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FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA

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Collaborative school development planning is a powerful means of promoting school effectiveness. It enables the school community to develop a clear vision of what the school is about and where it is going, a shared sense of purpose, a common set of goals and consensus on the means of attaining them. Despite the importance of school development planning, there still exists a problem of SDP implementation in the schools, yet it is not clear to the stakeholders the factors that militate against the implementation of the SDPs. This study therefore investigates the factors influencing the implementation of the school development plans in public primary schools under EMACK's Whole School Approach program in Mombasa County, Kenya. Utilizing a sample size of 252 teachers and 10 School Management Committee members, the study establishes that strong school cultures and effective communication of the school development planning and implementation processes correlate positively with the implementation of SDP implementation. The study recommends that the school communities should be capacity built to come up with realistic vision and mission statements through participatory processes. School administrators should review their modes and channels of communication in the schools and prioritize SDP communication.

Keywords: Communication, School Culture, School Development Plan Implementation

INTRODUCTION

School development planning is a series of steps that help a school achieve its preferred future (Tuohy, 1997). It therefore follows that a School Development (Improvement) Plan (SDP) is a high-level strategic planning document covering all the school's activities over a period of three or four years. The SDP must be unique to an

individual school because of the different circumstances under which schools operate; it focuses on what the school needs to do to improve academic standards and the quality of education, based on a careful appraisal of what the school does well, how it compares with other schools and what it needs to do next. Thus, school development planning responds to the

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following broad questions: Where is the school now? What changes should be made? How shall these changes be managed over time? How will it be known if the management of change has been successful? (Macharia, 2012).

Internationally, there is widespread acceptance among educationalists that collaborative school development planning is a powerful means of promoting school effectiveness. It enables the school community to develop a clear vision of what the school is about and where it is going, a shared sense of purpose, a common set of goals and consensus on the means of attaining them. It constitutes the school as a learning organization that focuses on meeting the professional needs of teachers in order to meet the educational needs of pupils (Jackson, 2005). The underpinning principle of school development planning is to improve the standards of learning and learner performance, which can be achieved through improved management practices by those involved in directing and guiding the school curriculum, that is, the school management team (Dalin, 1993; Hopkins *et al.*, 1994). In Kenya, school development planning for public schools is a relatively new concept. In the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) and the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research, the Government of Kenya and development partners through the Sector Wide Approach Process (SWAP) developed the Kenya Education Sector Support Program (KESSP). Under the primary school improvement program the government came up with School improvement grants component whose objective was to improve access, retention and learning outcomes in primary education for both boys and girls through the provision of grants to schools in

the poorest areas of the country. In its investment strategy, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) proposed a 5-year investment program to provide a range of school infrastructure depending on the local needs. The aims of this investment strategy was to encourage schools to develop their own development plans; support schools financially and technically, to improve their infrastructure; build capacity for implementation; mobilize community support; and to monitor and evaluate both progress and impact (KESSP, 2005-2010).

The development and implementation of the School's Development Plan should be an integral part of the school's management and governance. According to Thompson and Strickland (2007), strategy formulation and implementation are core management functions. Although formulating a consistent strategy is a difficult task for any management team, making that strategy work – implementing it throughout the organization – is even more difficult (Hrebiniak, 2006). On the one hand, the developed strategy may be good but if its implementation is poor, the intended strategic objectives may not be achieved. On the other hand, to ensure survival and success, an organization does not only need to formulate strategies that seek to constantly maintain a match between the organization and its environment but also must ensure appropriate implementation of strategy at all levels.

The Education for Marginalized Children in Kenya (EMACK) project, an initiative of the Ministry of Education (MoEST) supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) adopted the Whole School Approach (WSA) strategy to school development with the aim of empowering and increasing community

participation and ownership of school development planning in a holistic manner, to include issues concerning access, governance and quality education. The ultimate goal of the WSA was that each of the participating schools would, in a participatory manner, develop a 3-year school development plan describing individual schools' priority areas for investment, agreed upon by the School Management Committees (SMCs) and the Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs). EMACK's project evaluation report of the effectiveness of the Whole School Approach (2013) shows that there have been difficulties in some of the project schools in the implementation of school development plans despite the fact that the WSA approach is a rigorous process. It is recognized that a myriad of factors can potentially affect the process by which school development plans are turned into organizational action. However, it is not clear to the stakeholders the factors that militate against the implementation of the SDPs. This study, therefore, investigated the factors influencing the implementation of the school development plans in public primary schools under EMACK's Whole School Approach program in Mombasa County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theories on implementation of strategy, namely the electric implementation theory and the holistic strategy implementation theory. The electric implementation theory suggests integrating different managerial perspectives and theoretical viewpoints. It further suggests that a successful strategy implementation is a function of variables that in theory have been developed and studied separately but that in practice must be fully

