

**THE STATE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE TEACHERS
SERVICE COMMISSION KENYA**

MBAABU MIRIAM KATHAMBI

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS (MBA), UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

NOVEMBER, 2014

DECLARATION

This research project is my own original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university.

Presented byDate.....

MBAABU MIRIAM KATHAMBI

D61/79276/2012

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.

Approved byDate.....

DR. BITANGE NDEMO

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated first to Almighty God for this far He has brought me. Secondly, I dedicate this project to my husband Mutua Makaa who has provided encouragement and support in all ways which has enabled me pursue this course. Thirdly, I dedicate this project to my parents who have always encouraged me to pursue my potential and to always aim high as the sky is the limit. I am forever grateful to them as I am who I am today because of them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere appreciation goes to the Management of the Teachers Service Commission for giving me consent to use information from this organization. I am also indebted to my supervisor Dr. Bitange Ndemo for the professional guidance, cooperation, unlimited support, commitment and understanding throughout the period.

To my colleagues, the Master's Degree in Business Administration class 2013 for their ideas, constructive criticism, contributions and experiences to this project.

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on strategic planning practices at the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) of Kenya. Strategic planning has been viewed as a systematic process of envisioning a desired future and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them. Strategic planning is a means to an end, 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. Strategic planning practices have been adopted by many other institutions including State Corporations. The main interests of the study was to determine strategic planning practices in TSC through evaluating the factors that influence strategic planning practices in TSC establishing its efficiency, and determining the challenges that are associated with it. The researcher used an interview guide as the preferred data collection instrument. The interview guide was used to collect data through open-ended questions to the managers. Data was analyzed using context analysis. The findings of the study indicated that strategic planning practices at TSC composed of strategic themes that broadly outline the objectives and strategic initiating that outline action plans. It was found out that there are both internal and external factors that influence strategic planning practices at TSC. The organization ensures that their plans are in line with the strategic plan by use of the monitoring and evaluation tool.

ABBREVIATIONS

TSC	Teachers Service Commission
PPRI	Policy Planning Research and Innovations
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information Communications Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABBREVIATIONS	vi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.1.1 The concept of strategy	2
1.1.2 Strategic Planning and organizational Performance	3
1.1.3 The Teachers Service Commission.....	5
1.2 Research problem.....	6
1.3 Research Objectives	9
1.4 Value of the study	9
CHAPTER TWO	11
LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Theoretical Background.....	11
2.3 Benefits of Strategic Planning	12
2.4 Difficulties associated with Strategic planning.....	14
2.4.1 Goal conflict and ambiguity.....	14
2.4.2 Organizational alignment.....	15
2.4.3 Lack of meaningful performance measures	15
2.4.4 Constraining Financial, Legal, Contractual, and Organizational Practices	16
2.4.5 Change-averse organizational culture.....	17
2.4.6 Leadership.....	18
CHAPTER THREE	19
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	19
3.1 Introduction.....	19
3.2 Research design	19
3.3 Data Collection	19

3.4 Data analysis	20
CHAPTER FOUR.....	21
DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	21
4.1 Introduction.....	21
4.2 Respondents profile	21
4.3 Strategic planning process	22
4.4 Strategic planning outcome and Relevance	23
4.5 Conducting the Strategic Situation Diagnosis	23
4.6 Managing strategic plan implementation.....	24
4.7 Optimizing commission development and utilization.	25
4.8 Discussions	26
CHAPTER FIVE	29
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	29
5.1 Introduction.....	29
5.2 Summary	29
5.3 Conclusion	31
5.4 Recommendations.....	32
5.5 Limitation of the study.....	33
5.6 Recommendations for Further Research.....	34
REFERENCES.....	35
APPENDICES.....	iv
APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION	iv
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	v

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Henry (2008), strategy is simply an outline of how an organization has planned to achieve its intended objectives. The goals that the organization has set itself are the objectives and the strategy is therefore a well worked out plan on how to reach those objectives. A strategy is a plan or course of action for the allocation of scarce resources in order to achieve specified goals. It is a plan of action stating how an organization will achieve its long-term objectives. The concept of strategy comes from ancient Greeks. The word strategy comes from the Greek word stratego, which means to plan the destruction of one's enemies through the effective use of resources (Burns, 2009).

Strategic Planning is concerned with formulating strategy. Strategic planning takes a "big picture" approach that blends futuristic thinking, objective analysis, and subjective evaluation of values, goals, and priorities to chart a future direction and courses of action to ensure an organization's vitality, effectiveness, and ability to add public value (Poister, 2010:246). As indicated by Shirley (2001:4), strategic planning is not only about ensuring that an organization remains financially sound and be able to maintain its reserves, but it also projects where the organization expects to be in five, ten or fifteen years and how it will get there. It is a systematic planning process involving a number of steps that identify the current status of the organization, including its mission, vision for the future, operating values, needs (strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), goals, prioritized actions and strategies, action plans, and monitoring plans. Strategic planning can be referred to as a process to establish priorities on what will be accomplished in the future and allows all components of the organization to pull together around a single plan for execution for the attainment of a common objective.

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) of Kenya is a state owned organization that was established under the Constitution of Kenya to manage human resource within the education sector. It is headquartered in the capital city, Nairobi with offices in the counties. The TSC has embraced the perception of strategic planning, and now most leading parastatals appoint strategic planning managers to ensure continued existence and development. The concept of strategic planning has also taken root in public sector organizations, whose objectives may not essentially be revenue oriented. In Kenya, the Teachers Service Commission is an important organization used by the Government as a conduit for service delivery to the populace (TSC ACT 2012). Its purpose is typically of a wider scale that concerns both parastatals and the country as a whole, and its operations call for accountability to varied stakeholders. In order that they achieve their objectives, or increase their chances of doing so, it is important that strategic planning be done bearing in mind all the risks involved.

