

**STRATEGIC ISSUES AND PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU EAST AND CENTRAL SUB-
COUNTIES, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research study is my original work and has not been presented to any other University for the award of degree or diploma certificate.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my beloved husband Charles, my adorable children, Tony, Charles, Chelsea and Liz, for supporting me while undertaking the study, that they'll strive to better this achievement.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BOM	Board of Management
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
EFA	Education For All
FSE	Free Secondary Education
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KESI	Kenya Education Staff Institute
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
KISE	Kenya Institute of Special Education
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
KNUT	Kenya National Union of Teachers
KUCCPS	Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service
KUPPET	Kenya Union of Post Primary Education
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
TSC	Teachers Service Commission

ABSTRACT

Strategic issues are fundamental policy questions or critical challenges that affect an organization's mandates, mission and values. The environment, in which firms operate as open systems, is the custodian of these issues. Performance is about the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal processes of a firm, which reflect in its competencies. Consistent environmental monitoring enables firms to position themselves to be able to strengthen their capabilities, ward off threats and hence achieve remarkable performance for prolonged periods. Public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties are organizations that interact with the environment in their bid to exercise their mandates, hence strategic issues there-in impact their achievement of desired performance. This study aimed at establishing strategic issues and their influence on performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central Sub-counties, Kenya. The study was carried out through a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. Strategic issues were identified using questionnaire while performance data was gathered by content analysis. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to determine strength of influence of various strategic issues on KCSE performance. The study found that there are both internal and external strategic issues in these schools. These further revealed the possible internal strengths and weaknesses as well as possible opportunities and threats in their environments that influence performance as reflected in the mean scores and resultant transition numbers of various schools. The study concluded that issues such as student factors and funding are important to schools in carrying out their activities and present areas of weakness in most of the schools as independent variables. Strategic issues such as resources availability, staffing, networks and linkages and school-based factors were found to be statistically significant as independent issues influencing performance. Use of an exhaustive strategic issue list since the one used accounts for 98% of issues influencing performance in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties; a wider context of study, to include all sub-counties in Kisumu county and use of other performance constructs, other than KCSE results would further give strength to these findings. Public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties are open systems, constantly communicating and interacting with the environment. Relevance to path dependence theory has been established in the role of school leadership in interpreting and enforcing national policies governing education in their respective schools. In relation to chaos theory, the study highlights the need for the schools to adapt to emerging changes in their environments while injection of new energy through embracing new technology, is in line with modern complexity theory. Studies on management of strategic issues in public secondary schools would further develop this area of study.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Organizations are open systems, influenced by internal as well as external factors. Factors in the environment shape opportunities and challenges facing them and understanding this is important in defining objectives and developing strategies that will ultimately result in competitive advantage (Pearce and Robinson, 2007). Internally, organizations have strengths that they need to exploit and weaknesses they need to reduce and turn into strengths, for continued survival and profitability. It is therefore important for organizations to identify those strategic issues within and outside of itself that significantly influences its performance, with a view of reducing their weaknesses and exploiting or creating opportunities to further their purpose. Aguilar (1967) proposed four styles of scanning; undirected viewing, conditioned viewing, informal search and formal search; the choice decided by a collection of scanning rules and issue characteristics.

Organizations are enormously complex being non-linear systems, hence a small change of one or two parameters can drastically change the behavior of the whole system, and the whole can be very different from the sum of the parts (Daft and Lewin 1990). Systems theory, as initially proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968), emphasizes that real systems are open to, and interact with, their environments and that they acquire qualitatively new properties through emergence, resulting in continual evolution. Path dependence theory as examined by Bebhuk et al (1999) explain that initial ownership

structures determine corporate structures because they affect the identity of the structure that would be efficient for any given company. Also corporate rules, which affect ownership structures, will themselves depend on the corporate structures with which the economy started. Rules generate structure because the state that is the output of one application of rules becomes the input for the next round. Chaos theory put forward by Lorenz (1963) demonstrates that simple laws can have complicated, unpredictable consequences, rendering long term prediction generally impossible. Complexity theory as proposed by Anderson (1999) describes how complex causes can produce simple effects. Organization design tries to match the complexity of an organization's structure with the complexity of its environment and technology.

Schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya, operate in an external environment consisting of political, economic, social, ecological, technological and legal factors. The internal environment consists of the resources and capabilities within the schools. By exploring the factors that influence the education activities in these sub-counties, education stakeholders can work out the best ways to implement education policies. The intensifying competitive performance among secondary schools in Kenya dictate that schools in these sub- counties must continuously identify their internal capabilities and resources as well as external factors in their environment in order to align them to achieve better performance, hence, secure the limited chances in tertiary institutions as well as employment opportunities.

1.1.1 The Concept of Strategic Issues

Ansoff and Mc Donnell (1990) define a strategic issue as a forthcoming development, either inside or outside of the organization, which is likely to have an important impact on the ability of the organization to meet its objectives. Further, they suggest that the issue may be an opportunity to be grasped in the environment, or an internal strength which can be exploited to advantage. It can also be an external threat or an internal weakness which hinder continuing success, or even survival of the organization. Bryson (1995) views strategic issues as fundamental policy questions or critical challenges that affect an organization's mandates, mission and values, product or service level, clients or financing organization or management. A strategic issue requires that the organization either takes action immediately, monitor or take action in future, depending on urgency and importance of the issue. Aguilar (1967) defines issue scanning as the activity of acquiring information about events and relationships in a company's external environment, the knowledge of which would be useful in assisting top management in its task of charting the company's future course of action.

The concept of strategic issues first appeared during the evolution of strategic planning. A comprehensive analysis of environmental trends and prospects is crucial in identifying strategic issues. Ansoff and Mc Donnell (1990) posit that early identification can be through periodic review and updating of key strategic issue list throughout the year. Heugens (2001) identifies two possible scanning modes, that is; prospective- aims at identifying issues when they are still inchoate, thus giving the organization warnings about potential issues; and passive –issues identified when they are already mature. The

immediate identification of urgent important issues, in the external or internal environment, that require senior management action to resolve can then be used to determine thrusts for the future development of the organization (Dutton, 1986). Some of the environmental issues include- trends in the global market place, changes in age distribution of customers, government controls, consumer pressures, union pressures, strategic resource shortages, technological breakthroughs, inflation, among others. Internal trends include size, complexity, management style, workforce competence, among others. Some of the strategic issues confronting managers today are depletion of natural energy resources, the relationship between corporate control and politics, distributive justice and the emergence of new forms of corporate governance. Mahoney, et al (2006) further suggest, pervasive and worsening poverty, digitization and globalization of many industries, sky rocketing interest rates, corruption and terrorism, among others as emerging developments affecting firms.

Organizations are social entities that are goal oriented, designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity system, linked to the environment. Daft (2007) states that an assessment of the opportunities and threats in the external environment, and internal strengths and weaknesses, can enable an organization define distinctive competence. To deal effectively with everything that affects the growth and profitability of a firm, executives employ management processes that they feel will position it optimally in its environment by maximizing the anticipation of environmental changes and of unexpected internal and competitive demands (Pearce and Robinson, 2011). Strategic issue management improves performance through timely anticipation of new

developments, hence ensuring fast response to problems which may arise from any source, be it socio-economic, political or technological. It also enables the development of a quick internal reaction time, and compatibility of organizational structures and systems to new developments in the environment. When an organization fails to monitor its environment, then it faces the danger of maintaining inefficient internal processes, strained internal social climate, consumer pressures, among other factors, that will promote a decline in profitability, reduced market share and possible closure of the firm.

1.1.2 Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is a collection of work activities efficiency, effectiveness and tardiness at work; their measurement and subsequent outcome of the work activities (Dessler, 2008). Organizational performance can be understood from two aspects; internal measures which relate to the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal processes within the firm, and reflect the competencies of the firm for example, excellent customer service and reliability; external measures reflect the assessment of a firm by factors outside of the firm's boundaries and includes market share, sales growth and customer satisfactions among others (Richard et al, 1994). Performance is the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed.

