CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS BY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MANDERA COUNTY IN KENYA

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my late brother Mohamed Ali Kosar who was a fountain of inspiration in my life. His constant encouragement and material support made me to soar the academic heights. May Allah grant him 'Jannah'. I also dedicate it to my Mum Alasey Mamow Aden and my dad Al-hajj Kosar for their blessings.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEO   Chief Executive Officer

GOK   Government of Kenya

HOD   Head of Department

KEMCA   Kenya Educational Management Capacity Assessment

KESSP   Kenya Educational Sector Support Programme

MoE   Ministry of Education

STP   School Strategic Plan

TSC   Teacher Service Commission

RBV   Resource Based View

ABSTRACT

The strategic plan and its implementation are the focal point of any business organization and operation. To enable a company to strive, remain competitive and grow, proficient implementation form a core part of overall business growth and success. Strategy implementation is concerned with translation of strategy into action which is part of strategic management analysis and choice. The Ministry of Education introduced the strategic planning policy in secondary schools because once the policy is implemented it makes public spending on education more efficient by increasing the accountability of the agents involved and by empowering the clients to improve learning outcomes. The main objective of the study was to investigate the challenges in implementation of strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County. Since challenges of strategy implementation originate from the immediate environments, Mandera County is unique with its challenges ranging from insecurity, understaffing, environmental hardship and inaccessibility. The study adopted a cross sectional survey design and aimed at providing data on the entire population under study. The population of the study were all the secondary schools in Mandera County. As at 31st December 2014, there were 44 secondary schools (33 public and 11 private) schools in Mandera County. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. Descriptive statistics such as means, percentages and frequency distributions were used to describe the responses and presentation of the results was done on tables, pie charts and bar graphs. The study further found out that, Lack of enough staff; inaccessibility of the area and insecurity were the challenges encountered in strategy implementation by the secondary schools in Mandera County. Further, the management of schools at Mandera County were working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity; management was adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff as measures to deal with the challenges in strategy implementation. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the secondary schools in Mandera County had strategic plans which if properly implemented, would benefit the stakeholders in schools.The study however found out that most of the schools lacked enough finances to implement their strategic plans, which showed that lack of resources adversely affected the implementation of strategic plans in schools. The study recommended that all public secondary schools should engage in formal strategic planning because not only is it a policy but also its ability to help establish strategic direction and align resources to meaningful strategies to develop competitive advantage and compete successfully cannot not be overemphasized.The education policy makers should organize for workshops and seminars to train and sensitize school management on importance of stakeholder involvement in development of strategic plan, significance of intensive environmental analysis during strategic planning and the importance of striving to implement the agreed upon strategies. This study has policy implications as there has not been a standard benchmark on the secondary Schools implementation of strategic plan as it is for institutions of higher learning. There is need for secondary schools to form strategic alliances with development partners so as to enhance their performance. This makes this study therefore a critical part of the link between theory and practice within the confines of strategic education management in Mandera County and therefore there is need for the Kenya Government to review the education policies that are related to quality management and strategic planning and management in the Secondary schools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The strategic plan and its implementation are the focal point of any business organization and operation. Sandeland (1994) argued that people understand the commitment, time, emotion and energy needed to overcome inertia in their organization and translate plans. Strategy can only impact on the bottom line if it's successfully implemented. To enable a company to strive, remain competitive and grow, proficient implementation form a core part of overall business growth and success. According to Johnson and Scholes (2002) Strategy implementation is concerned with translation of strategy into action which is part of strategic management analysis and choice. Strategy implementation process is the most complicated, tougher and more time consuming than crafting a strategy, Thompson and Strickland (1993).Most managers know about strategy formulation than implementation and it should be noted that success formulation does not guarantee success in strategy implementation. Strategy implementation therefore is difficult and problematic and requires management attention across all level of organization without understanding the challenges.

Implementing strategies successfully is therefore vital for any organization, either public or private. Without implementation even the most superior strategy that seems straight forward may fail. However, transforming strategies into action is a far more complex and difficult task. The implementation strategies in organization have therefore not been without challenges. Research has shown that more than 50% of the strategies fail at the implementation stage (Atkinson, 2006).

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From a theoretical view, resource based view theory view strategic plan as substance concentrated on the consideration of current decision options based on available data and taken in the light of their possible effects and consequences over time. From a stakeholder's theory point of view, strategic leaders need to learn to set goals that are worthy of commitment to create a shared vision for the organization strategic plans. Without involvement of people throughout the organization, the strategic plan implementation may not come alive. An example of the strategic plan implementation counters resistance from managers for implementation (Miller, 2002).

Since this is the only way to be guided in whatever undertakings the institution sets to achieve. It is therefore imperative for managers of institutions to craft plans that would focus into the future. Arthur and Strickland (2003) acknowledge that managers cannot function effectively as either leaders or strategy makers without a guideline oriented concept of the business. School managers must come up with strategic plans that are commensurate with the resource and time available in order to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutions they manage.

According to the GOK(2005), all public secondary school were directed to develop a five years school strategic plan to chart the way for a successful educational outcome. This does not mean private secondary schools are not included because they too have the same goals and objectives similar to that of public secondary schools. Its therefore of paramount that both public and private secondary schools in Mandera County to have a school strategic plan.

1.1.1 Concept of Strategy

Strategy is the game plan a management has for positioning the company in its closed market arena, competing successfully, pleasing customers and achieving good business performance Thompson & Strickland (1998). The success of every organization is determined by its responsiveness to the environment Porter (1990).Strategy therefore is a concept which has much been used in various dimensions and has found application in various field of study and life. It is a multi-dimensional concept and has been used implicitly in different ways. The practice and concept of strategy has many varied meaning, yet it remains closely related to planning and planning models. The word strategy is now applied to almost every management activity.

According to Johnson and Scholes (2002) strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term, which achieves advantages for the organization through its configuration of resources within a challenging environment to meet the needs of markets and to fulfil stakeholder's expectations. In other words, strategy is about where the business is trying to get into long-term, the markets it should invest in and the kind of activities involved in such markets, how the business can perform better than the competitors in those markets. It is often said that an organization without strategy is like a rudderless ship in the high sea. Therefore, a successful implemented strategy will yield various benefits to an organization which will help it remain clearly focused in its growth path.

1.1.2Strategy Implementation in Organizations

Strategy implementation is concerned with the translation of strategy into organisational structure and design, resource planning and the management of strategic change. According to Gerry and Kevan (1984) strategy is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term which achieves advantage for the organisation to meet the needs of markets and to fulfil stakeholder's expectation. Successful implementation of strategy does not automatically follow strategic formulation. It exhibits its own resistance which can invalidate the planning effort (Ansoff & McDonnel, 1990). It is therefore up to the planners to ensure certain variables are closely monitored as the strategy is being implemented. One unit alone cannot guarantee the success of the strategic plan but rather interconnections, synergy and sharing of a common stand can ensure strategies are successfully implemented.

Pearce and Robinson (2000) stated that after design of strategy, managers need to focus on six components inorder to effectively execute the strategy. The six components are those suggested in McKinsey 7s framework. They include structure, skills, systems relationships, shared values, style and staff. Structure refers to reporting relationships. Systems are daily activities and procedures that are used to perform the job. Shared values are the corporate culture and general work ethics, style is the form of leadership adopted, while staff and skills refer to employees and their general capabilities. There are generally numerous factors that influence the realization of strategy implementation. Such factors include people who communicate the strategy to the systems or mechanism in action for purpose of co-ordination and control.

Institutions like secondary schools must be able to deal with various challenges and threats that may impede their attempt to operationalize or implement their school strategic plan. School strategic plan implementation would be meaningful more specifically to secondary schools. According to Jones (2008) study on why many strategies seen well-conceived but poorly executed. She concluded that while many organizations have some success with their strategy, almost nine out of ten organizations failed to fully implement their strategy as they had planned. Johnson and Scholes (1984) stated that the world in which organisations exist is highly complex and unpredictable. It is unconceivable that managers can know all that they require to know about this complexity, let alone predict its effects specifically. However, it is possible that people experience within a particular context can help them become sensitive to the complexity and uncertainty around them. When there are deviations from these patterns they are able to sense them intuitively. Strategic management should therefore be seen as more to do with building the capacity to be intuitive, and taking action based.

1.1.3 Challenges of Implementation of strategic plans

Implementation is the process that turns strategies and plans into action to accomplish the set objectives according to Ogunmokun et al. (2005). However, how the plans are implemented matters in determining organizational performance. Both strategic planning and implementation are critically important to the success of an organization. When trying to assess the reasons for failure of organizations, one of the possible reasons is poor planning and the other is poor implementation.

According to Pearce & Robinson (2005), the implementation process covers the entire managerial activities including such matters as motivation, compensation, management appraisal and control processes which entail cascading strategy to all functional areas in such away as to achieve both vertical and horizontal logic and enhance implementation of policies.

