are likely to affect teachers' morale, performance and commitment to strategy as non-performers are rewarded. The quality and adequacy of resources such as physical facilities, equipment, teaching and learning materials all have a direct bearing on quality as they determine how effectively the curriculum is implemented. The quality of education cannot be achieved and sustained if the resources and facilities are not available in sufficient quality and quantity, Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero (2006).

Ngware et al. (2006) are of the opinion that the school teacher must establish the context in which students can best achieve their objectives and that the board of Governors working together must be harnessed.

According to Okumbe (1998), leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work towards objectives. It involves developing a vision for the organization that will encourage employees to work with a passion. Good leadership should embrace the principles of management which bring about continuous improvement and which guide the students and teachers in working toward the achievement of the organizational objectives. It is important therefore for the system to sensitize school managers to the importance of utilizing operational planning strategies in influencing performance in education.

2.6 Summary

In the review of the related literature, it has been shown that utilization of operational planning strategies in secondary schools positively influences the performance at level. However, the influence of operational planning strategies on K.C.S.E performance had not yet been documented.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The theory of Strategic management is the art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating cross-functional decisions that will enable an organization to achieve its objectives. It involves the systematic identification of specific objectives of a firm, nurturing policies and strategies to achieve those objectives, and acquiring and ensuring that resources are available to implement the policies and strategies to achieve the objectives of the firm, (Cooper, 2002).

Opener exams as an operational planning strategy will ensure that the learners continue to study for the exams and therefore they are kept busy during the short holidays. Early opening as a strategy before the end of the holidays will give both students and the teachers' adequate time to cover the syllabus as a strategy to improve K.C.S.E performance.

Streaming of learners as a strategy helps both the teachers to teach each group of students effectively in accordance with its academic requirement. Weaknesses identified in each group of the students are addressed- a task which is complex if

streaming is not done. This will help to improve K.C.S.E performance in Kiambu District. Holiday assignments as a strategy ensure that the spirit of study both in school and at home is maintained. It helps teachers and students to cover the syllabus while giving students time to consult other people in matters pertaining to the assignments. This strategy will improve K.C.S.E performance in Kiambu District.

2.8 Conceptual framework

The study investigated the influence of operational planning strategies on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination performance in Kiambu District. In this study, the relationship between dependent variables and the independent variables are investigated. They include opener examinations to ensure learners continue studying during the holidays. There is also tackling of holiday assignments, streaming of learners and early opening of schools.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework for operational planning strategy study

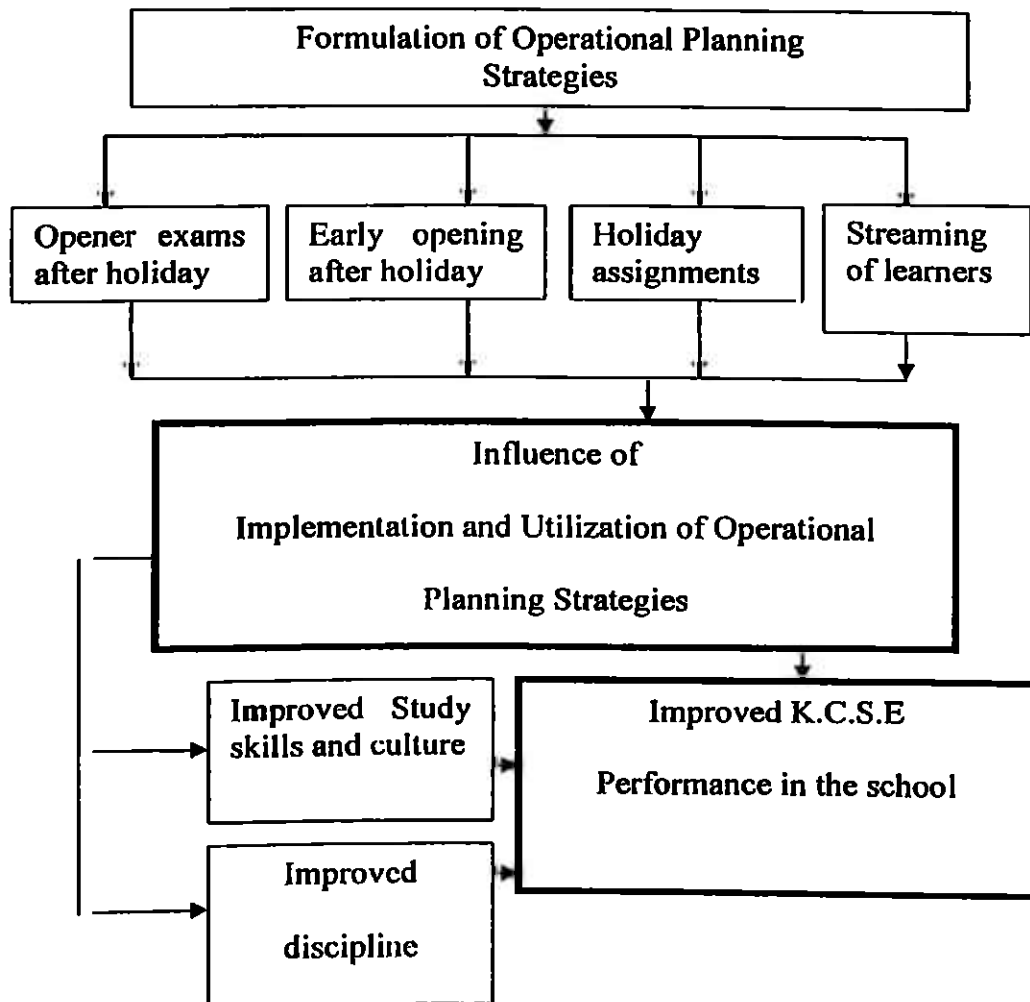


Figure 2.1 above shows the possible influence of the various strategies on the performance in K.C.S.E, ensuring that students sit for opener exams after school holidays, that schools open earlier after holiday, providing students with holiday assignments and streaming of learners are likely to result to improved study skills and culture, and discipline among the students. These are likely to positively impact on K.C.S.E performance.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this section, procedures and strategies that were used in the study are described. The research design, sampling procedures, research instruments, and the methods to be used in data collection, data analysis, plan and presentation are discussed.