Traditionally, firm performance has been measured using financial ratios like sales, profit cash flow, earnings per share, dividends, stock price, returns on investment,

returns on equity, revenue, and so on, mainly measuring shareholder value. However, it is difficult to select a single measure of firm performance because performance is a multidimensional construct, requiring multiple indicators. Daft (1995) proposes that firm size in terms of staff, sales and assets, technology environment, firm strategy and culture form basis for firm measurement and analysis. Kaplan and Norton (1996) introduced balanced scorecard as a more realistic measure of performance, the indicators being financial, customer service and satisfaction index, learning and growth within the organization, and efficient internal business processes. It provides feedback around both the internal business processes and external outcomes in order to continuously improve strategic performance and results.

Stakeholder measures, shareholder value and balanced scorecard approach are methods that can be used to assess overall corporate performance (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008). Triple Bottom Line as proposed by Elkington (1994) is an accounting framework focused on sustainability used to evaluate performance, with the indicators being social, environmental and financial. Hence, Neely and Najjar (2006) indicate that organizations have over the years been assessing whether they have been meeting their goals and there is need to keep doing so, especially as modern performance measurement methods emerge. However the bottom line is that organizational performance relates to the effectiveness and efficiency of the firm.

1.1.3 Strategic Issues and Performance

Organizational performance is a function of many factors that include the firm's external environment, that is, political, social, technological and legal factors; it's internal socio-economic culture and time period over which it has established its competencies. These competencies include relationships with customers, efficient management structures, efficiency in internal processes, innovativeness, among others, that ensure continued survival, growth and profitability (Pearce and Robinson, 2011). Dutton and Ashford (1993) put it that no issue is inherently strategic, but becomes so when top management believes that it has relevance for organizational performance.

Leadership and management are crucial to the performance of a firm as they are essential for the distinctive competence of an organization (Mahoney et al, 2006). Some managers fail to adjust their mental maps in response to changing environments, which eventually leads to flawed strategic decisions- hence new understanding of the environment must be developed (Dutton and Webster, 1988). Since firms are operating in an ever changing environment, they need to monitor those emerging issues in their environment that can adversely influence their existence. By so doing, they position themselves to be able to strengthen their capabilities and ward off threats, hence achieve a remarkable performance over a prolonged period.

1.1.4 Public Secondary Schools in Kenya

Formal education in Kenya was founded by missionaries during the colonial era as they endeavored to spread Christianity. The Kenya Education Commission (Ominde Report 1964 – 1965) recommendations influenced development of education significantly in post – independence Kenya, as it formed the basis for formulation of the goals of education in Kenya. Various education commissions have since been set up and their reports have continued to direct education policies in the country. They include (Bessay Report 1972, Gachathi Report 1976, Mackay Report 1981, Kamunge Report 1988, Koech Commission Report 1999). Mackay Report established the current 8-4-4 system, of which secondary school education is the second stage, catering for students aged 14-17 years.

The 8-4-4 system was introduced with the aim of responding to challenges of national development; offer a wider range of employment opportunities and to provide equitable distribution of education resources. Currently, public secondary schools are funded by the government and communities and managed by the Board of Management (BOM) and Parents Teachers Association (PTA). Some of the schools are sponsored by religious entities. The curriculum used is prepared by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) covering six major areas, that is; Language, Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities, Applied Education and Physical Education. Mean grade attained by students in the KCSE exam administered by KNEC, based on a specific combination of subjects determines entry into the local universities, currently set at C+ minimum. Given the current limited capacity in higher institutions of learning, admission has

become highly competitive and students need to attain a mean grade in KCSE that is higher than minimum eligibility requirement. Of 123,000 students who attained mean grade C+ and above in 2013 KCSE exam, only 72,000 were selected by KUCCPS to join Kenyan public universities and colleges on Government sponsorship (Standard digital news, 2014). Through KNUT and KUPPET teaching-learning process is interfered with when such unions call for strikes. KISE trains teachers to enable them handle special needs students. KESI is concerned with developing managerial capacity of staff already in the field. TSC deploys trained, registered teachers to schools.

Due to the large increase in enrolment in primary schools in Kenya since free primary education was introduced in 2003, the number of students seeking secondary education has grown significantly. In 1963 at independence, there were 157 secondary schools. Currently, there are over 4,000 secondary schools. The increase in number of schools is due to setting up of new school using CDF in many constituencies while the introduction of free day secondary schooling in 2008 is responsible for the increased number of students. FSE has also enhanced transition rate from primary to secondary school to 72% in 2011, up from 47% in 2001(Economic Survey, 2011).

1.1.5 Public Secondary Schools in Kisumu East and Central Sub-Counties, Kenya

In Kisumu Central Sub-county, the public secondary schools are mainly found in the suburbs around Kisumu, one of the major towns in the country. The schools are accessible by use of public service vehicles. The highly populated estates of this area

are a major source of students in this sub- county. The schools are in touch with new occurrences in the country and the world due to accessibility to electricity supply, presence of all weather roads, and presence of regional headquarters of Government departments and not for profit organizations as well as services associated with major towns. This then influences the variety of subjects offered in these schools. Problems associated with urban life for example, developing traffic jam during peak hours, noise pollution, moral decadence and poverty are some of the challenges these schools confront on a daily basis. In Kisumu East sub-county, most of the schools are rural-based, served by dry weather roads and ill-distributed power supply. In most of the schools, semi-permanent buildings are a common feature, used as classrooms, laboratory, and kitchen. Many of the schools are established on clan basis, hence, the communities perceptions and attitudes do influence schools' activities.

Generally, in the two sub-counties, most of the schools are mixed day, with a few girls only and boys only schools. Boarding schools are few, with some schools offering boarding facilities to students in Forms 3 and 4 only. Academic performance in these schools is good in a few, most showing fluctuations, with a number performing dismally in KCSE exams. There are a total of 24 public secondary schools in the sub-counties, with 12 in Kisumu East and 12 in Kisumu Central that presented candidates for the KCSE exam 2013. The schools are served by both TSC employees as well as trained and untrained teachers employed by the BOM on temporary terms. Parents' role in funding of these schools is crucial in development initiatives as well as lunch programs or boarding schedules not catered for by Government FSE funds.

1.2 The Research Problem

Environmental scanning identify an early opportunity for seeking new directions for the organization as well as identifying threats to corporate strategic decisions (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008). Organizations are faced with a turbulent environment that is volatile and unpredictable. Heugens (2001) explains how societal problems suddenly emerge, exist over a limited life span, and gradually give way to new issues .Regular environmental scanning resulting in identification of strategic issues enables organizations learn about trends in the environment and establish relationships between them so as to extract the main implications for decision making and strategy development. Changes in the environment influence how capabilities are developed within an organization. In turn, these capabilities affect business performance. At the organizational level, various characteristics of the strategic planning process systematically influence characteristics of the strategic issues that decision- makers attend to (Dutton and Duncan, 1987). This implies that the information derived from monitoring developments in the environment can be successfully used to improve an organization's abilities to deal with the rapidly changing environment, hence remain profitable.

Public Secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central operate under different environments in terms of administrative, physical environment, availability of resources and funding. Continuous growth in the education sector in terms of student enrolment in secondary schools, in line with the Government's overall policy goal of achieving EFA by 2015, has put a strain on the teaching – learning activity in these schools and hence performance has been hampered in some of them (Sessional Paper 1, 2005). High

ranking in KCSE examination brings prestige to the school, attracts more academically able students, experienced teachers and increase good will from parents, well-wishers and donors. These help in improvement of internal capabilities to counter emerging challenges in the education sector, for example e-learning. Newly established schools in these sub-counties, however, have to struggle to create a culture enabling academic excellence, their main focus being survival, hence exhibit faltering performance in KCSE examinations. However, there are also schools that appear to have more than minimum internal capabilities, but their academic results have remained below expectation. These unique contextual scenarios form the basis of this study.

Despite the importance of education in overcoming ignorance and as a development vehicle, comprehensive research on strategic issues influencing performance in public secondary schools is scarce. Daft et al (1998) in his findings, suggest that customer, competitor and economic issues cause great strategic uncertainty; and that there is a positive relationship between company profitability and scanning behavior. Garge et al (2003) established that high performing managers, vary their environment scanning emphases on different issues according to the perceived level of dynamism in both the external and internal environment, associated with high performance.

Recent studies have tended to focus on one or two strategic issues in relation to performance. Ngonga (2009) contends that the link and relationship between organizational politics, firm performance and firm corporate strategy is getting stronger and more pronounced; Mwanza (2009) found a positive relationship between corporate

governance and performance; Okioma (2011) established that employee empowerment improves performance in his study of 30 public schools in Tiriki West; Mibei (2011) established a relationship between the inner workings of the strategic planning process and performance, but the role of an organization's external environment was not explored. He recommended this for further study. From the foregoing studies, there exists a knowledge gap in research on the influence of strategic issues on performance of public secondary schools in Kenya; hence, what are the strategic issues influencing performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya?

