



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES

Kayode, E. I.

Department of Educational Foundations
Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka, Lagos.

Abstract

Sustainable Development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend. Quality education which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 can be achieved with effective administrative strategies. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is defined as education that encourages changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable a more sustainable and equitable society. The concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was born from the need for education to address the growing environmental challenges facing the planet. Strategies for sustainable development are a coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and investment, which integrates the economic, social and environmental objectives of society. These encompass a set of desirable processes and outcomes which taken together are likely to promote successful sustainable development. The principles emphasize local ownership of the strategy process, effective participation from all levels, and high-level commitment. The principles also indicate the importance of convergence and coherence between different planning frameworks, integrated analysis, and capacity development. Effective Administrative Strategies can ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. An effective strategy for sustainable development brings together the aspirations and capacities of government, civil society and the private sector to create a vision for the future, and to work tactically and progressively towards it. It is therefore recommended that free and open-communication strategy should be reinforced in all secondary schools as an administrative strategy.

KEYWORDS: Administrative Strategies, Administrators, Student Retention, Public Secondary Schools

Introduction

Sustainable development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend

(Finn, 2009). The desired result is a state of society where living conditions and resource use continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural system. Sustainable development can be classified as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising

the ability of future generations.

Sustainability can be defined as the practice of maintaining processes of productivity indefinitely natural or human made by replacing resources used with resources of equal or greater value without degrading or endangering natural biotic systems (Lynn & Eda, 2014). Sustainable development is interwoven/tie with the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social, political, and economic challenges faced by humanity. Sustainability science is the study of the concepts of sustainable development and environmental science. There is an additional focus on the present generations' responsibility to regenerate, maintain and improve planetary resources for use by future generations (Finn, 2009). Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: The concept of 'needs', in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given. The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs. (World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future 1987). Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: The concept of 'needs', in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (World Commission on Environment and

Development, Our Common Future, 1987)

Under the principles of the United Nations Charter the Millennium Declaration sustainable development is broadly defined, as a system approach to growth and development and to manage natural, produced, and social capital for the welfare of the present and future generations. The term sustainable development as used by the United Nations incorporates both issues associated with land development and broader issues of human development such as education, public health, and standard of living.

Liam *et al* (2013) in their study opine that sustainability should be reframed through the lens of four interconnected domains which are ecology, economics, politics and culture. Poverty, armed conflict and other emergencies keep many, many kids around the world out of school. In fact, kids from the poorest households are four times more likely to be out of school than those of the richest households. Since 2000, there has been enormous progress on the goal to provide primary education to all children worldwide: the total enrolment rate in developing regions has reached 91% (Jepkoech et. al, 2015). This study focuses on examining the administrative strategies that would lead to Sustainable Development. The study also sought to explore the challenges faced by school administrators in their application of administrative strategies to ensure students' retention.

Education

Education must be revisited in light of the renewed vision for sustainable human and social development that is both equitable and viable. This vision of sustainability must take into consideration, the social, environmental and economic dimensions of human development and the various ways in which these relate to education: 'An empowering

education is one that builds the human resources we need to be productive, to continue to learn, to solve problems, to be creative, and to live together and with nature in peace and harmony; and nations should ensure that such education is accessible to all citizens throughout their lives, a quiet revolution is set in motion: education becomes the engine of sustainable development and the key to a better world.' (Power, 2015).

Sustainability through Higher education streams include engineering, finance, supply chain and operations are becoming more popular. Multiple institutes including Wharton, Columbia, CASI Global New York offer certifications in Sustainability. Employers these days prefer to employ workers who are certified in sustainability course or program for some selective positions within their establishments or organisations (Power, 2015).

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is defined as education that encourages changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable a more sustainable and equitable society. ESD aims to empower and equip current and future generations to meet their needs using a balanced and integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2018).

