

Research Article

SCHOOL BOARDS INVOLVEMENT IN MANAGEMENT OF FINANCES AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN TRANS-NZIOIA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between school boards involvement in financial management and academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Trans-Nzoia County. The study was guided by the agency theory. The study adopted correlational research design. A total sample size of 336 respondents took part in the study. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Descriptive statistics namely; frequency, mean, percentages and standard deviation were used together with inferential statistics namely; Pearson product correlation, Linear regression, t-test and ANOVA in data analysis. The study established that school boards involvement in financial management had a statistically positive influence on academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Trans-Nzoia County.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Finances, Involvement, Management, School Boards.

INTRODUCTION

Manners (1998) and Wango (2009) alluded that prudent managing of school moneys is a pre-condition of quality. According to the New Zealand Council for Education (1994) accountability and proper administrative practices take priority over curriculum. According to Clarke (2008) safe cash storage; everyday banking of money obtained; adequate accounting books; fiscal dealings backed by documentation of sources; and once-a-month reconciliation bank statement and cash book should all be part of a school's finance policy. Interestingly, Adesina (2011) discovered that the importance of school boards in financial management had been largely disregarded in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the survey, school boards are not effusively involved in everyday operations of the institutions in which they work. Other studies have established weaknesses in of school boards in Sub Saharan Africa. For instance Maitland (2009) found that liability in respect to academic success was largely a school's head responsibility. According to Baaru (2019) Members of the Board of Administration with a background in finance became extra successful in managing finances of public elementary schools though faced with a lot of challenges. The study investigated on the efficacy of boards of schools in handling human and financial resources in Kenyan public elementary schools. It involved 2 head teachers and 196 member of school boards in 21 public primary schools within the County. The current study intends to use four study instruments, namely questionnaires, interview schedule, document analysis and checklists thus closing the study gap. Regarding the head teacher in financial management, it is not a debate that his / her role in financial management is critical in the realization of quality education since good academic performance depends on sound management of school financial resources. In a study by Abdalishoev (2000) when investigating head teachers' role in managing financial resources in a private school in Pakistan, it was

found out that the head teacher was delegated with the responsibility of allocating, utilizing and monitoring financial resources as per the needs of the school. Further the study observed that it was not as significant role in generating financial resources for the head teacher as for the school managers. Furthermore, the head teacher was faced with challenges in finding a balance between the academic and financial management roles. The study adopted a case study design. It used five instruments for gathering data, namely interviews, observation, video graphy, memos and reflective journals. This study however, departs from the current study as it looked at a private school and more so outside Kenya. These findings cannot however, be generalized since the working conditions for private schools and the politics of Pakistan are unlikely to be the same as for schools in Trans-Nzoia, hence the current study to address the gap. Similarly, Mukundi (2012) investigated the qualifications of head teachers and that of their bursars/accounts clerks in financial management in Olkalau division, Nyandarua district. The study found out that the secondary principals had issues in managing finances. This affected other administrative tasks for example implementation. Though the principals did make budgets, but they rarely and strictly followed them as cases of misappropriation were observed. The study sampled 10 public secondary schools with ten head teachers and twenty heads of departments being selected through simple random sampling technique. The sample also included schools' bursars/accounts clerks and the district schools' auditor. Mukundi (2012) study findings however, cannot be generalized. This study sampled secondary schools while the present study was intended to focus on primary schools specifically in Trans-Nzoia County thus bridging the gap. Equally, according to Kahavizakiriza *et al.*, (2015) public secondary schools hardly generate their own funds but relied mostly on parents and the government. The study purposed to ensure efficient public secondary schools management of finances in Kakamega County with the Kakamega Municipality inclusive. The total target population was 187 people consisting of 17 principals, 17 school bursars, 136 Heads of Departments and 17 school boards representatives. Twelve (12) schools were selected purposively to raise the sample. This was gotten by questioning school bursars, principals, Heads of

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Departments and school boards representatives. It also emerged that principals and bursars drew the budgets. The principals and school boards monitored and supervised the school budgets. Furthermore, approval of the budget was mainly done by the school boards of management, as the government was not consulted on the same. Contrastingly however, by using only one

(1) school boards representative for each of the twelve schools as a component of the sample size, Kahavizakiriza *et al.*, (2015) is likely to have invalidated the results of the study as this might have opened up to opportunities for collusion between the principals and the school boards representatives hence not revealing sensitive information on budget preparation and implementation. The current study intends to use 30% sample size to help address the gap. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Relationship between School Boards Involvement in Management of Finances and Academic Achievement

Descriptive Statistics of School Boards Involvement in Management of Finances

The study gathered information in form of views and opinions of respondents concerning the extent of boards' involvement in management of school finances. The responses were analyzed in form of percentages. The findings were reported in Figure 1

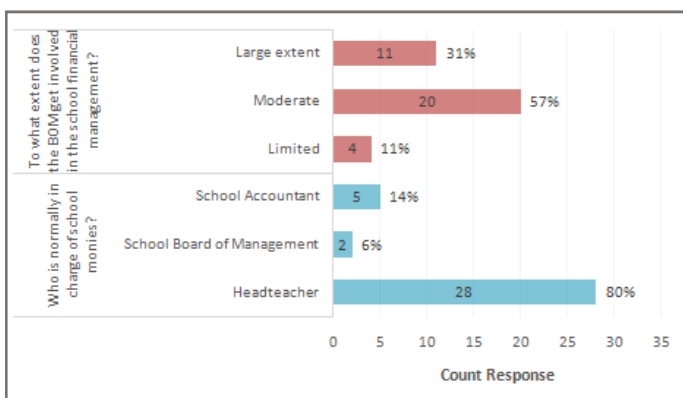


Figure 1. Management of School Finances (Source: Field Data, 2021)

Figure 1 shows that majority of the respondents 57% claimed that BoM in their respective schools got involved in management of school finances barely on a moderate extent. This finding is in line with the recommendations of the Education Act Cap 211 (2012) which stipulates that that one of the specific roles of School boards of management is sourcing and management of school finances. School boards of management in Trans-Nzoia County however, were not playing their role in financial management effectively. Further, the study sought information in form of views and opinions of the teachers who participated in the study on boards' involvement in the management of school finances.