1.3 Research Objectives

- i. To establish strategic issues in Public Secondary Schools in Kisumu East and Central Sub-counties.

- ii. To establish the influence of strategic issues on performance of Public Secondary Schools in Kisumu East and Central Sub-counties.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of this study intend to inform the public on strategic issues influencing performance of public secondary schools and their relative impact on performance since public funds have been invested in the sector. It will enable policy makers in the education sector in the region make strategic decisions in the light of globalization, increased competition, technological improvement, environment pressure and awareness so as to achieve the educational objectives. The leadership in Kisumu County

will obtain information that will enable it act appropriately and expeditiously to raise education standards in these sub-counties by allocating more funds towards upgrading educational facilities, supporting needy students and ensuring equity of the same among schools.

The findings of the study intend to enlighten the education managers to enable them find and embrace other methods of measuring teacher performance other than using students KCSE results. The quality assessment department will be motivated to carry out regular inspection of all public secondary schools to establish the adequacy of resources, staffing and school- based factors, among other issues, required to achieve desired level of performance, hence be able to recommend regular and timely allocation of funds from government as necessary.

Also, this study is useful for its contribution to the body of knowledge in the field and as further evidence of organizations being open systems. Hence it may be used as a source of references and areas to be identified for further study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the theories on which the study is anchored, how they relate to the research question and related literature on the subject under study, as presented by various researchers, scholars and authors. The review has drawn material from sources closely related to the theme and objective of the study. It also states gaps to be filled by the study and how the study differs from past studies.

2.2 Theories Anchoring the Study

This study is anchored on; systems theory, path dependence, chaos and complexity theories. Systems theory as used today was proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy who put forward the General Systems Theory (1968) as a reaction against reductionism and an attempt to revive the unity of science. A system is viewed as the interaction of its components, but the whole being independent of the parts. The interaction of the system's components is nonlinear. Communication and transaction are essential for the system to attain equilibrium, particularly for an open system, that uses information from the environment to effect changes- this increases its chances to survive and prosper. The overall health of an open system is strongly linked with its ability to anticipate and to adapt to environmental change. A closed system on the other hand does not interact with its environment and is therefore likely to decline. Systems theory provides an internally consistent framework for classifying and evaluating all complex entities. The theory is relevant to this study since schools are open systems that must transact with elements of the environment in order to obtain necessary resources for survival, and need to change

with new developments in their environments. They are systems because they consist of interconnected components that work together.

Path dependence theory is used to explain the structure of organizations. Two factors are identified by (Bebchuk et al, 1999) that is, structure driven and rule driven. They put it that the ways in which initial ownership structures in an economy directly influence subsequent ownership structures is a factor of structure driven path dependence while corporate rules can affect ownership and governance structures. Legal rules can encourage or discourage of concentrated ownership, constrain or push in a certain direction- like the choice of governance structure. Hence, changing legal rules and policies can have a marked impact on the activities of an organization within that environment. in relation to this study, it suggests that organizations, though guided by initial policies and rules have to evolve with changing environment in order to fit in.

Chaos theory as demonstrated by Lorenz (1963), studies the behavior of dynamic systems that are highly sensitive to initial conditions- a paradigm popularly referred to as the 'butterfly effect'. It is an extension of systems theory to include phenomena that lives outside of our normal perceptual limits of experience. It attempts to explain and model the seemingly random components of a system. Small differences in initial conditions yield large changes in the system due to the nonlinear nature of the components of these systems, which can have both stable and unstable characteristics. Turbulence is chaos on all scales; a relatively small but well timed or well placed jolt to a system can throw the entire system into a state of chaos. The challenge in the chaotic system is to discover the nonlinear relationship among the components and understanding the dynamics of these

systems. In relation to this study, due to the interactions of many economic forces and the rapidity of change, organizations must constantly reassess their vision and adapt to abrupt changes in the environment.

Complexity theory concerns systems that show complex global behavior as a result of local interaction of components where the behavior of components is determined by relatively simple rules. Daft (1992), equates complexity with the number of activities or subsystems within the organization. Organization design tries to match the complexity of an organization's structure with the complexity of its environment and technology (Galbraith, 1995). Modern complexity theory suggests that some systems with many interactions among highly differentiated parts can produce surprisingly simple, predictable behavior while others generate behavior that is impossible to forecast, though they feature simple rules and few actors.

It treats organizations as collections of strategies and structures. The structure is complex in that they are dynamic networks of interactions, their relationships are not aggregations of the individual and collective behavior mutate and self organize corresponding to a change-initiating micro-event or collection of events. Anderson (1999) states that self organization only occurs in open systems that import energy from outside since organizations are dissipative structures that can only be maintained when members are induced to contribute energy to them. The more turbulent an organization's environment is, the more energy must be generated to keep the system beyond the threshold above which self organization is sustained. In relation to this study, every organization, at

whatever level it exists, has some sensitivity and responds to it. Hence developments in the environment can only be ignored to the detriment of the organization.

2.3 Strategic Issues and Organizational Performance

Firms operate in competitive, institutional and cognitive environment. Changes in the environment influence how capabilities develop and in turn these capabilities affect business performance. The environment shapes the organizational capabilities through the information they provide to firms about successful ways of doing business. Performance therefore is an ongoing sequence of capabilities- conditioned adaptations. Information age organizations of today need to create future value through investing in customers, suppliers, employees, technology and innovation. Biticti et al (2000) identify that performance measurement needs to be sensitive to changes in the external environment of an organization, reviewing and prioritizing internal objectives when the changes in the external and internal environment are significant enough, deploying the changes to internal objectives and priorities to critical parts of the organization, thus ensuring alignment at all times; and ensuring that gains achieved through improvement programs are maintained.

With reference to the indicators proposed by Kaplan and Norton (1996), in the balanced scorecard, in the current climate of rapid technological change, it is necessary for employees to be in a continuous learning mode. The managers need to set aside funds for training of employees, stimulate their morale, provide mentors and develop communication systems to encourage free interaction of employees, hence ease in solving emergent problems. Development of capabilities as a response to changes in the

environment would lead to more efficient internal processes, in terms of productivity rates, quality measures, timelines and even production of new products. The issue of customer satisfaction and loyalty is emerging as an important factor in the face of changing customer needs and globalization. Ignoring this will gradually result in customers moving away to other suppliers that will meet their needs, hence, poor performance will lead to future decline of the organization. The importance of timely and adequate funding cannot be overlooked, especially when the environment demands innovativeness or acquisition of major technological tools to sustain or improve performance levels of the organization.

Strategic issue analysis also aids firm performance through: acting as a basis for allocation of resources and setting priorities; enables short term monitoring of the budgeted financial goals, customers, internal processes and learning and growth, hence evaluate strategy in the light of recent performance; enables implementation of change programs by increasing focus on the drivers of future performance; enables firm to take timely action to close unfavorable gaps in performance, among others. The current performance of an organization thus stems from the historic environment as well as current capabilities and environment.