3.2 Research design

The research design adopted in the study was the descriptive survey. According to Lockesh (2004), descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the status of phenomena and whenever possible to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered. Verma and Beard (2001) assert that surveys provide information about population variables, for instance when data on pupils' teachers' opinion on a variety of educational issues are sought. The descriptive survey is the most appropriate for this study because in the study, the researcher collects information on the state of affairs in the schools, without manipulating any variables.

3.3 Target population

Borg and Gall (1983) define population as all members of a real set of people, events or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research. The target population of the study comprises 123 public secondary

schools in Kiambu District. From these schools, all the headteachers, all teachers, Kiambu constituted the target population.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedures

Sommers and Sommer (1986) view a sample as a small group selected for testing. According to Orodho (2005), sampling is a technique where the investigator seeks knowledge or information about a whole population, objects or events by observing a sample, and extending the findings to the entire population. Gay (1992) asserts that for survey design a sample of at least 20 per cent is justifiable for the study. On this strength, a sample size of 30 schools, which comprised of 23.4 per cent of the total schools, was used. Two more schools were used for the pilot study.

Stratified random sampling was employed to select the sample by status of schools. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select the 18 schools from the 68 mixed schools, 5 from the 25 girls' schools and 7 from the 35 boys' schools. The sample was thus 18 mixed, 5 girls' and 7 boys' schools. All head teachers, N=30, 20 percent of 375 assistant teachers of the 30 schools, N= 75 constituted the study sample. Sample selection was done through purposive sampling technique to involve all the targeted population. According to Gay (1992), the approach where the population is equal to the sample is known as a

census survey (approach). Consequently, the total sample size yielded 105 respondents. Table 1 shows the sample size of the respondents.

Table 3.1 Sample size of the respondents

Respondents	Public Secondary Schools			
	Mixed day	Girls Boarding	Boys Boarding	Total
Principals	18	5	7	30
Teachers	40	15	20	75
Total	58	20	27	105

3.5 Research instruments

The researcher developed principals and teachers questionnaires to collect data. A Questionnaire is a set of questions or statements that assess attitudes, opinions, beliefs, and Biographical information (Schumacher, 2001). The study used questionnaires because of their economy, they ensured anonymity, permitted use of standardized questions, and they had uniform procedures to provide time for subject to think about responses and were easy to score.

3.6 Pilot study

A pilot study is the pre-testing of the research instruments in the field to randomly selected subjects to determine the validity and reliability of the research

instruments. The pilot study was carried out in two randomly selected schools and which were excluded from the actual study. It involved four teachers, two from each of the piloted schools. The two principals were also used to pilot the principal's questionnaire.

3.7 Validity of research instruments

Validity is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is designed to measure (Weirisma, 1980). Content validity is the extent to which the content of the instrument in terms of the statements, questions or indicators represent the property being measured Frankfort, (1996). According to Gay (1992), content validity is established by an expert. The researcher therefore consults the supervisors to approve the content of the instruments.

3.8 Reliability of the instruments

Reliability refers to consistence of measurement thus the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collection and the extent to which measures are free from error, McMillan & Schumacher, (2001). The researcher used the test-re-test method to determine the reliability of the instruments. The developed questionnaire was administered to two principals, and the four teachers in the pilot schools twice at an interval of one week. The scores of each administration were recorded separately. Pearson's product moment Correlation Coefficient Formula is used to calculate the

correlation coefficient between the tests. The formula for calculating Pearson's product moment Correlation Coefficient is as given below:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][N \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

$$\frac{75(105) - (75 \times 30)}{\sqrt{[(75 \times 375) - (75)^2][(75 \times 150) - (30)^2]}}$$

$$= 0.5213$$

$$= + 0.52$$

Where: x first test,

y second test

$\sum xy$ Sum of the gross product of the values of each variable.

$(\sum x)(\sum y)$ product of the sum of x and of y,

Σ sum of the values

After this was done, the reliability coefficients of the research instruments were found to be 0.79 for the principals and 0.52 for the teachers. According to Orodho (2005), a coefficient correlation (r) of about 0.5 and above should be considered high enough to judge an instrument.

3.9 Data collection procedure

The researcher sought for a research permit from the National Council of Science and Technology and an introductory letter from Nairobi University. The researcher got an introduction letter from the District Education Officer (DEO)

for Kiambu District. After this, the researcher booked an appointment with the sampled schools through the head teachers to visit and administer the questionnaires. He then administered his questionnaires. Arrangements were made with the headteachers to collect the filled questionnaires after one day as advised by Okumbe (1998). Secondary data was obtained from documents.

3.10 Data analysis techniques

After the collection of information using questionnaires, the data was sorted out and edited to identify blank spaces or unfilled items, spelling mistakes and those that could have been wrongly responded to. Data analysis procedures involved quantitative procedures. Questions were coded and fed into computer software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), for analysis. The results generated were presented using tables, charts, and frequency distributions to enhance clarity. Bell, (1999) maintains that when making the results known to a variety of readers, percentages have a considerable advantage over more complex statistics. Borg and Gall, (1983) hold that the most widely used and understood standard proportion is the percentage.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present the data collected by means of questionnaires from headteachers and teachers from public secondary schools in Kiambu District. Statistical analysis of the data is presented and interpreted based on the study objectives which were: To what extent does streaming of learners as an operational strategy influence K.C.S.E performance; how does utilization of holiday assignments as a strategy affect performance in K.C.S.E; in what ways does early opening of schools as a strategy impact on K.C.S.E performance; to what extent does an opener examination as a strategy affect K.C.S.E performance.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The researcher administered 30 questionnaires to the principals and 75 to the teachers. Thirty (30) principals and 72 teachers responded to the questionnaires. This translated to a questionnaire return rate of 100% for the principals and 96% for the teachers. Babbie (2007) explains that a response rate of 70% is considered to be very good and sufficient for analysis. The return rate was therefore considered adequate for the analysis.