1.1.1 The concept of strategy

A strategy enables an organization to balance its resources and capabilities to the needs of the external environment in order to achieve competitive advantage. There are three types of strategies namely corporate strategy, business strategy and

functional strategy. Corporate strategy deals with the broader issues of what industries the organization wants to compete in, and the allocation of resources between its strategic business units. It is usually dealt with at senior management level. Business strategy deals with how an organization is going to compete within a particular industry or market. It is more about how an organization is going to achieve competitive advantage over its rivals. Functional strategy is basically responsible for the provision of support to business strategy and is the responsibility of managers in the different functional units to ensure that their activities are geared to assist and complement the efforts towards achieving the business strategy (Shirley, 2001).

Strategy can therefore be defined as those planned activities employed to achieve the objectives of the organization. It is a means to an objective, a vehicle that guides and takes the organization from its present position to a desired position.

1.1.2 Strategic Planning and organizational Performance

A quick look through the management literature provides a description of strategic planning as an effective way of improving corporate performance. Strategic planning is said to result in a better match between external environment variables and the changing internal organizational conditions of the firm. The purpose of this match is to ensure that the plans continuously realign the firm's objectives and strategies with changing conditions to improve the long-run performance of the company. This interpretation of strategic planning's fundamental objective can be found in, for example, Ansoff (2001), Andrews (2003), Mc Nichols (1997), Hofer & Schendel (2005).

In addition to the general advantages of strategic plans, several specific advantages are presented in the literature. These can be classified into those being concerned with the planning process and those being concerned with the personnel involved in the planning. Writers such as Stern (2000), Loasby (2001), Hausler (1999), have suggested the following advantages for each of the two types namely; process advantages and personal advantages.

Process advantages include the identification and exploitation of future marketing opportunities and an objective view of management problems, minimization of effects from adverse conditions and changes, major decisions can be related more effectively to established objectives, more effective allocation of time and resources to identified opportunities, provision of co-ordination of the execution of the tactics of the plan, allowing for the combination of all functions into a combined effort, lessening of resources and time needed to correct erroneous ad hoc decisions, creation of a framework for internal communication between personnel, the identification of priorities within the timing of the plan and the utilization of planning provides an advantage over competitors.

Personal advantages arise in that it helps to integrate the behavior of individuals in the organization into a team effort and provide a basis for the clarification of individual responsibilities, contributing to motivation. Strategic planning also encourages forward thinking on the part of personnel and stimulates a cooperative, integrated and enthusiastic approach to tackling problems and opportunities.

1.1.3 The Teachers Service Commission

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) of Kenya is a state owned organization that was established under the Constitution of Kenya to manage human resource within the education sector. It is based in the capital city, Nairobi with offices in the counties.

The need for strategic planning is attributable to the failure of the State, as an owner of parastatals, to motivate the firms to realize evenhanded strategic planning standards (Mwaura, 2007).

Mismanagement, bureaucracy, wastage, pilferage, incompetence and irresponsibility by the management and employees are among the main problems that have made Parastatals like Teachers' Service Commission to fail to achieve their objectives. Poor strategic formulations and planning is also attributed to this. Parastatals' are deeply implicated in most fiscal problems of Kenyan government because of their inefficiency, losses, budgetary burdens, and provision of poor products and services. Occasionally, they achieve some non-commercial objectives, which are used to justify their poor economic performance (Mwaura.2007).

This has badly impacted development in important systems such as education, health, security. By 1995 for example, there were 240 parastatals. Of these, 51 were under direct Government ownership; 36 had majority shares held by the State and 153 were owned by the Government through State holding firms. The poor and ineffective management of parastatals can be credited, in part, to the strategic planning and management of these organizations.

With the new devolution system of government in Kenya, plenty is anticipated by the public on the performance of parastatals such The Teachers service Commission. This realization has probed my interest in the Commission, primarily because it is a parastatal that has a large responsibility in development and transformation of education system in Kenya. Effective strategic planning articulates not only where an organization is going and the actions needed to make progress, but also how it will know if it is successful.

1.2 Research problem

It is important during strategy formulation and implementation that everyone in the organization understands where it is going and how it will get there. Strategic planning has been viewed as a systematic process of envisioning a desired future and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them. Strategic planning is a means to an end, 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.

Strategic planning practices have been adopted by many institutions including State Corporations. The first organizations to embrace strategic planning in our country belonged to the private sector. The public sector is slowly but surely catching up with this inevitable element of modern management. It is now a public policy to have all public institutions embrace strategic planning through crafting organizational missions and visions based on core values. A strategic planning process is thus required to prepare the management of these schools to mitigate the emerging strategic issues in schools (Kimemia, 2006).

Strategic planning begun in 1950s in the United States of America (USA). This was the period characterized by many business opportunities to rebuild Europe and Japan by Americans after the end of World War II. The period saw the emergence of strategic thinking, Drucker (1954) where he wondered aloud what was our business and what should it be. Soon after Drucker (1954), came Chandler (1962) who wanted to know what strategy is and what is the relationship between structure and strategy? From this efforts came the famous thinking that structure follows strategy. The period was characterized by relative environmental stability, abundant business opportunities and rapidly expanding companies with the challenge here being how to manage companies better in the face of growth opportunities.

Planning was extrapolative with past orientation in planning and extended budgeting. Then came the disenchantment period where there was widespread dissatisfaction with strategic planning. The widespread dissatisfaction was attributed to among other things, increased environmental turbulence, reduced business opportunities, and increased competition. It was noted that the environment was so turbulent such that by the time the plans were implemented, they had already outlived their usefulness. The verdict was that strategic planning as developed in the stable environment could not cope with the challenges of the new turbulent environment. It was felt that strategic planning lacked an action orientation with too much emphasis on planning at the expense of implementation.