Hambrick (1982) posits that issue scanning itself has no basis for competitive advantage, but success follows from the propensity and ability to act upon certain environmental information. The findings of Daft et al (1998) suggest that customer, economic and competitor sectors generate greater strategic uncertainty than do technological regulatory and socio-cultural sectors. The study also established a positive relationship between

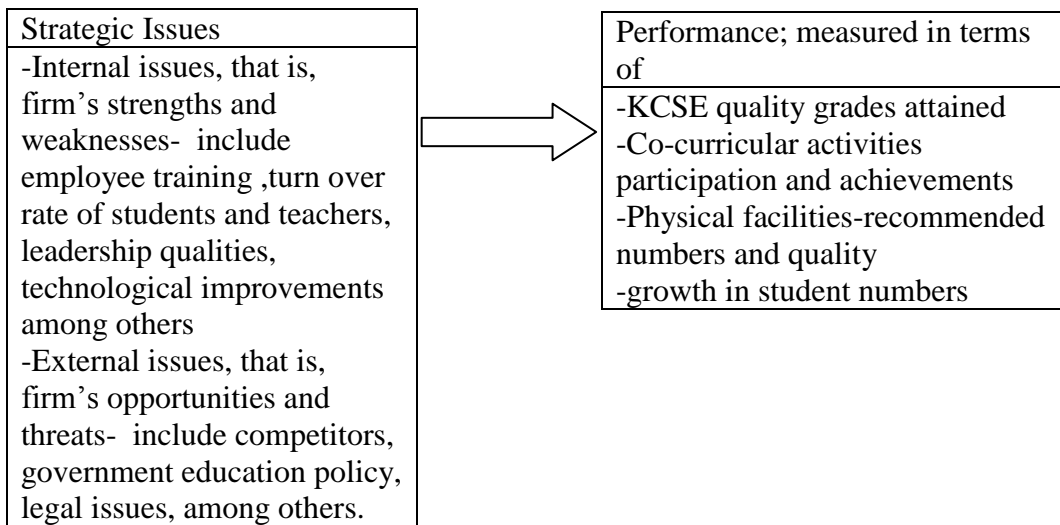
company profitability and scanning behavior. This suggests that executives in high-performing companies tailor scanning to perceived uncertainty. Garge et al (2003) studied the scanning emphases of CEO's under varying environmental dynamisms in 105 manufacturing companies. Their result suggest that high performing CEO's vary their relative scanning emphases on different domains according to the perceived level of dynamism in the external environment; particularly, relatively more CEO's attention to the task sectors of the external environment and to innovation-related internal functions is associated with high performance in turbulent environment. Conversely, in stable external environments increased scanning of general sectors of the general environment coupled with internal focus on efficiency related functions results in higher performance.

Ngonga (2009) argues that firms will basically have organizational politics and its positive aspects such as persuasion, lobbying activities, corporate governance, employee cooperation, firm reputation, among others, have a moderating effect on the relationship between firm performance and firm corporate strategy. He further posits that firms will align their internal processes with public policy demands to maximize returns on their investments and that reactive strategies involve compliance with political standards by an organization, which has been shown to increase organizational legitimacy and hence performance. Mwanza (2009) by use of regression analysis established a positive and significant relationship between corporate governance in his study covering a range of years, from 1999 to 2008 in the case of Afya Sacco Limited.

Okioma (2011) in her findings suggests that teachers who took part in training posted an improvement of 51.48% in their schools implying that training modified knowledge,

skills, attitudes and behaviors of respondents in the study, necessary to achieve effective performance. She also established in her findings that the teacher student ratio of 1:62 makes it difficult for the teachers to give enough time to each student and hence impact performance negatively. Mibei (2011) in his study found a relationship between the inner workings of the planning process and performance, and that organization which undertake formal strategic planning, that involve strategic issue management, with greater or less intensity perform better than non planners. This study differs from the above in that it looks into both external and internal strategic issues in relation to performance, particularly KCSE performance and transition numbers to higher institutions of learning, in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central, Kenya.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model; Influence of Strategic Issues on Firm’s Performance



Source; Research Literature Review

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The subject of this chapter is to put forward how the researcher set to gather data that was valuable in answering the research question and study objectives. It entails a description of the design of the study, data source, data collection instrument and data analysis techniques that were used to give relevant meaning to the data obtained from the field.

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional descriptive survey design to establish the influence of strategic issues on performance. A descriptive research is a process of collecting data in order to answer question regarding the current status of the subjects in the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The design determines and reports the way things are with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. It aims to find characteristics of a population under study but does not explain causal relationships. It aims at gathering data without any manipulation of the research context.

In this survey method the researcher intended to establish the influence of a range of both internal and external strategic issues on performance at a particular point in time. The design was used to identify and analyze relevant issues affecting performance which then form the basis for informing priority strategic issues influencing performance in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya.

3.3 Population of Study

The target population of interest constituted all public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, hence a census survey. According to the County Education Office report there were 24 public secondary schools within the two counties which had participated in KCSE by the year 2013. The schools are located in varying socio-ecological environments and will give the necessary true representation of the area of study.

The schools include county, sub- county and national schools, some of which are day, boarding, mixed or same sex in nature. Some of the schools are in urban part of Kisumu town while some are located in the rural areas.

3.4 Data collection

Primary and secondary data were collected for this study. Primary data from respondents was collected through structured questionnaires comprising of close ended questions. The questionnaires were self-administered with the researcher dropping them at the schools offices and collecting them after they had been filled. The target respondents included Principals/ Deputy Principals and Heads of Departments who are most influential in the strategic decisions made by the school, and are instrumental in overseeing the implementation of those decisions.

Clear and simple questions were used in the questionnaire. Close-ended questions were used in the section of general information, as they are easy to code and statistically analyze. This section contained the demographic information of respondents as well as basic information about the various institutions. The second part of the questionnaire was

used to gather information on strategic issues of importance to schools, by use of Likert-type scale. Secondary data covering KCSE results for the years 2011 to 2013 was collected from the sub-county education examination offices, using the tables in Appendix III.

3.5 Data Analysis

Analysis and summary of data using descriptive statistics, that is, use of frequency tables, percentages, mean scores, pie charts and bar graphs was applied. The response rate was determined from the completed questionnaires collected back. Use of frequencies aided in analyzing demographic data of size, type and years of existence of school, level of education, length of service, category of school, average performance of schools between 2011 and 2013, and so on. Demographic characteristics obtained from Section A, are an important way to measure individual cognitive bases, which in turn combine to create certain team abilities and tendencies, finally reflected in the decision outcomes (Hambrick and Mason, 1984).

Multivariate regression analysis using SPSS was used to establish the strength and significance of relationship between strategic issues and schools' performance. The independent variable for this study was the strategic issues which define and independently interact, resulting in the observed schools' performance. The dependent variable was narrowed down to KCSE mean scores which determine transition numbers to higher learning institutions.

The regression equation; $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \dots + \epsilon$

Where Y = Schools' performance

X_1 = Resources

X_2 = Institutional Factors

X_3 = Networks and Linkages

X_4 = Staffing

X_5 = Student-Based Factors

X_6 = Stakeholder Factors

X_7 = Socio-Economic Trends

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and findings of the study as set out in the research methodology. The objectives of the research were; to establish strategic issues in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties and; to establish the influence of strategic issues on performance of public secondary schools in the two sub-counties. To achieve these objectives, the study targeted 24 respondents representative of the 24 public secondary schools in the two sub- counties. However, one respondent did not participate, citing lack of time due to pressure of work. This represented a 95.8% response rate and a 4.2% non- response rate, hence provided a reliable base for the findings in this study. Data was obtained from the 23 public secondary schools using a structured questionnaire and also from the sub-county education offices, from where secondary data on KCSE results of various schools for the three years under study were obtained.

With the use of the questionnaire, the researcher gathered background information of respondents, to enable the researcher make conclusions on how background information informs strategic issues influencing performance in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya. The information gathered included year of establishment of school, category and nature of the school, enrolment, total number of teachers employed by TSC, as well as educational level attained by respondents and their length of service in the current station. The questionnaire was also used to determine the strategic issues in the schools. From a list of proposed issues, the respondent was required

to indicate, in a scale ranging between 1 and 5, the importance of an issue to his/ her school's activities. The findings were then analyzed to establish the importance of various issues in the schools.

4.2 Schools' and Respondents' Demographics

For each of the schools that participated in the study, the demographics captured included; the schools' classification, age of the school, student population and number of TSC employed teachers, while the respondents level of education as well as their length of service in the current station were established. The findings were as in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Schools' Demographics

Demographic	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
School Classification	National girls boarding	1	4.35
	County girls boarding	1	4.35
	County boys day	2	8.70
	County mixed day	2	8.70
	Sub- county mixed day	17	73.9
	Total	23	100
Age of school	Less than 10 years	3	13.04
	10 to 20 years	9	39.13
	More than 20 years	11	47.83
	Total	23	100
Student population	Less than 200	6	26.09
	200 to 500	8	34.78
	More than 500	9	39.13

Table 4.1 Continued			
	Total	23	100
TSC employed teachers	Less than 10	6	26.09
	10 to 19	8	34.78
	20 to 29	5	21.74
	30 and above	4	17.39
	Total	23	100
Respondents': - Level of education	Diploma	0	0
	Bachelor degree	17	73.91
	Master degree	6	26.09
	Total	23	100
- Length of service in current station	Less than 1 year	0	0
	1 to 3 years	0	0
	More than 3years	23	100
	Total	23	100

The study established that National girls' boarding schools comprised 4.35% of the total, County girls boarding 4.35%, County boys day 8.7 %, County mixed day 8.7% and Sub-county mixed day 73.9%. This shows that there is a shortage of boarding schools, particularly boys boarding is completely lacking. County girls' day is also amiss. These, coupled with the fact that the only national school available is a girls school, goes a long way to show the inadequacy of required resources in the schools in these sub-counties. This implies that general performance in the two sub- counties is influenced to a large extent by the large number of sub- county mixed day schools. Classification of a school, particularly in terms of National, County or Sub-county is important as it reflects the

availability of resources in the school. Categorization as day or boarding, suggest how far away students in the school can be coming from.

