



INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Strategic management practices have emerged as a promising area of study in the past decade. The field of strategic management or otherwise is regularly dismissed as superficial with its potential impact upon broader issues of strategy and “real” day to day business of an organization underestimated. It was against this reason that this research was undertaken to assess the influence of strategic management practices on performance of private primary schools in Embu County, Kenya. The study was guided by one general objective and four specific objectives: To establish how environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control affected organization growth in the selected private primary schools in Embu County. The findings of this study benefited private primary schools managers on the best practices on how to manage their schools. The study adopted survey research design, with selected private primary schools staff being the target population. Purposive sampling was used to select a sample size of three respondents in each 26 private primary schools totaling to a target population of 78 employees. Self-administered questionnaires was used as data collection instruments. Qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed by the help of Statistical package for social scientists software (SPSS). Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study concluded that there was a positive relationship between independent variables (environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control) and dependent variable organization growth among selected private primary schools. The findings showed that environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control enhance market share and product and services differentiation. The study recommended that school management should take strategies seriously so that they can improve the execution of these strategic management practices as they are crucial to performance of the company.

Key Words: *environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, strategy control, organization Growth*

INTRODUCTION

In the current turbulent world traditional approaches and structured processes to strategic management can no longer cope with the complexity of new demands. New problems are being confronted, requiring new solutions that involve fundamental transformation of strategic management thinking and practices. The critical strategic management challenge in the first decade of 21st century now becomes how organizations can continually adapt, shape, changes, innovative, create and network to survive and prosper in global market environments that are quickly becoming more unpredictable, with organizations that have become more virtual, mobile and porous, with technologies that are becoming more revolutionary and integrative and with people that are more independent knowledgeable assertive and mobile. A new overall organization purpose or strategic thrust seems to emerge; unlocking the mystery of organizations self-renewal, resulting from knowledge based creativity and innovation (Gilbert, Probst, Michael Gibbert, 2007).

According to Joyce (2015) argues there is an assumption that can be read across from private organization to a public organization and thus we are focusing on strategic thinking or leadership by an individual manager (e.g. the chief executive) or a management team e.g.(the senior management team). Actually, the private sector literature is very poor at researching and discussing how the executives of a company and the board of directors work on the development of corporate strategy and its implementation. The role of the public in the formulation of strategy is also neglected in the literature on private sector strategic management and there is (mostly) little consideration of the public other than as customers of products or services. Marubu (2012) argues strategic management is a level of managerial activity under setting goals and over tactics. Strategic management provides overall

direction to the enterprise and is closely related to the field of organization studies. In the field of business administration it is useful to talk about "strategic alignment" between the organization and its environment or "strategic consistency".

Education is one of the key indicators of human development. Daily Nation (December 2006) states that at the end of primary education, learners are expected to have acquired skills and knowledge to help them move easily to the next level. The learners are also expected to have developed physically to maintain healthy body and be equipped with skills to enable them to mingle with peers and others in society. Self-confidence and a positive image help them make proper judgments when they face social challenges. Okelo (2002) in her article states that the Kenyan education system consists of eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education and four years of university. Education in Kenya was generally provided free of charge by the government until 1980. However, challenges like declining economic growth rate and reduced foreign aid led to a gradual decrease in per pupil funding, which led to a decline in the quality of public education. The 8-4-4 system of education was introduced in 1985. This new system radically altered the structure of primary and secondary education since many new courses were added to the curriculum and placed increased demands on schools already limited resources. This decline in quality of public education in Kenya and limited spots at the secondary school entry level created demand for private primary schools.

Free primary education was initiated by the NARC government in 2003 with a need to achieve universal free primary education. This led to an influx of pupils into the City Council of Nairobi primary schools increasing enrolment by 35% in year 2003 from year 2002. This increased enrolment posed the following great challenges to public primary schools; overcrowded classes; increased teacher to pupil ratio

- leading to an increased teacher workload; inadequate secondary school places to match the increased enrolment; and inadequate physical facilities such as furniture, classrooms and sanitariums (Nairobi City Council-Information booklet, 2005). This strain on public primary schools resources led to further drop in quality of education in public schools. This drop in quality of education led to a need for private alternatives to fill this quality gap. Ranking of the best performing schools was stopped in year 2000 following a public outcry that it encouraged unethical practices like forced repetition, drilling or registration of candidates in satellite schools or in other regions.