4.3 Data reporting

In this section, data from the respondents have been reported. The data reported is based on the background information of the respondents and their schools, existence of strategic plans in schools in Kiambu District, level of utilization of the various operational planning strategies, and the effects of the operational strategies on K.C.S.E performance.

4.3.1 Background information of the respondents

Gender of the principals

The principals were asked to provide information on their gender. The data is summarized on Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Gender of the principals

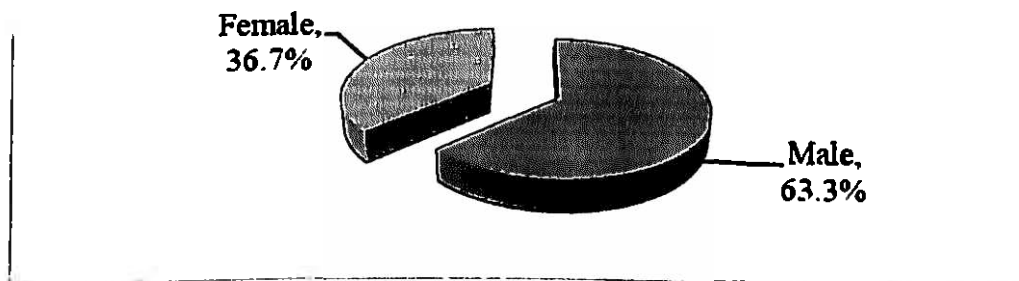


Figure 4.1 shows that the majority of the principals were male at 63.3%. The data therefore suggests gender disparities in school leadership in the district. The findings concur with Kiumi, Bosire, and Sang (2009) who reported that male teachers were the majority in administrative positions and in teaching positions in secondary schools in Kenya. Amondi (2011) also reports of gender disparity in

top management positions at the Ministry of Education headquarters where 33.3% were females, while 66.7% were males. This implies lack of gender parity in the teaching profession and in leadership in education in Kenya. Notable was that the district had met the recommended male:female ratio of 1:3 in leadership positions in schools. However, the male:female ratio needs further improvement to 1:1 so as to have gender parity in school leadership.

Professional qualifications of the principals

The principals were asked to provide data on their professional qualifications. This is summarized on Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Professional qualifications of the principals

	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor of Education	24	80.0
Masters of Education	5	16.7
Diploma in Education	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

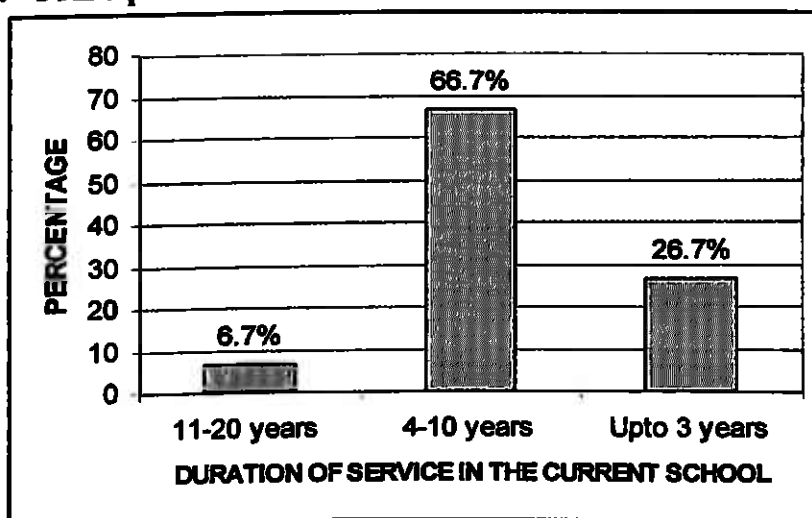
The data in table 4.1 indicate that Eighty percent of the school principals had a Bachelor of Education degree,. The professional qualifications of principals are expected to influence quality of service delivery at the school level. The knowledge that principals have affect teaching and learning practices, the leadership they provide for the school and community, and the ongoing support to

teachers. These are important in implementing successful school reforms including strategic planning in schools (UNESCO, 2009). The study therefore, confirmed that the principals in the sampled schools had the appropriate qualification and training to impact strategic planning in schools.

Duration of service in the current school

Both the principals and teachers were asked to provide data on the duration of service in the current school. The data is summarized on Figure 3.

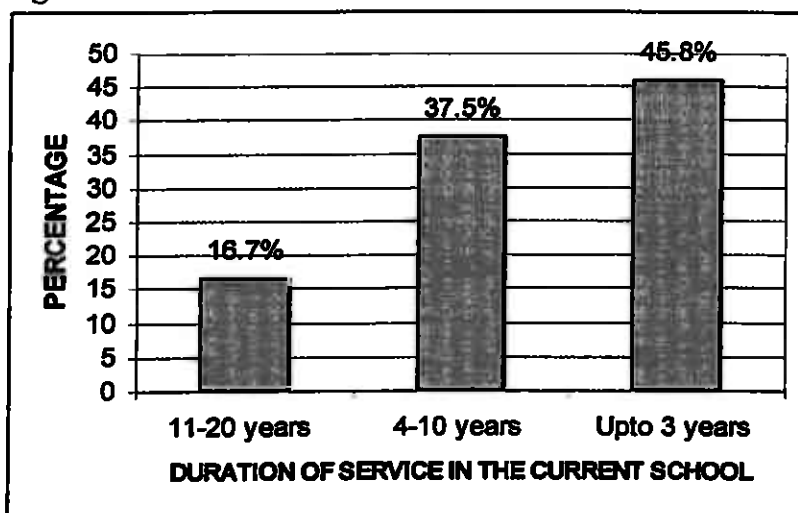
Figure 4.2: Principals' duration of service in the current school



Data presented in figure 4.2 revealed that majority of the principals, 66.7%, had served in their current schools for a period of 4-10 years. Majority of the principals would therefore be expected to either have developed strategic plans for their schools which usually cover five years. Moreover, they would be expected to have an understanding of the various strategies their schools were

adopting towards better K.C.S.E performance and whether the strategies were effective or not.