The study revealed that 47.83% of the schools have been in existence for over 20 years, 39.13% between 10 to 20 years and 13.04% for less than 10 years. This means that more than half the total numbers of schools have been in existence for the last 20 years only, that is, they were established long after independence. They therefore have not had adequate time to develop and accumulate adequate resources, both physical and human, as well as tradition and culture to keep things moving in order to achieve desirable performance levels. It also suggests that, 47.83% of the schools have had a longer duration to deal with strategic issues influencing performance, hence are likely to have a better performance index compared with the more recently established schools. Schools age is therefore important in determining resources, linkages, tradition, among other issues, that a school may have developed capabilities or strengths in order to continue being effective in executing its mandate.

Majority of the respondents were found to be in schools with over 500 students, at 39.13%; those with enrolment ranging between 200 to 500 constituted 34.78%, while those with less than 200 students made up the remaining 26.09%. These results show that the schools that have been in existence for a longer period are likely to have higher student enrolment than those that have been in existence for shorter periods. It implies that parents are most likely to take their children to schools whose performance in national exams is predictable, rather than take them to up- coming schools whose performance have not established a desired trend yet. The researcher inferred from this

data that there are a significant number of students in the less established schools, with up to 500 students each. This means that the well established schools lack resources to expand, to cater for more students hence the schools with between 200 to 500 students represent alternative schools, where students enroll due the high competition for the former. The schools with up to 200 students represent recently established schools that are struggling for survival and recognition. These schools have a lot of strategic issues to deal with, that can influence negatively, the general performance index of the schools in the two sub-counties. The student population is important in determining the size of the schools in these sub-counties and the rate of transition to higher learning institutions following students' performance in KCSE.

The study indicates that schools in the two sub-counties with less than 10 teachers form 26.09% of the total; 34.78% have between 10 and 19 teachers; 21.74% have 20 to 29 while 17.39% have 30 plus teachers. This distribution is explained by the distribution of students in various schools which in turn influence the possible number of teachers deployed by TSC to serve in those schools. The higher the number of students, the higher the number of TSC employed teachers. Schools with less than 200 students thus have less than 10 TSC teachers. This in turn means that these schools have a large number of BOM employed teachers, who are trained or untrained, depending on the payment packages on offer, which are also subject to the individual schools' resources. This category of teachers are very essential in these lowly populated schools as they instruct in subject areas where the TSC has not deployed a teacher, as compared to more established schools where the said category supplement the work of the TSC teachers. The availability of

trained teachers, employed by TSC determines the effective utilization of schools' resources and promotes accountability, hence performance in schools.

All respondents, 100%, had served in their current stations for over three years, hence had reliable knowledge of the schools, in terms of availability of resources, sources of funding, student and staffing factors, schools' culture as well as networks and linkages, among others. This knowledge was essential to identifying importance of various strategic issues in their respective schools.

Most respondents, 73.91%, had acquired a bachelor degree whereas 26.09% had master degree. This was significant to the study as it revealed that the management position in these schools comprise professionals. These respondents who included Principals, Deputy Principals and some Senior Heads of Departments, were of significant importance to the study since they were individuals who are sensitive to both internal and external emerging issues in their schools' environments, that lead them to make decisions intended to enable their schools achieve their mandates: the main one being academic excellence.

4.3 Strategic Issues

The second section of the questionnaire was used to establish strategic issues in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. The study required the respondents to indicate, from a prepared list of issues contributing to schools' activities, the extent of importance of each strategic issue in their schools on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was-of no importance and 5 -very important. After the completed questionnaires were collected from the respondents, the list of 40 issues provided to respondents was

condensed to 7 categories of issues for ease of analysis as in Table 4.2. The issues in each category were then ranked by finding an average of their values as indicated by respondents and fitting this according to the Likert scale. This was done for each of the 23 schools that participated in the study. These values were then analyzed by finding the mean and standard deviation for each category for the 23 schools.

Table 4.2 Categories of Strategic Issues

Category	Strategic issues	Mean	S.D
Resources	Classrooms, science laboratories, computer rooms, library, multipurpose halls, school bus. sports facilities, income generating activities, electricity, and clean water availability.	3.6957	.82212
Institutional or school-based	Extra subjects offered aver the basic 11, commencement of learning after termly holidays, student-teacher contact hours, schools' tradition and teacher supervision.	3.7391	.75181
Networking and linkages	Role of alumni, benchmarking practice, exchange programs with foreign institutions, competition from schools of same category, and mentorship programs practice.	3.1739	.65033
Staffing factors	Skill and competence of teaching and support staff, teacher turn over rate, teacher motivation, use of ICT, guidance and counseling programs, and teachers' strikes.	3.5652	.66237
Student factors	KCPE scores, absenteeism due to school fees, student turn over rate, and their source area.	3.9130	.66831
Parents/ Stakeholders	Parents support of school activities, government FSE funds, surrounding community involvement and bursaries.	4.5217	.51075
Socio-economic trends	Break-down in social values, trends in selection of competitive courses in higher learning institutions, and ease of accessibility of school.	3.6087	.49901

Source: Author, 2014

Majority of the respondents indicated that parents/stakeholder action was very important as shown by a mean score of 4.5217. Issues of importance included student characteristics with a mean of 3.9130, institutional factors 3.7391, resources availability 3.6957, socio-economic trends 3.608 and staffing at 3.5652. The issue of networking and linkages was considered to be of moderate importance, with a mean score of 3.1739.

Resources showed the greatest variation, of 0.82212 from the mean across the schools, followed by institutional and student-base factors at 0.75181 and 0.66831 respectively. 0.65033 respectively. Stakeholder contribution had a variation of 0.51075, while socio-economic trends had the least variation of 0.49901. The variations observed can be explained by the variety of characteristics exhibited by the schools as captured in section 4.2 of this chapter, in terms of classification, student population, and age of schools as well as number of TSC teachers in these schools.

These figures imply that public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties rely very much on funding from outsiders other than that generated within the schools. Delays in disbursement of governments' FSE funds, payment of school fees by parents and remittance of bursary from well wishers would significantly affect the activities in these schools, including the teaching-learning process. Students' performance at KCPE and their resultant admission to secondary school, their regular presence in class to ensure continuity in completing the four-year course, is an important consideration. School based factors, which mainly involve administrative decisions and actions, are of importance in schools' achievement of their mandates.

The availability of resources for effective teaching–learning process is indicated as important, teacher-related issues having an important impact on the schools’ activities as the people who utilize the available resources as well as being resources in themselves. These results also indicate that current socio-economic trends have an impact on the school activities as it reflects the amount of energy directed to ensure achievement of schools’ goals according to arising needs in the society and in spite of challenges that could be present. The issue of networking, was on average ranked as moderately important, suggesting that schools in these sub-counties are yet to exploit the opportunities that these issues could offer in ensuring they achieve their mandates.

4.4 Strategic Issues and Performance

The second objective of the study was to establish the influence of strategic issues on performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. Secondary data showing performance of each of the schools in KCSE examinations for the years 2011 to 2013 were obtained from the sub-county education offices to partly fulfill the requirement of this objective. The mean of mean scores for the three years was calculated from these data, for each of the schools as indicated in Appendix III and analyzed as in Table 4.3. These means were then used, together with the rankings obtained in Section 4.3 for the strategic issues, in a multivariate regression analysis tested at 95% significance level by use of SPSS, to find out the strength of influence of the issues as a combination and as independent factors on performance. The independent

variable was the seven categories of strategic issues while performance/exam was the dependent variable.