It was also noted that planning and implementation had been unrealistically separated and that it was inflexible and rigid. Additionally, strategic planning was highly

rational and analytical thereby ignoring other aspects of strategy. There were also some criticisms that strategic planning was inhibiting strategic thinking. With all the above criticisms leveled against strategic planning there was a period of low activity up to mid 1980s (Karanja, 2008).

Actual planning and implementation of programs and projects starts at the lowest level in the organization and it is therefore important that staff members at this level understand the direction the organization is going in order to make sense out of their own contribution (Henry, 2008). The planning versus the learning school debate suggest that the features of planning systems might be fundamentally different that is, they are either the result of formal, structured convictions or learned emergence. Whichever way, the implication is that the planning process should be vastly different across institutions (Dolence, 2004). An additional limitation that is characterized by limited knowledge is the involvement of different parties in the strategic planning process.

Burgelman (1999) calls for more studies in the strategic planning context that explore the role of the corporate centre as compared to other representatives from various organizational levels. Studies by King (1983) indicate that most government institutions and departments are attempting to formulate and implement strategy but are finding it quite challenging for varied reasons.

TSC like many organizations does indeed have strategic plans but in most cases they fail to translate the plans. For TSC to finally generate strategies and implement them

successfully there is need for an inquiry into the current practices. This study therefore sought to answer the following research question: what is the state of strategic planning in the TSC?

1.3 Research Objectives

The following were the research objectives of the study;

- (i) To identify the strategic planning practices at the Teachers Service Commission
- (ii) To establish the hindrances to strategic planning at the Teachers service Commission.

1.4 Value of the study

Since a lot of academic inquiry has focused on strategy implementation, scanty attention has been accorded to hindrances to strategy implementation in parastatals. This study was therefore to help directors and managers in Kenyan Parastatals to identify the impediments to effective strategic management practice with regard to the formulation and execution of strategic plans in the public sector and to apply remedial actions in the event of diversion from the adopted strategies.

The study was to benefit employees at strategic levels within the Teachers Service Commission by identifying effective models of strategic planning and their impacts on organizational performance. It was to help create awareness among the employees on the purposes of strategic planning and assist public service leaders to effectively implement strategies for better service delivery.

Scholars, students and other researchers may also find the study helpful to identify further areas of research built on the findings of this research. The study may be a source of reference material for future researchers on other related topics; it may also help other academicians who undertake the same topic in their studies. The study also highlighted other important relationships that require further research; this may be in the areas of relationships between strategic planning practices and organizational performance.

Most importantly, it may help the policy makers within public and private sector to identify crucial areas in their organizations and make appropriate decisions to ensure that strategic planning is critically emphasized on. Also, through this study leaders and managers in state corporations may learn and make responsible strategic plans and policy decisions that are meant to facilitate and sustain high organizational performance, and manage organizational and national resources so that corporations and societies can benefit from them in the future.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter examines literature relating to strategy and strategic planning. It also gives an overview of the strategic planning process and highlights the effective tools and procedures for strategic planning. Dominant sources of literature were text books and journals with supplementary sources being the internet and prior publications and also materials from relevant government institutions.

2.2 Theoretical Background

Strategic planning is no longer the preserve of the corporate world. Environmental fundamentals have made it necessary for even parastatals and government departments to plan and implement strategy. Strategic planning can be explained by the Resource based view and the Dynamic capabilities theories.

The resource based theory assumes sustainable competitive advantage as the desired outcome of management effort (Fahy & Smithee, 1990). Sustainable competitive advantage is obtained through accumulation of valuable resources that are difficult to duplicate by competitors. Collins and Montgomery (1995) suggest that advantage creating resources must meet five conditions namely: inimitability, durability, appropriability, substitutability and competitive superiority. Resource based theory suggests that firms possess heterogeneous resources that allow managers to execute value creating strategies. Even though resource based provides managers with

decision making frame work, it has been criticized for failing to explain how resources are created and deployed to achieve competitive advantage (Priem, & Butler, 2001).

The dynamic capabilities theory is an extension of the resource based view of the firm. It addresses the weaknesses of the resource based view. It argues that since marketplaces are dynamic, inter-firm performance variance is explained by organizational capabilities for acquiring and deploying resources in ways that match the firms' marketing environment (Makadok, 2001). Teece *et al* argue that capabilities are dynamic when they reflect changing market conditions. According to Winter (2003), dynamic capabilities involve long term commitment to specialized resources. Capabilities are complex, structured, and multi-dimensional.

2.3 Benefits of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning stimulates thinking for organizations to make better use of their resources, assigns responsibility and schedules work, coordinates and unifies efforts, facilitates control and evaluation of organizational activities (accountability). Strategic planning also helps to create awareness of obstacles to overcome, identifies opportunities and threats and avoids the trap of linear thinking.

While strategic planning effects require a much more subtle analysis, many scholars (and practitioners) are ultimately interested in superior (financial) performance of methodological rigor once again overshadowed Shea-VanFossen, Rothstein et al.'s (2006) findings. One major lack in the author's otherwise thorough

piece of work is that meta-analysis can only confirm the link between the variables strategic planning and performance. It does not, however, explain causality. In addition, while the authors criticize publication bias, they themselves are subject to one, namely that the studies included in their review were only those written in English. Including studies published in other common languages could substantially increase the number and thus influence findings in the field.

Kukalis (2001) sampled 115 large manufacturing firms, looking at the relationship of four design parameters of planning systems and five different company and environmental characteristics. His findings confirm that an effective planning system should be designed in such a way that the specific situational setting of the firm is reflected in the design. This thinking is also reflected in Frederickson's (1984) and Frederickson and Iaquinto's (1989) research. The authors found formal planning to be best suited for stable environments and incrementalism for unstable environments.

