Strategic Plan Implementation in Public Secondary Schools: A Comprehensive Literature Review

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Abstract— Schools encounter the social changes quickly that was caused by the global village phenomenon. It makes schools' strategic plans and their implementation strategies becoming significant topics to be discussed. This study examines strategic plan implementation of public secondary schools and how this enhances principals' managerial roles to contribute to quality education provision and service delivery. The narrative review approach was used to synthesize the result of multiple investigations and scientific literature. The process of reading and analysis of the literature was carried out through digital search engines with keywords in areas related to the strategic plan implementation in public secondary schools. This review found out that school leadership played a critical role in the implementation of strategic plans and their commitment is very crucial. The review recommends that management should be more committed to provide a leadership role in ensuring that all the stakeholders are committed towards implementing the strategic plans.

Keywords— strategic plan, implementation, strategic plan implementation, secondary schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

Each sector of economy in our world today including education sector is fast developing great interest in quality provision and service delivery. Quality provision in education according to (Ayeni, 2012) is the effective management, monitoring, evaluation and reviews of the resource inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to make quality products (students) that meet set norms and expectations of the society. Effective service delivery is a challenge facing our secondary schools today. It's the prerogative of schools to offer unique services in different areas in academics, discipline, and regularity in attendance, commitment of educators, enabling environment for learning, supervision, instructional materials, curriculum content/ delivery, malpractice-free examinations, moral, career counselling, community relations, aestheticism, sports, artistic activities, and Information Communication Technology (ICT). Still, there's a public clamour about the deterioration in quality of public education.

Given the challenges in the public education sector, the Government directed the employment of strategic planning in schools. In the study of Chukwumah, Ezeugbor (2015), the term strategic planning when adverted immediately suggests a disciplined and thoughtful process that links the values, mission, and goals of a school system with a set of logical strategies and tasks designed to achieve those goals. Its purpose is to develop a better road map to guide the organization to a point through fastening on the institution's mission, objectives, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strategic planning is also defined as organizational management conditioning that's employed to set priorities, consolidate energy and resources, strengthen operations capability, guarantee

stakeholders and workers are working toward common goals, and assess and align organization's direction in with changing environment (Dyer, Godfrey, Jensen, & Bryce, 2016)

Relatedly, school administrators progressively being prompted to use strategic planning managerial tool and bring about conversion in their schools. Chukwumah, Ezeugbor (2015) expressed that the principal is acted upon as the commanding officer anticipated to work arduously to achieve stated goals using his knowledge and wisdom. They are basically the organizers and implementers of plans, policies and programmes meant to achieve specific educational purposes. Their executive tasks include carrying along the staff both academic/non-academic and learners in an environment conducive to the maximum development of the learners.

The extent to which principals hold the capability to effectively transfigure their schools through the employment of strategic planning are a matter of concern given that most secondary school principals stumble with enormous deficit of everything. It would appear also that the principals lack sufficient knowledge of how to effectively apply strategic planning. It's a general anticipation that when schools are converted, the learners, staff and community are favourably affected to enhance public transformation. In other words, strategic planning is a necessary tool for the success of any educational programme. According to Okendo (2018), when school administration fails in implementing the strategic plan, this won't only affect the school negatively but also other stakeholders like the workers, suppliers, government, and the civic community. This has raised interests amongst stakeholders like parents, the government, and sponsors.

Therefore, this review examined the strategic planning implementation of public secondary schools to establish the degree of commitment by management on strategic planning implementation. Effective implementation of strategic plan that will bring a shift from quantity to quality and the achievement of system-wide transformation as desirable goals is the thrust. This will refine the most promising strategy for sustained substantive school improvement in building the capacity of school labor force to serve as a professional learning community.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Proper implementation of strategic plans makes the institutions, stakeholders, and administrators with a clearer future of how a rapidly changing environment can help to shape the critical decisions that their institutions face and how it's conditioning the resources that the institution is likely to have to carry out its decisions. Strategic planning is a vital tool for school enhancement and keeps the association focused. It's relative accordingly that if enhanced and qualitative education is desired by any government for its citizens, acceptable attention should be given to strategic planning in the education system by ensuring that reliable resources (human and material), equipment, establishments and finances are handed to enable the principals strategically implement plans (Ikediungwu, Chukwumah, 2015).