Table 4.3 Performance Scores of various Schools (2011-2013)

Schools' KCSE Mean of Mean Scores	Frequency	Percentage
3.0000 to 3.4999	2	8.696
3.5000 to 4.4999	5	21.739
4.5000 to 5.4999	8	34.783
5.5000 to 6.4999	3	13.043
6.5000 to 7.4999	3	13.043
7.5000 to 8.4999	0	0.000
8.5000 to 9.4999	2	8.696
Total	23	100

Source: Author, 2014

The findings expressed in this table show that a majority of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties 34.8% had an average mean score of between 4.5 and 5.4999, which translates to mean grade C-. 21.7% had an average mean score of between 3.5 and 4.4999, that is a mean grade D+, 13% attained a mean score of between 5.5 and 6.4999, hence mean grade C. An equal percentage attained a mean score between 6.5 and 7.4999, hence mean grade C+. Notably, 8.7% of the schools achieved a mean score between 3.0 and 3.4999 and between 8.5 and 9.4999. These translate to mean grade D and B respectively.

Most of the students enrolled for KCSE exams in the majority of these schools failed to achieve the minimum mean grade of C+ set by KUCCPS for transitioning to the public universities in Kenya. Out of a total of 6128 candidates in the three years of study 2974 made the minimum grade, while 3154 did not. This reflects as 48.5% achievers as opposed to 51.5% non-achievers. The fact that most schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties failed to achieve this grade is a pointer to the presence of strategic issues influencing performance of schools in these sub-counties.

In order to determine the combined effect of the identified strategic issues on performance, the coefficient of determination R^2 was obtained from the regression analysis results. Further, the F-value was determined from the analysis of variance table.

Table 4.4 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.990 ^a	.980	.971	4.68170

a. Predictors: (Constant), socio-economic, stakeholders, staffing, networks, students, resources, institutional

Source: Author, 2014

Table 4.5 ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	16024.142	7	2289.163	104.441	.000 ^a
Residual	328.774	15	21.918		
Total	16352.916	22			

a. Predictors: (Constant), values, stakeholders, staffing, networks, students, resources, institutional

b. Dependent Variable performance

Source: Author, 2014

Coefficient of determination R^2 explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables, or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable (performance) that is explained by all the seven independent variables (stakeholders, staffing, networks, student-factors, resources, institutional factors and socio-economic factors). The seven independent categories of strategic issues that were studied explain 98.0% of the schools' performance as represented by the R^2 with a standard error of the estimate at 4.68170. This therefore means that the seven independent variables contribute 98.0% to performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties while other factors not studied in this research contribute 2.0% of the schools' performance.

The ANOVA table revealed a high F-value of 104.441 that is statistically significant at 95% significance level with a value of 0.000. This therefore was further proof that the combined seven categories of strategic issues were statistically significant and thus have a very strong influence on performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. Further research should be conducted to investigate the other factors (2.0%) that contribute to these schools performance.

The researcher also conducted a multiple regression analysis so as to determine the relationship between the schools' performance and each of the seven categories of strategic issues under study. Table 4.5 shows the independent effect of each of the categories on performance, in terms of beta coefficients, t-values and p-values.

Table 4.6 Independent Effect of Strategic Issues on Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-112.679	10.962		-10.279	.000
Resources	6.574	2.567	.198	2.561	.022
Institutional	18.799	4.261	.518	4.412	.001
Networks	7.627	2.482	.182	3.073	.008
Staffing	15.874	2.823	.386	5.622	.000
Students	-3.993	3.925	-.098	-1.018	.325
Stakeholders	-3.068	3.047	-.057	-1.007	.330
Socio-economic	-1.136	2.648	-.021	-.429	.674

a. Dependent Variable:
performance

Source: Author, 2014

The regression equation ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7$) was thus expressed as;

$$Y = -112.679 + 6.574X_1 + 18.799X_2 + 7.627X_3 + 15.874X_4 - 3.993X_5 - 3.068X_6 - 1.136X_7$$

Whereby $Y =$ Performance

$X_1 =$ Resources

$X_2 =$ Institutional

$X_3 =$ Networks and linkages

$X_4 =$ Staffing

$X_5 =$ Students

X_6 = Stakeholders

X_7 = Socio-economic

According to the regression equation established, taking all the independent variables constant at zero, the performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties Kenya, will be -112.679. The data findings analyzed also shows that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in each of the categories of strategic issues will have an incremental effect on performance as per resources, institutional and staffing factors, as well as networking and linkages. On the other hand, student and stakeholder factors will have a negative effect with each unit increase.

Stated at 95% significance level, the statistically significant independent variables in relation to performance are those with a high t-value and p-value < 0.05. Hence from Table 4.4, resources, institutional factors, networking and linkages, and staffing factors are statistically significant in influencing performance. Statistically insignificant independent variables are those with low t-values and p-values > 0.05. This means that student factors, stakeholder factors and socio-economic trends are statistically insignificant in influencing performance.

This infers that institutional factors contributed most to better the performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. These factors included extra subjects offered above the basic eleven that are uniformly done in all public secondary schools, period taken before commencement of learning after termly holidays, student-teacher contact hours, schools' tradition and culture, and way of doing things, and teacher supervision. These issues, that are mainly administrative in nature, have the combined

effect of influencing performance to a large extent. The implication is that, the way the management of a school manipulates these issues individually and in combination, will go a long way in determining whether a school achieves academic excellence or not. The ability of management to use available resources and be innovative in cases of inadequacy, for example, enables the school to offer a wider variety of examinable technical subjects that students, guided by their level of interest and giftedness, can involve in and excel in national exams, thereby boosting the schools' mean score. Supervisory system in place, to ensure effective teaching-learning, the schools way of doing things, that ensure maximum use of time available to achieve the schools' mandate, are also important issues to be considered by the administration.

Staffing factors that include the skill and competence of teaching and support staff, teacher motivation and turn over rate, hence enabling use of ICT, practice of guidance and counseling among other practices, are some of the important issues to consider in pursuit of good performance. For example, skilled support staff is very essential in handling apparatus in the science and computer laboratories, and workshops for technical subjects. Without the necessary skill and competence, then efficient and effective use of available resources to produce desirable results would be compromised. Teachers strike, on the other hand can hamper performance when teachers stay away from their stations, hence the ability of the administration to find ways to counter adverse effects of such strikes at school level is crucial.

Resources, including; availability of classrooms, science laboratories, computer rooms, library, multipurpose halls, school bus, sports facilities, income generating facilities,

electricity and clean water, are important factors in allowing the teaching-learning process to take place smoothly and effectively. The presence and adequacy of these resources provide a conducive, enabling environment for staffing and school-based factors to operate both efficiently and effectively to produce good academic results.

Networks and linkages, that comprise of benchmarking practices, role of alumni, exchange programs with foreign institutions, mentorship programs and competition from schools of same category, was found to be statistically significant in relation to performance. This implies that these issues are a major boost to positive efforts in areas of resource availability, school-based factors and staffing, as stringent implementation of activities concerning network and linkages will provide the much required energy that would certainly lead to better academic scores.

Student factors that include KCPE scores, absenteeism due to school fees, and student source areas; stakeholder factors that include parents support of school activities, government FSE funds, surrounding community involvement; and socio-economic trends that include breakdown in social values, ease of accessibility of school and trends in selection for competitive courses in higher learning institutions, have been found to be statistically insignificant. Therefore, there is reason to suggest that these possibly provide areas of weakness independently, and most schools have underestimated their influence on performance in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. The student is the raw material to be processed into worthy material for higher learning institution, stakeholders are the providers of funds to enable the smooth processing to proceed with minimum obstacles, while the socio-economic trends are important in influencing the attitudes and behaviors

of the students, staff, management, and even stakeholders in their day to day dealings as far as their school-related activities are concerned. These attitudes and behaviors can be either positive or negative, thus influencing performance in either direction. The strategic issues in these three categories therefore, should not be considered insignificant and require constant monitoring, in order to influence results positively in most schools under study.

4.5 Discussion

This study established that public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties operate in environments that contain external and internal strategic issues. The external issues were identified as stakeholder action, socio-economic trends and, networking and linkages; while internal issues included student factors, institutional issues, resources availability, and staffing, in order of importance. These show that the schools are systems, since they consist of interconnected components that work together. They are open systems that are in constant communication and transaction with their environments, from which they obtain necessary resources and adapt to changes there-in in order to survive and prosper.