Powell (1992) takes the debate to the next level by reviewing over 40 studies in the planning-performance literature and concluding that, while planning might produce economic value, it is easily imitated and may not be sustainable. This in turn also means that planning does not create competitive advantage. Overall, it seems that the stream of divergent findings in the planning-performance link is only consistent in that research finds the link is not as clear as one might like to think. Repeatedly, authors report measurement errors, a lack of methodological rigor and the difficulty of measuring the strategic planning construct. What might add to the

complexity of the strategic planning construct could be related to the fact that we still know very little about how and why firms engage in strategic planning in reality (Grant, 2000).

2.4 Difficulties associated with Strategic planning

In the process of strategic planning, a number of difficulties will be experienced. Ansoff (1999) identifies them as goal conflict and ambiguity, issues to do with organizational alignment, lack of meaningful measures of performance, and financial constraints among others.

2.4.1 Goal conflict and ambiguity

Since setting goals for a parastatal is a highly political process, the tendency is to make the goals all things for all people. Substance gets flushed out in the process of political negotiation and agreement is achieved at the expense of goals that are ambiguous and sometimes conflicting and, hence, quite difficult to implement (Miller, 2009). Many writers have emphasized the diverse and ambiguous nature of goals in public organizations, including Banfield (1995), Rainey, Back off et al. (1996), Dahl and Lindblom (2000), and Buchanan (2000).

Although the literature emphasizes the problem with goals in the parastatals, Lan and Rainey (2003) report empirical evidence to the contrary. They found that public managers perceive their goals as clear and achievable, but this result may depend on the comparative publicness of the organization. Setting goals in a highly politicized

environment can cause difficulties for public managers, especially those in federal agencies that have a variety of stakeholders.

2.4.2 Organizational alignment

Organizational alignment has internal and external magnitude. Internal alignment refers to corresponding the individual's goals with the organization's goals. This alignment is noteworthy for strategic planning because it refers to the tension between agency leaders aligned to the political process and professional bureaucrats who are normally sympathetic with the needs of the TSC stakeholders.

Political actors weigh into the process of formulating and implementing strategic plans to make sure their objectives are met, especially if the plans are ambiguous and conflicting. The tension between political appointees and career bureaucrats is complicated by the relatively short tenure of political appointees and their perceived need to implement the administration's agenda quickly (Allison, 2008). In addition to the above areas affecting implementation, derived from Melamid and Luck's work (2004), two other areas are important additions from other sources in the literature. These are performance measures and organizational culture.

2.4.3 Lack of meaningful performance measures

For the reason that parastatals do not typically have a "bottom line" as most organizations do, setting meaningful performance measures can be difficult. Measuring the results of an agency's strategic initiatives is difficult because the goals are often ambiguous and the desired outcomes are nebulous, at best. In most cases, performance in public organizations is determined by the degree to which the

organization has met its legal mandates, mission responsibilities, and executive and legislative program objectives. Because of the multiple diverse sources, expectations for the organization are often unclear and competing and have a pervasive vagueness (Back off & Nutt, 2000; Ring & Perry, 2005). Lack of clear benchmarks to measure progress affects strategic planning because it is difficult to develop incentives and control mechanisms.

2.4.4 Constraining Financial, Legal, Contractual, and Organizational Practices

There are constraining factors that manifest themselves in several ways in the course of strategic planning in public organizations. For example, resources in a parastatal are subject to political forces which make obtaining funds more complicated compared to market-based approaches. There may not be political support to fund strategic initiatives even though there is a “customer” demand. In addition, implementation may face bureaucratic hurdles associated with personnel rules and regulations, and scrutiny from oversight bodies.

The pervasiveness of this difficulty is demonstrated by the number of writers who have argued that these types of constraints are sources of problems for managers in public organizations (Banfield, 2005; Blumenthal, 2003; Buchanan, 2004; Meyer, 1999). Rainey, et al. argues that the formal, legal environment of government organizations is the source of limitations on the autonomy and flexibility of the public organization and its managers.

The legal authority of the parastatals can also be used as a coercive measure to achieve the aims of the organization or as a basis for adjudicating differences among stakeholders (Bozeman, 2001). Making strategic changes may also be hampered by a bureaucratic culture derived from the rule-based environment of public organizations, which tends to support behaviors that maintain the status quo by relying on long-established, elaborate legal and procedural guidelines to guide decisions and actions (Downs, 1966).

2.4.5 Change-averse organizational culture

The bureaucratic character of parastatals can develop a culture that minimizes risk and inhibits change. There are few incentives to change, and rules and regulations often limit the discretion of managers, resulting in a conservative posture toward change. Strategic planning is inherently change-oriented and calls for managers to establish goals that call for modifications in the traditional practices carried out in the organization (Meyer, 1979; Warwick, 1975). In some cases, it is more appropriate for public managers to avoid risk and change. For example, risk-taking may violate a fiduciary role or jeopardize a legal organizational mission responsibility (Lorvich, 2001)

2.4.6 Leadership

Ensuring that parastatals including the TSC have qualified boards is not only a critical but also a priority issue if boards are to ensure proper oversight over the corporations. The nomination process of board members in Kenyan parastatals is intrinsically flawed. In a past press release to all Ministers, the Kenyan PM (Prime Ministers) circular reminded that the appointment of managing directors of parastatals is the responsibility of Ministers and the PS (Permanent Secretaries) should stick to their role of advising the ministers.

The Prime Ministers intervention came against a backdrop of constant wrangling in ministries over the appointment of heads of state corporations. To an extent that appointment of parastatal heads was a source of disquiet in some sectors of the Kenyan Society. Such a call is timely though it overlooks the reality in Kenyan public life. Ministers are usually under pressure to appoint their cronies. This practice has caused the recruitment of unqualified leadership in the parastatals thus affecting strategic development.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the methodology and procedures that were applied during the research. It presents the research design that was used, sample determination data collection and analysis. The research instrument was also described.