Problem statement

The essence of strategy is how an organization can add value to a product or service and how the organization can develop so that it is able to add value. In the private and public sector this means that the strategy of an organization consists of defining a business purpose that leads to value creation. Strategic management is a level of managerial activity under setting goals and over tactics. Strategic management provides overall direction to the enterprise and is closely related to the field of organization studies. In the field of business administration it is useful to talk about "strategic alignment" between the organization and its environment or "strategic consistency" (Veldma & Szabo, 2015)

Experience has shown that some policy designs are better than others when it comes to addressing the objectives of efficiency, equity, social cohesion and freedom of choice in education (Levin, 2002). Advocates of private schools argue that private involvement in school management leads to more efficiency and responsiveness to parents' demands (OECD, 2012). Nyakerrairo (2015) argues that management of schools do not carry thorough strategic planning process.

In Kenya past studies on strategic management include Nzoka and Orodho (2014), studied school management and students' academic performance. How effective are strategies being employed by school managers in secondary schools in Embu North District, Embu county. Njeru, Stephen & Wambui (2014) analyzed the factors influencing formulation of strategic plans in Embu North District Embu County. The findings indicated that employee motivation, availability of funds, support by top school leadership, government policy and employee skills had a statistical relationship with formulation of strategic plans in public secondary schools in Embu North district. Okwako (2013), studied strategic planning and performance of public secondary schools in Rarieda district schools in Embu county. The past studies especially in Embu County on strategic management practices have not focused on selected private primary schools in Embu County. It was against this back drop that this study sought to answer do strategic management practices have influence on private schools in Embu County?

Objective of the study

The general objective of this study was to assess the influence of strategic management practices on performance among selected private primary schools on organization performance in Embu County. The specific objectives were:-

- To determine the effect of environmental scanning on organization performance among selected private primary schools in Embu County
- To establish how strategic planning influence organization performance among selected primary schools in Embu County
- To determine the role of strategy implementation on organization performance among selected primary schools in Embu County
- To assess the role of strategy control on organization performance among selected primary schools in Embu County

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical review

Resource Based Theory

This theory was developed by BirgeWenefeldt in 1984. It is a method of analysing and identifying a firm's strategic advantages based on examining its distinct combination of assets, skills, capabilities and intangibles as an organization. The RBV's underlying premise is that a firm differ in fundamental ways because each firm possess a "unique" 12 bundle of resources-tangible and intangible assets and organizational capabilities to make use of those assets. Each firm develops competencies from these resources, and when developed especially well, these become the source of the firm's competitive advantage; (Pearce & Robinson, 2007). In the context of this theory, it is evident that the resources that a firm has will play a big role in the strategic implementation process. This is because no matter how good the strategies are, without the necessary resources to enable the implementation, they remain in the planning phase. The resource-based approach sees firms with superior systems and structures being profitable not because they engage in strategic investments that may deter entry and raise prices above long run costs, but because they have markedly lower costs, or offer markedly higher quality or product performance.

This approach focuses on the rents accruing to the owners of scarce firm-specific resources rather than the economic profits from product market positioning. Competitive advantage lies 'upstream' of product markets and rests on the firm's idiosyncratic and difficult-to imitate resources.' One can find the resources approach suggested by the earlier strategy literature. A leading text of the 1960s (Learned et al., 1969) noted that 'the capability of an organization is its demonstrated and potential ability to accomplish against the opposition of circumstance or

competition, whatever it sets out to do. Every organization has actual and potential strengths and weaknesses; it is important to try to determine what they are and to distinguish one from the other.' Thus what a firm can do is not just a function of the opportunities it confronts; it also depends on what resources the organization can master.

New impetus has been given to the resource based approach by recent theoretical developments in organizational economics and in the theory of strategy, as well as by a growing body of anecdotal and empirical literature that highlights the importance of firm specific factors in explaining firm performance. Cool and Schendel (1988) have shown that there are systematic and significant performance differences among firms which belong to the same strategic group within the U.S. pharmaceutical industry. Rumelt(1991) has shown that intra industry differences in profits are greater than inter industry differences in profits, strongly suggesting the importance of firm-specific factors and the relative unimportance of industry effects. Jacobsen (1988) and Hansen and Wemerfelt (1989) made similar findings. The resource-based perspective puts both vertical integration and diversification into a new strategic light. Both can be viewed as ways of capturing rents on scarce, firm specific assets whose services are difficult to sell in intermediate markets (Teece, 1980). Empirical work on the relationship between performance and diversification by Wemerfelt and Montgomery (1988) provides evidence for this proposition. It is evident that the resource-based perspective focuses on strategies for exploiting existing firm specific assets.