Most of the studies in strategic planning give only scant attention to implementation of plans. Implementation is defined as carrying out the decisions made and controlling subsequent performance (Ackoff, 1981). The studies on strategic planning deal largely with the processes involved in arriving at the strategic plan. Limited attention has been given to actions taken to implement plans, favoring instead the thought processes involved in developing thorough strategic plans Ansoff et al (1998), state that the real value of a decision surfaces only after implementation of the decision. In other words, it will not be enough to select a good decision and effective results is obtained unless the decision is adequately implemented.

1.1.4 Secondary Schools in Mandera County

All the secondary schools in Kenya are spread across the 47 counties. However, this research study is focused on all the secondary schools in Mandera County. Mandera County is located in North Eastern province and constitutes 6 sub-counties: Mandera North, Mandera East, Mandera West, Banisa, Lafey and Mandera South. The county borders Ethiopia to the North and Somalia to the East. The county occupies a total area of $25,797.7 \text{km}^2$ with a population of 1,025, 756 persons as per the 2009 census. The county headquarters is in Mandera town (Kenya Open Data Survey, 2014).

According to County Education Office (2014) there are 33 public secondary schools and 11 private secondary schools in the county. However, there are few girls secondary schools compared to the boys secondary schools. According to the ministry demand the public secondary schools are supposed to be headed by school principals who are employees of Teacher Service Commission (TSC) and must be graduates. Equally it is expected that the private secondary schools are to be headed by university graduates. In public secondary schools the teachers are also employees of TSC who are expected to be diploma or graduates. In both public and private secondary schools teachers are expected to be registered with the TSC as per regulations of TSC. The 33 public secondary schools and the 11 private secondary schools are spread across the 6 districts in the county; however, most schools are concentrated in Mandera East district which hosts the county headquarter followed by Mandera North and Mandera South respectively; while Lafey, Mandera West and Banisa districts host very few schools.

1.2 Research Problem

Managing the implementation and execution of strategy is an operation- oriented; make-things happens activity aimed at performing core business activities in a strategy- supportive manner Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2007).Johnson, Pearce and Robinson (1991) allude that strategy implementation is the most demanding and time consuming part of the strategy management process. A strategy may be well crafted but its success depends on how it will be carefully implemented. Organizations focus more on formulation by allocating resource and time and yet the success of the strategy largely depends on the systematic implementation of the strategy itself.

Public schools in Mandera County have always adopted strategic plans as directed by the Ministry of Education but the schools continue experiencing low performance. It is common knowledge that school's five year planning cycles have not been effectively implemented according to the adopted strategic plans (Lewa, Mutuku & Mutuku,2009). Most public schools fail to achieve their goals and objectives, and this is reflected through poor academic performance attributed to challenges hindering implementation of strategic plans (Ngware & Kosimbei, 2006). Despite adoption of strategic plans in public secondary schools, implementation of the strategic plan has not been successful. However, despite the introduction of the policy and the government allocation of substantial resources towards its implementation in secondary schools, there has been no significant improvement in school performance. Therefore it's obvious that there are many obstacles to effective implementation of the strategic planning policy in secondary schools. This means that the on-going efforts to improve the education standards in Kenya are not being properly implemented.

Various studies have been done on the challenges facing many organizations in implementing the strategic plans. Heracleous, (2008) noted that strategic planning deal largely with the processes involved in arriving at the strategic plan. Limited attention has been given to actions taken to implement plans, favouring instead the thought processes involved in developing thorough strategic plans.Gregory (2007) in his study "A systems approach to strategic management" affirms that reasons for failure of strategic plans may be attributed to the successive dominance of different reductionist approaches to strategic management. Guohui and Eppler (2008) identified nine, globally acknowledged, individual factors that influence strategy implementation. these are: the strategy formulation process, the strategy executors

(managers, employees), the organizational structure, the communication activities, the level of commitment for the strategy, the consensus regarding the strategy, the relationships among different units/departments and different strategy levels, the employed implementation tactics, and the administrative system in place. Chermack and Provo (2005) identified communication, management style and alignment as common issues cited for implementation problems.

Locally, Pamela (2010) researched on the challenge of implementing strategic plan at Mumias Sugar Company. The study identified the challenges in implementation of the strategic plan as resistance to change, lack of stakeholders support, poor policies behind government involvement, lack of education, training and involvement of employees. David (2012) studied challenges facing public secondary school managers in the implementation of strategic plan in Gatundu North District, Kiambu County. The study established that most schools lacked enough resources and finances to implement their strategic plans. Ochanda (2005) studied the challenges of strategy implementation at Kenya Industrial Estates (KIE). He recommended that the study be replicated on other state enterprises and an in-depth study be carried out on each challenge.

Karanja (2004) carried out a survey on strategic planning and performance of public corporations in Kenya and established that strategic planning was being effectively carried out by state corporations in Kenya. In spite of all these efforts aimed at studying challenges of strategy implementation there is lack of studies on the topic of challenges in implementation of school strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County.

Since challenges of strategy implementation originate from the immediate environments, Mandera County is unique with its challenges ranging from insecurity, understaffing, environmental hardship and inaccessibility. What are the challenges in implementation of school strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were

   i.   To identify the challenges facing secondary schools in Mandera County in implementing school strategic plan.

  ii.   To establish how they overcome the challenges.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study would be significant to the school managers, their deputies and the entire staff members of the schools in understanding challenges facing schools in implementation of strategic plans. It would further help them to explore ways of overcoming the challenges. It would also help managers to gain a better understanding of formulation and implementation of strategies and how to adopt in the context of their environment.

The study would be significant to policy makers in the ministry of education in guiding the government in developing sound educational policies that would ensure smooth implementation of school strategic plan for better performance. They would be able to use the findings of the study to formulate viable policy documents that effectively address problems faced by the schools in adopting strategic plans.

The research would also be vital to researchers in the field of strategic management as they would be able to use the information gathered as a basis for further studies. This study would therefore contribute to the existing body of knowledge in strategic management. The study would enrich the existing knowledge and hence are of interest to both researchers and academicians who seek to explore and carry out further investigation.

1.5 Chapter Summary

The main focus on this chapter was to lay foundation of the study by giving a justification of why we need to carry out the research. It covers the concept of strategy, strategy implementation in organizations, challenges of strategic plan implementation and secondary schools in Mandera County.

The chapter also gives a detailed statement of the problem and defines the objective of the study. In addition the chapter outlines the value of the study. Chapter two of the research paper will involve the literature review of the other research work that has been carried out on related topics.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A strategy will only be worth a strategy if it's successfully implemented. Although implementation is usually considered after strategy has been formulated, implementation is a key post of strategic management. Strategy formulation and strategy implementation should thus be considered as two sides of the same coin (Jones, 2008). For strategy to be implemented it has to be formulated. This chapter therefore, summarises, the literature review of previous researchers who carried out their research in the same field.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

A theory is a set of assumptions, propositions or accepted facts that attempts to provide a plausible or rational explanation of cause - and - effect relationships among a group of observed phenomenon. The theoretical foundation for this is informed by the resource view based theory and the stakeholders theory.

2.2.1 Resource Based View

This study premised its reasoning on the basis of the Resource Based theory. The RB is a model of a firm performance that focuses on the resources and capabilities controlled by a firm as sources of competitive advantage (Barney &Hesterly, 2008). Resources in resource based theory are the assets a firm controls that it can use to conceive and implement its strategies. Capabilities also do play a big role. It is a sub-set of a firm's resources that will enable a firm to take full advantage of other resources it controls.

Lack of resources is the greatest impediment to strategy success. The resource based theory postulates that resources, capabilities and competencies are one of the central pillars in strategy implementation. An organization must acquire the resources, competencies and capability before it embarks on a journey of implementing the formulated strategy. The success of any strategy squarely hinge on availability of resources and the abilities of the executers. Resource based theory basically alludes that financial resources, physical resources, individual resources and organizational resources must be availed for success in strategy implementation.

2.2.2 Stakeholder theory

The study also relies on the stakeholder theory which tries to explain the importance of stakeholder's involvement in strategy implementation.The typical stakeholders are considered to be consumers, suppliers, government, competitors, communities, employees, and of course, stockholders, although the stakeholder map of any given corporation with respect to a given issue can become quite complicated (Carroll, 1996). Stakeholder management involves taking the interests and concerns of these various groups and individuals into account in arriving at a management decision, so that they are all satisfied at least to some extent, or at least that the most important stakeholders with regard to any given issue, are satisfied.

The very purpose of the firm is to serve and coordinate the interests of its various stakeholders, and it is the moral obligation of the firm's managers to strike an appropriate balance among stakeholder interests in directing the activities of the firm. Each stakeholder has identifiable interests that must be taken into account by the manager in arriving at a responsible and effective decision. The inclusion of stakeholders is pertinent and therefore will lead to success of strategy implementation.

2.3 Strategic Management

Thompson and Strickland (1993); Strategic management is the comprehensive collection of on-going activities and processes that organizations use to systematically coordinate and align resources and actions with mission, vision and strategy throughout an organization. Strategic management activities transform the static plan into a system that provides strategic performance feedback to decision making and enables the plan to evolve and grow as requirements and other circumstances change. Strategy execution is basically synonymous with strategy management and amounts to the systematic implementation of a strategy.