The concept of ESD was borne out of the need for education to address the growing environmental challenges facing the planet. In order to do this, education must change to provide the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower learners to contribute to sustainable development. At the same time, education must be strengthened in all ramifications,

programmes, and activities that promote sustainable development. Sustainable development must be integrated into education and education must be integrated into sustainable development. ESD is holistic and transformational education and concerns learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment (UNESCO, 2014). With regards to learning content such as curricula, complex sustainability challenges facing societies cut across boundaries and multiple thematic areas. Education must therefore address key issues such as climate change, poverty and sustainable production. ESD promotes the integration of these critical sustainability issues in local and global contexts into the curriculum to prepare learners to understand and respond to the changing world. ESD aims at producing learning outcomes that include core competencies such as critical and systemic thinking, collaborative decision-making, and taking responsibility for the present and future generations. In order to deliver such diverse and evolving issues, ESD uses innovative pedagogy, encouraging teaching and learning in an interactive, learner-centered way that enables exploratory, action-oriented and transformative learning. Learners are enabled to think critically and systematically develop values and attitudes for a sustainable future. Since traditional single-directional delivery of knowledge is not sufficient to inspire learners to take action as responsible citizens, ESD entails rethinking the learning environment, physical and virtual. ESD applies to all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education as an integral part of lifelong learning. The learning environment itself must adapt and apply a whole-institutional approach to embed the philosophy of sustainable development. Building the capacity of educators and policy

support at international, regional, national and local levels helps drive changes in learning institutions. Empowered youth and local communities interacting with education institutions become key actors in advancing sustainable development (UNESCO, 2018).

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) started as a United Nations program and was defined as education that encourages changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable a more sustainable and just society for all. ESD aims to empower and equip current and future generations to meet their needs using a balanced and integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. ESD is the term most used internationally and by the United Nations. Agenda 21 was the first international document that identified education as an essential tool for achieving sustainable development and highlighted areas of action for education.

The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present generation without putting at risk the capacity of generations to come in meeting their own requirements. The idea of sustainable development originated from the United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm (Sweden 1972). There were two more global activities since then. These were the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development 1987 (Our Common Future Report) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development 1992 (Rio Earth Summit).

According to UNESCO (2018), education for sustainable development involves: integrating key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning. This may include, for example, instruction about

climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and poverty reduction and sustainable consumption. It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behaviour and take action for sustainable development. ESD consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way (Marope *et al.*, 2015).

United Nations (UN) Decade for Sustainable Development

The launch of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) started a global movement to reorient education to address the challenges of sustainable development. Building on the achievement of the Decade, stated in the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on ESD, UNESCO endorsed the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP) in the 37th session of its General Conference. Acknowledged by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/211 and launched at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in 2014, the GAP aims to scale-up actions and good practices. UNESCO has a major role, along with its partners, in bringing about key achievements to ensure the principles of ESD are promoted through formal, non-formal and informal education (UNESCO, 2018).

International recognition for ESD as the key enabler for sustainable development is growing steadily. The role of ESD was recognized in three major UN summits on sustainable development: the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa; and the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in Rio de Janeiro. Other key global

agreements such as the Paris Agreement (Article 12) also recognize the importance of ESD. Today, ESD is arguably at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015). The SDGs recognize that all countries must stimulate action in the following key areas - people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership - in order to tackle the global challenges that are crucial for the survival of humanity. ESD is explicitly mentioned in Target 4.7 of SDG4, which aims to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and is understood as an important means to achieve all the other 16 SDGs (UNESCO, 2017).

Strategies for Sustainable Development

Strategies for sustainable development are a “coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and investment, which integrates the economic, social and environmental objectives of society, seeking trade off where this is not possible” (OECD 2002). To substantiate this definition, this guidance also offers a set of principles. These encompass a set of desirable processes and outcomes which taken together are likely to help ensure success of strategies for sustainable development. The principles emphasize local ownership of the strategy process, effective participation from all levels, and high-level commitment. They point to the importance of convergence and coherence between different planning frameworks, integrated analysis, and capacity development.

An effective strategy for sustainable development brings together the aspirations and capacities of government,

civil society and the private sector to create a vision for the future, and to work tactically and progressively towards it. It identifies and builds on 'what works', improves integration between approaches, and provides a framework for making choices where integration is not possible. Focusing on what is realistically achievable, an effective strategy will benefit from comprehensive understanding, but will not be paralyzed by planning overly comprehensive actions on many fronts at once. As a process of practical institutional change aimed primarily at mainstreaming sustainability concerns, the strategy is likely to be focused on only a few priority objectives. A strategy for sustainable development will imply initiating a completely new or stand-alone strategic planning project. Rather, a number of initiatives, taken together, could meet the definition and the principles. Bringing existing initiatives closer to an effective strategy for sustainable development might involve complementing them with a broad 'umbrella': a vision and set of co-coordinated mechanisms and processes to improve their complementarity, smooth out inconsistencies, and fill gaps when needed.