However, the resource-based perspective also invites consideration of managerial strategies for developing new capabilities (Wernerfelt, 1984). Indeed, if control over scarce resources is the source of economic profits, then it follows that such issues as skill acquisition, the management of knowledge and

know-how (Shuen, 1994), and learning become fundamental strategic issues.

Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage

The dominant paradigm in strategy at least during the 1980s was the competitive forces approach. Pioneered by Porter (1980), the competitive forces approach views the essence of competitive strategy formulation as 'relating a company to its environment. The key aspect of the firm's environment is the industry or industries in which it competes.' Industry structure strongly influences the competitive rules of the game as well as the strategies potentially available to firms. In the competitive forces model, five industry level forces- entry barriers, threat of substitution, bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, and rivalry among industry incumbents-determine the inherent profit potential of an industry or sub segment of an industry. The approach can be used to help the firm find a position in an industry from which it can best defend itself against competitive forces or influence them in its favor (Porter, 1980). This 'five-force' framework provides a systematic way of thinking about how competitive forces work at the industry level and how these forces determine the profitability of different industries and industry segments. The competitive forces framework also contains a number of underlying assumptions about the sources of competition and the nature of the strategy process. Available strategies are described in Porter (1980). Competitive strategies are often aimed at altering the firm's position in the industry vis-à-vis competitors and suppliers. Industry structure plays a central role in determining and limiting strategic action. Some industries or subsectors of industries become more 'attractive' because they have structural impediments to competitive forces (e.g., entry barriers) that allow firms better opportunities for creating sustainable competitive advantages. Rents are created largely at the industry or subsector

level rather than at the firm level. While there is some recognition given to firm specific assets, differences among firms relate primarily to scale. This approach to strategy reflects its incubation inside the field of industrial organization and in particular the industrial structure school of Mason and Bain (Teece, 1984).

Strategic Management Theory

Strategic management is the process and approach of specifying an organization's objectives, developing policies and plans to achieve and attain these objectives, and allocating resources so as to implement the policies and plans. In other words, strategic management can be seen as a combination of strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation (David, 2005). According to Radua et al.,(2009), strategic management theories stem mainly from the systems perspective, contingency approach and information technology approach. Following David (2005) and MohdKhairuddin Hashim (2005), among the common strategic management theories noted and applicable are the profit-maximizing and competition-based theory and the resource-based theory. This theory was relevant to the strategic planning because it enables the Kenya Power Company to ensure that it achieves its set objectives and allocation of its resources through the plan schedules. The management must ensure that the strategic plans are in place in order to realize the desired objectives and also encourage the efficient utilization of the available resources.

Empirical review

Environmental scanning

Strategy defines a path for organizational development. The major goals are included in the core strategy document, but wider explanation can be defined in the activity plan (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). Many authors have looked into the question on how to create a strategy development process more efficiently and achieve better results in strategy

implementation phase. Radomska (2014) indicates that elements such as internal processes, systems, people and the environment should be taken into account when strategy is developed to secure its successful implementation. While careful and planned strategy implementation is a success factor to organizations, however, many organizations fail on it (Blahová & Knápková, 2011). There are many approaches that recommend using such practices as involving employees in strategy development and creating financial incentives for units and employees to achieve better results during strategy implementation phase. Research that is done by Rapert, Velliquette, and Garretson (2002) reveals that reaching internal consensus allows organizations to achieve better financial results and increase efficiency.

Higgins (2005) reveals that one of important factors ensuring efficient strategy execution is constantly monitored strategic performance. Desroches, Hatch and Lawson (2014) outlines that one of prior tasks for management is to set up an appropriate communication style within the organization for employees to understand the targets set by management. Additionally many authors define that management is responsible for creating a strong bond between themselves and employees to ensure implementation of strategic settings (Mowbray & Ingley, 2013). The tasks defined for this research to examine deeper strategy development and implementation process are: To determine the most important factors, which have the impact on strategy implementation, and factors utilized during strategy development and implementation x Define nowadays trends in Latvia in strategy creation and implementation To implement the set tasks authors created a survey and disseminated it across the Latvian organizations to gain responses on most common practices of strategy creation and implementation nowadays.