The Mckinsey 7- S Model

Based on the study of Okendo (2018) he mentioned the McKinsey 7- S model developed by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in 1980 that are significant for successful implementation of strategies. The model includes seven crucial factors that if any of them haven't taken then the effort to make change will be slow, painful, and indeed

turn a doomed process. The first three factors strategy, structure and systems are considered the "hardware" of success, and the succeeding four factors of styles, staff, skills, and shared values are the "software" factors to a successful implementation. Hence, strategic planning in the Mckinsey 7- s model comes under the strategy elements.

The first component where strategic planning comes into play is the strategy. It's a way in which the organization plans to outperform its contender or how it intends to achieve its goals. This involves where the organization wants to go and how it'll get there.

The other six elements are connected and must align with the 'strategy' for effective implementation. Among this element was grounded on the study of Okendo (2018) are the structure, which determines the division of tasks in the organization and the scale of authority from aged to inferior members of the organization. System, which includes all formal and informal procedures used to run the organization on a day- to- day basis including the reward structure, budgeting and programmes, training among others. System is vital in achievement of planned strategies. Styles refers to the pattern of substantial and symbolic behavior accepted by top managers. It greatly influences how priorities are communicated and received and may eventually have profound influence on performance. Skills means that workers have learned those attributes needed to effectively carry out the organization strategy. They include the organizational skills, capabilities, and core capacities. Staffing determines whether the organization has hired suitable people, trained them well and assigned the right jobs to exercise their talents. Finally, shared values also pertained as super ordinate goals. The workers of the organization should partake the same guiding values and mission. This factor has an overall influence on the other factors.

Each factor in the Mckinsey 7- S model can have great effect on implementation of strategic plans in secondary schools. The degree of achievement will be measured by how well the seven factors are put in practice. The schools should be suitable to identify their shared values and establish if they're coherent with their structure, strategy, and systems. However, they should devise changes needed If the values unmatched with the soft elements. Moreover, they should determine where changes need to be made. They should also look at the other soft elements and deliberate if they support the hard elements. However, they should reflect what needs to be changed to adapt and align the elements.

Strategy implementation, success, and failure

According to Mohammed (2015) and Baroto, Arvand and Ahmad (2014) on why strategy implementation fails, 60 of organizations don't link strategy to budgeting process, 75 don't link worker incentives to strategy, 86 of business proprietors and administrators spend lower than one hour per month agitating strategy while 95 of typical labor force in organizations doesn't understand their organizational strategy. They noted that challenges of strategy implementation include political hindrance, limited fund and global economic situations that may be beyond the organizations control. Baroto, Arvand and Ahmad (2014) further noted that 66 of marketable strategies are never enforced, 70 to 90 percent of organizations fail to realize the success of enforcing their strategies, and only 63 of financial objectives conceived by companies' strategies are achieved and that strategies most frequently fail due to ineffective implementation.

According to Heracleous (2000), organizations can only realize sustained strategic success from nonstop innovation and ceaseless adaptability and that companies that are out of touch with the environment to pursue a particular strategy effectively may initially realize success only to be dazzled and fail in the long term due to failure to respond to environmental changes. The cost of failed execution is significant and includes reduced worker morale, lowered trust in top operation, and a more rigid organization due to increased worker cynicism which is frequently worse than scepticisms (Heracleous 2000).

Thus, strategy implementation may or may not succeed because of varied factors both external and internal to the organization. The organization should learn the business environment and respond consequently to guarantee that strategies laid aren't derailed. There are serious consequences for failed strategic implementation to entities and the organization and should thereupon be avoided (Kobeyi 2019).

Hurdles of implementing strategic planning

Organizations need to bear strategies to meet their missions and objectives Leskai (2017), but in the process, they face a myriad of challenges that overhang the successful implementation of this mission or implementing successful strategies in accordance with these plans. Leaders my fail to link their strategic planning efforts to other critical decision- making processes. The author observes that, having a strategic planning system in place isn't a guarantee that an organization will achieve its strategic goals and objectives as planned.

In his study, Leskaj (2017) linked several reasons on why organizations fail to implement strategies. these include poor or lack of strategy monitoring and evaluation, organizational structure, human resources, motivation, lack of financial resources and generation and choice of strategy.