Planning is a conscious systematic process during which decisions are made about the goals and activities that an individual, group, work unit or organisation would pursue in the future (Zethmul, 1990). The development of strategic plan is not as difficult as implementing the strategy. The biggest obstacle that stands on the way of sound strategic management for secondary school institutions are the challenges of strategy implementation. There is therefore need to study the challenges facing both private and public secondary schools in implementing strategic plans.

Many organisations do have formal planning systems and find that they contribute usefully to the development of the strategy of their organisation. However, not all organisation have them, and even when they do, it would be a mistake to assume that the strategy of organisations necessarily come about through them.(Mintzberg, 1999) asserts that the organisation process of performing measurements, compensation, management development all this enmeshed in systems of incentive and towards control must be directed towards the kind of behaviour required by organisational

purpose. Strategic planning in school scenarios has been differently explained by a number of writers. Basham and Luneburg (1989) assert that there exist a number of definitions pertaining to educational strategic planning and that there is lack of a uniform discrete definition of educational strategic planning amongst various prescribed planning models.

Brown and Marshall (1989)define strategic planning as a process that is designed to move an educational organisation through the steps of understanding changes in the external environment assessing the internal strength and weaknesses of the organisation, developing the vision of the desired future of the organisation, and some ways to achieve that mission, developing specific plans to get the organisation where it is to where it wants to be, implementing these plans and monitoring that implementation so that necessary changes or modification can be made.

Mintzberg & Quinn, (1991) acknowledge that strategic planning is still relatively new as a management practice. The authors identify the period of time between 1950 and1970 as the time when strategic planning emerged and note that the last several decades have been a boom period for strategic planning. As strategic planning has grown in popularity, researchers have devoted more time and attention to defining strategic planning. Bryson (2004) defines strategic planning as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. Ansoff, (1991) says the key to understanding planning is the concept of formalization. He defines strategic planning as "a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions.

Noble, (1999) define strategic planning as a method used to position an organization, through prioritizing its use of resources according to identified goals, in an effort to guide its direction and development over a period of time. A major component of a strategic plan is the vision. Vision is an orientation that guides an organization's movement in a specific direction (Mintzberg, Quinn &Goshal, (1999). Sometimes referred to as the ideal the vision allows the people at the very top of an organization to clearly state where they want to take the organization. It is often inspiring, appealing to both the emotions and the intellect of the employees. It serves as an organizing principle, allowing all in the organization to see how their daily efforts contribute to creating a desired future. Depending on the size of an organization, a distinction may be made between the vision and a more formal statement of mission.

According to Mintzberg, et al. (2007), a vision is a picture of the desired future of an organization, in terms of its impact on the environment, the major roles it plays, and its image while a mission is a straightforward description of the current organization, in terms of its broad goals, customers and clients, products and services, and the functions it performs in delivering the products and services.

Consensus seems to exist that the purpose of strategic planning is to maximize the ability of an organization to survive by focusing its actions and allowing it to adapt to the rapidly changing external and internal environment. Other purposes for planning include obtaining funds to run the operation, as in business plans, focusing business efforts and resources to maximize shareholder value (Steiner, 1979), or to help organizations achieve mandated or discretionary objectives in the most effective and efficient way, while balancing stakeholder interests'.

Many planning systems are said to be good at getting staff organized around guiding principles (visions, ideals and missions), and setting broad organizational agendas (Steiner, 1979). Strategy formulation guides executives in defining the business their firm is in, the end it seeks and the means it will use to accomplish those ends. The approach of strategy formulation is an improvement over that of traditional long range planning (Robinson,2003). When formulating strategies institutions must put into consideration the available resources capabilities and the influences of the surrounding environment. Such considerations will help the organisation to plan for what to be achieved on the basis of the available resources and the capabilities.

Finally, it will be of great importance to note that strategic analysis and choice is key pillar in strategic management. Scholes and Johnson (1984) stated that strategic analysis and choice are of little value to an organisation unless the strategies are capable of being implemented; strategic change does not take place simply because it is considered to be desirable. It takes place if it can be made to work and put into effect by members of the organisation.

2.4 Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation is translating strategic thought into organizational action or moving from planning their work to working their plan as they shift their focus from Strategy formulation to strategy implementation (Pearce & Robinson, 1991).Successful implementation of strategy does not automatically follow strategy formulation; it exhibits its own resistance which can invalidate the planning effort (Ansoff & McDonnel, 1990).

Implementation is often seen as to be one of the most essential steps in strategic management process. Strategic implementation is always the business of the organisation. It is what is going to determine the success of the organisation. This is always the area where many secondary schools fail to recognise its importance as the process of strategic management. As with any plan, formulating the appropriate strategy is not enough. Strategic mangers must ensure that the new strategies are implemented effectively and efficiently (Zethmul, 1990).

Implementing strategy is a job for the whole management team such as the chief executive officer, heads of major organizational units and also top management has to orchestrate major implementation initiatives. The administrative tasks of implementing and executing the strategy involves a process of moving incrementally and deliberately to create a variety of fits that bring an organizations conduct of its internal operations into good alignment with strategy (Mbindyo, 2011).

According to Johnson and Scholes (1984) they say strategy implementation is concerned with the translation of strategy into organisation action through organisational structure and design resource planning and the management of strategic change. Further, Pearce and Robbinson (1997) states that strategy implementation is one of the component of strategic management and refers to a set of decision and activities that result in the formation of long term plans designed to achieve organisational objectives (Pearce and Robinson, 1992).

Academic institutions require a strategic implementation process. The need for academic institution to turn to strategic management so as to move, positively to address their own future has been a populated topic for some time with a number of approaches being suggested as framework for its introduction (Mwangi, 2005).

According to Steven (2008) schools are being encouraged to develop 3 or 5 years strategic plan to define intended strategic course of actions. Shivach (2007) points out that secondary school head teachers are charged with the responsibility of managing schools on day to day basis and their work to ensure that educational aims are achieved. They occupy a positive leadership as they lead their team of teachers, students, non- teaching staff and parents towards achievement of educational goals. The head teacher is entrusted with both management and leadership roles. To build a sustainable school community the secondary school teachers cannot be managers without being good leaders or being good teachers without being good managers, (Jocabus, 2005). Therefore, as the CEO of the institution he/she must openly show a clear commitment to the implementation of the school strategic plan.

Al-Ghamdi (1998) identified barriers to strategy implementation which include: competing activities that distract attentions from implementing the decisions, changes in responsibilities of key employees not clearly defined, key formulators of the strategic decision not playing an active role in implementing, problems requiring top management involvement not communicated early enough, key implementation tasks and activities not sufficiently defined, information systems used to monitor implementation are inadequate, overall goals not sufficiently understood by employees, uncontrollable factors in the external environment, surfacing of major problems which had not been identified earlier, advocates and supporters of the strategic decision leaving the organisation during implementation, and implementation taking more time than originally allocated.

2.5 Strategy Implementation Challenges

Successful strategy implementation depends to a large extent on the implementation process. The challenges to strategy implementation cannot be exhaustively studied as they are complex and are having numerous overlapping nature or meaning. They differ in terms of intensity and effect from one organization to another but they may be grouped into a few categories as lack of resources, stakeholders, participation, leadership, involvement and skills, role conflicts, culture and communication.

Lack of resources is a factor that could affect the implementation of strategic plans. Vespoor (2008) has noted that most secondary schools in Sub-Sahara Africa operate with inadequate resources due to poor funding. Most schools face inadequacy of text books, classroom, sanitation facilities, teachers and other teaching resources. It is incumbent upon the institution to plan for the resources they have and are capable of using it. Thompson and Strickland (1993) stated that all organisations have four types of resources that can be used to achieve desired objectives, financial, physical, human and technological resources.

David(2003) argues that allocating resources to a particular divisions and departments does not mean that strategies will be successfully implemented. This is because a number of factors commonly prohibit effective resources allocation. These include overprotection policies, vague strategy targets, reluctant to take risks and lack of sufficient knowledge. Stakeholders are very important group in the organisation or institutions where a strategy is to be implemented. One of the key factors affecting implementation of strategic plans is stakeholders' participation. The success of any strategic plan lies in the level of participation of all those who will be charged with

the responsibility of implementing it. Therefore, active involvement of stakeholders at all levels is emphasised. A research by Swiderska (2001) shows that stakeholders participation plays a critical role in ensuring that strategic planning efforts are successful and in preventing potential problems at the implementation stage. Stakeholders participation brings considerable benefit in terms of building the conditions necessary to facilitate Smooth implementation of strategic plan, stakeholders for the case of a secondary school can mean the management, teachers, students, non- teaching staff, board of governors (BOG), sponsors and the entire society which the institution serves. All these categories must be involved in one way or another. The involvement can be right at the beginning when strategy is being formulated to the evaluation period. In that way then strategic implementation would be easy to realise. The absence of a strong professional leadership in a firm means lack of leadership commitment and skills. Strategy is formulated at the top of the organisation but is executed by those at the bottom of the organisation better known as executers. Misplacement of priorities and lack of understanding of the strategy has been a recipe for failure in most organisations.