Strategic planning

The history of strategic planning refers to long range planning in organizations (Piccolli, 2008). Strategic planning was therefore a proactive alternative to long-range planning which was found to be obsolete because it was not increasing firm's true value. Strategic Planning is a core task of senior management which involves fourteen (14) processes (Armstrong, 2010). These processes are designing objectives, planning strategy, establishing goals, developing company philosophy, policies, procedures, organization structures, establishing personnel and facilities, capital, establishing standards, programs and operational plans and institutionalization, evaluation and control. Pearce and Robinson (2008) view Strategic Planning as an organizational process that is vision driven and that aims at developing the future value of an organization.

Dan (2009) states that Strategic Planning process involves the implementation of strategy in an organization which should be managed through a sequence of steps. These steps include setting of objectives, analysis of environmental trends and capabilities, evaluation of the available options and planning, implementation, operationalization and institutionalization of strategy. Barney and Hesterly (2006) are of the view that the process of strategic planning has to be designed well such that it meets the specific needs of the organization. The strategic management planning process involves the mission and vision of the organization, environmental analysis, selection of objectives and analyzing strategic choices (Porter, 2008). Since there is not any best way of conducting the process of strategic planning in an organization strategies should therefore be formulated explicitly and implicitly. Hotels have embraced strategic planning as a tool for continuous improvement because it helps them to clearly identify and prioritize their objectives and targets (Aldehayyat, 2011). Strategic planning

however has to be done under a conducive strategic planning environment which has the appropriate structures for proper coordination and cooperation (Ocasio & Joseph, 2008). Manager's perception is also very important to the strategic planning process because they are the initiators as well as the implementers of the plans (Rigby & Bilodeau, 2007).

Strategy Implementation

Strategy formulation includes defining the corporate mission, specifying achievable objectives, developing strategies and setting policy guidelines. It is achieved by reviewing key objectives and strategies of the organization, identifying available alternatives, evaluating the alternatives and deciding on the most appropriate alternative (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008). The process of strategy formulation is mainly carried out at three levels, which include the corporate level, business level and the functional level. The lower level managers drive the functional strategies, which have short-term horizons and relate to a functional area (Macmillan & Tampoe, 2000). Taiwo and Idunnu (2010) examined the impact of strategic planning on organizational performance and survival. The study evaluated the planning-performance relationship in organization and the extent to which strategic planning affected performance of First Bank of Nigeria. The findings indicated that planning enhances better organizational performance, which in the long term impacts its survival. Bakar et al, (2011) studied the practice of strategic management in construction companies in Malaysia. The findings of the research showed that most of the firms practicing strategic management had a clear objective, a winning strategy to achieve the objective and a sound mission statement to guide the organization towards success

Strategy control

Strategy evaluation involves setting control processes to continuously review, evaluate and provide

feedback concerning the implemented strategies to determine if the desired results are being attained such that corrective measures may be taken if needed. Onda (2013) examined strategic management practices in Mbagathi District Hospital, Nairobi, Kenya. The study revealed that, the hospital formulates implements and evaluates the work plan by involving all staff working at the hospital and that the management allocated funds based on the work plan to facilitate the process of strategy implementation. Strategy Control Strategic control is concerned with tracking the strategy as it is being implemented, detecting problems or changes when deemed necessary and making the necessary adjustments (Pearce and Robinson, 2008). The review of monthly, quarterly and annual reports is one of the means management exercise their evaluation and control of a strategy. The reviews require a look at for instance the profit margins, sales; earnings per share and return on investment to assist management determine the effectiveness of the strategy being implemented. Pappas et al (2007) examined the joint influence of control strategies and market turbulence on strategic performance in sales-driven organizations. Results from the survey of sales-driven organizations indicated that self, professional, activity, and output control systems had varying effects on participation in strategic activity. Organizational Performance Good performance influences the continuation of the firm and can be divided to financial or business performance (Gibcus and Kemp, 2003). Financial performance is at the core of the organizational effectiveness domain. Accounting-based standards such as return on assets (ROA), return on sales (ROS) and return on equity (ROE) measure financial success. Business performance measures market-related items such as market share, growth, diversification, and product development (Gibcus and Kemp, 2003). The organizational performance measures as indicated by Kaplan and Norton (2004) include excellence in internal business processes and effective timely and

accurate data collection, quality workforce, quality work environment.