integrated. The integration of such variables defines the implementation process. The degree of usefulness of the process on the other hand is driven by at least six criteria. An implementation process (or model) increases its value if at least it is logic, operational, economic, balanced, manageable and efficient (Jofre, 2011). Logic is necessary to build an implementation process within a rational framework that is meaningful to the organization. Logic also allows deductive construction from which we can derive further implementation activities or sequences. Logic is not entirely based on experience or instinct but also in facts and therefore allows us to develop an implementation framework that combines both theory and practice. A useful model for implementation should, in addition to logic, be expressed in terms of operational and concrete actions that are tangible and verifiable or that at least are meaningful and objective. By doing so, the model will allow us to induce greater change by identifying or solving more issues. The model should not be a recipe of what to do but also of about the implications of doing. This regards the balance between the contingency (eventualities) and the prescription (directions) perspective, or in other words the reconciliation between theories and laws (*ibid.*).

The Holistic Strategy Implementation Theory (Bourgeois and Brodwin, 2004) is a five-model system for strategy implementation categorizing strategy implementation practices. It shows different positions or viewpoints one might assume while implementing strategy. The commander model draws its influences from the military life, in the sense that the CEO wields absolute power. In this model the CEO is the rational agent behind the strategy decisions and plays no role in implementation. The CEO-

model's works best with a powerful executive with few personal biases and vast and accurate sources of information (Bourgeois and Brodwin, 2004). The change model is based on planned interventions in the organization's structure and systems, which will set off the desired behavioral outcomes. This model creates the ability to carry out more complicated strategic plans than the commander model, but also creates an additional inflexibility for unanticipated events and changes of plan. The collaborative model extends the power of strategic decision-making from the CEO to the organization's management team. This model helps to motivate the managers and also provides the strategic decision-making-process with more information and cognitive capital. The problem of this model results from the fact that collaboration does not reach beyond top management. More decision making also means more politics and conflicts of interest, which may mean less rationality (Bourgeois and Brodwin, 2004).

School Culture and Implementation of School Development Plans

Drawing the similarities between the business and the school in terms of strategy implementation, Tsiakkios and Pasiardis (2002) identified the similarities as follows. First, the two sectors try to make a profit but the type of profit differs in both; Two, both have limited resources yet they have unlimited needs and must allocate resources after putting their needs in a sequence of priority; Three, both compete for clients and resources and lastly, both have clients who demand for more satisfaction. The schools get resources from government, parents, donors and other income generating projects to implement the projects they identify. These resources are

hardly enough. Taking this line of argument, school culture may be considered as a parallel to organizational culture to provide a basis for comparing the link between the former and SDP implementation, taking cognizant of the large body of literature in respect of the link between the later and strategy implementation in the corporate sector.

In the corporate world, organizational culture is defined as "beliefs, assumptions, and values that members of a group share about rules of conduct, leadership styles, administrative procedures, ritual, and customs" (Mehta and Krishnan, 2004). Also, it has been mentioned "the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes and norms" (Lund, 2003), "the human invention that creates solidarity and meaning and inspires commitment and productivity" (Deal, 1986; Lund, 2003), a "system of shared values and beliefs that interacts with a company's people, organizational structure, and control systems to produce behavioral norms" (Lund, 2003). Aosa (2002) notes that lack of compatibility of strategy and culture can lead to resistance to change and frustrate strategy implementation efforts.

School culture is not a static entity. It is constantly being constructed and shaped through interactions with others and through reflections on life and the world in general (Finnan, 2000). School culture develops as staff members interact with each other, the students, and the community. It becomes the guide for behavior that is shared among members of the school at large. Culture is shaped by the interactions of the personnel, and the actions of the personnel become directed by culture. Hollins (1996) argues that schools are shaped by cultural practices and

values and reflect the norms of the society for which they have been developed. The general ideologies of society at large and the communities surrounding individual schools become reflected in the culture of schooling. In Anyon's study of inner city schools (1995), she identified three factors that vitiated reform efforts in the schools involved in her study: socio-cultural differences among participants, an abusive school environment, and educators' expectations of failed reform. These three factors combined to create a school culture that negated any attempt at reform. Efforts at reform continually failed in those schools because the underlying stream of values and norms was indicative of the poverty, negativity, and abuse of the surrounding community. Anyon's study suggests that in order to reform the schools, the community's expectations and values would have to be reformed which will be reflected in the culture of the schools.