3.2 Research design

The case study design was used in the study. Case studies are the best designs when a researcher is interested in unearthing rich and detailed information about the phenomenon of interest (Mugenda, & Mugenda, 2000). Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Under this approach, the results of qualitative research will be descriptive rather than predictive.

3.3 Data Collection

Data was collected through the interview guide where the interview guide was divided into five parts. The first part captured information relating to demographic aspects of the respondents. The second part used rating questions to rate various aspects of strategic planning process, part three evaluated the strategic planning outcomes, part four the situation diagnosis within the organization of interest and part five the managing strategic plan implementation.

The researcher selected senior, middle and junior managers because their experience by benefit of their varied positions of authority and by being members of the Administrative Management Committee where most administrative decisions are taken. The target population for this research was senior and mid-level Managers at the Teachers Service Commission. According to the Human resource Department, as of 31st May 2014, there were Fifty (50) senior managers and seventy eight mid-level managers (78) within the TSC. This total One hundred and twenty eight (128) formed the population of this study.

The researcher interviewed a different percentage of each cadre of management which was as follows: senior management 6% which is 3 managers and middle level management 7% which is 6 managers. In the Senior Management, 1 (one) Senior Deputy Director and 2 (two) Deputy Directors were interviewed. In the Middle level management 6 (six) Assistant Deputy Directors were interviewed. A total of 9 was representative of the total population.

3.4 Data analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the respondents' responses. Content analysis is measurement through proportion – persuasiveness is an indicator index of specific factor strength. Content analysis can be done at two levels; simple and subtle. It is simple level when pursued on the basis of certain characteristics of the document or verbal materials that can be identified and counted. It is at a subtle level when the researcher makes a study of the attitude; say a CEO towards strategic planning both, levels of analysis was attempted in this study. Because of the presence of rating type questions, means, modes, standard deviation and variance was used. Churchill and Emory (2007) argue that these methods are adequate when the researcher was only interested in the description of a variable and not investigation of relationships.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The research objective was to identify the strategic planning practices at Teachers Service Commission and to establish the hindrances to strategic planning. Data was successfully collected from total of nine respondents through an interview guide. This chapter presents the analysis and findings with regard to the objective and discussion of the same.

4.2 Respondents profile

This section covers the organization information which was to establish the respondents' department, number in the section and how long had the TSC being doing strategic planning. The respondents comprised of Policy Planning Research and Innovations (PPRI) Managers, Human Resource Management Managers and Directors of departments. A greater majority believed that TSC had conducted strategic planning in the last ten years and not before that.

It was not conclusive when the last strategic plan was crafted but general belief was that it was conducted in 2012. Most of the respondents have been involved in the strategic planning process only to the level of provision of information that formed the basis for the planning process.

4.3 Strategic planning process

This section of interview guide was to establish the last time strategic plan was done and the role played by each of the respondents during the strategic planning process, the extent of involvement in strategic plan formulation and implementation and how successful was the implementation of the strategic plan. From the interview guides, it was clear that the last time strategic plan was done was year 2012. The roles played by various respondents varied from department to department. An Assistant Deputy Director from PPRI indicated “that they were involved in identification of strategic objectives for various sections and developed the activities” while HRM managers indicated being a member of the steering committee. All respondents indicated having participated in one way or the other in formulation and implementation of the strategic plan.

Regarding how successful the implementation of strategic plan was, various divergent views were observed with administrators from PPRI indicating to a great extent being successful while other administrators from HRM responded to poor implementation of strategic plan. Human resource managers indicated that some strategies and targets were partially implemented due to budgetary constraints while others cited the time frame and lack of realistic indicators in the implementation.

4.4 Strategic planning outcome and Relevance

This section of interview guide aimed at providing information in regard to significance of strategic planning to TSC, what were the end results of strategic planning and how the results were measured in TSC. The respondents noted that the strategic planning had enabled the TSC to carry out its mandate because the activities are formulated based on identified strategies. A Human resource manager indicated that strategic planning is a planning tool that gave them a sort of road map in planning for its human resource requirements and how to deal with external parties.

The end results of strategic planning included stability in staffing levels in education institutions and efficiency in institution management. The Deputy Director- HRM indicated that strategic planning end results had been prudent in the utilization of resources, motivated staff and improved service delivery. The achievement of the organization mission and vision was cited by respondents in the PPRI section. The organization end results are measured through use of monitoring and evaluation tool where counties and schools give monthly data on staffing levels.

4.5 Conducting the Strategic Situation Diagnosis

This section of the interview guide was to establish if the TSC periodically gathers and analyze data about its customers and other external factors which affect the running of the organization. In addition, the analysis included detailed analysis of stockholders or other geographic and /or demographic and psychographic segments as well as assessment of a whole industry in terms of new stakeholders and concepts, new technologies, labor and procurement practices, assess to institutional factors i.e.

finance, government practices, economy and to identify if the key strengths and weakness in the organization.

The respondents were in agreement that the TSC does periodically gather and analyze data about its customers and other external factors by use of customers' satisfaction survey conducted every year. The survey was very inclusive with the scope well defined. TSC assessed the industry as whole in terms of new stakeholders and concepts, new technologies, procurement and labor practices, with managers from PPRI and human resource department indicating that it's done through a market survey. Participation by TSC in sector planning process helped the organization in assessing institutional factors such as the availability of finance, government practices and the economy. There was a clear agreement from the respondents that the internal analysis identified key strength and weakness in the organization.

4.6 Managing strategic plan implementation

This section of the interview guide was to establish how TSC managed strategic decisions based on the strategic plan and if TSC clearly assigned responsibility for action plan, if sufficient resources were allocated for implementation of strategic plan in the presence of defined measurable performance standards for each plan. In regard to strategic decisions, the respondents agreed that TSC made strategic decisions based on the strategic plan. Operations plans are based on the strategic plan objectives. The Deputy Director Human Resource Management cited examples of operational plan, divisional and individual work plans as examples of implementation action plans. In

relation to assigning responsibility, TSC had a strategic planning steering committee for action plan and implementation.