Conceptual Framework

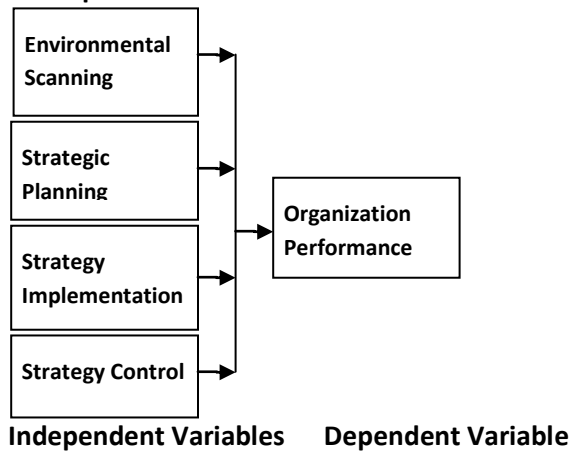


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source Author (2018)

METHODOLOGY

Survey design was appropriate for this study because it allows collective of information of data for dependent and independent variables using questionnaires and interviews (Orodho, 2003). The study targeted 78 teachers in Embu County. Private primary schools were selected owing to the heterogeneity of the student population as regards to their academic backgrounds, having students drawn from private primary schools from across Embu County which formed the study area for this study.

Table 1: Organization performance

Organization growth	Mean	Std.Deviation
Our organisation performance is always reviewed	4.3558	.78961
Organisation growth is important in organisation sustainability	4.1395	.94065
Strategy implementation ensures organisation performance	3.3953	.62257
Organization performance in our school is determine by management commitment	4.0000	1.04654
Organization growth is our main strategic growth	4.1628	1.06749

The analysis showed that the majority who scored the highest mean of 4.35 and a standard deviation of 0.78 agreed that organisation performance is always

The primary data was collected by use of structured questionnaires designed. Secondary data was obtained from literature sources; secondary data was also collected through review of published literature such as text books, published dissertations and published thesis to researchers with also make use of secondary data from the selected 26 private primary schools. Inferential analysis entailed both multivariate regression a correlation analysis performed to assess the strength of the relationships between the specified variables. The multiple regression models was the following equation:

$$Y = C + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + E$$

Y= Organization performance

C= Constant term

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ = Co-efficient

X₁= Environmental scanning

X₂= Strategic planning

X₃= Strategy implementation

X₄= Strategy control

E=Error term

RESULTS

Organization performance

The study respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to organization performance. The results were shown in table 1 below.

reviewed. This was closely followed by those who too agreed that Organisation performance is important in organisation sustainability a mean of (4.13) and a

standard deviation of (0.94). Further more respondents agreed that organization growth was our main strategic growth with a mean of (3.39) and a standard deviation of (0.62), organization growth in our school was determined by management commitment at a mean of (4.00) and a standard deviation of (1.04), and Strategy implementation ensured organization growth (4.20) and a standard deviation of (0.96).

Environmental Scanning and organization performance

The respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to environmental scanning. The results were as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Influence of environmental scanning on organization performance

	Mean	Standard deviation
We have achieved high growth by environmental scanning	4.1395	.94065
Our environmental scanning strategy targets a specific growth opportunities	4.1628	1.0674
We always adopt environmental scanning so as strategy to enable organization growth	4.7674	.47994
Aggressive environmental scanning allows the school expansion	3.3953	.62257

Source: Researcher (2018)

Environmental scanning had been acknowledged to be one of the factors that influence organization performance in Embu County. The study wanted to establish the claim. The respondents were therefore required to rate their responses on a likert scale of 1-5 where: 1= Strongly Agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neutral; 4= Disagree; 5=Strongly Disagree. The analysis showed that the majority who scored the highest mean of 4.76 and a standard deviation of 0.47 agreed that they always adopted environmental scanning so as strategy to enable organization performance. This was closely followed by those who too agreed that our environmental scanning strategy targeted specific growth opportunities with a mean of (4.20) and a standard deviation of (0.96). Further more respondents agreed that they had achieved high growth by environmental scanning with a mean of (4.16) and a standard deviation of (0.47), and Aggressive environmental scanning allows the school expansions at a mean of (4.0) and a standard

deviation of (1.06). The findings agreed with (David 2011), successful strategy implementation depends on a large part on how an organization is structured. Organization structure is the pattern in which the various parts of the organization are interrelated or interconnected. It prescribes relationships among various positions and activities. Symptoms of an ineffective organization structure include too many people, too much attention being directed at solving interdepartmental conflicts, too large span of control and too many unachieved objectives. The structure helps an organization identify its activities and the way in which it will coordinate them to achieve the firm's strategic objective.