According to Osei (2006) school principals often-work in poorly equipped schools and with teachers who are not adequately in-serviced. Yet as Desler (2002) advices, after the employee has been recruited he or she must next be developed to better fit the organisation. No one is a perfect fit at the time of hiring and some training education must take place. As put by (Boomer, 2007) management training programs have become a popular and effective means to meet this need. It is so important that the leadership must give explicit support but with skills and commitments.

In his work Robinson(2003) effective administrators are those who have acquired certain basic skills to cope with the demands of their management tasks. Robbin (2003) classified those skills into three broad categories namely: technical, human and conceptual skills. Technical skills help in putting into maximum use the technological know-how of the available human resource. Human skills also contribute by way of the known how of those involved in the business of the organisation. While conceptual skills are oriented towards the concept understanding.

Since most principals and teachers have not been attending any training for purpose of enhancing their skills and attitudes will prove to be difficult to achieve much by trading into new treasures of knowledge. Teachers and their managers do not attend any management course, in service or induction in order to improve their skills through training and development. This leaves them in darkness on how to overcome daily challenges posed by the surrounding environment. This fails their ability to implement the school strategic plan since they cannot understand the link between strategy, structure, culture and environment.

Organisation culture is the set of important assumption that members of an organisation share in common. Every organisation has its own culture. An organisation culture is similar to an individual's personality- an intangible yet ever-present theme that provides meaning, direction and the basis for action. In much the same as personality influences the behaviour of an individual, the shared assumption (believes and values) among a firm's members influences opinions and actions within the firm, Robinson and Pearce (1991). In the school case the culture of the school must be in line with the strategy to be implemented.

Implementation of strategy can be thwarted by cultural shocks. Many deeply rooted cultural beliefs have always remained an obstacle to strategic implementation. Those developing strategies must make sure that the strategy crafted must be compatible with the prevailing school culture. Aosa (1992) advices that lack of compatibility between strategy and culture can lead to high organisational resistance to change and demonization which can in turn frustrate the strategy implementation. Communication is the life blood and the backbone of an organisation. Every member of an organization must be in touch with any piece of information whether old or new. Muthuiya (2004) states that the most important problem experienced in strategy implementation in many cases is lack of sufficient communication. Peng and John(2001) stated that effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation.

According to Wang (2000) communication should be two ways so that it can provide information to improve understanding and responsibility and to motivate staff. For strategy, to be clearly understood by the staff it should be communicated to all those that will be involved in the implementation of the strategy. It is through communication that the staff will get to understand the content of the strategy and hence easy to implement.

2.6 Measures to Mitigate the Challenges of Implementation of Strategic Plans

Opportunistic planning allows organizations to be flexible and open to making changes to the strategic planning process, if it becomes necessary in the face of unexpected events and changes in the initial assumptions. Organizations need a good combination of formal and opportunistic planning. Organizations that rely exclusively

on formal planning could trap themselves in unbearable rigidities. Those whose decision-making capability is entirely opportunistic will be constantly reacting to external forces, without a clear sense of direction (Hax & Majluf, 1996). Planners should not only plan, but also serve as facilitators, catalysts, inquirers, educators, and synthesizers to guide the planning process effectively.

Organizations should encourage active participation of as many people as possible, including the faculty, administration, students, and alumni), engaging them in the on-going dialogue, and involving them in the strategic planning process, to generate a feeling of ownership of the process and the outcomes throughout the organization. Using a series of incremental steps that build strategies and integrating them into the entire organization will help to adjusting the course of action of strategic planning with overall organizational vision and strategic issues, while allowing for creativity and flexibility for change (Hax & Majluf, 1996).

While all types of communication are useful in implementing strategies, oral communication is especially important to implementing enterprise-wise strategies and carrying out the planning effort (Senge, 1990). Oral communication used in conjunction with other forms of communication affects strategic plans implementation directly through its impact on the individuals involved in implementation. It encourages participation in strategy formation, refinement and implementation as well as enables direct communication of corporate strategies once formulated. Open and collaborative dialog helps the strategic management effort in many ways. In addition to reaffirming the personal involvement of top management, it provides a mechanism for clarifying concepts during plan development, adapting

overall organization plans to operational needs on a timely and detailed basis, helping those operating managers unfamiliar with strategic planning techniques to acquire strategic planning skills and coordinating and controlling the planning effort. This way greater integration of the overall organization and operating plans can be enhanced through greater reliance on oral communications (Povejsil, 1989). Open and cooperative dialog also enables the strategic management process to foster strategic thinking among key operating managers.

Leadership has been identified as critical to the planning process because knowledgeable and committed leadership is important for balancing the internal and external forces that affect the organization (Pearce & Robinson, 2003). Additionally, an active and supportive leader builds managerial support for the planning process which results in greater support for implementation of the plan (Carter, 1999). Peter (1974) clearly identifies the critical importance of leadership to the planning process by writing that leadership is important, and there is a need for leaders, within an organization to make strategic planning something more than muddling through or an incremental process. It seems conclusive then, that people play an important part in the planning process –both as leaders (or champions) and as participants.

Past studies have agreed that strong leadership that is committed to strategic planning is important for successful implementation of the plan. If the leader makes strategic planning a priority, it follows then that the organization is more likely to make strategic planning a priority. The challenge, however, comes from the idea that the people in the organization are more likely to be accountable for the plan if they are involved in the development of the plan. In practice, however, it is more difficult

because the leader responsible for championing the planning process may also be the one who does not like to relinquish control of the process. Despite this challenge, the people play an important role in the planning process and for strategic planning to be effective, organizations must have the participation and support of leaders and employees who will implement the plan.

2.7 Empirical Studies and Research Gaps

Ngware *et al.* (2006) conducted a study to determine the extent of practice of TQM in Kenyan secondary schools revealed that most schools did not have strategic plans. Among the few schools that showed evidence of strategic planning, the strategic plan acts not only as the roadmap but also as a tool to communicate quality expectations to all employees. The researchers noted that unfortunately, such schools are week in systematic follow-up to ascertain the implementation of the plans.

In addition there seemed to be no deliberate attempts to do a formal internal evaluation with a view to ascertain the extent to which qualitative and or quantitative targets have been met. Failure to do such an evaluation denies the organization the opportunity to reflect on the quality planning and inculcate a culture of quality assurance in schools. The fact that schools are operating without strategic planning is an indication of a lack of commitment to quality management. Lack of quality planning may jeopardize the provision of quality education services, which may in turn lead to low student achievement. It is important therefore for the school system to sensitize school managers to the importance of strategic management in education.

Freedman (2003) as cited in Chermack, Provo & Danielson (2005) affirm the following as strategy implementation obstacle; strategic inertia; lack of stakeholder commitment; strategic drift (lack of focus - unclear goals); strategic "dilution"; strategic isolation (lack of alignment among business units and goals); failure to understand progress (no measurement of indicators of success or failure); initiative fatigue (too many initiatives - tired of consultants and their tricks); impatience (a demand that change happens now); not celebrating success.

De Lisi (2002) as cited in Chermack, Provo& Danielson (2005) found that lack of knowledge of strategy and the strategy process; the plan was not communicated effectively; People are not measured or rewarded for executing the plan; the plan is too abstract- people can't relate it to their work; people are not held accountable for execution; Senior management does not pay attention to the plan; Strategy is not clear, focused and consistent; Conditions change that make the plan obsolete; The proper control systems are not in place to measure and track the execution of the strategy; reinforces such as; culture, structure, processes, IT systems, management systems and human resource systems are not considered, and/or act as inhibitors; People are driven by short-term results.

Beer and Eisenstat (2000) asserts that the six key "strategy killers" are: Top-down or laissez-faire senior management style; Unclear strategies and conflicting priorities; Ineffective senior management team; Poor vertical communication - employees often feared that senior level managers and executives did not want to hear their observations or interpretations of the problems they were facing; Poor coordination across boundaries; Inadequate down the line leadership skills - Lower-level managers were not developing skills through the new opportunities they were facing, nor were they supported through leadership coaching or training.

Ateng (2007) on challenges of strategy implementation at the ministry of finance in Kenya, Awino, Wandera, Imaita & K‟Obonyo (2009) Challenges facing the implementation of differentiation strategy at the Mumias sugar company limited. The key challenges identified by the studies were; control by external powers; political decision making; inadequate resources; inadequate funding and untimely disbursement of resources by Treasury; staff resistance to change and lack of skills; politicized internal environment; dependency on exchequer for recurrent and development funding; promotion of traditional mangers and aversion to superior practices; policies and procedures, tactical and operational plans; globalization forces, power and politics, training, branding, pricing, research, culture, and competition.

This chapter has presented a review of literature on strategic planning in schools. The chapter started with the theoretical review, whereby resource view and stakeholders theories were discussed. Then an empirical review of literature was presented, starting with literature on extent of strategic planning in schools, and finally literature related to strategic management, strategic implementation and challenges and measures to mitigate the challenges of implementation of strategic plans. In the process of conducting literature review, several gaps emerged which the proposed study hopes to fill. First, the researcher come across very few studies on strategic planning in Kenyan secondary schools. Ngware, Wamukuru, and Odebero (2006) conducted a study on total quality management in secondary schools in Kenya, but strategic planning has not been given attention. This is in spite of the many benefits associated with strategic planning. Another gap identified was related to the fact that, even after head teachers are trained on strategic planning, the Ministry of Education does not follow up to see if the school administrators are able to develop and implement strategic plans.