Figure 4.3: Teachers' duration of service in the current school



Findings in figure 4.3 revealed that half of the teachers, 45.8%, had served their current schools for a period of up to three years. A good number, 37.5%, had served for a period of 4-10 years. Majority of the teachers were therefore also considered adequately versed with the various strategies their schools were adopting towards better K.C.S.E performance and their effects.

4.3.2 Background information of the schools

This section presents background information of the schools such as type of school and number of streams.

Type of school

The principals were asked to provide information on the categories of theory schools. Almost half of the schools (46.7%) were mixed day schools. The data obtained is summarized on Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Type of school

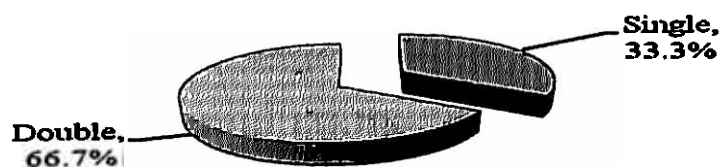
Type	Frequency	Percent
Boys boarding	4	13.3
Boys day	4	13.3
Girls boarding	4	13.3
Girls day	2	6.7
Mixed boarding Day	2	6.7
Mixed day	14	46.7
Total	30	100.0

Data presented on table 4.2 reflects the overall distribution of schools in Kenya. This is in line with Oyugi (2010) who noted that most students in secondary schools in Kenya are actually enrolled in day schools and or mixed day schools.

Number of streams

The principals were asked to provide data on the number of streams in their schools. These data is summarized on Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.4 Number of streams in the schools



Majority of the schools (66.3%) were double streamed. The data therefore show that the majority of the schools were two streamed. These may be an indicator of growing students' population due to free secondary education in Kenyan schools.

4.4 Strategic planning in schools

The headteachers were asked to indicate the number of times they had prepared operational planning strategies in the last five years. The data obtained is summarized on Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Number of times the schools had prepared operational planning strategies

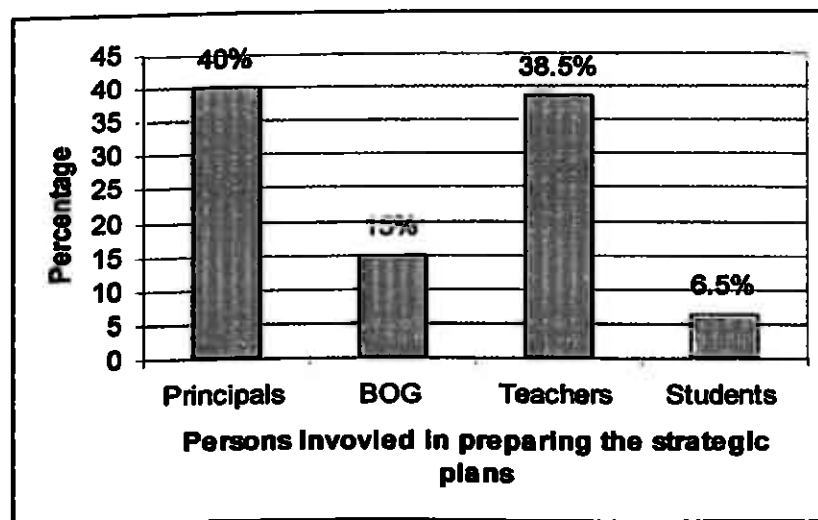
Number of times	Frequency	Percent
Never	5	16.7
Once	15	50.0
Twice	10	33.3
Total	30	100.0

Data summarized on table 4.3 show that half of the schools (50%) in Kiambu District had developed an operational planning strategy for the last five years. Another significant percentage (33.3%) had prepared their strategies twice. Sixteen percent (16.7%) had never prepared one. From the data, it was evident that a majority of the schools in the district had adopted Total Quality Management (T.Q.M) practices including preparation of strategic plans.

4.4.1 Persons involved in preparing the operational strategic plans

The headteachers were asked to list the various persons involved in preparing the planning strategies. The data obtained is summarized on Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.5 Persons involved in preparing the operational planning strategies



Data presented on figure 5 show that most of the strategies in the schools were prepared by headteachers (40%) together with the teachers (38.5%). However,

some schools involved the B.O.G (15%). Students were the least involved in preparing the strategies (6.5%).

From the data, questions emerge on the role and involvement of B.O.G in strategic planning in schools. Board of Governors are responsible for the management of both human and other resources so as to facilitate smooth operations, infrastructure, development and the provision of teaching and learning materials in public secondary schools in Kenya (MOEST, 2005). Their role in operational planning strategies for any secondary school cannot be understated. Failure of some schools to involve them may result to lack of support in the implementation of the operational strategies adopted towards the improvement of K.C.S.E results. The fact that majority of the schools operational planning strategies were prepared by the headteachers and teachers are notable. This shows unity of purpose between the headteachers and teachers towards improved academic performance.

4.4.2 Operational planning strategies used by schools to influence K.C.S.E performance

The headteachers were asked to list the various strategies used in their schools for improvement in K.C.S.E performance. The various strategies used are summarized in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Strategies Used to improve K.C.S.E Performance

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Opener examinations	24	80.0
Early opening after holiday	23	76.7
Holiday assignments	21	70.0
Streaming of learners	6	20.0

Data presented on table 4.4 show that opener examinations (80%), early opening after holiday (76.7%), and holiday assignments were the most commonly used strategies in the District. Streaming of learners was the least used strategy. This implies that students who are weak academically may not be receiving individual learner attention and leading to poor academic outcomes.

