Influence Of The School Improvement Program (Sip) Grant Project On Educational Outcomes Of Primary Schools In Laikipia County, Kenya

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Abstract
The School Improvement Program (SIP) grant project in Laikipia County has been a significant factor in the provision of high-quality education. This study aimed to determine the influence of planning and management on educational outcomes in primary schools. The research used an ex-post facto research approach, targeting 36 SIP schools out of 57 in the county. Key respondents included school head teachers, pupils, and education officials. Data was collected through questionnaires, structured interviews, and physical evaluation of school infrastructure and instructional materials. The study found a robust positive correlation between the increase in KCPE Mean score and the average success of the SIP project. However, there was also a weak but still statistically significant positive correlation between the growth in enrollment and the average project success. Regression analysis indicated a weak and statistically insignificant correlation between "Average Project Success" and "Growth in Enrolment." However, the regression analysis demonstrated that the variable "Average Project Success" is a very significant predictor of the variable "Growth in KCPE Mean score." The model accounts for a significant amount of the variation in KCPE Mean score (86.5%), indicating a very robust association. Both the model and the predictor exhibit extremely significant p-values (both p-values are 0.000), suggesting a strong and reliable association between Average Project Success and Growth in KCPE Mean score.
Keywords: *School Improvement Program(SIP), planning, schedule management, educational outcomes, provision of high-quality education*

I.   Introduction
School grants are increasingly being used to improve the quality of educational provision globally, driven by the importance of decentralized decision-making at the school level. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, signed into law in the United States, provided $100 billion to states and school districts to ensure the employment of teachers and advance educational innovation. This financing included $3 billion for Grants for School Improvement (SIG), which authorized grantees to use one of four school intervention methods: transformation, turnaround, restart, or closure. These models supported the employment of a variety of improvement tactics in four main areas: (1) adopting comprehensive educational reform strategies; (2) enhancing teacher and principal performance; (3) extending learning times and building public schools; and (4) practicing flexibility and receiving assistance. This study focused on SIG grants made in 2010, when 50 states and the District of Columbia received about $3.5 billion in SIG awards, $3 billion of which came from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The audit of SIG-funded school projects found no evidence that SIG was the reason these schools implemented more practices. Schools employing a SIG-funded model implemented much more SIG-promoted practices than other schools. The schools studied reported using, on average, 7.1 of the eight SIG-promoted practices examined in the realm of present a wide range reform strategy (89%). Study schools reported using, on average, 0.87 of the two SIG-recommended flexibility and support approaches examined (43%). There were no significant differences between schools adopting a SIG-funded model and many other schools in the usage of ELL-focused practices. Overall, the use of any SIG-funded plan had no substantial influence on math or reading test results, graduation from high school or college enrolment through all grade levels.

School grants have become a crucial component of educational administration in developing countries, with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funding initiatives aiming to enhance appropriateness, reduce bureaucracy, improve quality, and promote equality. Classrooms for Africa, an African-based grant-making organization, aims to provide 15,000 more children with an elevated, values-based education in appropriate facilities between 2020 and 2025. The organization's budget is $3,300,000, with an average of $11,000 per classroom. Classrooms for Africa also provides financing to community groups that aid in the construction of classrooms and other educational structures.

The PRIDE Project, financed by school grants in Kenya, targets 4000 public elementary schools in ASAL Counties and disadvantaged urban regions with low performing KCPE scores below 243 in 2012 and 2013. Among the 4000 selected schools in Kenya, 57 are located in Laikipia County, receiving KSh. 500,000 each to promote school management and accountability. This research investigates the effects of executing the SIP grant on educational results in Laikipia County schools that benefitted from the program, using indicators such as the provision of school supplies, a conducive learning environment, proper management, and stakeholder engagement to determine the quality of education in the county.