Mehta and Krishnan (2004) found that strong cultures help leaders be more charismatic and influential. Organizational culture seemed to have some substantial influence on organization's strategy (Mantere, 2000; Van Der Maas, 2008; Van Buul, 2010). Bates (1995) suggests that business strategy and organizational culture are essentially synonymous. Green (1988) introduces strategy as a product of culture. According to Buul (2010), a fundamental part of managing strategy implementation process should take into account organizational culture as a powerful aspect of status quo (Van Der Maas, 2008; Barret, 2004). What the literature has not clarified is which types of cultures strengthen or undermine the strategy implementation process. Due to previously mentioned researches, it may be noted that there is a significant relationship between the

organizational culture and strategy implementation. However, the relationship between school culture and SDP implementation has received very limited research attention, and actually remains uncovered. Given this apparent lack of empirical study on the relationship between school culture and SDP implementation, this study sought to establish the influence of school culture on the implementation of school development plans in public primary schools, focusing on the schools covered by the EMACK's Whole School Approach Program in Mombasa County.

Communication and Implementation of School Development Plans

Strategic alignment of internal communication and employee engagement with overall organizational performance must be considered to be at the core of successful strategies (Jofre, 2011). Forman and Argenti (2005) noted that little attention has been given to the links between communication and strategy implementation. On the other hand, numerous researchers have emphasized the importance of communication for the process of strategy implementation (Peng and Litteljohn, 2001; Heide *et al.*, 2002; Rapert *et al.*, 2002; Forman and Argenti, 2005; Schaap, 2006). The content of such communications includes clearly explaining what new responsibilities, tasks, and duties need to be performed by the affected employees. It also includes the why behind changed job activities, and more fundamentally the reasons why the new strategic decision was made firstly. Organizations where employees have easy access to management through open and supportive communication climates tend to outperform those with more restrictive communication environments (Rapert *et al.*, 2002). Also the

findings of Peng and Litteljohn (2001) show that effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation.

At the school level, communication plays an important role in training, knowledge dissemination and learning during the process of implementation of the school development plan. Communication relates in a complex way, to organizing processes, institutional context and implementation objectives which, in turn, have an effect on the process of implementation of the SDP. Heide *et al.* (2002) indicate that there are various types of communication problems that constitute the key barriers to the implementation of planned strategic activities. Rapert *et al.* (2002) state that communication and shared understanding play an important role in strategy implementation process. In particular, when vertical communication is frequent, strategic consensus (shared understanding about strategic priorities) is enhanced and an organization's performance improves. They explore vertical communication linkages as a means by which strategic consensus and performance can be enhanced.

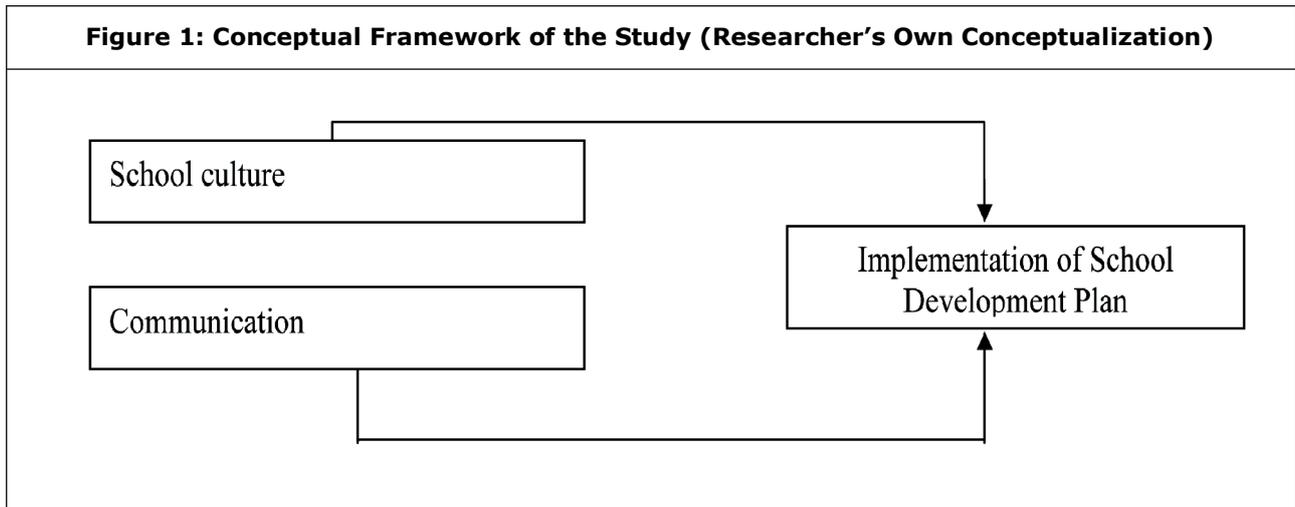
The study of Schaap (2006), which was conducted in the casino industry within the state of Nevada, shows that over 38% of the senior-level leaders do not communicate the company's direction and business strategy to all of their subordinates. This study also reinforces findings that frequent communication up and down in organization enhances strategic consensus through the fostering of shared attitudes and values. The communication function serves to facilitate strategy implementation through communication (Forman and Argenti, 2005). Communication also serves as the "antenna" of