4.5 Objective 1: Use of Holiday Assignments as an Operational Planning Strategy to Influence Learners' Performance in K.C.S.E

The first research question was: How does utilization of holiday assignments as an operation strategy influence learners' performance in K.C.S.E in public secondary schools in Kiambu District? In order to answer this question, the teachers were provided with a list of indicators on the extent to which the strategy was being used to influence K.C.S.E performance in their schools. The teachers were asked to indicate whether they (1) Strongly agreed, (2) Agreed, (3) Were neutral, (4) Disagreed, or (5) Strongly disagreed with the statements. The teachers' responses, the frequency of each response, the percentage of teachers

providing each response, the valid, and cumulative percentages are summarized on table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Use of holiday assignments in the schools

Statement	Response	Frequency	%	Valid %
Holiday assignments are compulsory in every subject taught in the school curriculum	Strongly Agree	34	47.2	47.2
	Agree	18	25.0	25.0
	Neutral	9	12.5	12.5
	Disagree	7	9.7	9.7
	Strongly Disagree	4	5.6	5.6
	Total		72	100
All students must obtain and execute holiday assignments	Strongly Agree	27	37.5	37.5
	Agree	27	37.5	37.5
	Neutral	8	11.1	11.1
	Disagree	5	6.9	6.9
	Strongly Disagree	5	6.9	6.9
	Total		72	100
The objectives of holiday assignments is understood by teachers and students in this school	Strongly Agree	10	13.9	13.9
	Agree	34	47.2	47.2
	Neutral	15	20.8	20.8
	Disagree	7	9.7	9.7
	Strongly Disagree	6	8.3	8.3
	Total		72	100
Detailed and objective verifications are carried out to ensure students have done their holiday assignments	Strongly Agree	18	25.0	25.0
	Agree	19	26.4	26.4
	Neutral	19	26.4	26.4
	Disagree	11	15.3	15.3
	Strongly Disagree	5	6.9	6.9
	Total		72	100

Data presented on table 4.5 show that half of the teachers, 47.2%, in the schools strongly agreed that holiday assignments were compulsory in every subject taught in the school. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 72.2%. This is a clear indicator that schools in the district were using holiday assignments as a strategy to improve academic outcomes.

Twenty seven percent of the teachers strongly agreed that all the students were also required to obtain and execute holiday assignments. A similar percentage, 37.5%, also agreed. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 75%. The data therefore seems to suggest that the holiday assignments were not only compulsory but also students were expected to obtain and execute them.

Most of the teachers, 47.2%, agreed that the objectives of holiday assignments were understood by teachers and students in the schools. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 61.1%. A good number of teachers (38.9%) were either neutral or in disagreement that the objectives of holiday assignments were understood by both the students and teachers.

The data also revealed that there were variations on carrying out detailed and objective verifications to ensure students have done their holiday assignments.

The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 51.6%. A good number of teachers, 48.4%, were either neutral or in disagreement that detailed and objective verifications were carried out to ensure students had done their holiday assignments.

Based on the data, it is therefore evident that holiday assignments were compulsory in every subject taught in the school curriculum. All the students were also required to obtain and execute holiday assignments in majority of the schools. However, 30% of schools failed to ensure that the objectives of holiday assignments were understood by teachers and students in the schools. This implies that teachers and students will participate in holiday assignments as a matter of policy but with no clear purpose. Moreover, detailed and objective verifications to ensure students had done their holiday assignments may not have been done in majority of the schools. It is therefore possible that the assignments would be given and students would not take them seriously due to lack of follow-up.

4.5.1 Impact of holiday assignments on K.C.S.E performance

In order to establish the impact of holiday assignments on K.C.S.E performance, the headteachers were asked to rate whether the impact was high, moderate, low or none. Majority of the headteachers (86.7%) were in agreement that holiday assignments highly impacted on K.C.S.E performance.

4.6 Objective 2: Use of opener examinations for the students

The second research question for the study was: To what extent does an opener examination as an operational planning strategy affect K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District? The teachers were asked to indicate whether they (1) Strongly agreed, (2) Agreed, (3) Were neutral, (4) Disagreed, or (5) Strongly disagreed with the statements which were provided to measure the extent of use of the strategy. The teachers' responses, the frequency of each response, the percentage of teachers providing each response and the validity are summarized on Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Use of opener exams in the schools

Statement	Response	Frequenc y	%	Valid %
Opener exams are enforced in all co-curriculum based subjects in this school	Strongly Agree	39	54.2	54.2
	Agree	17	23.6	23.6
	Neutral	5	6.9	6.9
	Disagree	5	6.9	6.9
	Strongly Disagree	6	8.3	8.3
	Total		72	100
Opener exams are mandatory for all students in this school	Strongly Agree	39	54.2	54.2
	Agree	18	25.0	25.0
	Neutral	5	6.9	6.9
	Disagree	3	4.2	4.2
	Strongly Disagree	7	9.7	9.7
	Total		72	100
Opener exams are comprehensive and test the content and intent of the syllabus	Strongly Agree	30	41.7	41.7
	Agree	19	26.4	26.4
	Neutral	11	15.3	15.3
	Disagree	6	8.3	8.3
	Strongly Disagree	6	8.3	8.3
	Total		72	100
The goals and objectives of opener exams are understood by both teachers and students	Strongly Agree	18	25.0	25.0
	Agree	16	22.2	22.2
	Neutral	14	19.4	19.4
	Disagree	13	18.1	18.1
	Strongly Disagree	11	15.3	15.3
	Total		72	100

Data presented on table 4.6 show that the majority of the teachers, 54.2%, strongly agreed that opener exams were enforced in all co-curriculum based

subjects in the school. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 77.8%. Opener exams were also mandatory for students in majority of the schools in the district. The majority of the teachers, 54.2%, strongly agreed. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 79.28%. The data implies that opener exams were enforced in all subjects and were also compulsory.

A good number of the teachers, 41.7%, strongly agreed that opener exams were comprehensive and tested the content and intent of the syllabus. However, it was evident that the goals and objectives of opener exams were not understood by both teachers and students. Majority of the teachers, 52.8%, were either neutral or in disagreement that the goals and objectives of opener exams were understood by both teachers and students.