The PPRI administrator indicated that the lead responsibility for action assigned to an individual who is was head of respective division but is supported by the team. It also had an elaborative monitoring and evaluation team. PPRI division is charged with planning and implementation of strategic plan. PPRI administrator believed there was sufficient resources allocated for implementation of the strategic plan since priority was given to such projects while the human resource manager believed there were no sufficient resources allocated due to budgetary constraints. PPRI administrator agreed that TSC sets clearly defined and measurable standards for each plan and it's measured through performance contracts.

Through monitoring and evaluation, TSC was able to develop organized system for assessing how well the set standards were met using the M and E team. In regard to monitoring the data regularly PPRI administrator confirmed review of data monthly through the monthly monitoring and evaluation report. The individual responsible for strategic planning and implementation were not rewarded as confirmed by managers in human resource and administrators in PPRI as there were no structures in place.

4.7 Optimizing commission development and utilization.

This section of interview guide was to seek if there were efforts to cultivate the top management of TSC were fruitful and if they were engaged with staff for effective strategic planning. The PPRI administrators and HRM managers agreed that the top

management of the commission were involved in training and strategic planning and were very supportive in the process of strategic planning. In regard to commission management engagement with staff for effective strategic planning, HRM officers disagreed with PPRI administrators as they cited lack of involvement of lower cadre in the whole process of strategic planning process. PPRI administrators believed that through the heads of divisions and heads of departments and commissioners (in Policy meetings and CEO meetings) all the staff were engaged in strategic planning.

4.8 Discussions

Strategic planning stimulates thinking for organizations to make better use of their resources, assigns responsibility and schedules work, coordinates and unifies efforts, facilitates control and evaluation of organizational activities (accountability). Strategic planning also helps to create awareness of obstacles to overcome, identifies opportunities and threats and avoids the trap of linear thinking. The resource based theory assumes sustainable competitive advantage as the desired outcome of management effort. Sustainable competitive advantage is obtained through accumulation of valuable resources that are difficult to duplicate by competitors.

The Teachers Service Commission has been able to achieve better service delivery by efficient use of resource at its disposal and in return value addition in the education sector in Kenya. This gives the commission comparative advantage in regard other comparable commissions within the government and the private sector. When senior managers in Teachers Service Commission are confronted with the task of building dynamic capabilities, they need to consider sometimes drastic fluctuations in the

threshold capability definition standards, making it more and more complex for the commission to understand the minimum requirements needed to remain in the game as sector player.

In turn, these fluctuations derived from external change in the macro environments and the total resource sum available in an entire sector. Monitoring of these external and increasingly unpredictable parameters will then allow managers to tackle the internal process of adapting their resource base. This is well explained by the case of budgetary constraints as Teachers Service commissions have to depend on the government for resources replenishment for hiring its workforce and other administrative duties from time to time. Hence the theory of resource based and dynamic capabilities applies well in case of Teachers service Commission in strategic planning from initial plan, formulation until the implementation of the plan.

Situation diagnosis was taken seriously with respondents agreeing generally to the various issues raised by the study. Management of the implementation process received mixed reactions on issues of reward management. Successful implementation, effectiveness of cultivating top management of the commission and engagement of staff by management received higher negative response. The study established that the process of strategic planning presented a review detailing the fundamental statements of the vision, mission, mandate, core functions, and statement of principles, values proposition, policy priorities, current organizational structure, current funding and the achievements of the TSC

The study established that the vision of statement of Teachers' service commission played a key part in the process of strategic planning. The study established that the process of strategic planning essentially begins with thorough generating strategic direction through the identification of issues such as number of teachers, institutional management, institutional resources and linkages and partnerships. This initial phase was realized to be key in the determination of the change sought out, it also included quantifying of the benefits to be attained by the strategic plan made.

The findings from the study revealed that the head of departments and directors were tasked with being in the front line as they were at the executive level to drive the convergence initiative. It was found out that the root for most strategic plan emanated from the response communicated by them. The directors and heads of different departments identified the areas and issues that needed change and that were beyond their level making. It was clear from the study that communication in strategic planning played a key part; this was identified in the vast consultation that took place within and with the key stakeholders.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusions, recommendations for further research. The study set to find the state of strategic planning, identify the practices and establish the hindrances in Teachers service commission.

5.2 Summary

The study established that TSC has being doing strategic planning for the last ten years. The respondents indicated that their role in strategic planning was clear from the initial process of formulation until the implementation of the strategic plan. All the respondents have been involved in the strategic planning process from the level of provision of information that formed the basis for the planning process. Respondents indicated having participated in one way or the other in formulation and implementation of the strategic plan.

Regarding how successful the implementation of strategic plan was, various divergent views were observed with administrators from PPRI indicating to a great extent successful; with other administrators from human resource responding that implementation of strategic plan was poor. A Human resource manager indicated that, some strategies and targets were partially implemented due to budgetary constraints while others cited the time frame and lack of realistic indicators in the implementation process.

The respondents noted that the strategic planning had enabled the TSC to carry out its mandate since the activities are formulated based on identified strategies and objectives. A Human resource manager indicated that the strategic plan was used as a planning tool that gave them a road map in planning for its human resource requirements and how to deal with external parties. The end results of strategic planning included stability in staffing levels in education institutions and efficiency in institution management.

The respondents were in agreement that the TSC periodically gathers and analyzes data about its customers and others external factors by use of customers' satisfaction survey conducted every year. The survey is very inclusive with the scope well defined. TSC assesses the industry as whole in terms of new stakeholders and concepts, new technologies, procurement and labor practices. Participation by TSC in sector planning process helps the organization in assessing institutional factors such as the availability of finance, government practices and the economy. There was clear agreement from the respondents that the internal analysis identify key strength and weakness in the organization.