II. Ground Theory

This study examines the impact of the School Improvement Program (SIP) grant project on Kenyan educational outcomes, utilizing project management theory to evaluate its success. Andreas Faludi's project planning theory, introduced in 1973, focuses on scientific approaches in policymaking. It distinguishes between theoretical and procedure theories, assisting planners in understanding their field of interest and operational procedures. Good planning requires understanding and managing risks and planning theory. The theory consists of three phases: managerial, principle, and effector components. The managerial component focuses on planning, while the effector component executes the plan. Principles include the environment's reality, desired target state, and allowable state changes. The organization's effector component makes the strategy a reality. The three principles as outlined in Faludi's theory are critical for the success of a project.

III. Literature Review

Project planning is crucial for a project's success, as even the strongest team cannot overcome a poor project plan. Early decisions during project definition provide a comprehensive strategy that increases the likelihood of a project's success. Effective execution may only matter to the project team, while the rest of the company views the project as a failure. Planning factors prevail throughout the project, with perceived value of the project and customer satisfaction having the greatest influence. Careful planning is the norm for high and ultra-high technology projects, and the quality of planning has a positive impact on efficiency and client satisfaction. Shenhar (2001) found a correlation between planning phase elements and project success, with planning approaches being less important than expressing functional and technical needs. Organizations with the highest project success scores also have the highest planning quality. Competencies in project risk management and risk planning have a substantial impact on the accomplishment of a project. This research aims to determine the proficiency of the planning aspect of the SIP project and its impact on the success of a SIP project as defined by the achievement of the desired outcomes and deliverables.

IV. Methodology

Sample size and Instrumentation

The study involved a wide range of respondents. Thus the respondents were drawn from all the categories of the population so as to ensure that all the facets of the population were adequately represented. For instance, the study involved the county education officers, head teachers and pupils. Given that the study sample consists of different strata, the sampling procedure used needed to be representative of all the strata included in the study. To achieve equitable representation of the subjects in the study, stratified random sampling was used to obtain the 104 pupils, 36 head teachers' and 1 CQASO from the overall sample.

Due to the large number of the subjects in the target population, the sample size was computed on the basis of Yamane's formula (Lwanga, Lemeshow & World Health Organization, 1991).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where,
n= size of the sample
N = population size
e= error limit

The application of Yamane's formula on the target population of 672 pupils yields 87 pupils and a population of 57 head teachers' yields 36 as the sample size. On adjusting for attrition, the study used a sample comprising of 108 pupils, 36 head teachers and 1 CQASO.

Table 1 summarizes the size of the sample drawn from each cluster.

Table 1: Sampling Matrix

Strata	Population	Sample Size	Percentage (%)
Pupils	672	108	16.1
Head Teachers	57	36	63.2
CQASO	1	1	100.0
TOTAL	**730**	**145**	**19.9**

*Source***: Researcher (2024)**

Due to the fact that the study was to use both quantitative and qualitative methods, data was gathered using four instruments of collecting data; questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The questionnaires were administered to the head teachers and contained items on the perception of the head teachers on the effectiveness of the planning and implementation of the SIP project on the achievement of the expected outcomes. The questionnaires had both closed-ended and open-ended questions. A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used to collect data from the pupils. The pupils were put in 12 groups and a predesigned FGD guide was administered to each of the groups. Each of the groups discussed the items in the FGD guide and complete the FGD guide. A predesigned interview schedule was administered to the CQASO. The items on the interview schedule were meant to explore the planning and implementation strategies applied to the SIP project. In addition, through the interview schedule, information on the level to which the project was succeeded was collected. The researcher undertook document analysis with research assistants. The documents included school enrollment and attendance records, as well as the academic achievement of the students in national examinations. Piloting the research instruments is essential for fine-tuning them and improving their validity and dependability. In an effort to pilot and pre-test the instrument, a pilot research was conducted with a comparable sample of SIP schools from of the nearby county of Nyeri that was not part of the final study.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), validity is used to determine whether research instruments accurately measure what they are supposed to assess or the veracity of study outcomes. In the present study, the research submitted the instruments to the expert assessment of the supervisors, who provided advice on how to improve the instruments' content and construct validity. The researcher the adjusted the instruments in light of the expert's recommendations.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defined dependability as the consistency of outcomes across time. The test-retest procedure was used to establish reliability in the present investigation. The instruments were given again within two weeks to a 10% sample of the final sample, and two pairs of complete instruments were collected (Mugenda &Mugenda, 2003). Two full sets of instruments were coupled to calculate the reliability index. A reliability index of 0.83 was obtained and was deemed high enough to assure satisfactory instrument dependability.