4.6.1 Impact of opener examinations on K.C.S.E performance

The headteachers were asked to rate whether the impact was high, moderate, low or none. All the headteachers (100%) were in agreement that opener examinations highly impacted on K.C.S.E performance.

4.7 Objective 3: Early opening of schools as a strategy

The third research question was: In what ways does early opening of schools as an operational strategy impact on K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools

in Kiambu District? The teachers were asked to indicate whether they (1) Strongly agreed, (2) Agreed, (3) Were neutral, (4) Disagreed, or (5) Strongly disagreed with the statements which were provided to measure the extent of use of the strategy. The data obtained are summarized on Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Early opening of school as a strategy

Statement	Response	Frequency	%	Valid %
All students and teachers participate in early opening of the school	Strongly Agree	20	27.8	27.8
	Agree	14	19.4	19.4
	Neutral	15	20.8	20.8
	Disagree	12	16.7	16.7
	Strongly Disagree	11	15.3	15.3
	Total		72	100
The early opening of school is geared towards better performance in K.C.S.E	Strongly Agree	27	37.5	37.5
	Agree	19	26.4	26.4
	Neutral	11	15.3	15.3
	Disagree	5	6.9	6.9
	Strongly Disagree	10	13.9	13.9
	Total			100
		72		
The goals and objectives of early opening is understood by both teachers and students in this school	Strongly Agree	23	31.9	31.9
	Agree	22	30.6	30.6
	Neutral	18	25.0	25.0
	Disagree	3	4.2	4.2
	Strongly Disagree	6	8.3	8.3
	Total		72	100

Data presented on table 4.7 revealed that the early opening of schools did not have the support of all the students and teacher. The majority of the teachers, 52.8%, were either neutral or disagreed that all students and teachers participated in early opening of the school when required to do so. This suggests that some

teachers and students would not turn up for early opening of school after holiday. Only the students who were involved in early opening benefited. Similarly, assuming the goal of early opening was to complete the syllabus, the findings therefore suggest that some subjects would lag behind in syllabus implementation. This was likely to affect performance in K.C.S.E.

A majority of the teachers, 63.9%, were in agreement that the early opening of schools was geared towards better performance in K.C.S.E. Similarly, 62.5% of the teachers were also in agreement that the goals and objectives of early opening of schools were understood by both teachers and students in the schools.

Based on the data, it was evident that while teachers were aware that the early opening of schools would result to better outcomes in K.C.S.E and that the objectives of early opening were understood by both the teachers and the students, there were constraints in ensuring that all teachers and students cooperated towards the implementation of the strategy.

4.7.1 Impact of early opening of school on K.C.S.E performance

The headteachers were asked to rate whether the impact was high, moderate, low or none. All the headteachers (100%) were in agreement that early opening of school after holidays highly impacted on K.C.S.E performance.

4.8 Objective 4: Streaming of learners as an operational planning strategy

The fourth research question was: To what extent does streaming of learners as an operational planning strategy affect K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District? The teachers were asked to indicate whether they (1) Strongly agreed, (2) Agreed, (3) Were neutral, (4) Disagreed, or (5) Strongly disagreed with the statements which were provided to measure the extent of use of the strategy. The data obtained are summarized on Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Use of streaming of learners as a strategy

Statement	Response	Frequency	%	Valid %
Students who require more academic tuition and contact time from teachers are assisted independently	Strongly Agree	22	30.6	30.6
	Agree	19	26.4	26.4
	Neutral	17	23.6	23.6
	Disagree	9	12.5	12.5
	Strongly Disagree	5	6.9	6.9
	Total		72	100
Streaming is done to ensure better K.C.S.E examination performance in this school	Strongly Agree	19	26.4	26.4
	Agree	16	22.2	22.2
	Neutral	12	16.7	16.7
	Disagree	9	12.5	12.5
	Strongly Disagree	16	22.2	22.2
	Total		72	100
The objective of streaming is understood by both teachers and students	Strongly Agree	14	19.4	19.4
	Agree	11	15.3	15.3
	Neutral	20	27.8	27.8
	Disagree	9	12.5	12.5
	Strongly Disagree	18	25.0	25.0
	Total		72	100
Streaming of learners is done in accordance with their abilities	Strongly Agree	12	16.7	16.7
	Agree	12	16.7	16.7
	Neutral	14	19.4	19.4
	Disagree	12	16.7	16.7
	Strongly Disagree	22	30.6	30.6
	Total		72	100

Data presented on Table 9 shows in majority of the schools, students who required remedial tuition and contact time from teachers were assisted

independently. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 56.9%.

The other operational planning strategies such as streaming to ensure better K.C.S.E performance in the school, the objective of streaming being understood by both teachers and students, and streaming of learners in accordance with their abilities were not adopted in a majority of the schools.

The majority of the teachers, 51.4%, were either neutral or disagreed that streaming was done to ensure better K.C.S.E performance in their school. The majority, 65.3%, were either neutral or disagreed that the objective of streaming was understood by both teachers and students. A significant majority (66.7%) were either neutral or disagreed that streaming of learners was done in accordance with their abilities.

Failure of schools to fully embrace streaming implies that teachers are not able to adapt instruction according to students' ability level, match work to students' needs and interests, provide appropriate tasks both for students with higher and with lower abilities, skills and knowledge, Cheung & Rudowicz (2003). Where no such arrangements exist, students with academic challenges will not receive

individualized attention. This greatly impacts their academic achievement in favour of the students who are not struggling academically.

4.8.1 Impact of streaming of learners on K.C.S.E performance

The headteachers were asked to rate whether the impact was high, moderate, low or none. All the headteachers (100%) were in agreement that streaming of learners had low impact on K.C.S.E performance.

The findings agree with Cooper (1996) who also found in their study that utilization of operational planning strategies may help to achieve the stated goals, that is, transforming K.C.S.E. grades.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and presents conclusions, recommendations and the suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of operational planning strategies on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination performance in Kiambu District. The study aimed at investigating the influence of utilization of holiday assignments, use of opener examinations, early opening of schools, and streaming of learners as operational strategies that affect K.C.S.E performance.