a school by receiving reactions from key stakeholders to the SDP. Aldehayyat *et al.* (2011) and Ngware *et al.* (2006) argue that one of the benefits of strategic plan to a school that it helps to communicate the set goals to all members and stakeholders. It is therefore necessary to display the motto, vision, mission, goals and objectives in conspicuous places where all the stakeholders can see. Thus, for the school to be able to formulate effective SDP, the school management must possess effective communication skills to pass down the vision to all the members of the school including teachers, parents, learners and other relevant stake holders.

Dandira (2011) is of the opinion that communication should cascade from top to bottom of the organization so that all employees are kept in the light on how the strategic plan is being conceived and what is required of them. This means that the school management should not hold back any information in their possession which can be helpful in the implementation of the SDP. From the foregoing literature, it is clear that studies related to the link between communication and SDP implementation appear to be scarce since most of the literature relates to the corporate sector. Thus, this study analyzed the influence of communication on the implementation of school development plans in public primary schools under EMACK's Whole School Approach Program in Mombasa County.

The conceptual framework of the study shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The conceptual framework of the study is as shown in Figure 1.

School development planning can best be understood within the framework of the school as a system in which change of any part affects



all the other parts (Haynes *et al.*, 1996). Therefore, school development planning is a systematic, collaborative and inclusive, ongoing and progressive process undertaken by the school to promote whole school effectiveness, school improvement, quality enhancement, staff development, partnerships, effective resource deployment, change management and the furtherance of aims and priorities of the national education system (SDPI, 1999). School development planning is undertaken to give direction to the work of the whole school in order to ensure that learners receive quality education in terms of both their holistic development and their academic achievement (Broadhead and Cuckle, 2002). In essence, school development planning entails the school’s analysis of its development needs, prioritization and planning for addressing such needs and developing an SDP to address those identified development needs (McNamara *et al.*, 2002). For this purpose, the school development planning process comprises a framework in the form of a planning cycle revolving around a central core, namely, the school’s mission, vision and fundamental aims, and the planning cycle itself comprising the

school review, design, implementation and evaluation thereof (SDPI, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive research design to determine whether the independent variables significantly influenced the dependent variable and to ascertain any association between these variables. Descriptive survey was appropriate for this study to the extent that it sought to describe the factors that influence the implementation of SDPs. The study also attempted to make specific predictions about reasons for implementation or non-implementation of SDPs. Descriptive research aims to describe the characteristics of a phenomenon on the basis of some prior understanding of the nature of the research problem (Veal, 2005). The previous understanding may have been provided by the results of a preceding exploratory research. In this case, the literature reviewed provided the basis for previous understanding of the research problem in different contexts.

Study Population and Sampling

The target population for the study comprised 86 public primary schools in Mombasa County with a total of 1,615 teachers, that is; 86 head teachers and 1,529 teaching staff. In addition, the study also targeted the three top School Management Committee (SMC) members from each school (total = 774) (Mombasa County Education Office, 2013). However, the EMACK program covers only 64 out of the 86 primary schools, spread across the four Sub-Counties of Mombasa namely: Kisauni, Likoni, Changanwe and Mombasa. According to EMACK program's approach, the identified stakeholders were involved in the formulation of the school development plans and were largely expected to participate in its full implementation.