Strategic planning and organization performance

The respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to strategic planning. The results were as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Strategic planning influence on organization performance

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strategic planning has contributed to tremendous growth of our school	4.4186	.9815
Strategic planning has led to exploration of new markets	4.0233	1.057
Strategic planning has led to competitive advantage	4.7442	.6932
Our organizations Strategic planning has resulted to continued survival in the market.	4.000	1.1952

Source: Researcher (2018)

Strategic planning influences organization growth in the private primary schools in Embu County. The respondents were therefore required to rate their responses on a likert scale of 1-5 where: 1= Strongly Agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neutral; 4= Disagree; 5=Strongly Disagree. The analysis showed that all the respondents in the category agreed that; Strategic planning has led to competitive advantage, at a mean of (4.47) and a standard deviation of (0.69), Strategic planning had contributed to tremendous growth of our school, at a mean of (4.41) and a standard deviation of (0.9815), the same with Strategic planning had led to exploration of new market at a mean of (4.27) and a standard deviation of (0.73), Personal selling of security firms products create high level of customer attention with a mean of (4.34) and a standard deviation of (0.81), and Our organizations Strategic planning had resulted to continued survival in the market at a mean of (4.02) and a standard deviation of (1.05) The findings agreed with (David

2011), successful strategy implementation depends on a large part on how an organization is structured. Organization structure is the pattern in which the various parts of the organization are interrelated or interconnected. It prescribes relationships among various positions and activities. Symptoms of an ineffective organization structure include too many people, too much attention being directed at solving interdepartmental conflicts, too large span of control and too many unachieved objectives. The structure helps an organization identify its activities and the way in which it will coordinate them to achieve the firm's strategic objective.

To strategy implementation and organization performance

The respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to strategy implementation. The results were as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Role of strategy implementation on organization performance

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Commitment of top management is very crucial in strategy implementation because employees take their cues from senior management	4.418	1.051
strategy implementation helps in nurturing and dissemination of core values	4.488	.9604
Strategy implementation enhances integration and coordination within the organization.	4.255	.9535
strategy implementation helps an organization identify its activities and the way in which it will coordinate them to achieve the firm's strategic objective	3.046	.81514

Source Author (2018)

Strategy implementation, influence on organization performance in private primary schools in Embu County. The respondents were therefore required to rate their responses on a likert scale of 1-5 where: 1= Strongly Agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neutral; 4= Disagree; 5=Strongly Disagree. All the respondents agreed that istrategy implementation helps in nurturing and dissemination of core values at a mean of (4.488) and a standard deviation of (0.96), Commitment of top management is very crucial in strategy implementation because employees took their cues from senior management, at a mean of (4.41) and a standard deviation of (1.05), Strategy implementation enhances integration and coordination within the organization., at a mean of (4.25) and a standard deviation of (0.95), strategy implementation helps an organization identified its activities and the way in which it would coordinate them to achieve the firm’s strategic objectiveat a mean of (4.18) and a standard

deviation of (0.79). The findings agreed with (David 2011), successful strategy implementation depends on a large part on how an organization is structured. Organization structure is the pattern in which the various parts of the organization are interrelated or interconnected. It prescribes relationships among various positions and activities. Symptoms of an ineffective organization structure include too many people, too much attention being directed at solving interdepartmental conflicts, too large span of control and too many unachieved objectives. The structure helps an organization identify its activities and the way in which it will coordinate them to achieve the firm’s strategic objective.

Strategy control and organization performance

The respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to strategy control. The results were as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Influence of strategy control on organization performance

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strategy control has enabled growth and survival of our firm against competition	3.907	1.191
Strategy control is vital in organization growth	4.441	1.0305
Strategy control isimportant for upcoming primary schools to ensure competition survival.	2.976	1.101
Strategy control speeds up take of growth strategies	4.18	1.044

Source, Author 2018

The study sought to know whether Strategy control influences organization growth in the private primary schools in Embu County. The respondents were therefore required to rate their responses on a likert scale of 1-5 where: 1= Strongly Agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neutral; 4= Disagree; 5=Strongly Disagree. The analysis showed the results. The analysis showed that all the respondents that majority of the respondents agreed Strategy control was vital in organization growth, at a mean of (4.44) and a standard deviation of (1.0305), Strategy control speed up take of growth strategies

with a mean of (4.18) and a standard deviation of (1.04), through Strategy control had enabled growth and survival of our firm against competition, at a mean of (4.16) and a standard deviation of (1.044), and Strategy control had enabled growth and survival of our firm against competition at a mean of (3.9) and a standard deviation of (1.191). A minority of the respondents strongly agreed that; Strategy control is important for upcoming primary schools to ensure competition survival., at a mean of (2.97) and a standard deviation of (1.101). The findings agree

with (David 2011), successful strategy implementation depends on a large part on how an organization is structured. Organization structure is the pattern in which the various parts of the organization are interrelated or interconnected. It prescribes relationships among various positions and activities. Symptoms of an ineffective organization

structure include too many people, too much attention being directed at solving interdepartmental conflicts, too large span of control and too many unachieved objectives. The structure helps an organization identify its activities and the way in which it will coordinate them to achieve the firm's strategic objective.