The research design adopted in the study was the descriptive survey. The target population of the study comprised of 123 public secondary schools in Kiambu District. From these schools, all the head teachers and teachers constituted the target population. A sample size of 30 schools, which constituted 23.4% of the total schools, was selected. Two other schools were used for the pilot study. Simple random sampling techniques was used to select 18 schools from the 68 mixed schools, 5 from the 25 girls' schools and 7 from the 35 boys' schools. All head teachers, N=30, 20 percent of 375 assistant teachers of the 30 schools, N= 75

constituted the study sample. Sample selection was done through purposive sampling technique to involve all the targeted population. Data was collected through questionnaires for the principals and the teachers. The questionnaire return rate was 100% for the principals and 96% for the teachers.

5.3 Discussion of the study findings

The majority of the principals were male (63.3%). Most of them, 80%, had a Bachelor of Education degree with some (16.7%) having a Masters of Education degree. Majority of the principals (66.7%) had served in their current schools for a period of 4-10 years. Almost half of the teachers (45.8%) had served their current schools for a period of up to three years. Majority of the schools (66.3%) were double streamed. Almost half of the schools (46.7%) were mixed day schools.

Half of the schools (50%) in Kiambu District had developed a strategic plan for the last five years. The strategic plans in the schools were prepared by headteachers (86.7%) together with the teachers (83.3%). B.O.G involvement was at 33.3% of the sampled schools.

Opener examinations (80%), early opening after holiday (76.7%), and holiday assignments were the most commonly used strategies in the District. Streaming of learners was the least used strategy at 20%. Almost half of the teachers, 47.2%, in

the schools strongly agreed that holiday assignments were compulsory in every subject taught in the school. Holiday assignments were not only compulsory but also students were expected to obtain and execute them.

Most of the teachers, 47.2%, agreed that the objectives of holiday assignments were understood by teachers and students in the schools. The data also revealed that there were variations on carrying out detailed and objective verifications to ensure students have done their holiday assignments. The majority of the teachers, 51.4%, were either neutral or in disagreement that detailed and objective verifications were carried out to ensure students had done their holiday assignments. However, 86.7% of the principals reported that holiday assignments highly impacted on K.C.S.E performance.

The majority of the teachers, 54.2%, strongly agreed that opener exams were enforced in all co-curriculum based subjects in the school. Opener exams were also mandatory for students in majority of the schools in the district. The majority of the teachers, 54.2%, strongly agreed. A good number of the teachers, 41.7%, strongly agreed that opener exams were comprehensive and tested the content and intent of the syllabus. However, it was evident that the goals and objectives of opener exams were not understood by both teachers and students. Majority of the teachers, 52.8%, were either neutral or in disagreement that the goals and

objectives of opener exams were understood by both teachers and students. All the headteachers (100%) were in agreement that opener examinations highly impacted on K.C.S.E performance.

Early opening of schools did not have the support of all the students and teacher. The majority of the teachers, 52.8%, were either neutral or disagreed that all students and teachers participated in early opening of the school when required to do so. However, a majority of the teachers, 63.9%, were in agreement that the early opening of schools was geared towards better performance in K.C.S.E. Similarly, 62.5% of the teachers were also in agreement that the goals and objectives of early opening of schools were understood by both teachers and students in the schools. All the headteachers, 100%, were in agreement that early opening of school after holidays highly impacted on K.C.S.E performance.

In the majority of the schools, students who required remedial tuition and contact time from teachers were assisted independently. The cumulative percentage for teachers providing their response as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' was 56.9%. The majority of the teachers, 51.4%, were either neutral or disagreed that streaming was done to ensure better K.C.S.E performance in this school. The majority, 65.3%, were either neutral or disagreed that the objective of streaming was understood by both teachers and students. A significant majority (66.7%)

were either neutral or disagreed that streaming of learners was done in accordance with their abilities. All the headteachers, 100%, were in agreement that streaming of learners had low impact on K.C.S.E performance.

5.4 Conclusions

After analyzing the effects of operational planning strategies in schools K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools in Kiambu District, it is concluded that use of holiday assignments for the students, early opening of school after school holidays, and opener exams after school holidays has high effect on K.C.S.E performance. Streaming of learners is the least used and least effective strategy.

The study also concludes that though use of holiday assignments for the students, early opening of school after school holidays, and opener exams after school holidays has high effect on K.C.S.E performance; there are critical issues that affected their effectiveness. Both the teachers and students do not understand the objectives of the holiday assignments. Teachers also fail to conduct detailed and objective verifications to ensure students had done their holiday assignments. Similarly, early opening of the schools does not have the support of some of the teachers and students.

5.5 Recommendations

From the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- a) **The Ministry of Education should provide short courses on strategic management to B.O.G members. Considering their critical role in management of secondary schools, they should be trained on Total Quality Management in Schools. That is the only way they can spearhead secondary school reforms this can be done in collaboration with Kenya Institute of Management and the Ministry of Education.**
- b) **While it is important to have operational planning strategies for schools on paper, there is need to sensitize secondary school stakeholders on their critical role towards ensuring that the mission, vision, and school values are realized and maintained. Schools administration, with the support of trained B.O.G members, should therefore conduct in-service training for the teachers on the objectives of all process improvement on operational planning strategies.**
- c) **Similarly, the school administration should take advantage of the available communication channels to effectively communicate to students the value of the various operational planning strategies enshrined in the plans.**
- d) **There is need to train teachers both at pre-service training and in-service training levels on mainstreaming. It is a fact that individual differences exist among all learners. Depending on how the differences are handled, schools may continually add value to the weakest candidate in class or**

simply contribute to failure of the candidate. Such failures have major social-economic impacts on the individual learner and the nation.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

From the findings and conclusions of the research, further research has been recommended in the areas below:

- a) Since the study was only carried out in one district, the study can be replicated in other districts in order to determine whether these findings can be replicated.
- b) A study should be conducted to investigate factors affecting effective adoption of mainstreaming in public secondary schools.
- c) A study should also be conducted to investigate challenges that headteachers face in implementation of operational planning strategies for improvement of K.C.S.E performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A INTRODUCTION LETTER

Paul N. Ngugi

P.O. Box 438 0902

KIKUYU

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL.