Consequently, the effects of strategic planning on school effectiveness in terms of improvement in academic achievement, discipline of students and utilization of resources are not known. This study sought to fill the research gaps by finding out the challenges in the implementation of strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County in Kenya.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides literature review on other research work that has been carried out on related topic. It covered the theoretical foundation, strategic management, and strategy implementation, measures to mitigate the challenges of implementation of strategic plans and empirical studies and research gaps.

The next chapter will detail the methodology that will be adopted in the research. The chapter outlined the sampling method, the research design, the data collection method, the data analysis method and give the justification of the research methodology adopted.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the methodology that was applied in the overall process of the research. It elaborated on research design, population of study, sampling techniques, research instruments, and data collection procedures used, data analysis and presentation of the findings.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a cross sectional survey design and aimed at providing data on the entire population under study. It is descriptive in nature hence can be used to describe some features of the population. Cooper, (2000) states that a descriptive study is concerned with finding out who, what, where and how of a phenomenon which is the concern of this study. Descriptive design was used to facilitate description and inference building about population parameters and the relationship among two or more variables.

The purpose of descriptive research is to describe the state of affairs as it is at present (Cooper & Schindler, 2001). It is used when the objective is to provide a systematic description that is as factual and accurate as possible. The benefit of cross sectional survey is that it focuses on finding relationship between variables at one moment in time from a large pool of subjects. Researchers record the information that is present in a population but they do not manipulate variables. The research study involved the collection of data on challenges in implementation of school strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County.

3.3 Population of the Study

A population is the total collection of elements from which we wish to make some inference (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). According to Ngechu (2004), population is a set of people, services, elements, and events, groups of things or households that are being investigated. It is the number of individuals which the researcher is interested in describing and making statistical inferences.

The population of the study were all the secondary schools in Mandera County. As at 31st December 2014, there were 44 secondary schools (33 public and 11 private) schools in Mandera County as per County Education Office (2014) report. This was a census survey in which all the secondary schools were involved. The study issued one questionnaire in every school which was filled by the principal or deputy principal or a department head. In total the researcher used 44 questionnaires for the 44 secondary schools in Mandera County.

3.4 Data Collection

The study relied on primary data. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. The questionnaire as the instrument of data collection was preferred because respondents of the study were literate and able to answer questions. The questionnaire contained both structured and open ended questions.

The researcher issued the questionnaire by to the respondents during a seminar which was organized by the County Director of education to discuss the way forward for the education in the region which had faced serious security threats due to numerous attacks which had been carried out in the region by the Al-Shabaab Militias.

Most of the schools in the region had closed down due to fear of attacks. There was general inaccessibility in the region due to the rugged nature of the region. The researcher obtained an Introductory Letter from the University to collect data from the respondents who were principals, deputy principals and departmental heads of the schools.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected was edited to identify and remove errors made by respondents. Edited data was then coded in order to translate responses into specific categories. Code numbers were assigned to each answer of survey question and from this a coding list or frame was obtained. Coding was expected to organize and reduce research data into manageable summaries.

Descriptive statistics such as means, percentages and frequency distributions were used to describe the responses as it was better method of presenting the findings of the study. Presentation of the results was done on tables, pie charts and bar graphs.

3.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter described the methodology that was used to carry out the study. The research design was descriptive in nature focusing on secondary schools in Mandera County. The population of the study were all the secondary schools in Mandera County. The sample size and the sampling techniques as well as the questionnaire as a primary data collection instrument were described.

The questionnaire developed was pilot tested before a refined one was administered to the respondents. The chapter also indicated that, data was analysed using SPSS and presented in inform of chart and tables. The next chapter presents the findings of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The study sought to establish challenges in implementation of strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County. Data was collected from principal or deputy principal or a department head. The findings are presented in the following sections.

4.2 Response Rate

Of the 44 questionnaires that were distributed to the principals, deputy principals or a department head, 30 useable questionnaires were returned in good time, giving a response rate of 68.1%. This response rates were sufficient and representative and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. The chapter covered the demographic information, and the findings were based on the objectives.

4.3 Demographic Information

The analysis of the demographic characteristics showed significant influences on strategic plan implementation. The analysis and discussion below captures the findings and the implications that the same have on strategic plan implementation.

4.3.1 Nature of the school

The researcher sought to determine the nature of the school and the findings are given in figure below.
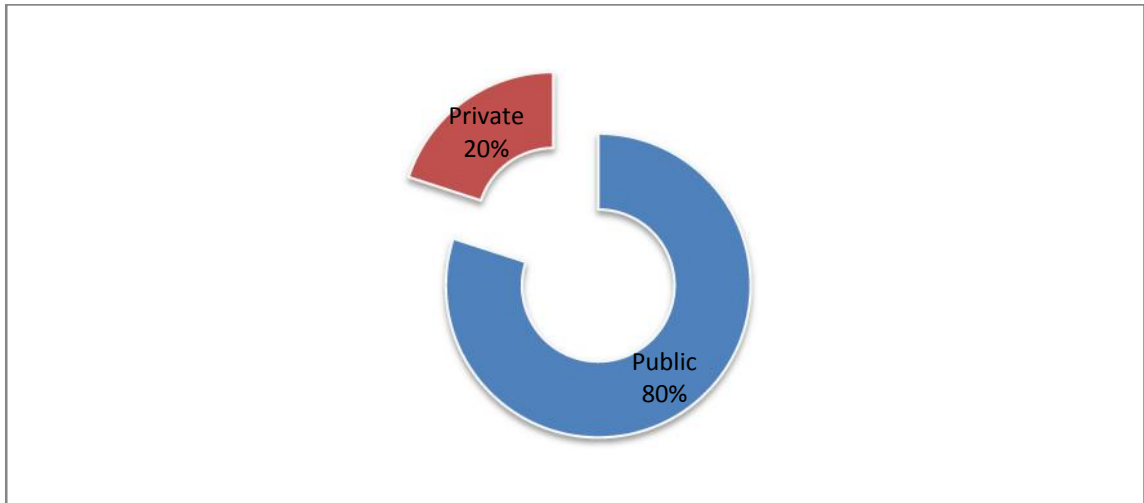
Source: Research Data (2015)

Figure 4.1: Nature of the school

From the findings of the study, majority (80%) of the respondents indicated that their schools were public while 20% indicated that the schools were private. This implies that majority of the secondary schools in Mandera County were public schools.

4.3.2 Position held in the school

The researcher sought to determine whether the respondents were indeed the principals or deputy principals or heads of department in their respective schools. This was to ensure that the survey results were valid and reliable. The findings are given in figure below.
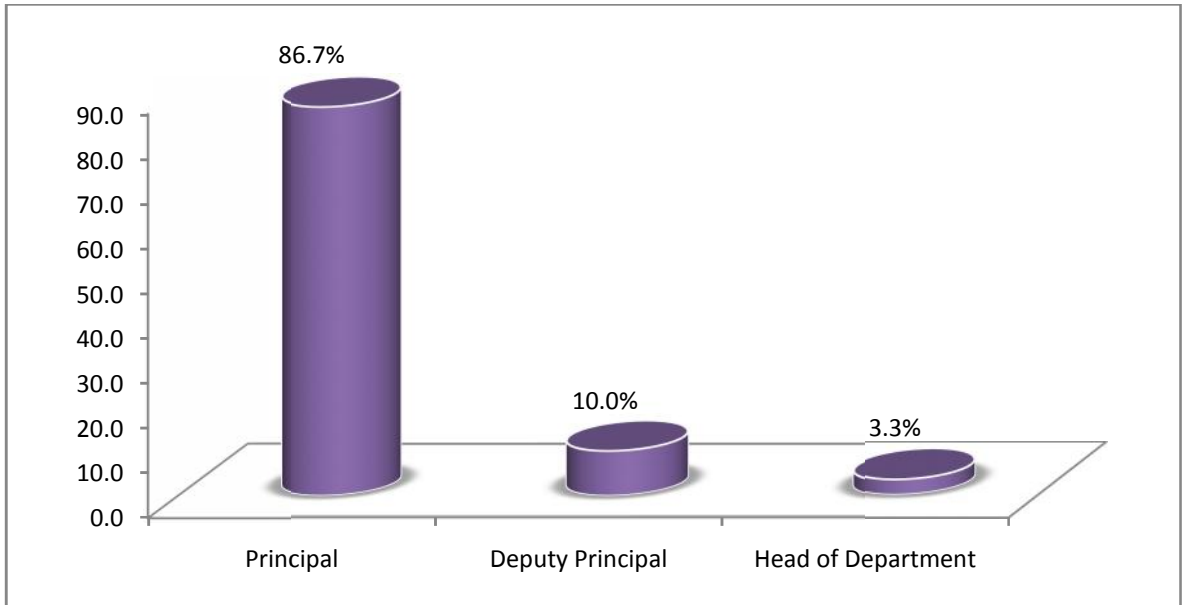
Source: Research Data (2015)

Figure 4.2: Position held in the school

From the findings in the figure above, majority (86.7%) of the respondents were principals and 10% were deputy principals while 3.3% of the respondents were heads of departments. This implies that majority of the respondents were principals.

