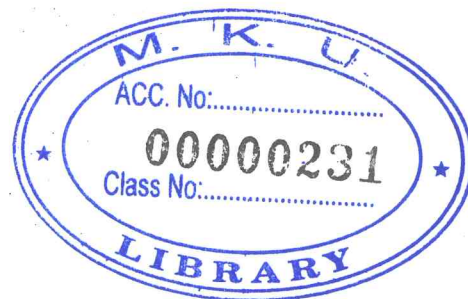


**ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STRATEGIC PLANS ON STUDENT  
LEARNING IN IGEMBE CENTRAL MERU COUNTY**

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## ABSTRACT

It is a ministerial requirement that public organizations including educational institutions develop strategic plans as a means of enhancing results based management and efficiency in their operations. In Kenya school planning involves determining school needs, prioritizing school needs, preparing action plans, implementing and monitoring the plans. In order to justify their existence schools need to develop strategies that embrace changes by anticipating challenges sufficiently in advance and by planning timely response, increasing speed of implementing of response, being flexible and respond on time to surprises which could not be anticipated in advance. Effective planning can be attained through strategic planning. Thus, it is anticipated that a school which has a strategic plan puts into action a detailed plan that will enable students attain their diverse learning aspirations. However, there was no empirical data that supports this line of argument. Moreover, when students enroll into secondary schools, they often have various learning aspirations. However, most schools concentrate only on academics. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effectiveness of strategic plans on student learning in Igembe Central District Meru County. The findings of this study were intended to elucidate the extent to which SP in schools ensure that student learning goals are met. This was important in helping the designers of SP in schools in ensuring that SPs align with the student learning goals. This was in turn to help in ensuring general improvement of schools in terms of attaining student learning goals. Moreover, the study was to ensure that the designing of SP puts into consideration support for in-service training of teachers to ensure they are in a better position to promote the learning process. The study was carried out in Igembe Central District of Meru County. A total number of 32 respondents were sampled from 8 selected schools. The selection of schools employed stratified random sampling technique. Data collection was done using a set of questionnaire for the head teachers and the teachers. The researcher used the quantitative approach where data was analyzed using the statistical packages for social sciences and presented in form of percentages, frequency distribution tables, pie charts and bar graphs. For ethical purposes, anonymity of the respondents as well as that of the selected schools was guaranteed by requesting the respondents neither to indicate their name nor that of the school. The study results indicated that school strategic plans empower staff to be responsive of diverse needs of students Igembe Central District. Moreover, the results indicated that strategic plans for schools in Igembe Central District encourage provision, improvement and enrichment of physical and to a larger extent emotional safe learning environment for all students. Finally, the results showed that school strategic plans in Igembe Central District support students and families as they undergo a transition into and out of grade levels and programs. It was therefore, concluded that school strategic plans in Igembe Central are effective for student learning. Based on the findings the study recommended that preparation of school strategic plans in Igembe Central District should involve all stakeholders in order to be more responsive to the learning needs of students. Moreover, the study recommended that school strategic plans should envision hiring personnel such as counselors, nurses and social workers to help in the creation of emotionally safe learning environment.