Data Analysis

The data was quantitatively and qualitatively examined. Qualitative data is a categorized measurement presented in natural language, as opposed to numerical form. Quantitative is a numerical measurement represented in terms of numbers as opposed to a natural language description. Quantitative data was entered into SPSS v.23.0 and evaluated using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages as well as correlation analysis. The qualitative data was reviewed, categorized into logical thematic groups based on the goals, coded, analyzed, and displayed in tables, figures, and graphs.

Ethical Considerations

Halai (2006) emphasizes the importance of protecting the confidentiality, respect, and sensitivity of study participants, as well as the integrity of the research authorities and policy. Mount Kenya University and the National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation were contacted for permission, and local administration provided authorization. Ethical considerations included protecting respondents from abuse, coercion, and violation of their freedom to voluntary participation. Informed permission was obtained, and participants were informed that their information would only be used for academic purposes. The researcher ensured the absence of plagiarism by correctly attribution of important works and claims within the text.

V.   Findings

Project Planning

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for project planning aspects

Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Adequate planning of resources needed for full implementation was done prior to the rolling out of the project	32	1.7500	.43519	.189
Adequate resources were availed for the complete implementation of the project	32	1.7300	.44620	.199
Schedule planning for the project was conducted, that is project milestones and deliverables were well outlined prior to the start of project implementation	32	1.7400	.44084	.194
The anticipated outcomes for the project were identified and planned for before the implementation of the project	32	2.2500	.43519	.189
Valid N (listwise)	32			

The study found that respondents generally rated the adequacy of resource planning for project implementation at 1.75, indicating that it was somewhat adequate. The availability of resources for complete project implementation was also considered somewhat adequate, with an average rating of 1.73. Schedule planning was also considered adequate, with an average rating of 1.74. However, the statement that anticipated project outcomes were identified and planned for before implementation received a higher average rating of 2.25, suggesting that identifying and planning for these outcomes was more effective. The standard deviation of 0.43519 indicates moderate variability in responses, suggesting the need for further investigation into other factors contributing to these perceptions. The importance of applying prudent planning procedures at the inception of a project is emphasized by Müller & Jugdev (2012) and Thaddee et al (2020), who cited prudent planning as a key determinant of project success.

Correlational Analysis

The study sought to determine whether there was significant correlation between the growth in school enrolment, KCPE menscore growth and the average success of the implementation of the SIP projects. Table 4.8 displays the results obtained.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Growth in enrolment KCPE mean score growth and Average SIP project success

		Growth in enrolment	Growth in KCPE Mean score	Average Project Success
Growth in enrolment	Pearson Correlation	1	.159	.187
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.114	.063
	N	32	100	100
Growth in KCPE Mean score	Pearson Correlation	.159	1	.930[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.114		.000
	N	32	100	100
Average Project Success	Pearson Correlation	.187	.930[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.063	.000	
	N	32	100	100
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The correlational analysis reveals a strong and highly significant positive correlation between Growth in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education mean score and Average Project Success. There is a weak positive correlation (0.159) between Growth in enrolment and Growth in KCPE mean score, but this is not statistically significant. The correlation between Growth in KCPE mean score and Average Project Success is highly statistically significant at the 0.01 level, with a p-value of "0.000" indicating a very low p-value. The correlation between Growth in enrolment and Average Project Success is moderately positive, with a p-value of 0.063, suggesting a significant but relatively weak positive relationship between the two variables. In summary, the correlational analysis reveals a strong and highly significant positive correlation between Growth in KCPE Mean score and Average Project Success, while a weaker but still statistically significant positive correlation exists between Growth in enrolment and Average Project Success.

Regression Analysis

To enhance the understanding of the relationship between the variables under study, linear regression

analysis was run. Tables 4, 5 and 6 display the outputs obtained.