4.3.3 Length of continuous service in the school

The research sought to establish respondents' working experience based on the number of years they have worked in the schools. The findings are as stipulated in figure below.
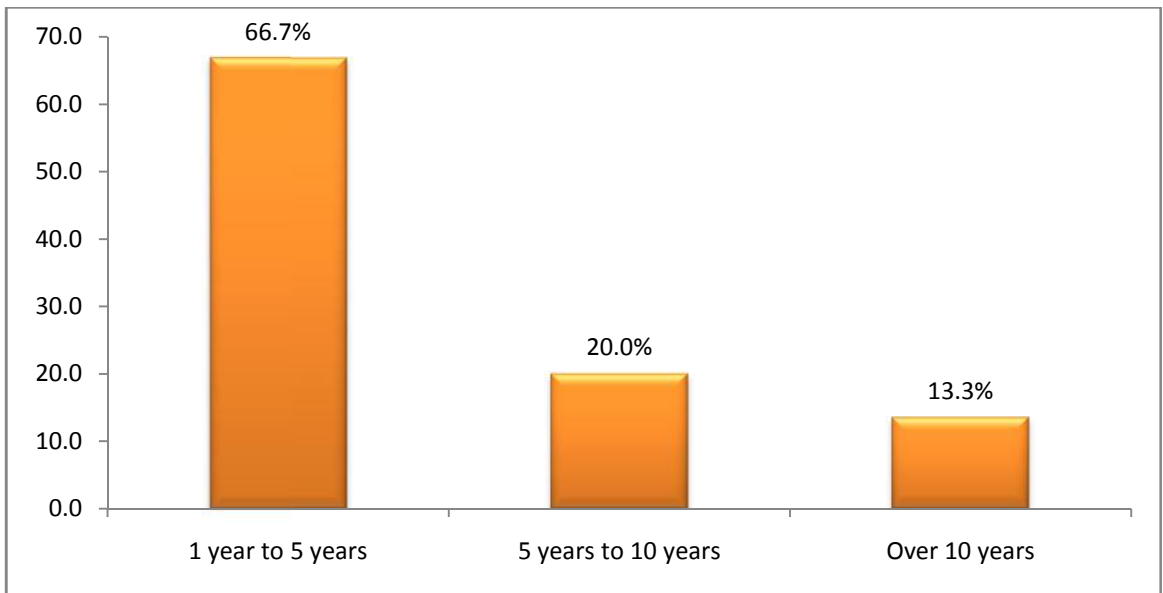
Source: Research Data (2015)

Figure 4.3: Length of continuous service in the school

From the findings in the figure above, majority (66.7%) of the respondents had worked in their current schools for a period of between 1 -5 years, 20% had worked for 5-10 years while 13.3% had worked in their current schools for a period of over 10 years. This implies that majority of the respondents had worked in their current schools for a period of between 1 -5 years.

4.3.4 Highest level of education

The study further sought to establish the level of education of the respondents. The findings are stipulated in the figure below.
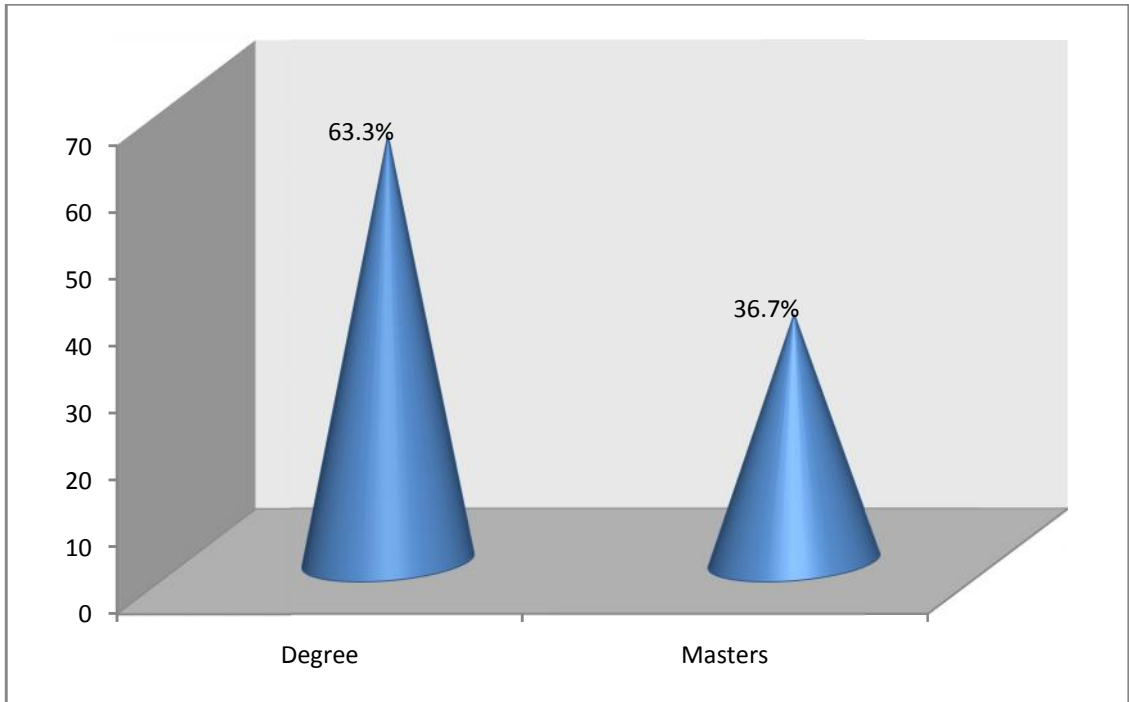
Source: Research Data (2015)

Figure 4.4: Highest level of education

From the study findings presented in the figure above, majority (63.3%) of the respondents had university degree as their highest level of education while 36.7% had Master's degree as their highest level of education. This implies that majority of the respondents had university degree as their highest level of education.

4.3.5 Availability of a school strategic plans

The study also sought to establish whether schools in Mandera County had strategic plans. The results are presented in the figure below.
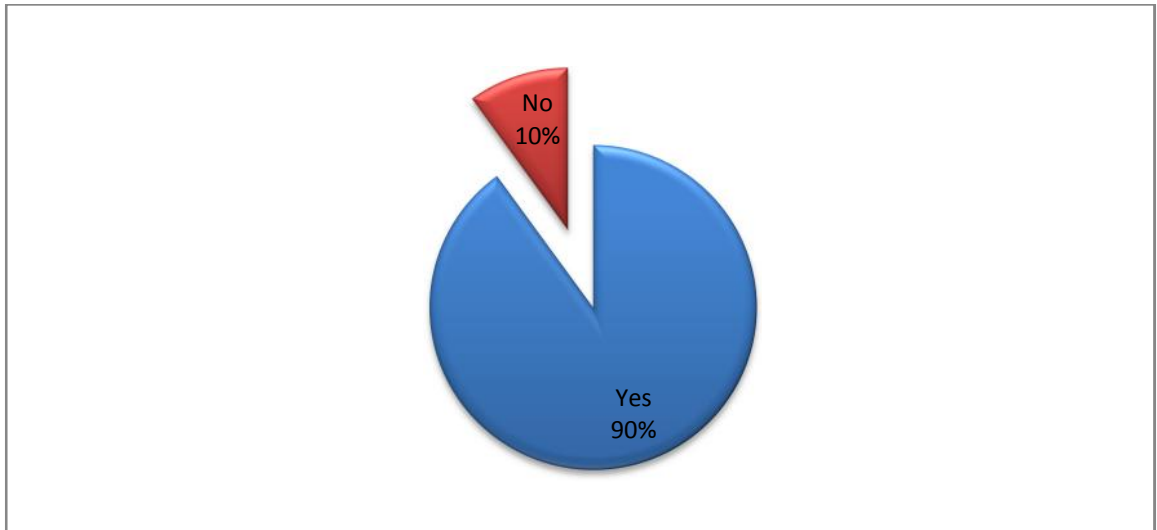
Source: Research Data (2015)

Figure 4.5: Availability of school strategic plans

From the findings above, majority (90%) of the schools in Mandera county had strategic plans while the minority 10% had no had strategic plans. This implies that majority of the secondary schools in Mandera County had strategic plans. On further investigation, the study established that teachers, students and school board of governors were involved in the formulation of the school strategic plans while the school management were involved in implementation of the strategic plans.

4.4 Challenges facing school in implementing school strategic plans

The study asked the respondents to indicate the level at which they encountered the challenges in strategy implementation. The responses were rated on a five point Likert scale where: 1- Not at all, 2- To a little extent, 3- To a moderate extent, 4- To a great extent and 5-To a very great extent. The mean and standard deviations were generated from SPSS and are as illustrated in table below.