Inferential Analysis

Table 6: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.874 ^a	.764	.746	.230

a. Predictors: (Constant), environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control

b. Dependent Variable: organization performance

Source: Researcher 2018

Referring to table 6 above the study established the adjusted R-square to be 0.764 implying that 76.4%, of organization growth of the selected private primary schools is explained by environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control leaving 24.6% unexplained. This implied to some extent that there was strong explanatory power for the whole regression. Therefore further studies should be done to establish

the other factors (24.6%) affecting organization growth in selected private primary schools Embu County Kenya.

Correlation

There is no statically significant between organization growth of the selected private primary schools and environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control. The alternative hypothesis is that there is statically.

Table 7: Correlation Analysis

		Organization growth	Environmental scanning	Strategic planning	Strategy implementation	Strategy control
Organization growth	Pearson Correlation	1	.224	.308*	-.049	.270
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.150	.044	.753	.079
	N	58	58	58	58	58
Environmental scanning	Pearson Correlation	.224	1	-.074	.125	-.170
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.150		.638	.423	.277
	N	58	58	58	58	58
Strategic planning	Pearson Correlation	.308*	-.074	1	.059	.299
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.044	.638		.709	.052

	N	58	58	58	58	58
Strategy Implementation	Pearson Correlation	-.049	.125	.059	1	.346*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.753	.423	.709		.023
	N	58	58	58	58	58
Strategy control	Pearson Correlation	.270	-.170	.299	.346*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.079	.277	.052	.023	
	N	58	58	58	58	58

As shown in table 7, strategy implementation had the highest correlation with organization growth, followed by strategic planning, direct marketing, Strategy control and environmental scanning respectively. Similarly there should be low correlation between the independent variables. High correlation between the independent variables means that the

estimated dependent variable could either be overestimated or underestimated. This leads to a problem of multi-collinearity. None of the independent variable had coefficient > 0.5 hence no problem of multi-collinearity. This meant that a true predictor model could be used in forecasting organization growth.

Table 8: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.845	4	2.711	54.22	.000 ^b
	Residual	2.665	53	.050		
	Total	13.51	57			

a. Dependent Variable: Organization performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control

Source: Researcher 2018

The probability value of $p < 0.00$ indicated that the model was conclusively significant. Specifically, environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control combined together significantly influences organization in the

selected private primary schools in Meru County. The F calculated at 5% level of significance was 54.22 since F calculated value is greater than the F critical value, this showed that the overall model was significant.

Table 9: Multiple Regressions

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.418	1.188		2.296	.027
	Environmental scanning	.106	.095	.176	1.074	.563
	Strategic planning	-.051	.074	-.065	-.416	.680
	Strategy implementation	.122	.101	.276	1.726	.326
	Strategy control.	.146	.255	.095	.622	.538

a. Dependent Variable: Organization growth

Source (Researcher, 2018)

The findings established that taking all factors into account (environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control) constant factor sales performance was 2.418 due to variation from other factors other than environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control. Also a unit increase in environmental scanning while setting the coefficient of other independent variables zero would lead to a increase in organization growth among the private primary schools by a factor of .106; a unit change in strategic planning while setting the coefficient of other independent variables zero would lead to a increase in organization growth among the private primary schools by a factor of a factor of -.054; a unit change in Strategy implementation while setting the coefficient of other independent variables zero would lead to increase in organization growth among the private primary schools by a factor of a factor of by a factor of .122; a unit change in Strategy control while setting the coefficient of other independent variables zero would lead to a change increase in organization growth among the private primary schools by a factor of a factor of by a factor of .146. The results reveal that environmental scanning, strategic planning, strategy implementation, and strategy control had a significant influence on organization growth among the private primary schools since they all had a significant p value (p value < 0.001). Therefore resultant regression equation was $Y = 2.418 + .106E - .051P + .122I + .146C + \epsilon$

CONCLUSION

It was established that external environment had a significant influence on all the indicators of performance. This results support those of Murgor (2014) who established that environment scanning has a significant influence on organizational performance in large scale manufacturing firms.