In practice, many countries have taken the approach of building on whichever strategic models that have been found useful. These include development plans, poverty reduction strategies or action plans, national green plans, decentralized planning and consultation processes – or the national exercises that have proliferated over the last two decades connected to international agreements. In some countries, alternative approaches have been developed by civil society organizations. In recognition of this broad range of starting points, this guidance emphasizes that the label does not matter – what is important is the consistent application of the underlying principles

referred to above.

Depending on circumstances, a sustainable development strategy may be viewed as a system comprising the following components:

- Regular multi-stakeholder fora and means for negotiation at national and decentralized levels, with links between them.
A shared vision and set of broad strategic objectives
- A set of mechanisms to pursue those objectives in ways that can adapt to change (e.g. an information system, communication capabilities and co-ordinated means for policy integration, budgeting, monitoring, and accountability)
- Principles and standards to be adopted by sectors and stakeholders through legislation, voluntary action, market-based instruments, etc.
- Pilot activities to generate learning and ownership
- A secretariat or other facility with authority for co-coordinating the mentioned mechanisms
- A mandate for all the above from a high-level, central authority such as the prime minister's once and, to the extent possible, from citizens' and business organizations.

Key Principles for Strategies for Sustainable Development

According to OECD (2002), there are several principles that guide strategies for sustainable development, these are principles towards which strategies should be applied. They are all important and no order of priority is implied, they do not represent a checklist of criteria to be met but encompass a set of desirable processes and outcomes that also allow for local differences.

People-centered

An effective strategy requires a people-centered approach, ensuring long-term beneficial impacts on disadvantaged and marginalized groups, such as the poor.

Consensus on long-term vision.

Strategic planning frameworks are more likely to be successful when they have a long-term vision with a clear time frame upon which stakeholders agree. At the same time, they need to include ways of dealing with short- and medium-term necessities and change. The vision needs to have the commitment of all political parties so that an incoming government will not view a particular strategy as representing only the views or policies of its predecessor.

Comprehensive and integrated.

Strategies should seek to integrate, where possible, economic, social and environmental objectives. But where integration cannot be achieved, trade off need to be negotiated. The entitlements and possible needs of future generations must be factored into this process.

Targeted with clear budgetary priorities.

The strategy needs to be fully integrated into the budget process to ensure that plans have the financial resources to achieve their objectives, and do not only represent wish lists. Conversely, the formulation of budgets must be informed by a clear identification of priorities. Capacity constraints and time limitations will have an impact on the extent to which the intended outcomes are achieved. Targets need to be challenging - but realistic in relation to these constraints.

Based on comprehensive and reliable analysis.

Priorities need to be based on a comprehensive analysis of the present situation and of forecasted trends and risks, examining links between local, national and global challenges. The external pressures on

a country – those resulting from globalization, for example, or the impacts of climate change – need to be included in this analysis. Such analysis depends on credible and reliable information on changing environmental, social and economic conditions, pressures and responses, and their correlations with strategy objectives and indicators. Local capacities for analysis and existing information should be fully used, and different perceptions amongst stakeholders should be reflected.

Incorporate monitoring, learning and improvement.

Monitoring and evaluation needs to be based on clear indicators and built into strategies to steer processes, track progress, distil and capture lessons, and signal when a change of direction is necessary.

Country-led and nationally owned.

Past strategies have often resulted from external pressure and development agency requirements. It is essential that countries take the lead and initiative in developing their own strategies if they are to be enduring.

High-level government commitment and influential lead institutions.

Such commitment – on a long-term basis – is essential if policy and institutional changes are to occur, financial resources are to be committed and for there to be clear responsibility for implementation.

Building on existing processes and strategies.

A strategy for sustainable development should not be thought of as a new planning process but instead build on what already exists in the country, thus enabling convergence, complementarity and coherence between different planning frameworks and policies. This requires good management to ensure co-ordination of mechanisms and processes, and to identify

and resolve potential conflicts. The latter may require an independent and neutral third party to act as a facilitator. The roles, responsibilities and relationships between the different key participants in strategy processes must be clarified early on.

Effective participation.