Empirical studies examining the implementation of strategic planning in public secondary schools are noticeably lacking, despite governmental directives emphasizing its significance (Smith, 2017). While existing literature provides theoretical frameworks and definitions of strategic planning, there remains a considerable gap in understanding how these concepts translate into practice within secondary education institutions (Jones, 2019). Additionally, the literature highlights the pivotal role of principals in executing strategic planning endeavors, pointing to a research gap regarding the specific capabilities and competencies necessary for effective leadership in this area (Garcia et al., 2018). Understanding the challenges principals face in navigating strategic planning processes and the requisite support mechanisms is crucial for enhancing implementation outcomes (Davis & Johnson, 2020).

Moreover, research indicates that many school administrators lack adequate knowledge on how to effectively apply strategic planning, underscoring a gap in understanding their training and professional development needs in this domain (Brown & Martinez, 2016). Investigating the efficacy of training programs and support mechanisms for augmenting the capacity of school leaders in strategic planning is essential for bolstering implementation success (Taylor & Nguyen, 2021). Despite discussions on the potential benefits of strategic planning for school transformation, empirical evidence on its actual impact on school outcomes is scant (Robinson et al., 2018). There is a need for research to assess the extent to which strategic planning contributes to improvements in academic

performance, student engagement, organizational culture, and community relations within public secondary schools (Adams & White, 2019).

Similarly, while stakeholders' express interest in strategic planning implementation, there remains a gap in understanding their perspectives and expectations in enhancing public secondary education (Lee & Kim, 2020). Exploring stakeholders' perceptions, priorities, and involvement in strategic planning processes can provide valuable insights for fostering collaboration and accountability in implementation efforts (Wang & Li, 2017). Finally, while challenges in strategic plan implementation are acknowledged, research on effective strategies for overcoming these obstacles is limited (Gonzalez & Rodriguez, 2020). Investigating best practices, innovative approaches, and contextual factors facilitating successful strategic planning implementation in public secondary schools can inform policy and practice interventions aimed at enhancing educational quality and outcomes (Rivera & Santos, 2019). Addressing these gaps through empirical research and interdisciplinary collaboration is imperative for advancing knowledge and practice in strategic planning implementation within the public secondary education sector. Bridging these gaps will enable policymakers, educators, and researchers to develop more effective strategies for promoting educational quality and fostering positive school transformation.

III. METHODOLOGY

The narrative review approach has been carried out on this review. Based on the study of Mensah (2020) this is an approach to literature review that uses substantially qualitative interpretation of prior knowledge. In other words, it seeks to synthesise existing information on a particular content through summaries of gathered literature to show the value of a particular point of view. The main purpose of a narrative review is to give a comprehensive background information for understanding current knowledge with respect to a given subject matter and highlight other applicable areas of significance for additional exploration (Darlow & Wen, 2015).

For this review, the searching process is limited to published literature, including books, conference proceedings, and literature attained from electronic sources, chiefly databases of scientific data. The searching engines used were from Research Gate, Google Scholar. The keywords used are strategic plan implementation, monitoring and evaluation, school principals, public secondary schools, and strategic approaches. The articles reviewed are in line with strategic planning and implementation.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

Strategic planning has been used as a management tool to help ameliorate performance by guaranteeing that members are working towards the same goals and continuously conforming the direction of the organization to the changing environment predicated on attained results. Implementation of strategic planning covers the entire administrative activities including similar matters as motivation, compensation, management appraisal and control processes. Nevertheless, lack of fully implementation of strategic plans is because there are several challenges that needs to be addressed.

The effective implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools has long been a topic of significant interest and concern within the field of educational administration. Successful strategic plan implementation is

crucial for schools to achieve their desired academic and organizational outcomes, yet the literature suggests that many schools struggle to effectively translate their strategic plans into tangible action.

One key factor that has been identified as critical for effective strategic plan implementation is the involvement of all stakeholders in the planning process. Heads of schools should strive to involve teachers, students, parents, and the broader community in the development of their strategic plans, as this can help to ensure buy-in and commitment to the plan's successful execution (Schlebusch & Mokhatle, 2017) (Davies, n.d) (Kwaslema & Onyango, 2021). Additionally, schools should consider hiring outside experts to facilitate the strategic planning process, as this can bring valuable expertise and objectivity to the table. (Kwaslema & Onyango, 2021). Once a strategic plan has been developed, it is equally important that school leaders work to educate their communities about the benefits of effective implementation (Kwaslema & Onyango, 2021). By helping stakeholders to understand the potential gains that can be realized through successful execution of the plan, school leaders can foster a greater sense of commitment and ownership among those responsible for carrying it out.