Results of the analysis revealed the existence of a relationship between strategic planning and firm performance with a Pearson moment product coefficient of 0.616. Study findings also indicated existence of a relationship between strategic planning and organization performance indicators. It was observed that firms that exhibit higher levels of strategic planning perform better in both strategic planning and organization performance indicators compared to those exhibiting low levels of strategic planning. Examining the strategic planning constituent variables and there link to performance, it was evident that no doubt there are correlations between these constituent variables and performance. This finding conformed to the theoretical arguments by Hofer and Schendel (2008) that companies record improved performance once they effectively embrace strategic planning. These findings were also in agreement with those of other studies which observed that indeed there is a relationship between strategic planning and organization performance.

From the findings, there is a moderately strong relationship between strategy implementation and organization performance. This view suggests that the two aspects of strategy implementation (operationalization and institutionalization) are complementary and either is ineffective in the total absence of the other. Therefore, considering the importance of strategy implementation to stakeholder value addition, it would not be an overstatement to say, "Strategy is implementation". However, for strategic management to improve organizational performance, all steps in the process need to be effectively designed and carried out. The required actions in each step of should be carefully thought out, tailored to the organization and made part of an overall implementation plan. Institutions that want to thrive and compete effectively must implement strategy effectively.

There is considerable effort in the direction of strategy planning and implementation. Others touch on managerial control. They do not focus on strategic control yet according to Wheelen and Hunger (2015) a number of benefits accrue from strategic control including improved performance in efficiency and effectiveness. The studies delved on a number of areas of strategy. They are deficient of investigations on strategy control particularly description of strategic control activities to be carried out in pursuit of strategic outcomes. It is therefore unknown what interaction strategic control activities have with organization growth. Empirical Evidence is unspecific and lacking on the relationship between strategic control and organization social performance. Current knowledge developed from practice is therefore unconfirmed and building on theory such as Theory of Control is a challenge. There is need for more literature review to expose further empirical evidence on this important subject of strategic control and its interaction with aspects of organization performance especially social performance. It is recommended that researchers mount studies on this relationship.

Recommendation

It is most likely, from analysis of comments made by the research respondents that Kenya state corporations had ensured a proper environmental scanning that had led to a strong SWOT analysis and accurate stakeholders mapping. The stakeholders mapping has most likely led to favorability of relationships hence the positive effect of external environment. External environment ought not to impact organization growth negatively. The open system theory's main postulation suggested that as firms conduct their business, they will be influenced by occurrences and changes in their external environment. The results of this study proved this. Perhaps, more significant impact of this study to the theory is the finding that environmental dimensions were found to have a positive rather than negative influence on organizational performance. Scholars

and practitioners should therefore take cognizance that not all external environmental manifestations negatively impact organizational activities. On the contrary others have positive implications.

This study contributed to the strategic management literature by bringing into the study the concept of multidimensional (seven dimensions of planning) Strategic Planning, which is viewed as an effective way of planning (Kargar and Parnell, 1996). It will therefore, make a significant contribution to the understanding of key dimensions for effective and focused Strategic Planning. It will also be useful to scholars and managers of organizations, in providing a greater understanding of the levels of commitment critical to achieving quality Strategic Planning practices and the influence this will have on their organization's Performance.

Strategy Implementation dictates the pace of organization responsiveness to its needs and tasks accomplishment. Strategy Implementation defines matters like span of control and chain of command. These are vital components as far as organization responsiveness to strategy implementation is concerned. In strategic planning therefore we recommend thorough Strategy Implementation to ensure competitive organizational structure is employed, organizations vary in size and complexities therefore this Strategy Implementation will help primary schools arrive at a competitive structure that support strategic plans implementation.

Consequently, we recommended that private primary schools operating in Kenya need to consider strategic surveillance and special alert controls, as factors that significantly influence their performance. With regard to areas for further study, we recommended that the relationship between operational controls and performance in the private primary schools and in other organizations be conducted to in addition to replication the current study in other organizations.

Suggestions for Further Research

The literature review in this study depicted that previous studies carried in this field of factors influencing strategic management practices in secondary schools have not addressed studies focusing other forty six counties in Kenya. Therefore, this study set precedence for upcoming researchers

to focus secondary at county levels in the succeeding studies.

Secondly, this study utilized quantitative and qualitative research biased with cross-sectional study therefore subsequent studies should utilize longitudinal designs.

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