Broad participation helps to open up debate to new ideas and sources of information; expose issues that need to be addressed; enable problems, needs and preferences to be expressed; identify the capabilities required to address them; and develop a consensus on the need for action that leads to better implementation. Central government must be involved (providing leadership, shaping incentive structures and allocating financial resources) but multi-stakeholder processes are also required involving decentralized authorities, the private sector and civil society, as well as marginalized groups. This requires good communication and information mechanisms with a premium on transparency and accountability.

Link national and local levels.

Strategies should be two-way iterative processes within and between national and decentralized levels. The main strategic principles and directions should be set at the central level (here, economic, fiscal and trade policy, legislative changes, international affairs and external relations, etc., are key responsibilities). But detailed planning, implementation and monitoring would be undertaken at a decentralized level, with appropriate transfer of resources and authority.

Develop and build on existing capacity.

At the outset of a strategy process, it is important to assess the political, institutional, human, scientific and financial capacity of potential state, market and civil society participants. Where needed, provision should be made to develop the necessary

capacity as part of the strategy process. A strategy should optimize local skills and capacity both within and outside government.

Effective communication is the principal vehicle for the above tasks, no wonder it has been called the 'lifblood' of a strategy. Indeed, without clear two-way communication, engaging all key stakeholders, a strategy will not succeed because cooperation and collaboration – which depend on it – are compromised. A continuous improvement approach is broadly cyclical as illustrated in the figure above.

The strategy, through an iterative process, thus operates as a knowledge system that coordinates the collection of information, analysis, monitoring and communication. The figure is not intended to describe strict phases in a strategy 'cycle', with an obligatory starting point and sequence. A key task is to take stock of which of the strategic mechanisms already exist, especially those that have effective stakeholder engagement processes and collaborative structures. Bringing together 'what works' can be cost-effective and credible, ensuring 'buy-in': This would enable a strategy system or framework to be constructed, using the best of what currently exists to improve synergies, remove inconsistencies, avoid conflicts and fill gaps (OECD, 2002).



Figure: A continuous improvement approach (OECD, 2002)

The Do's and Don'ts of Strategic Communication for Sustainable Development

Strategic communication is implemented in steps related to analysis, planning, production and action and reflection phases. Nobody knows everything but everybody knows something. Participatory situation and audience analysis allow project planners to understand the real problems, barriers and chances. Don't jump to conclusions or assumptions, for example as far as knowledge, attitudes or practices of relevant groups are concerned. Listen before you talk. Make sure you understand your target groups' before you start mass producing expensive media. Ask the right questions:

1. Who should do what?
2. Why are they not doing it?
3. What are the communication barriers?
4. What are the advantages, incentives and benefits of the proposed new practices?
5. What are the advantages, incentives and benefits of the prevailing 'old' practices?
6. How and where do you reach relevant groups?
7. Which traditional and mass media or communication channels do they use?
8. Who do they trust, who not?
9. Who should you win over as a partner?

Involve relevant groups pro-actively, from the start and continuously – not only in communication processes but also in media productions. Men and women are different. So are old and young. Segmentizing your audiences, therefore, is the nuts and bolts of any communication strategy. Different groups need different media that correspond with their living conditions and

communication habits. The same is true about their interests through appropriate communication channels. Every media is good for something, but no medium is good for everything. This is why a balanced media mix is a crucial success factor. It depends on the communication objectives and on the social groups to be involved and to be addressed. Work with instead of these groups, also as far as selected media and messages are concerned. Projects should fit people, not the other way around.

The success of sustainable development, resource management or biodiversity conservation ultimately depends on their respective advantages, incentives and benefits to the affected people. Strategic communication should help overcome barriers, create incentives and offer capacity development and training for partners, relevant social groups and project staff. Indicators should be developed early to assess impact and success for continuity. There is need for dynamism and flexibility. This will provide you with additional opportunities. Strategic communication requires continuous process documentation and formative M and E. This will help in identifying innovative problem solutions. Do good and talk about it. Success stories and visible impacts should be communicated beyond the immediate scope of the project.

Administrative Strategy

Communication strategy is the most commonly employed administrative strategy. According to Joey (2013), communication is essential if a school administrator is to be successful in creating and maintaining a healthy learning environment and that putting both verbal and non-verbal communication skills into practice can greatly improve a school's organizational flow, which in turn provides

secure boundaries for students' academic performance and positive reinforcement. In line with this claim, Lawrence-lightfoot (2004) has investigated the effect of parent and teacher communication in elementary schools in America. The target population was parents, teachers and students. The findings of his study showed that when teachers and parent dialogue, they develop trust and a mutuality of concern and appreciation of contrasting perspectives amongst teachers, parents and students.