In regard to strategic decisions, the respondents agreed that TSC makes strategic decisions based upon the strategic plan. Operations plans are based on the strategic plan objectives. A Human resource manager cited examples of operational plan, divisional and individual work plans as examples of implementation action plans. In relation to assigning responsibility, TSC has a strategic planning steering committee for action plan and implementation. A PPRI administrator indicated that the lead

responsibility for action is assigned to an individual who is the head of respective department but is supported by the team.

The PPRI managers and human resource managers agreed that the top management of the commission was involved in training and strategic planning and was very supportive in the process of strategic planning. In regard to commission's management engagement with staff for effective strategic planning, human resource officers disagreed with PPRI administrators and cited no involvement of the lower cadre in the whole process of strategic planning process.

5.3 Conclusion

An organization's strategic plan should be inclusive and well founded on the organization's vision and mission statement. The respondents believed that the implementation was successful with the end result being efficient and effective delivery of service, easier facilitation for planning and better response to challenges but the situation would have been different if all departments are involved in strategic planning process. Situation diagnosis was taken seriously with respondents agreeing generally to the various issues raised by the study. Management of the implementation process received mixed reactions on issues of reward management. Successful implementation, effectiveness of cultivating top management of the commission and engagement of staff by management received high negative response.

The study established that the process of strategic planning presented a review detailing the fundamental statements of the vision, mission, objectives, mandate, core functions, and statement of principles, values proposition, policy priorities, current

organizational structure, current funding and the achievements of The Teachers' service Commission. The study revealed that the head of departments and directors were tasked with being in the front line as they were at the executive level to drive the convergence initiative. It was found out that the foundation for strategic planning came from the response communicated by them to the other managers. The directors and heads of different departments identified the areas and issues that needed change and that were beyond their level decision making.

5.4 Recommendations

From the study, the researcher recommends that Teachers Service Commission Management involves its members of staff in making of the strategic plan because through this the staff will feel part of the organization and will be in a position to provide their input towards strategic planning. The organization should also implement methods through which information towards strategic plan making will be provided to the employees and other stakeholders to enhance goal congruence of strategic plan making and implementation.

Given that the respondents were mainly from human resource and PPRI, Teachers service commission should ensure that all departments have strategic plan champions who are able and aware of strategic plan making process. Individuals responsible for strategic planning and implementation should be rewarded for successful performance. Specific reward system should be developed and implemented to encourage and motivate the staff involved.

Management of Teachers Service Commission should develop an information system through their ICT department to aid in data collection, up to date reports and data processing and facilitation of customers and stakeholder's feedback. The organization's strategic plan information should be easily available and accessible in the website. This information should be clear in the minds of all members of staff and should form part of the orientation process. It should also form part of working documents for reference to enhance participation in the process of strategic planning.

5.5 Limitation of the study

Key limitations of the study were first owing to time and resource limits, the study drew its sample mainly from senior staff in PPRI and HRM departments these meant that other departments and divisions in the organization were excluded from the study.

Secondly, the data used was only from those members of staff were willing to participate in the study. This is because of the interview process which required a lot of time and dedication from the senior staff members who are mostly busy and involved in very tight time schedules.

The setting was found to be inappropriate because of interferences. There were a lot of interruptions during interviews, since interviews were conducted at the participants' workplace during work hours. This happened despite all efforts taken to reduce interruptions such as knocks on the door by colleagues. There was also a lot of noise outside the interview setup as some of the respondents operate in open plan office set up.

The researcher was the main data collection instrument for the unstructured interviews and analysis of the data. The possibility of bias was minimized by the assistance of an expert co-coder and the use of strategies such as trustworthiness, reflexivity, bracketing and intuiting throughout the study. This was occasioned by the relevance of information regarding the strategic plan and level of participation. However, these limitations did not have any adverse effects on the findings of the study.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Research

The study researched on the strategic planning and practices at Teachers Service Commission. This research therefore should be replicated in other public institutions in Kenya like the Judicial Service Commission and both public and private to create comparable results so as to establish whether there is a consistency in the findings. A bigger sample and a different method of data analysis can be used for to enhance adaptability.

In the light of the limitations identified and the findings of the study, the following are recommended as future research subjects; strategic reactions applied by Teachers Service Commission in the education sector in Kenya and the impact of the same in Vision 2030. If the government is committed to the achievement of Vision 2030, then it must be willing to fund education adequately. In addition, to find out how Teachers Service Commission performs on strategic control and evaluations.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, David A. & Mascarenhas B, (1999) The need for strategic flexibility. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 5(2), 74-82. Lexington Books.
- Anthony Henry, (2008). *Understanding Strategic Management*. New York Oxford
- Ansoff, H .I ,(1991), *Implanting Strategic Management*, Cambridge, Prentice Hall.
- Armstrong, J.S. (2001), *Strategic Planning improves manufacturing performance*.
Long Range Planning, Vol.24 NO.4, pp.127-9.
- Baird, Inga S. & Howard Thomas. (2001). *Toward a contingency model of strategic planning*. *Academy of Management Review*, 10: 230-44.
- Back off, Edward R. & Nutt Wander. (2000). *Strategic Planning and risk taking in strategic management*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Bettis, Richard A. & Vijay Mahajan. (1985). *Risk/return strategic performance of diversified firms*. *Management Science*, 31: 785-98.
- Burgelman, R. A. & Grove, A. S. (2006). *Strategic dynamics: Concepts and cases*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Burgelman, R. A., & Sarnot, S. (2003). *BEA Systems in 2003: Reaching for the next level*. In R. A. Burgelman & A. S. Grove (Eds.), *Strategic dynamics*
- Byars, L (2001), *Strategic Management, Formulation and Implementation-Concepts Cases*
- Cawelti, G. (1987). *Strategic planning for curriculum reform*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Center for Strategic Planning (2011). *Outcome-based strategic planning approach for Parastatals* Retrieved October 30, 2011 from

[www.planonline.org/planning/strategic/docs/Strategic Planning](http://www.planonline.org/planning/strategic/docs/Strategic%20Planning%20Model.doc)

[Model.doc](#)

Chiarelott, L., Reed, P., & Russell S. C. (2011). *Lessons in strategic planning learned the hard way*. *Educational Leadership*, 48 (7).