The unit of sampling for the study was the school. A sample of public primary schools under the EMACK program was constituted at a sampling ratio of 0.5 to obtain 32 public primary schools. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan's table of determining sample size (Appendix IV), at a confidence level of 95% and margin of error 5.0%, a population of 1,615 teachers gave a sample size of 310. This sample size included 32 Head teachers and 278 teaching staff. In addition, 10 SMC chairpersons or their secretaries from the 10 of the sampled schools were included in the study. From the onset, purposive sampling was adopted to cover only schools that under the EMACK's Whole School Approach program. Simple random sampling was used to objectively sample 32 schools by applying the sampling ratio of 0.5 across the four Sub-Counties. At the school level, all the head teachers of the sampled schools automatically included in the study while the 10 SMC members were selected conveniently based on their availability. However, the 278 teaching

staff were selected using probability proportionate to size techniques based on the population of teachers in each of the participating school and in relation to the sub-sample size for each Sub-County.

Instrumentation

The study's deductions were pegged on both secondary and primary data. Secondary data formed the basis for comparison with findings and as a building block to answering research questions. This was obtained through desk reviews of documented sources. On the other hand, primary data were collected using questionnaires for the teaching staff and an interview guide for SMC members. The use of questionnaires made each respondent respond to the same set of questions thus provided an efficient way of collecting responses from a large sample prior to quantitative analysis (Dillman, 2000). On the other hand, in-depth interviews with the SMC members helped the study to gather valid and reliable data that was relevant for clarifications.

This study identified itself with construct validity. According to Perry (2001), construct validity requires the development of suitable operational measures of the concepts being investigated during data collection, data analysis and report writing stages of a research. Methods of increasing construct validity include using multiple sources of data for triangulation, establishing a chain of evidence, and having draft reports reviewed by key informants before they are analyzed and final reports prepared from them (Yin, 2009). In this research, primary and secondary data were collected and triangulated. The research instruments were reviewed by peers and then the supervisor to ensure that the

items adequately measured the constructs of the study. Primary data were collected by interviewing the sampled respondents. The interviews were conducted in English.

During this study, a rigorous instrument validation exercise was conducted through pre-testing. The pilot units, equivalent to one-tenth of the proposed sample size, were obtained from comparable members of the population from which the sample for the full study was drawn, that is, two of the 64 primary schools which were then omitted from the actual study. The reliability of the questionnaire items was calculated using the Cronbach alpha coefficient, obtaining a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.83$. Bryman and Cramer (1997) recommend a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.70$ and above.

Data Analysis Techniques

The researcher examined the collected quantitative data to make inferences through a series of operations involving editing to eliminate inconsistencies, classification on the basis of similarity and tabulation to relate variables. Subsequently, the refined data was entered into the computer and analyzed using descriptive statistics involving percentages and mean scores to determine varying degrees of response-concentration. The statistics were generated with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) Version 20. To establish whether the independent variables in the study influenced the dependent variable and consequently answer the research questions, further analyses was done using inferential statistics (regression analysis and the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation).

RESULTS

Response Rate

Two hundred and fifty two (252) teacher's questionnaires out of the 310 that were administered were returned. This represented a response rate of 81.3%. Dillman (2000); Rea and Parker (1992) suggest response rate of 50% as the minimal level acceptable, while Fowler (1984) suggests 60% and De Vaus (1986) argues for 80%. Therefore, the 81.3% response rate was considered credible enough to allow analysis of the data collected thus generalization of the findings to the target population.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents included sex, highest level of education, position held in the school and teaching experience. With regard to sex, 86.1% of the respondents were female and 13.9% male. The highest percentage of the respondents (54%) had Diplomas in Education, 40% were P1 teachers while 6% had Bachelors' Degrees in Education. Majority of the respondents (88.5%) were class teachers, 6% ordinary teachers and 5.5% subject heads. On teaching experience, 43.3% of the teachers had over 10 years' teaching experience, 27.8% had between 1 and 5 years' experience, 16.7% had less than a year and 12.3% had 6-10 years' experience in teaching.

School Culture and Implementation of School Development Plans

School Vision and Mission

As part of the school culture, vision and mission statements are important for enhancement of school effectiveness and performance. The study sought to establish whether the schools had

vision and mission statements and the extent to which teachers and pupils subscribed to the vision and mission of the school. All the respondents reported that their respective schools had a vision statement. On the other hand, 95% of the respondents indicated that their respective schools had mission statements while 5% reported otherwise. Asked to indicate the extent to which they were able to describe your school's vision, more than half of the respondents (57.5%) indicated that they subscribed to their respective school vision "to a moderate extent", 26.2% to "a large extent", 11.1% to "a limited extent" and 5.2% "not at all". With regard to teachers and learners subscription to the school's mission statement, majority of the respondents (71.8%) reported that teachers and learners subscription to the school mission statement was moderate. Those who indicated that they teachers and learners subscription to the school's mission statement was strong were 28.2%.