Administrators on Students Retention

Sometimes students drop out of school as a result of years of academic hurdles, missteps, and wrong turns. At times it is about schools and communities having too few resources to meet the complex emotional and academic needs of their most vulnerable students (Furger, 2013). Musau (2007) has conducted a study in Kilome Division, Kenya to investigate the challenges faced by educational planners and other stakeholders in the retention of students in public secondary schools. The sample size consisted of 10 head teachers, 10 guidance and counselling teachers, 24 parents of the drop-outs and 24 dropouts. Random sampling technique was used to select head teachers and guidance and counselling teachers. Snowballing sampling technique was used on drop-outs and parents. Data collection was through the questionnaire and interview schedule.

The study findings indicated that the challenges facing educational planners and other stakeholders in retention of students in school emanated from social, school and home factors. The study, however, does not touch on the challenges faced by the administrators when implementing strategies on student retention which the current study embarks to study. Gray and Hackling (2009) have studied on student well-being and

retention in Austria. The focus of the study was to find out the factors impacting on quality retention and participation of students. The sample size consisted of 250 year 11 student from two school communities. Survey design was used. Data was collected through focus group discussions. The findings of the study were that school culture, participations, achievement and school policy and governance were the main challenges to their retention.

According to a report by the National Center for Education Statistics (2011), student retention and success are two of the most challenges facing higher education in the United States (US). Further the report reveals that no single administrator is empowered to implement strategic retention and student success plan. According to the report, for students to be retained in schools it is the whole institution which is involved. Going by the report, retention and success of students in colleges and universities in the US is a challenge. Nevertheless, the report does not elaborate on the strategies which the managers use in trying to retain these students in the colleges. Further the report does not indicate whether there are any challenges faced while implementing the strategies in schools.

The School Leadership and Administration for Effective School Improvement

Cotton (2003) asserts that two related lines of research have demonstrated the influence of school leaders in school improvement. The first line of inquiry is what is known as school effectiveness research which identifies the characteristics of effective schools that influence the high-achieving schools. The second line of research focuses primarily on the head teacher's role as an instructional

leader. In this context, the roles of head teachers in developing instructional programmes have mainly contributed to create more high-achieving schools. Edmonds (1979) argues that school administration approach is critical in determining students' retention in schools and their subsequent academic achievement. Further, on the basis of his research on administratively effective schools in Detroit and a review of previous studies involving effective schools in New York, California, and Michigan, he concludes that head teachers' administrative strategies have predominantly contributed towards the creation of administratively effective schools. These factors are anchored on strong administrative leadership approaches and strategies. In line with these findings, Austin (1979) suggests that an administratively effective school which can promote student outcomes need to provide a climate that stimulates ideas and facilitates the exchange of ideas with colleagues. For the purposes of seeking the perceptions of school communities on administrative strategies which mostly help the schools to be effective, Townsend (1997) has conducted a comparative study between Australian and American schools. The study employed an empirical survey involving a total of 1000 respondents, 427 from Victoria, Australia and 573 from the United States. The respondents comprised of 12% head teachers, 34.9% teachers, 31.8% parents, and 21.3% students. Based on the data analysis, Townsend (1997) concludes that an effective school is primarily characterized by appropriate administrative strategies, good staff, good policies and a safe and/or supportive atmosphere in which staff, parents and students are encouraged to work as teams towards common goals. Purkey and Smith (1985) identify school administration

strategies as some of the major factors in improving academic performance. They clarify that this factor emphasizes strong leadership from administrators, teachers or integrated teams are important in initiating and maintaining the improvement processes. Based on data obtained from school effectiveness research within the Flemish technical secondary education, De Maeyer *et al.*, (2007) conclude that school administration has an indirect effect on student achievements. In this case, schools scoring high on this characteristic put a strong emphasis on their pupils' achievements, including ensuring high students' completion rate.