Clay, K., Lake, S., & Tremain, K. (2009). *How to build a strategic plan: A step-by-step guide for school managers*. San Carlos, CA: Ventures for Public Awareness.

Cooper, H. A. (2005). *Strategic planning in education: A guide for policymakers*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State School Boards of Education.

Dolence, M. G. (2004). *The curriculum-centered strategic planning model*. Retrieved October 20, 2011 from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ERB0410.pdf>

De Meyer, Arnoud, Jinichiro Nakane, Jeffrey G. Miller & Kasra Ferdows. 1989.

Foundation for Community Association Research (2010). *Best practices: Strategic planning*. Alexandria, VA: Foundation for Community Association Research.

Flexibility: *The next competitive battle. The manufacturing futures survey. Strategic Management Journal*, 10: 135-44 Mintzberg, H. (1994). *The rise and fall of strategic planning*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Jennings, D. (2000). "PowerGen: *The Development of Corporate Planning in a Privatized Utility*." *Long Range Planning* 33(April): 201 - 219.

King, W. R. (1983). "Evaluating Strategic Planning Systems." *Strategic Management Journal* 4(3): 263-277.

- Kukalis, S. (1999). "*Determinants of Strategic Planning Systems in Large Organizations: A Contingency Approach.*" *Journal of Management Studies* 28(2):143
- Michael L. Burn (2009). *The Impact of Board Structure on Top Management Team Strategic Action Capability.* The strategic role of the Board.
- Meyer AD, Tsui AS, Hinings CR (1993). *Configuration Approaches to organizational Analysis.* *The Academy of Management Journal*, 36. 6. 1175 –1195
- Mittenthal, R. A. (2003). *Ten keys to successful strategic planning for nonprofit and foundation leaders.* Retrieved October 20, 2011 from www.tccgrp.com/pdfs/per_brief_tenkeys.pdf
- Nebgen, M. (1991). *The key to success in strategic planning is communication.* *Educational Leadership*, 48(7). Retrieved October 30, 2011 from www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_199104_nebgen.pdf
- Porter, M. E. (1980). *Competitive strategy: Techniques for analyzing industries and competitors.* New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Schmoker, M. (2004). *Tipping point: From reckless reform to substantive instructional improvement.* *Phi Delta Kappan*. 85 (6), 224–252.
- Steiner, G. A. (1969). *Strategic planning: What every manager must know.* New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Thorley, Andy and Rydin, Y, eds (2003) *Planning in a global era* Urban and Regional Planning and Development Series: Ash gate,
- TSC ACT 2012.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Miriam K. Mbaabu

University of Nairobi

5th May 2014

The Chief Executive Officer

Teachers Service Commission

Private Bag

Nairobi

Thro' The Senior Deputy Director

(Policy, Planning and Research Implementation Division)

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH STUDY

I am a student at the University of Nairobi currently undertaking a research study on The State of Strategic planning at the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya. The research is towards the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters of Business Administration of the University Of Nairobi.

The purpose of this letter is to ask that you kindly assist me by responding to the attached interview guide. The information provided will be used exclusively for academic purposes only and no name will appear on any report, the findings will be treated confidentially. A copy of the final paper will be availed to you open request. Your favorable response will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Miriam Kathambi Mbaabu

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Part One: Organizational Information

Please provide the following information about your section. "Section" should be the unit for which strategic planning was conducted.

1. Name of your department _____

2. How many employees are in your section?

3. How long has TSC done strategic planning?

Part Two: Strategic Planning Process

Please provide the following information about the strategic planning process in your organization.

4. What year was the last strategic plan done? _____

5. What was your role in the strategic planning process?

6. Please mention if you have ever participated in the strategic plan formulation or strategic plan implementation?

7. How successful was the implementation of the strategic plan?

Part Three: Strategic Planning Outcome and Relevance

8. What is the significance of strategic planning to your organization?

9. What are the end results of strategic planning in your organization?

10. How are these end results measured?

Part four: Conducting the strategic situation diagnosis

11. Does TSC periodically gather and analyze data about its customers and other external factors which affect the running of the organization?

12. Does the analysis include detailed analysis of stakeholders or other geographic and /or demographic and/or psychographic segments?
13. Does TSC assess the industry as the whole in terms of new stakeholders and concepts ,new technologies ,procurement practices and labor practices?
14. Does TSC assess institutional factors such as availability of finance, government practices and the economy?
15. Does this internal analysis identify key strengths and weakness in the organizations?

Part five managing strategic plan implementation

17. Does TSC make strategic decisions (implementation action plans) based upon the strategic plan?
18. Does TSC clearly assign lead responsibility for action plan implementation to a person or alternately to a team?
19. Are sufficient resources allocated for implementation of the strategic plan?
20. Does TSC set clearly defined and measureable performance standards for each plan element?
21. Does TSC develop an organized system for monitoring how well those performance standards were met?
22. Does TSC review monitoring data regularly and revise strategic decisions as appropriate?
23. Are individuals responsible for strategic planning and implementation rewarded for successful performance?

Part six optimizing commission development and utilization

24. Are efforts to cultivate the top management of the commission effective?
25. Is the commission management engaged with staff for effective strategic planning?

THANK YOU!