Table 4: Model Summary-1

		Model Summary		
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.187[a]	.035	.025	308.48538
a. Predictors: (Constant), Average Project Success				

Table 5: ANOVA-1

				ANOVA[a]		
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	336700.441	1	336700.441	3.538	.063[b]
	Residual	9325996.549	98	95163.230		
	Total	9662696.990	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Growth in enrolment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Average Project Success						

Table 6: Coefficients-1

			Coefficients[a]			
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-123.740	106.761		-1.159	.249
	Average Project Success	32.530	17.294	.187	1.881	.063
a. Dependent Variable: Growth in enrolment						

The regression analysis reveals a weak positive correlation between "Average Project Success" and "Growth in Enrolment." The R multiple correlation coefficient is 0.187, indicating a 3.5% variance in "Growth in Enrolment" can be explained by "Average Project Success." The adjusted R Square is 0.025, and the Standard Error of the Estimate is 308.48538, representing the average distance between observed and predicted values. The ANOVA table shows an F-statistic of 3.538 and a p-value of 0.063, indicating no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. The coefficients table provides a constant (intercept) of -123.740 and a coefficient of 32.530, with a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.187 and a t-statistic of 1.881. The p-value associated with "Average Project Success" is greater than 0.05, indicating no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. The analysis concludes that "Average Project Success" is not a significant predictor of "Growth in Enrolment" in this context.

Relationship between SIP Project Success and Growth in KCPE Mean score

To enhance the understanding of the relationship between the SIP Project Success and Growth in KCPE Mean score under study, linear regression analysis was run. Tables 7, 8 and 9 display the outputs obtained.

Table 7: Model Summary-2

		Model Summary		
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.930[a]	.865	.863	3.80700
a. Predictors: (Constant), Average Project Success				

Table 8: ANOVA-2

				ANOVA[a]		
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9083.372	1	9083.372	626.731	.000[b]
	Residual	1420.338	98	14.493		
	Total	10503.710	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Growth in KCPE Meanscore						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Average Project Success						

Table 9: Coefficients-2

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-18.347	1.318		-13.925	.000
	Average Project Success	5.343	.213	.930	25.035	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Growth in KCPE Mean score						

The regression analysis reveals a strong positive correlation between "Average Project Success" and "Growth in KCPE Mean score" in Kenya. The R multiple correlation coefficient is 0.930, indicating a strong positive relationship. The R Square coefficient is 0.865, indicating that approximately 86.5% of the variance in "Growth in KCPE Mean score" can be explained by "Average Project Success." The Adjusted R Square value is 0.863, and the Standard Error of the Estimate is 3.80700. The ANOVA table provides statistical significance, with a mean square of 9083.372, F-statistic of 626.731, and p-value of 0.000. The coefficients table provides a coefficient for "Average Project Success" of 5.343, a standardized coefficient of 0.930, and a t-statistic of 25.035, indicating a highly statistically significant relationship. The regression analysis concludes that "Average Project Success" is a highly significant predictor of "Growth in KCPE Mean score," explaining a substantial portion of the variance.

VI. Discussions, Conclusions And Recommendations
Effect of Planning on the success of SIP Grant Project

The data suggest that the respondents generally considered the planning and execution of project resources, availability of resources, and timetable preparation to be somewhat sufficient. Nevertheless, they held the belief that the process of identifying and strategizing for projected project results was more efficient in contrast. The presence of standard deviations indicates that there was variability in the respondents' beliefs on each of these features. This underscores the need for more research and comprehension of other variables that influence these perceptions.

As per the CQASOs interviewed, the training booklet used during the planning process was clear and easy to understand. Nevertheless, the cascade training strategy proved to be too time-consuming and monotonous. Some individuals held the view that the project planning procedures used were efficacious, and that a multitude of stakeholders were actively involved throughout the planning stage. The CQASOs interviewed identified effective stakeholder engagement, defined goals and objectives, prudent resource allocation, needs assessment, data-driven decision making, and community participation as the key elements of excellent project planning procedures. During the SIP project planning phase, the CQASOs discovered many shortcomings and gaps. These included a failure to recognize risks, a weak communication strategy, a lack of alignment with national objectives, poorly specified timetables, and a lack of financial management abilities among the members of the planning team.

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