Internal Rules and Regulations Governing the Conduct of Teachers, Support Staff and Learners

The respondents were asked to indicate who originates the internal rules and regulations governing the conduct of teachers, support staff and learners in their respective school. The highest percentage of respondents (49.2%) reported that the school management originated school rules and regulations with the participation of teachers and learners; 20.2% of the respondents indicated that it the rules and regulations were made by the management with teachers' participation, 19% reported that it was school management only while 11.5% indicated that school rules and regulations originated from the parent Ministry of Education. With regard to

adherence school operational plans, almost all the respondents (98%) confirmed that their schools had such plans. Asked to rate the extent to which teachers and learners in their schools adhered to the manuals and guides, majority of the respondents (69.8%) indicated that teachers and learners had moderate adherence to the school operational plans. On the other hand, 27.4% reported strong adherence while 2.8% reported that teachers and learners had weak adherence.

Teacher Development Policy

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement in relation to key features listed of their respective school's teacher development policy that impact on staff performance. The response categories ranged from strongly disagree with a score of 1 to strongly agree with a score of 5. The respondents' responses were analyzed descriptively using means and standard deviations and the findings presented as shown in Table 1.

The findings revealed that the means ranged from 4.12 (highest) to 2.85 (lowest). The highest mean was in relation to "There is considerable delegation of duties/responsibilities", implying that generally, the respondents agreed that teachers were empowered in through delegation of duties and responsibilities. On the other hand, the respondents' responses on the existence of flexible job designs which had the lowest mean indicates that the school did not have flexible job designs. This could be attributed to the fact that schools follow prescribed curriculum implementation plans that are designed by the parent Ministry of Education, which are more or less uniform across all the schools.

		N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
i.	There is considerable delegation of duties/responsibilities	252	2	5	4.12	.877
ii.	My school recognizes individual talents of the staff	252	1	5	3.62	.957
iii.	There is fair compensation for individual competencies	252	1	5	3.46	1.130
iv.	My school offers training/capacity development opportunities	252	1	5	3.11	1.245
v.	My school has a flexible job design	252	1	5	2.85	1.271

Staff Involvement in Decision Making

The respondents were asked to indicate how often the school administration involved staff in making key decisions at the school through the listed ways. Their responses were as shown in Table 2.

The findings in the table indicate that the leading means of staff involvement in decision-making was through regular staff meetings as indicated by the 79.8% of teachers who reported that they were “often” involved in decision-making through such meetings. On average, pooling of opinions was the least used means of teacher involvement in decision making in the schools as a combined 63.9% reported that they were never or rarely involved through pooling of opinions. Nevertheless, these findings generally indicate impressive involvement of teachers in decision-making.

Relationship Between School Culture and Implementation of School Development Plans

The study sought to establish the influence of school culture and the implementation of school development plans. To analyze the relationship between the variables, an index for school culture comprising four variables namely: subscription to the school mission statements, adherence to school operational plans, teacher development policy and staff involvement in decision making was adopted. The scoring strategy for these variables was as follows: Subscription to mission statement and adherence to school operational plans - (Weak = 1, Moderate = 2, Strong = 3); teacher development policy – (Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5) and staff involvement in decision making was (Never = 1, Rarely = 2, Often = 3, Always = 4).

Means of involvement in decision-making	Never	Rarely	Often	Always
1. Pooling of opinions	32.9%	31.0%	28.2%	7.9%
2. Regular staff meetings	-	13.9%	79.8%	6.3%
3. Use of written communication	20.2%	33.3%	26.6%	19.8%
4. Direct consultations	27.0%	24.2%	34.1%	14.7%

Implementation of school development plans was measured using a 10 points index in which the teachers were required to indicate the extent to which their respective school managements/ administration had realized the changes listed. The measurement scale adopted for implementation of SDPs was “Not at all” = 1, “To a small extent” = 2, “To a moderate extent” = 3, “To a considerable extent” = 4 and “To a great extent” = 5. The total scores for each of these variables were computed and used to run a regression analysis with the four components of school culture as independent variables and SDP implementation as the dependent variable using the regression model below:

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + e$$

where

Y = SDP implementation (Dependent variable)

a = Constant

b₁, b₂, b₃ and b₄ are regression coefficients of the independent variables

x₁ = Teachers’ and learners’ subscription to school mission statement

x₂ = Teachers’ and learners’ adherence to operational manuals and guides

x₃ = Teacher development policy

x₄ = Staff involvement in decision making

e = Error term

When SDP implementation was regressed against the four sub-components of school culture, the ANOVA results indicated that the regression model was significant (p<0.05). The regression model coefficient results for the independent variables (school culture sub-variables) were as shown in Table 3.