The study established that a unit increase in institutional factors, which are mainly administrative in nature, resulted in the greatest increase in academic performance. The way the schools' management manipulate these issues individually and in combination, determine to a large extent the level of performance. The supervisory systems put in place to ensure maximum use of available resources and student-teacher contact, the development of academics enabling tradition and culture as well as continued adoption of

new developments in the teaching learning process, ensures that schools attain better performance indices. Hence, relevance to path dependence theory has been established in the role of school leadership in interpreting and enforcing national policies governing education in their respective schools. The leadership has to come up with governance structures in their respective institutions that will enable the school to evolve with the changing environment in order to continue to prosper.

This corroborates the studies by; Mwanza (2009), who established a positive and significant relationship between corporate governance and performance in his study covering a range of years in the case of Afya Sacco; Garge et al (2003), who studied the scanning emphases of CEO's under varying environmental dynamisms in 105 manufacturing companies, suggested that high performing CEO's vary their relative scanning emphases on different domains according to the perceived level of dynamism in the external environment.

This study further established that staffing issues, that include staff skills and competencies, was statistically significant. A unit extra effort in the combination of factors in this category, reflect in the achievement of better results. When the necessary skills and competence are lacking, then this hinders the efficient and effective use of available resources to produce desired results. Okioma (2011) in her findings suggested that teachers who took part in training posted an improvement of 51.48% in their schools implying that training modified knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors of respondents, necessary to achieve effective performance.

Chaos and complexity theories stipulate about changes in initial conditions yielding large changes in the system that can result in chaos. Further, such systems can import energy from the outside to sustain self organization. This is supported by the findings in this study that show socio-economic trends that include break down in social values and selection of competitive courses in higher learning institutions, among others, rated as important by respondents. The trends influence attitudes and behavior of people hence their performance levels. Hence the findings of this study has pointed out the need of empowerment of staff in form of training, for example in guidance and counseling skills, as well as ICT use in order to enable staff aid each other, students and parents in view of the turbulent environment schools exist in. This will ensure that the schools maintain self organization and continue to exercise their mandates effectively.

This study has therefore, unlike others, which focused on one or two strategic issues, established a number of both external and internal issues that influence performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central counties. The issues identified, categorized as institutional, staffing, resources, networks and linkages, student, stakeholder and socio-economic issues, accounted for 98% of issues influencing performance and are thus very significant. 2% of issues influencing performance were not established.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the findings from chapter four, and also gives the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the objectives of the study. The objectives of this study were to establish strategic issues influencing performance and the strength of influence, in public secondary schools within Kisumu East and Central counties, Kenya.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study established that all participating schools had pertinent strategic issues, relating to efficiency and effectiveness of activities in their respective schools, both internal and external. The findings indicate schools as open systems that interact with their environments and adapt to changes in it. The list of forty strategic issues was rated on importance by respondents from individual schools according to factors inherent in their specific schools. These issues were grouped into seven categories as resources, institutional, networks and linkages, staffing, student factors, stakeholder, and socio-economic issues for ease of analysis. Respondents from the participating 23 schools identified stakeholder action as very important to their schools' activities, majorly because they are the source of funding for the schools, without which activities, including the teaching- learning process would come to a halt. All the other categories were classified as important by the respondents, meaning they influence the schools' activities to a large extent. The study also established that the issues rating was linked to the basics

of the schools in terms of classification, student population, age of school, as well as the number of TSC employed teachers.

The study further established that performance was wanting in most of the schools under study, since majority were under- performing. The study revealed that only 21% of the schools had attained C+ and above mean grade in KCSE exams in the three years under study. The rest of the schools, 79%, had not been able to achieve this mark. Hence the number of students that were able to transition to public higher institutions of learning was low. This should act as a signal to policy makers and stakeholders in the education sector, to strive to put in place mechanisms that will enable the 79% of schools in the two sub-counties to perform much better in academics. Analysis of cause-effect relationship between the identified strategic issues and performance in each of the schools would thus be crucial.

The study established that, the combination of the seven categories of strategic issues had a very significant effect hence a great, positive influence on performance, with a R value of 98%. Individually, four categories; institutional, staffing, resources, and networking and linkages were found to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level. The rest, student and stakeholder issues, including socio-economic issues were found to be statistically insignificant. The were study has identified these three as possible areas of weakness, offering challenges to most of the public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. Hence, the schools' need to constantly monitor these issues and find ways of countering their negative effects reflecting in performance outcomes.

The study also revealed that all the issues identified and rated by respondents in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and central sub-counties have interactive effect on performance. School-based issues, although with the highest independent effect, cannot be effective without student, staffing and resource issues. Networking and linkages require involvement with factors in the schools external environment, in which the socio-economic issues are in operation. Stakeholders provide funds necessary for any of the strategic issues in the schools internal environment to be operational hence determining the performance out-put of the schools. The importance of the role of the schools' administration in organizing and overseeing the effective interaction of these strategic issues, in order to establish an equilibrium that will enable survival and prosperity of the schools' is evident in the findings of this study.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that all public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties have intrinsic strategic issues, both external and internal, that may be strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or challenges influencing their performance, independently as well as jointly. Hence the schools are open systems. Internal strategic issues, that are school- based, resources, staffing, interact with external issues such as socio-economic trends, networks and linkages and stakeholder issues, need to be constantly monitored to bring about desirable academic performance in these schools. The study findings have established a very strong link between strategic issues and performance in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya. The relevance of these findings to path dependence, chaos and complexity theories has been explored.

The role of schools management in decision making and initiating activities that ensure a favorable interaction of internal and external issues to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the schools activities is crucial. Schools administration duty in ensuring effective and maximum use of available resources by skilled and competent staff, as well as developing critical networks and linkages to enhance efficiency and effectiveness towards meeting set performance goals cannot be under estimated. Students must be in school as much as possible, hence ensuring prompt funding is important to counter absenteeism and to increase student- teacher contact hours, and maximum use of time allocated for teaching-learning activities in these schools.

5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

From the findings of this study, stakeholder issues, that include, parents' support of school activities, government FSE funds, bursaries and surrounding community involvement, present a possible area of weakness as far as strategic issues influencing performance are concerned. Hence, it is imperative that the stakeholders and policy makers in the education sector ensure availability of prompt and regular funding to public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya. This will ascertain availability of resources and keep students in school, to enable the schools' administration effectively run the schools in order to achieve better results.

Institutional, staffing and resource availability factors were found to be the largest contributors to improvement in performance, independently. This means that there is need to strengthen issues in these categories, by ensuring qualified individuals manage the schools, and that trained, well motivated, staff are assigned to schools for proper

utilization of resources in the school, hence effective teaching-learning process. Resources should therefore be made available to all these institutions in quantity and quality to enable effective use of the skills and competencies of the staff. This would in turn provide an enabling environment for all students in these schools to excel in their academic endeavors.

For day to day practice, the schools' administrators need to be pro-active in establishing income generating activities in their schools to get regular funds for example, establishing pre- primary schools, strengthening of alumni, who can in turn solicit for funds from the diaspora to help needy students and supplement the funds supplied by stakeholders among other activities. They also need to strengthen their supervisory roles and establish an enabling culture in their schools that will form a strong base for quality performance.

There's need for the staff to be well motivated to reduce turnover rates and encouraged to upgrade their skills regularly in order to embrace modern technology that will increase their sources of information and keep up with new developments in their various fields of specialization. They will be able to pass on the same to their students, and enable them compete effectively for competitive courses in higher learning institutions. Skills upgrade would also enable them handle important issues like guidance and counseling that would keep in check the effects of breakdown of social values and be able to effectively use ICT in the teaching-learning process.

5.5 Limitations of the study

Only one construct was used to measure performance, that is, KCSE results. However, performance is a multi-faceted concept that cannot be wholly measured by only one construct. Hence the findings of this study are restricted in this aspect. The findings also explained 98% of issues influencing performance, the rest 2% remain un-explained.

The study was limited to merely establishing the strategic issues and their strength of influence on performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties. It did not explore the management of these issues in the various schools to establish the cause of performance indices in each of them.

The scope of the study considered only public secondary schools in two sub-counties found in Kisumu County, Kenya; but there are several private secondary schools in these sub-counties as well as other five sub-counties within Kisumu County whose strategic issues and performance were not explored.