I am a post-graduate student pursuing a Master of Education (M.Ed) degree in Educational Planning at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a research on “Influence of Operational Planning Strategies on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Examination performance in Kiambu District, Kenya”.

I request you to kindly spare time to fill this questionnaire. The information obtained will be purely for academic purposes. I would like to assure you that the information gathered will be used solely for research purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Paul N. Ngugi
M.Ed Student

APPENDIX B
HEADTEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

This questionnaire seeks information on the "Effect of strategies in schools' strategic plans on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Examination performance in Kiambu District". All the information you give will be used for academic purposes only. Your identity will not be revealed in this research. You are therefore not required to write your name or name of your school in the questionnaire. Please respond to all items in the questionnaire. Put a tick (✓) in the statements that relate to your situation.

Part A: Background Information

1. Your gender

- Male
- Female

2. Your professional qualification

- Bachelor of Education
- Bachelor of Arts/Science
- Masters of education
- Master of Arts/Science
- Other (specify).....

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

- Up to 3 years
- 4 to 10 years

- [] 11 to 20 years
- [] 21 years and more

4. Type of school

- [] Boys Boarding [] Boys Day [] Girls Boarding
- [] Girls Day [] Mixed Boarding Day [] Mixed Day
- Others (Specify)

5. Number of students in the school

6. Number of streams

- [] Single [] Double [] Triple

7. Number of Teaching Staff

Part B: Proportions of Public Secondary Schools that Have Utilized Strategic Plans

Put a tick (✓) in the statements that relate to your situation.

1. How many times have your school prepared strategic plans in the last five years?

- Never prepared one [] once [] Twice [] More than twice []

2. Who were actively involved in the preparation of the plan?

- Headteacher [] B.O.G/P.T.A [] Teachers [] Students []

3. Are you aware that strategies in strategic plans may influence K.C.S.E performance in your school?

- [] Yes [] No

4. What strategies does your school participate in?

Opener examinations []

Holiday assignments []

Early opening after the holiday []

Streaming of learners []

All of the above []

Please specify any other/s

.....
.....
.....

Part C: Effects of strategies in schools' strategic plans in influencing K.C.S.E performance.

1. What is the effect of these strategies in your schools K.C.S.E performance?

a) Opener examinations

High []

Moderate []

Low []

None []

b) Holiday assignments

High []

Moderate []

Low []

None []

c) Early opening after the holiday

High []

Moderate []

Low []

None []

d) Streaming of Learners

High []

Moderate []

Low []

None []

e) Others specify

.....
.....

APPENDIX C
TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

This questionnaire seeks information on the effect of strategies in strategic plans in influencing K.C.S.E performance in public secondary schools. All the information you give will be treated confidentially and for academic purposes only. Please respond to all items in the questionnaire. Put a tick (✓) in the statements that relate to your situation.

Part A: Background Information

1. Number of years served in the current school

- Up to 3 years
 4 to 10 years
 11 years and above

2. Type of school

- Boys Boarding Boys Day Girls Boarding
 Girls Day Mixed Boarding Day Mixed Day
Others (Specify)

Part B: Percentages of Public Secondary Schools that have Utilized Strategies in their Strategic Plans to Influence K.C.S.E performance.

Put a tick (✓) in the statements that relate to your situation.

3. Are you actively involved in the preparation of the strategies used in the school plan?

- Yes No

4. Are you involved in the implementation of strategies in strategic plans in your schools? [] Yes [] No

Part C: Levels of utilization to strategies in strategic plans

The following are options for you to fill to indicate the extent to which you feel about the Effects of schools strategies in strategic plans in influencing K.C.S.E performance in your school. Please tick (✓) to indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the statements.

Strongly agree=5 Agree=4 Neutral = 3 Disagree = 2 Strongly Disagree = 1

Effects of schools' strategies in Strategic Plans in K.C.S.E performance in Kiambu District

No	Effects of schools strategies in strategic plans	SA	A	N	D	SI
	Holiday Assignments					
1.	Holiday assignments are compulsory in every subject taught in the school curriculum					
2.	All students must obtain and execute holiday assignments whereas on holiday					
3.	The objectives of holiday assignments is understood by teachers and students in this school					
4.	Detailed and objective verifications is carried out to ensure students have done their holiday assignments					
#	Opener examinations					
5.	Opener exams are enforced in all co-curriculum based subjects in this school					
6.	Opener exams are mandatory for all students in this school					
7.	Opener exams are comprehensive and test the content					

	and the intent of the syllabus					
8.	The goals and objectives of opener exams are understood by both teachers and students					
	Early opening					
9.	All students and teachers participate in early opening of the school when required to do so					
10.	The early opening of the school is geared towards better performance in K.C.S.E					
11.	The goals and objectives of early opening is understood by both teachers and students in this school					
	Streaming of Learners					
12	Streaming of learners is done in accordance with their aptitude abilities					
13	Students who require more remedial tuition and contact time from teachers are assisted independently					
14	Streaming is done to ensure better K.C.S.E performance in this school					
15	The objectives of streaming is understood by both teachers and students in this school					

APPENDIX D
RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegram: "SCIENTECH", Nairobi
Telephone: 254-020-341349, 2213103
254-020-310571, 2213123
Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318145, 310249
When replying, please quote

NCST/RI/12/1/SS-011/818/5

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke
Date: 2nd June, 2011

Our Ref:

Paul N. Ngugi
University of Nairobi
P. O. Box 30197
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Effects of strategies in schools' strategic plan on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Examination performance in Kiambu District*", I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Kiambu District for a period ending *31st August, 2011*.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner & the District Education Officer, Kiambu District before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit one hard copy and one soft copy of the research report/thesis to our office.


DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioner
Kiambu District

The District Education Officer
Kiambu District