Table 4.1: Challenges facing school in implementing school strategic plans

Challenges facing school in implementing school strategic plans	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lack of funding	4.36	0.999
Untimely distribution of funds	4.30	0.986
Lack of top management commitment	3.43	1.381
Staff resistance to change	3.90	1.446
Political interference/ influence	4.20	1.323
Culture	4.06	1.142
Lack of skills	2.93	1.412
Lack of enough staff	4.50	0.776
Lack of appropriate structure	3.10	1.093
Poor communication	3.13	1.332
Insufficient buy in or lack of understanding of the strategy among those who need to implement	3.40	1.037
Insecurity	4.43	1.072
Inaccessibility of the area	4.46	1.188

Source: Research Data (2015)

From the table above, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that Lack of enough staff; Inaccessibility of the area; Insecurity; Lack of funding; Untimely distribution of funds; Political interference/ influence and Culture were the challenges encountered in strategy implementation as indicated by the mean scores of 4.50, 4.46, 4.43, 4.36, 4.30, 4.20 and 4.06 respectively.

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On the other hand, most of the respondents agreed that Staff resistance to change; Lack of top management commitment; Insufficient buy in or lack of understanding of the strategy among those who need to implement; Poor communication and Lack of appropriate structure were the challenges encountered in strategy implementation as indicated by the mean scores of 3.90, 3.43, 3.40, 3.13 and 3.10 respectively.

From these findings, it is clear that that Lack of enough staff; Inaccessibility of the area; Insecurity; Lack of funding; Untimely distribution of funds; Political interference/ influence and Culture were the challenges encountered in strategy implementation by the secondary schools in Mandera county.

4.5 Measures taken to address the challenges

The study asked the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the following measures to deal with the challenges in strategy implementation. The responses were rated on a five point Likert scale where: 1- Not at all, 2- To a little extent, 3- To a moderate extent, 4- To a great extent and 5-To a very great extent. The mean and standard deviations were generated from SPSS and are as illustrated in table below.

Table 4.2: Measures taken to address the challenges

Measures taken to address the challenges	Mean	Std. Dev.
Allocating enough resources for each project	3.53	1.195
Ensuring timely distribution of resources	3.46	1.166
Improving top management commitment to strategy implementation	4.00	0.909
Managing staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management	3.80	1.374
Recruitment of more staff to the institution when there is need	2.93	1.436
Organizing internal training of staff through workshops and seminars to change institution culture	2.16	1.416
Sponsoring staff members to further their studies in related fields to enhance their skills	2.36	1.542
Enhancing of organizational structure to suit the strategy	3.10	0.994
Change institution structure	3.63	1.033
Management avoiding political influence in running of the school matters	4.06	1.257
Management adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff	4.13	1.041
Working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity	4.63	0.614

Source: Research Data (2015)

From the table above, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they were working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity; management was adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff; management was avoiding political influence in running of the school matters and that they were improving top management commitment to strategy implementation as indicated by the mean scores of 4.63, 4.13, 4.06 and 4.00 respectively. On the other hand, most of the respondents agreed that they were managing staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management; changing institution structure; allocating enough resources for each project; ensuring timely distribution of resources and that they were enhancing organizational structure to suit the strategy as indicated by the mean scores 3.80, 3.62, 3.53, 3.46 and 3.10 respectively. From these findings, it is clear that that the management of schools at Mandera County were working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity; management was adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff; management was avoiding political influence in running of the school matters and that they were improving top management commitment to strategy implementation as measures to deal with the challenges in strategy implementation.

4.6 Discussions of the Findings

The study further found out that, Lack of enough staff; Inaccessibility of the area; Insecurity; Lack of funding; Untimely distribution of funds; Political interference/ influence and Culture were the challenges encountered in strategy implementation by the secondary schools in Mandera county. These findings agree with Vespoor (2008) who noted that most secondary schools in Sub-Sahara Africa operate with inadequate resources due to poor funding. Osei (2006) stated that school principal's often-work

in poorly equipped schools and with teachers who are not adequately in-serviced. Yet as Desler (2002) advices, after the employee has been recruited he or she must next be developed to better fit the organisation. No one is a perfect fit at the time of hiring and some training education must take place. As put by (Boomer, 2007) management training programs have become a popular and effective means to meet this need. It is so important that the leadership must give explicit support but with skills and commitments.

Aosa (1992) advices that lack of compatibility between strategy and culture can lead to high organisational resistance to change and demonization which can in turn frustrate the strategy implementation. Muthuiya (2004) states that the most important problem experienced in strategy implementation in many cases is lack of sufficient communication. Peng and Little John (2001) stated that effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation. The study established that the management of schools at Mandera County were working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity; management was adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff; management was avoiding political influence in running of the school matters and that they were improving top management commitment to strategy implementation as measures to deal with the challenges in strategy implementation. This conforms to Mintzberg, (1999) who asserted that the organisation process of performing measurements, compensation, management development all this enmeshed in systems of incentive and towards control must be directed towards the kind of behaviour required by organisational purpose. Strategic planning in school scenarios has been differently explained by a number of writers.

Scholes and Johnson (1984) stated that strategic analysis and choice are of little value to an organisation unless the strategies are capable of being implemented; strategic change does not take place simply because it is considered to be desirable. It takes place if it can be made to work and put into effect by members of the organisation.

Further, Swiderska (2001) showed that stakeholder's participation plays a critical role in ensuring that strategic planning efforts are successful and in preventing potential problems at the implementation stage. Stakeholders participation brings considerable benefit in terms of building the conditions necessary to facilitate Smooth implementation of strategic plan, stakeholders for the case of a secondary school can mean the management, teachers, students, non- teaching staff, board of governors (BOG), sponsors and the entire society which the institution serves. All these categories must be involved in one way or another. The involvement can be right at the beginning when strategy is being formulated to the evaluation period. In that way then strategic implementation would be easy to realise.

4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the results and findings of the study with respect to the data collected from the respondents.

The findings based on the background of the respondents are given in the first section followed by the findings on the Challenges facing school in implementing school strategic plans.

The third section presents the results on measures taken to address the challenges and the final section provided the discussions of the findings. The next chapter focused on the discussion of the findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, and the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the objectives of the study. The objective of this study was to establish the challenges in implementation of strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County.

5.2 Summary

From the findings, majority of the secondary schools in Mandera County were public schools and majority of the respondents in the study were principals who had worked in their current schools for a period of between 1 -5 years. The study further found out that majority of the respondents had university degree as their highest level of education and that majority of the secondary schools in Mandera County had strategic plans which were formulated by the teachers, students and school board of governors and implemented by the school management.

The study further found out that, Lack of enough staff; Inaccessibility of the area; Insecurity; Lack of funding; Untimely distribution of funds; Political interference/ influence and Culture were the challenges encountered in strategy implementation by the secondary schools in Mandera county.

Lastly, the study established that the management of schools at Mandera County were working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity; management was adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff; management was avoiding political influence in running of the school matters and that they were improving top management commitment to strategy implementation as measures to deal with the challenges in strategy implementation.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the secondary schools in Mandera County had strategic plans which if properly implemented, would benefit the stakeholders in schools. The findings of the study revealed that the schools had long-term plans for their schools, which would enable them to have ample time to make and see the changes of their strategic plans before deciding whether to make any more adjustments or to continue with the same strategic plans. The study established that schools in Mandera County made an effort of including all the stakeholders in the implementation of strategic plans, to ensure that everyone's interests are met.

The study however found out that most of the schools lacked enough finances to implement their strategic plans, which showed that lack of resources adversely affected the implementation of strategic plans in schools. It emerged from the study that the schools had effective leadership, which had a positive effect on strategic planning in schools. Effective leadership in strategic planning play the role of making good plans for the future, providing better awareness of needs and of the facilities related issues and environment, defining the overall mission of the organization and focuses on the objectives, providing a sense of direction, continuity, and effective

staffing and leadership. It could also be argued that the large extent of formal strategic planning observed is attributed to the MoE policy requiring every school to formulate a strategic plan in the overall Government's endeavor to improve quality of education and achieve the MDGs and the vision 2030. It could also be due to the dynamism and complexity in the environment presenting numerous opportunities and threats to schools hence the need to determine individual strength and weaknesses and channel the scarce resources in meaningful strategies to develop competitive advantage.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommended that all public secondary schools should engage in formal strategic planning because not only is it a policy but also its ability to help establish strategic direction and align resources to meaningful strategies to develop competitive advantage and compete successfully cannot not be overemphasized. The management of the schools should therefore invest heavily to ensure that the strategic choices in the strategic plan are implemented to the later.

The education policy makers should organize for workshops and seminars to train and sensitize school management on importance of stakeholder involvement in development of strategic plan, significance of intensive environmental analysis during strategic planning and the importance of striving to implement the agreed upon strategies. Strategic planning requires top management commitment to be able to channel resources into strategy implementation in order to realize the impact of strategic planning on performance otherwise; brilliantly formulated strategies that are not implemented do not add any value to a firm.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that future studies should endeavor to find out the challenges of strategy implementation, significance of stakeholder involvement in strategic planning, significance of environmental analysis during strategic planning, challenges of strategy implementation and the possible remedies to improve the percentage contribution of strategic performance besides the other performance indicators.