The multivariate correlation and regression analysis revealed that at p<0.05, teachers’ and learners’ adherence to operational manuals and guides and teacher development policy positively influences the implementation SDPs. However, teachers’ and learners’ subscription to the school’s Mission Statement and staff involvement in decision making did not contribute significantly to implementation of the SDPs. Thus, the resulting regression model would be:

$$Y = 17.99 + 2.994x_2 + .320x_3$$

Table 3: Regression Model Coefficients of School Culture

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	17.986	2.810		6.401	.000
Teachers’ & learners subscription the School’s Mission Statement	.871	.641	.108	1.358	.176
Teachers’ and learners’ adherence to operational manuals and guides	2.994	.654	.306	4.580	.000
Teacher development policy	.320	.109	.205	2.930	.004
Staff Involvement in Decision Making	.236	.142	.121	1.655	.099

Note: a. Dependent Variable: SDP Implementation

Communication and Implementation of School Development Plans

Communication of School Development Planning Process

The respondents were asked to indicate how the school development planning process was communicated to them. The highest percentage of teachers (39.3%) reported that the SDP planning process had been communicated to them through staff meeting, 28.2% verbally, 21% by means of circulars and 2.8% had face to face briefing sessions with the school administration in which the process was communicated. However, a significant 8.7% reported that the School Development Planning process was never communicated to them. With regard to communication channels for communicating the SDP implementation, whereas the highest percentage of the respondents acknowledged that they were aware of the existence of communication channels for teachers on SDP implementation (57.9%), majority of the respondents (63.5%) denied knowledge of such channels for communicating the SDP implementation process to the learners. This implies that communication of SDP implementation favored teachers than learners.

The study established that regardless of the frequency of feedback, teachers received more feedback as indicated by a cumulative 68.3% of the respondents in favor of teachers compared to a cumulative 49.5% in favor of learners. However, in terms of frequency of communication, 31.3% of the respondents reported that learners received feedback any time progress occurred compared to 25% of the respondents who reported a similar frequency for teachers. There were more respondents (29%) who reported that learners never received feedback than there were

for teachers (15.9%). On the effectiveness of communication channels on SDP, whereas the highest percentage of the respondents (32.1%) indicated that the communication channels were effective for teachers, for learners, the highest percentage of the respondents (40.5%) reported that the channels were not effective at all. Notably, 6.7% of the respondents rated the communication channels as very effective for both teachers and learners. The findings of Peng and Litteljohn (2001) show that effective communication is a key requirement for effective strategy implementation. Communication relates in a complex way, to organizing processes, institutional context and implementation objectives which, in turn, have an effect on the process of implementation of the strategic plan.

Relationship Between Communication and SDP Implementation

To analyze the relationship between communication and SDP implementation, a 10-point index for communication comprising frequency of feedback on SDP implementation and the effectiveness of the communication channels was adopted. A scoring strategy for the two communication sub-variables was adopted as follows: feedback on SDP implementation (Never = 1, Once every year = 2, Once every term = 3, Monthly = 4, Any time progress occurs = 5); effectiveness of the communication channels (Not effective at all = 1, Somehow effective = 2, Moderately effective=3, Effective=4, Very effective = 5). The total scores for communication were computed and used to run the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis to determine the nature of the relationship between communication and SDP implementation. The PPMC analysis results were as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Relationship Between Communication and SDP Implementation

	Communication	SDP Implementation	
Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.496**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	211	211
SDP Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.496**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	211	245

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The PPMC analysis results revealed that there was a significant, positive relationship between Communication and SDP Implementation ($r = 0.496$; $p < 0.01$, $n = 211$). The correlation was of moderate strength, indicating that schools in which feedback on SDP implementation was given to teachers and learners more frequently as well as where the communication channels were perceived to be effective realized positive results in SDP implementation. The SCM members argued that when communication flows effectively from the school administrators to the parents on all aspects of school development, there are always positive responses from the parents. However, the equally lamented that sometimes the communication is ineffective given that issues that require parents' attention are not brought to their attention in good time to allow them adequate time to meet their obligations as far as school development is concerned. Generally, the SMCs were not comfortable with strategy communication practices in the schools.