Access to information, in terms of filling questionnaires by respondents and getting analyzed results from the sub-counties education offices was a challenge because the study was carried out in third term when the category of respondents were highly engaged in preparing candidates for KCSE exams were underway. This resulted in 4.2 % non-response rate. 95.8% response rate was thus achieved through persistent phone calls to remind respondents of their invaluable assistance required in fulfilling the objectives of the study.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

Similar studies may be carried out in other sub-counties in Kisumu or in Kenya, to establish similarities or variations to findings of this research and also find out the other 2% of strategic issues influencing performance in public secondary schools.

The study also suggests that similar studies should strive to use additional constructs, in addition to KCSE results, to measure performance in secondary schools, such as, participation and achievements in co-curricular activities, since performance is not all about achievement in national exam (KCSE).

Further, the study suggests similar studies should be carried out earlier in the year to facilitate ease in collection of data, when results of previous year KCSE exam are still fresh in the respondents' minds and respondents can be readily available to provide the required information.

This study endeavored to establish strategic issues in relation to performance of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya. Further research should be done to find out how each of the public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties deal with these strategic issues in order to achieve better performance indices.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letters of Introduction



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI **SCHOOL OF BUSINESS** **KISUMU CAMPUS**

Telegrams: "Varsity" Nairobi
Fax: 4181650
Kisumu, Kenya
Telex: 22095Varsity
Mobile: 0720348080
Email: ajaleha@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O Box 19134-40123
Kisumu, Kenya

Date: 08th October, 2014.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter Ms. Opondo Mary Anyango

REGISTRATION NO: D61/60604/2013

The above named student is in the Master of Business Administration degree program. As part of requirements for the course, she is expected to carry out a study on **"Strategic issues and performance of Public Secondary Schools in Kisumu East and Central Sub Counties Kenya."**

She has identified your organization for that purpose. This is to kindly request your assistance to enable her complete the study.

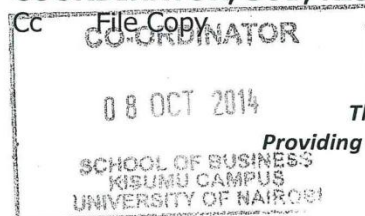
The exercise is strictly for academic purposes and a copy of the final paper will be availed to your organization on request.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance.

Sincerely,

MR. ALEX JALEHA
COORDINATOR, SOB, KISUMU CAMPUS



ISO 9001:2008
The Fountain of Knowledge
Providing leadership in academic excellence

University of Nairobi,
School of Business,
Department of Business Administration,
P.O. Box 30197,
Nairobi.

Date: 28/08/2014

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA

I am a Master of Business Administration student at the University of Nairobi, specializing in Strategic Management. As part of the degree, am required to conduct a research study on **‘Strategic Issues and Performance of Public Secondary Schools in Kisumu East and Central Counties, Kenya’**.

You have been chosen to participate in the study and I will greatly appreciate your input in responding to all the items in the attached questionnaire. The study is purely academic, all responses shall be kept completely anonymous and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Opondo Mary Anyango,

MBA student,

University of Nairobi.

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Fill in the blank spaces or tick appropriately

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of institution_____

Year of establishment_____

Length of service in current station: less than 1 year () 1-3 years () over 3 years

()

Highest level of education attained: Diploma () Bachelor Degree () Master Degree

()

Category of the school: National () County () Sub-County ()

Is your institution a Day or Boarding School: Day () Boarding ()

Is your institution: A Mixed school () Girls only () Boys only ()

Total number of students in the school: below 200 () 200-500 () over 500 ()

Total number of TSC employed teachers_____

Total number of BOM employed teachers_____

SECTION B: STRATEGIC ISSUES

Strategic issues are fundamental policy questions or critical challenges that affect an organization's mandates, mission and values, product or service level, and may occur inside or outside of the organization.

To what extent does each of the strategic issues listed below considered important in your school? **KEY: 1-Not important at all 2-Less important 3-Moderately important 4-Important 5-Very important**

Strategic Issue	1	2	3	4	5
Internal					
Student KCPE marks at admission					
Availability of resources, in terms of;					
-Classrooms					
Science laboratories					
Computer rooms					
Library					
Multi-purpose halls					
School bus					
Sports facilities					
Income generating activities					
Electricity					
Clean water					
Skilled support staff					
Teacher skill and competences in various subjects					
Extra subjects offered apart from basic eleven					
Teachers workload per week					
Commencement of learning after termly holidays					
Student-teacher contact hours per day					
Student absenteeism due to lack of school fees					
Number of students leaving or joining class during a four year course					
Teacher turn over rate					
Internal succession politics					
Teacher supervision by Principal/HODs					
School's use of ICT in teaching/ learning process					
Practice of guidance and counseling					

Tradition and way of doing things					
Teacher motivation					
External					
Parents response to provision of learning materials and support of school's activities					
Surrounding community contribution to school's activities					
Government funding(FSE)					
Benchmarking with other schools					
Exchange programs with foreign high schools					
Teachers strikes					
Student source area					
Role of alumni					
Breakdown of societal norms and values					
Bursary schemes					
Trends in selection for chances in competitive courses in higher learning institutions					
Competition from other schools of similar status					

Appendix III: Performance Table

The table below indicates the number of candidates enrolled, mean score and number of students with mean score of C+ and above in the years 2011- 2013 of public secondary schools in Kisumu East and Central sub-counties, Kenya.

SCHOOL	2011 Entry	M.S	C+	2012 Entry	M.S	C+	2013 Entr y	M.S	C+
Orongo	30	3.3000	0	19	4.894	4	18	3.3889	0
Dr Aloo Gumbi	89	4.6290	18	81	4.901	17	87	4.9526	18
St Alberts Angira	34	4.6363	5	39	4.794	5	43	4.9020	8
Obwolo	85	6.4000	32	83	6.048	29	85	5.3647	24
Nyamasaria	57	4.1578	6	37	4.108	1	30	4.6000	4
Nyalunya	54	4.7350	5	85	4.165	8	77	4.3896	10
Kasagam	104	5.4466	24	132	5.265	27	116	4.4224	12
St.Alloys Mayenya	43	4.4500	4	54	4.240	6	37	4.8378	5
Got Nyabondo				15	2.733	0	21	3.2857	1
St Peters Kindu	25	3.0000	0	38	3.947	2	43	4.4186	5
Okok	27	5.1667	6	40	5.250	9	42	4.2381	4
GP Owiti	24	3.3181	0	23	3.608	0	28	2.6071	0
Lions High	185	7.7140	140	187	7.180	116	189	7.000	116
Joyland	43	4.2558	7	37	3.819	2	51	3.880	6
Bishop Abiero	56	4.5818	6	93	4.322	18	72	4.958	15
Joel Omino	83	5.6940	22	84	5.035	11	85	4.365	10
Kisumu Boys	249	8.9416	205	246	8.756	213	268	8.925	245
Xaverian	85	6.3614	38	85	6.306	40	78	6.462	35
StIgnatius Magadi	68	5.6716	21	94	6.277	45	104	6.194	38
Kisumu Day	203	7.6450	145	217	7.410	150	216	7.324	148

St Teresa's Girls	105	6.2476	42	105	6.486	52	125	7.040	75
Kisumu Girls	235	8.8154	218	234	9.141	225	257	9.342	247
St Peters Nanga	44	5.3488	10	55	4.900	9	45	5.227	11
Totals	1928	5.4890	948	2083	5.373	989	2117	5.3098	1037

Schools Mean of Mean Scores and Mean Grades

SCHOOL	P1 MMS	P2 C+ and above%
Orongo	3.8609	7.01
Dr Aloo Gumbi	4.8275	20.6
St Alberts Angira	4.7774	15.4
Obwolo	5.9376	33.6
Nyamasaria	4.2886	8.9
Nyalunya	4.4299	10.6
Kasagam	5.0447	18.0
StAlloys Mayenya	4.5093	11.3
Got Nyabondo	3.0094	2.4
St Peters Kindu	3.7885	5.6
Okok	4.8849	18.1
GP Owiti	3.1777	0.0
Lions High	7.2980	66.3
Joyland	3.9849	11.2
Bishop Abiero	4.6206	17.0
Joel Omino	5.0313	17.1
Kisumu Boys	8.8742	86.8
Xaverian	6.3765	45.5
StIgnatius Magadi	6.0475	38.4
Kisumu Day	7.4597	69.7
St Teresa's Girls	6.5912	49.8
Kisumu Girls	9.0995	95.0
St Peters Nanga	5.1586	21.2
St. John's Kudho		