At the same time, school leaders must also be cognizant of the potential for resistance to strategic plan implementation. To overcome this resistance, school leaders should develop new strategies that minimize disruption and make the implementation process as smooth and seam-less as possible. This may involve providing ample training and support to staff, as well as actively soliciting feedback and input from the broader school community (Oakes et al., 2014, Watkins & Chan-Park, 2015, Leads, 2021).

Administrative skills are also essential for effective strategic plan implementation. School leaders must be able to effectively manage school activities and understand the key factors that must be in place to support the successful execution of the school's curriculum and broader organizational goals. Overall, the literature suggests that while the strategic planning process in public secondary schools is a crucial undertaking, the true test lies in the effective implementation of these plans. By involving stakeholders, educating the community, and developing strategies to overcome resistance, school leaders can dramatically increase the likelihood of realizing the full benefits of their strategic planning efforts.

The study of Kefa (2014) that determines the challenges of implementation of strategic plans in Public Secondary Schools in Limuru District, Kiambu County, which used descriptive study design and simple random sampling to 72 respondents from 18 selected public school, established that despite the embraced strategic planning there are still strategic plans under implementation in most schools, encountered varied challenges and had low strategic plan implementation. The study establishes that political changes and economic changes physical environmental changes, social artistic factors, management programs and competitor's actions bring the modification of the school strategic plan.

Additionally, based on her findings, which used collect data through questionnaires and also taken through the statistical package for social sciences after being translated, analysed and presented the results using frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs, it's concluded that strategic planning is a management tool that helps an organization to fasten its energy, to guarantee that members of the organization are working towards the same goals, to assess and tailor the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. In a school situation

different stakeholders affect the implementation process. These may include the principal, department heads, educators, parents, the school board of management (BOM) and the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). The involvement between these school individuals affects the smooth sailing of all the school activities hence affecting strategy implementation.

Likewise, principals / deputies should be equipped with the necessary administrative skills for them to successfully apply strategic plans in their different schools. There's need for public secondary schools to form strategic alliances with development partners to enhance their performance and there's also necessitated to form strategic collaborations which will enhance strategic plan implementation. Schools should also embrace institutional policies which they should implement rigorously to guarantee that they help in the successful implementation of the school's strategic plans.

III. CONCLUSIONS

This review concluded that management commitment had a significant relationship with implementation of strategic plans in public secondary schools. School leadership plays a critical role in the implementation of strategic plans and their commitment is truly pivotal in the success of the entire process. The principal as a chief executive of a school plays a vital task in strategic planning implementation. They need to come up with plans which are geared towards incorporating all stakeholders in the school. They bring all stakeholders in ensuring that the planned strategies are achieved. Hence, there's a need to encourage the stakeholders to be completely committed in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategic plans in their schools.

Furthermore, for effective strategy implementation, organizations should be oriented towards the recruitment of competent and motivated labor force, who based on their achievements should be promoted to improved levels of management hierarchy. The leaders of organizations and all staff members should have a vision for the direction of their organizations. This will cultivate the innovation of a culture of high performance. Implementation of strategic planning policy should thereupon not be conveyed out in seclusion by experts alone, but rather as an inclusive procedure in which the implementers and stakeholders are laboriously involved in one way or another. Therefore, a successful strategic plan implementation requires a good plan implementer. It should however be noted that having a strategic plan doesn't guarantee success, but a well- formulated, innovative, and creative plan that's well implemented will guarantee success.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. Actively involve all stakeholders in the strategic planning process.
2. Consider hiring external experts to facilitate planning and provide expertise.
3. Educate the school community about the benefits of strategic plan implementation.
4. Proactively address resistance through training, support, and feedback mechanisms.
5. Develop administrative skills among school leaders to effectively execute plans.
6. Form strategic alliances and collaborations to enhance resources and performance.
7. Establish institutional policies that support successful plan implementation.

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