DISCUSSION

The study established that all the schools had vision statements. On the other hand, most of the schools had mission statements in their schools. Teachers' and learners' adherence to

operational manuals and guides and teacher development policy positively influences the implementation SDPs. However, teachers' and learners' 'subscription to the school's Mission Statement and staff involvement in decision making did not contribute significantly to implementation of the SDPs. A vision statement sets out a school's long-term goals and aspirations clearly and concisely. A vision statement is intended to inspire and motivate the school community by providing a picture of where the school is heading. It also provides a reality check for school management, who can compare their school development objectives and operational plans to the vision statement. On the other hand, a mission statement defines the environment in which a school operates and sets out its key purpose. It summarizes what the school does and why. A mission statement helps school community members understand where their contribution fits into the school development objectives. When teachers and learners subscribe to the school vision and mission statements, they understand where to focus their efforts and align their daily activities with the vision and mission because these instruments help them to know what decisions and tasks best align with the vision and mission of the school. A

vision and mission couched in words that inspire and challenge help build committed effort from all members of the school community and serve as powerful motivational tools (Sotunde, 2012). A mission statement gives focus and encourages strategy implementation, improves organizational climate, internal or external communication, and improves management and leadership in a school (Lesnik, 2008; Williams, 2008).

Schools in which teachers' and learners' adhere to operational manuals and guides as well as those that have robust teacher development policies realize positive results with respect to SDP implementation. The School Management Committee members who participated in the study mainly heralded cooperative school cultures as supportive of improvement of school improvement strategies. Teachers, parents, pupils and other stakeholders within the school community were reported to actively participate in school activities that were aimed at realizing progression in school development strategies. Organizational culture is a form of collective interpretative scheme shared by the members of an organization, due to which they assign meanings to occurrences, people, and events within and outside of the organization in a similar way and treat them similarly (Schein, 2004; Alvesson, 2002; Martin, 2002). For this reason the culture of an organization implies that all the members of the organization similarly understand the organization, as well as a suitable way of its functioning, managing, and changing.

With regard to the influence of communication on the implementation of School Development Plans, the study established that a cumulative 91.3% of the teachers reported having been communicated to about the SDP process in

various ways. Dransfield (2001) states that effective communication systems are needed in implementing strategy to make sure that everyone within the organization shares the vision, mission, objectives and values and has a good grasp of the strategy and how it relates to their own efforts. Multi-channel flows (in which information and ideas flow in all directions) of communication are helpful in creating a shared sense of ownership of school development strategy. A significant, positive relationship between Communication and SDP Implementation ($r=0.496$; $p<0.01$, $n=211$). Rapert *et al.* (2002) state that communication and shared understanding play an important role in strategy implementation process. In particular, when vertical communication is frequent, strategic consensus (shared understanding about strategic priorities) is enhanced and an organization's performance improves. Heide, Gronhaug and Johannessen (2002) indicate that there are various types of communication problems which may be influenced to some extent by the organizational structure. According to Heide, Grønhaug and Johannessen, they constitute the key barrier to the implementation of planned strategic activities.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study revealed that primary schools in Mombasa County have well established school cultures, complete with vision and mission statements that define why the schools exist and their purpose. Regrettably, teachers and learners do not adequately subscribe to their respective school vision and missions which is a precursor to their commitment towards the execution of the mission and realization of the school vision. This is expected to be augmented by the teachers' and

learners' adherence to the school operational plans which was very weak as established by the study. On a positive front, where there are established strong school cultures, it has significant and positive influence on SDP implementation.

With respect to the influence of communication on the implementation of School Development Plans, a good percentage of the schools communicate the SDP processes to the school community and especially the teachers who are the primary implementers of the SDPs. However, the channels of communication used in the schools seem to be ineffective. There also exists differential feedback mechanisms between learners and teachers with teachers receiving more feedback than learners yet the SDPs are mainly meant to effect change in the lives of the learners. Schools that have effective communication channels and more robust feedback mechanisms realize positive results in SDP implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with other stakeholders in the education sector, more specifically those involved in school development planning should capacity build the school communities to come up with realistic vision and mission statements in a participatory manner. This will create a sense of ownership among the teachers and learners which will go a long way in enhancing their subscription to these important instruments in the school development processes
2. School administrators should review their modes and channels of communication in the schools and prioritize SDP communication. As

a matter of fact, school administrators need to be sensitized on the importance of developing school communication strategy to alleviate the communication weaknesses as depicted by the findings of this study.

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