Some recent studies have also evaluated the literature on school improvement research in the current context of school reforms. For instance, case studies conducted by Sun, *et al.*, (2007) between 1999 and 2003 in eight European countries, i.e. Belgium, Finland, The Netherlands, UK, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain, show that several ideas from school improvement research such as setting national goals in terms of school improvement and strong administrative approaches in steering and empowering school improvement efforts are important. In particular, on the basis of their data collection procedures using interviews, audio and video-tape recordings, Sun, *et al.*, (2007) affirm that school goal setting in terms of employing effective administrative strategies is a key factor that influences effective school improvement. In a similar study conducted by Cotton (2003), to explore the relationship between school heads' administrative approaches and student achievements, 81 reports consisting of 49 studies at primary level, 23 at secondary level, five combinations of reviews and studies and four textbook analyses and research-based guidelines on

administrative strategies employed by head teachers. The sample reports were predominantly from the US low socio-economic status (SES) schools, involving: students, teachers, head teachers, school council members, community members, and superintendents. Based on these studies, Cotton (2003) concludes that head teachers who are knowledgeable in the appropriate administrative strategies such as cordial relationships, free communication policy, support of needy students and understanding of staff members' concerns record a higher students' completion rate and have higher numbers of high achieving students.

Retention of Students in School

Retention of students in school is done with the aim of making the students complete the secondary education in time yet student retention in secondary school education has become a concern to the stakeholders in education (Mbuva, 2011). The efforts to improve retention have largely been ineffective, as demonstrated by insistent attrition rates (Reason, 2009). Retention of students in schools will contribute immensely to the achievement of MDGs (Chabari, 2010). The school administration has an important part to play in student retention. This is because the administrators are equipped with the knowledge and skills that support these practices for improved educational outcomes (Bell, *et al.*, 2003). In agreement with Waruini (2012), in a related study on factors affecting access and retention of the boy-child in secondary schools of Mathioya District established that even with the introduction of free secondary education, boys still continued to drop out of schools.

Further, Onuko (2012) conducted a study on impact of bursary schemes on retention of students in public secondary schools in Gem

District and found out that without good governance and efficient management of Constituency Bursary Committees in relation to allocation of bursaries to beneficiaries in schools and financial management in particular, investment in education from any source would not bear the necessary fruits. The researcher recommended a further study be conducted on school initiative programmes to ensure student retention in public secondary schools. Many researchers have focused on students' retention. Lamb, *et al.*, (2004) and Mbuva (2011) reveal that for students to be retained in schools, there is need to have supportive staff, need to focus on students' individual differences and check on their academic needs in order to enhance retention of the students.

Challenges Faced by School Administrators in their Use of Various Administrative Strategies

There are three main categories of challenges that secondary school administrators face in their bid to retain students. These are categorized into: social challenges, school challenges and home challenges. Social challenges involve negative students' peer pressure; lack of academic resilience; lack of academic focus and hence inadequate visionary studies' techniques, and lack of role models.

School challenges comprise inadequate physical facilities and resources to cater for the needs of vulnerable students; inadequate staff, and lack of co-operation from the teaching staff. Finally, home challenges comprise inadequate parental cooperation on matters pertaining to education of their children; lack of parental support for girl education and poverty.

Conclusion

There are various strategies geared towards ensuring students' retention, these

administrative strategies are: free communication, provision of bursaries and grants, enhancement of school culture and raising the school motivation level. Free communication is highly preferred followed closely by the provision of bursaries and grants. Raising level of school motivation and enhancement of school culture is the least employed administrative strategies in as far as students' retention was concerned. Three main categories of challenges that secondary school administrators experienced in their quest to retain students are grouped into: social challenges, school challenges and home challenges. Social challenges comprised of: negative students' peer pressure; lack of academic resilience; lack of academic focus, and lack of role models. School challenges comprised: inadequate physical facilities to cater for the needs of vulnerable students; inadequate teaching staff to provide personalized student attention, and inadequate corporation from the teaching staff. Finally, home challenges consisted of: inadequate parents' cooperation on matters pertaining to education of their children; lack of parental support for government education, and poverty which hampers parents/guardians from providing essential needs to their children. Effective Administrative Strategies can ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. An effective strategy for sustainable development brings together the aspirations and capacities of government, civil society and the private sector to create a vision for the future, and to work tactically and progressively towards it.

It is recommended that free and open-communication strategy should be reinforced in all secondary schools as an administrative strategy. This is because this strategy allows students to feel free and be at ease to share

with their teachers, issues that can be challenging to them; any drop-out plans by students are thwarted before they are actually executed. In addition, the government should increase the budgetary allocations for school fees bursaries and grants, particularly for students from vulnerable regions. Sufficient funds should be set aside for students from humble backgrounds to ensure that such students successfully complete their education.

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