Finally, the study recommends that the government through the ministry of education should set aside funds to be used by the schools to ensure that the schools have implemented the school strategic plans.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by the fact that questionnaires were used to collect the data. The main limitation with this is that some respondents could have over-rated their schools on failed to mention the challenges they faced as schools or they may have exaggerated the challenges. Another limitation is that data was collected only from principals, deputies and heads of departments (HoDs). Due to insecurity in the area time and financial constraints, other important stakeholders like parents and students were not included in the study. This is despite the fact that they also have views on school strategic planning.

It was such an uphill task for the researcher to convince the respondents to participate in the study. Principals, deputies and heads of departments are known to work under very strict confidentiality in order to secure any unauthorized access to information. Most of the respondents agreed to participate on condition that the information would

not be divulged to any other party other than for academic purposes only. The researcher faced serious security threats in the county due to numerous attacks which had been carried out in the region by the Al-Shabaab Militias. Most of the schools in the region had closed down due to fear of attacked and most of the respondents, majority of whom are non-locals, had also freed the region making it difficult to obtain the information.

The study was limited to One County in Kenya. For a more conclusive result, all Counties should have been represented. However, this was not possible due to time factor and financial constraints.

5.6 Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should endeavor to focus on other concepts of strategic management that affect students' performance. For instance, a research on governance or organizational behavior and performance of public secondary schools would shed more light on performance in public secondary schools.

Similarly, such concepts determine the extent of formal strategic planning in an organization as well as the extent of implementation of strategic plans. Such studies in addition to the findings in this study can help determine whether the whole concept of strategic planning and strategic management in general is relevant in public secondary schools.

5.7 Implications on Policy Theory and Practice

This study has policy implications as there has not been a standard benchmark on the secondary Schools implementation of strategic plan as it is for institutions of higher learning. There is need for secondary schools to form strategic alliances with development partners so as to enhance their performance. This will also enhance strategic plan implementation.

Currently several institutions of higher learning are now participating in common quality assurance system, which aims at harmonizing higher education standards thereby promoting comparability of academic programs among institutions of higher learning based on regional benchmark standards. This makes this study therefore a critical part of the link between theory and practice within the confines of strategic education management in Mandera County and therefore there is need for the Kenya Government to review the education policies that are related to quality management and strategic planning and management in the Secondary schools.

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<div align="center">**APPENDICES**</div>

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

Dear Respondent,

<div align="center">**REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA**</div>

I am a Master of Business Administration (MBA) student at the University of Nairobi. I am required to submit as part of my course work assessment, a research proposal report on challenges in implementation of school strategic plans by secondary schools in Mandera County in Kenya. I am kindly requesting you to assist me in this study by filling the attached questionnaire honestly and to the best of your ability as it applies to your institution.

Please be assured that the information you provide will be used solely for academic purposes and all responses will remain confidential.

Abdikadir Ali Kosar

Student Researcher

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Section 1: General Information

1. (a) Name of the school (Optional)

    (b) Is your school:

    i.   Public   ( )

    ii.   Private   ( )

    (c) What position do you hold in school?

    i.   Principal   ( )

    ii.   Deputy Principal   ( )

    iii. Head of Department   ( )

    iv.   Other   ( ) Specify --------------------------------

2. How long have you worked in the school?

    i.   1 year to 5 years   ( )

    ii.   5 years to 10 years   ( )

    iii. Over 10 years   ( )

3. Highest level of education

    O-level / A- level   ( )

    Diploma   ( )

    Degree   ( )

    Masters   ( )

    Any other specify……………………………………. …………………

4. Does your school have school strategic plans?

Yes   ( )

No   ( )

5. If yes who are involved in the formulation and implementation of the school strategic plan:

 i. Formulation --

   ----

 ii. Implementation --

Section II: Challenges facing school in implementing school strategic plans

6. (a) To what extent do you encounter each of the following challenges in your strategy implementation? Rate on a 5 –point scale, where

1 = Not at all, 2= Little extent, 3= Moderate extent, 4= Great extent, and 5= Very great extent

Implementation challenges	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of funding					
Untimely distribution of funds					
Lack of top management commitment					
Staff resistance to change					
Political interference/ influence					
Culture					
Lack of skills					
Lack of enough staff					
Lack of appropriate structure					

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Poor communication					
Insufficient buy in or lack of understanding of the strategy among those who need to implement					
Insecurity					
Inaccessibility of the area					

(b) Any other challenge not mentioned above.

Section III: Measures taken to address the challenges

7. (a) To what extent do you adopt the following measures to deal with the implementation challenges? Rate on a 5- point scale where; 1 = Not at all, 2= Little extent, 3= Moderate extent, 4= Great extent, and 5= very great extent

Measures to address challenges	1	2	3	4	5
Allocating enough resources for each project					
Ensuring timely distribution of resources					
Improving top management commitment to strategy implementation					
Managing staff resistance to change by practicing proper change management					
Recruitment of more staff to the institution when there is need					
Organizing internal training of staff through					

workshops and seminars to change institution culture				
Sponsoring staff members to further their studies in related fields to enhance their skills				
Enhancing of organizational structure to suit the strategy				
Change institution structure				
Management avoiding political influence in running of the school matters				
Management adopting a top down and horizontal communication with the staff				
Working closely with the locals in matters of insecurity				

(b) Other measures taken and not mentioned above.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix III: List of Schools in Mandera County

Public Secondary Schools in Mandera County

1. Barwaqo Boys Day Secondary

2. Khadija Girls Day Secondary

3. Mandera Secondary

4. Mandera Buruburu Day Boys Secondary

5. Arabia Boys Secondary

6. Hareri Mixed Secondary School

7. Arabia Girls Secondary School

8. Khalalio Secondary School

9. Takaba Boys Secondary School

10. Takaba Girls Secondary School

11. Takaba Day Mixed Secondary

12. Elwak Secondary School

13. Chief Mohamed Jari Secondary

14. Elwak Girls Secondary School

15. Elwak DEB Mixed Day Secondary

16. Wargadid Mixed Secondary

17. Shimbir Fatuma Mixed Secondary

18. Sheikh Ali High School

19. Rhamu Girls Secondary School

20. Rhamu Day Mixed Secondary

21. Ashabito Secondary School

22. Rhamu Dimtu Boys Secondary

23. Ashabito Girls Secondary School

24. Lafey Boys Secondary School

25. Wayam Secondary School

26. Barusa Mixed Secondary

27. Moi Girls Mandera Secondary

28. Mandera Buruburu Day Boys Secondary

29. Malkamari Secondary School

30. Neboy Secondary School

31. Gari Boys Secondary School

32. Aresa Girls Secondary

33. Khalalio Girls Secondary

Private Secondary Schools in Mandera County

1. Border Point Mixed Secondary School

2. Jowahar Islam Secondary

3. Mandera Integrated Secondary School

4. Matarejio Secondary School

5. Rhamu Mixed Secondary School

6. Towfiq Secondary School

7. Township Secondary School

8. Al-sadiq Mixed Secondary School

9. Talent High Academy

10. Al- Bukhari Secondary School

11. Border- view Secondary School

Source: Mandera County Education Office 2014

Appendix IV: Letter from the University

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

Telephone: 020-2059162
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 27ᵗʰ JUNE 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter ABDIKADIR ALI KOSAR
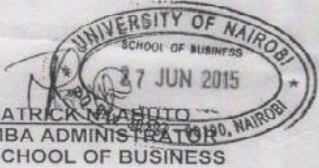
Registration No. D 61 / 67914 / 2013

is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.

27 JUN 2015

PATRICK NYABUTO
MBA ADMINISTRATOR
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Appendix V: Proposal Correction Form

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

PROPOSAL CORRECTION FORM

Student Name... Abdikadir Ali Kosar.

Registration Number... D61/67914/2013

Department... Business Administration

Specialization... Strategic Management

Title of Project Proposal...

Challenges In Implementation of strategic plans by secondary schools In Mandera county.

The student has done all the corrections as suggested during the Proposal Presentation and can now proceed to collect data.

Name of Supervisor... Prof. ZB AWINO ...Signature... ...Date... 26/05/15

Appendix VI: Project Format

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

THE FINAL PROJECT (MBA)

A.   STRUCTURE

- Title Page
- Declaration
- Acknowledgements
- Dedication
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- Abstract

Chapter One	Introduction
Chapter Two	Literature Review
Chapter Three	Research Methodology
Chapter Four	Data Analysis, Results and Discussion
Chapter Five	Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

References
Appendices.

B.   FORMAT OF THE PAPER

- **Length:**   Should not exceed 70 pages (double spacing, A4 paper)
- **Margins:**
  - Left margin: 1½ inches
  - Right margin: 1 inch
  - Top margin: 1 inch
  - Bottom margin: 1 inch
- **In-text citation:**   Use the parenthetical citation style i.e. Author (Date). Follow the American Psychological Association Style (APA, 6th Edition, 2010)
- **Referencing:**   Follow the American Psychological Association Style (APA, 6th Edition, 2010)
- **Pagination:**   Bottom centre
- **Justification:**   Left and right
- **Font size:**   12, Times New Roman (Text)
  14 Times New Roman (Headings)