Table 1 presents responses of teachers on whether boards were involved in the management of the school finances. The teachers' responses were measured on a five point likert scale where; 1= SD (Strongly Disagree) 2= D (Disagree) 3= U (Undecided) 4= A (Agree) and 5= SA (Strongly Agree). The responses were then analyzed and presented in form of frequencies and percentages.

Table 1. Teachers Responses on whether school boards were involved in the Management of School Finances

Area of Financial Management	Responses				
	SD	D	U	A	SA
Ensuring efficiency, accountability and transparency in the use of funds	6(6%)	12(13%)	44(47%)	15(16%)	17(18%)
Ensuring efficient and economic management of school finances	8(9%)	8(9%)	35(38%)	16(17%)	26(28%)
Ensuring proper policies and procedures in financial managements	8(9%)	11(12%)	39(42%)	11(12%)	23(25%)
Maintaining proper accounting records	1(1%)	22(23%)	59(63%)	9(10%)	3(3%)
Helping in Procuring goods and services as per laid down regulations	1(1%)	15(16%)	70(75%)	3(3%)	4(4%)
Ensuring provision of educational resources	1(1%)	31(33%)	54(58%)	5(5%)	2(2%)
Ensuring achievement of organizational goals and objectives	3(3%)	28(30%)	56(60%)	5(5%)	2(2%)
Facilitating review of the school academic achievement	1(1%)	31(34%)	51(55%)	7(8%)	2(2%)
Ensuring proper acquisition and allocation of cash within the organization	5(5%)	28(30%)	45(48%)	12(13%)	3(3%)
Facilitating good mobilization of financial resources	5(5%)	33(35%)	46(46%)	6(6%)	4(4%)
Average Level of BOM effectiveness in financial management	Mean (%Mean)	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	Min.	Max.
	2.9633 (59%)	.45749	.04719	1.00	4.40

Source: Field Data (2021)

Table 1 indicates that the teachers' responses as to whether boards were involved in management of school finances varied from one aspect of management to the other. For instance, 26 (28%) of the teachers strongly agreed that school boards were involved in ensuring efficient and economic management of school finances compared to only 2 (2%) who strongly agreed that boards were involved in ensuring provision of educational resources, ensuring achievement of organizational goals and objectives and facilitating review of the school academic achievement respectively. Further, table 1 shows that 23 (25%) of the teacher respondents strongly agreed that boards were involved in ensuring proper policies and procedures in financial management as compared to only 8 (9%) who contrarily strongly disagreed on this particular aspect. Furthermore 17 (18%) of the teacher respondents strongly agreed on the statement that boards were involved in ensuring efficiency, accountability and transparency in the use of funds as opposed to only 6 (6%) who expressed a contrary opinion on this particular aspect by strongly disagreeing. In addition, 16 (17%) of the teacher respondents simply acknowledged by agreeing that boards were involved in ensuring efficient and economic management of school finances as opposed to

8 (9%) who strongly disagreed with this statement. Majority, 70 (75%) of the respondents however, were undecided on whether boards were involved in helping in procuring goods and services as per laid down regulations. Overall, majority of the teacher respondents who took part in this study generally remained undecided on this item. The study concluded that on average, an overall level of boards effectiveness in the management of school finances was 59 % (mean =2.9633, Std. dev. = 0.45749) rated average(see table4.9). These findings support the views of Odhiambo (2001) who found out that educational attainment of school board members determine the extent to which they are effective in their roles. The study also sought to establish the extent to which primary board members were involved in administration of school budgets. On a five point likert scale where;1= SD (Strongly Disagree) 2= D (Disagree) 3= U (Undecided) 4= A (Agree) and 5= SA (Strongly Agree), head teachers were asked to give their opinion on whether boards were involved in the administration of school budgets. The head teachers' responses were then analyzed and presented in form of frequencies and percentages. Table 2 presents head teachers responses as to whether the boards were involved in the administration of schools' budget.

Table 2. Head teachers' responses on Boards involvement in budget administration

Involvement	Responses				
	SD	D	U	A	SA
The board adheres to school financial management procedures and criteria	10(11%)	17(18%)	36(38%)	10(11%)	21(22%)
There is delegation of duties among the board members involved in budget implementation process	5(5%)	23(24%)	57(59%)	8(8%)	3(3%)
The board makes school reports to inform the stake holders of the school financial expenditure	2(2%)	18(19%)	69(73%)	3(3%)	3(3%)
The board usually reviews school financial statements to ensure resources are deployed in line with students' needs	3(3%)	30(32%)	54(57%)	7(7%)	1(1%)
The board conducts value for money audit so as to assess and document the financial expenditure	4(4%)	26(27%)	59(61%)	4(4%)	3(3%)
The school board needs to be improved to play its financial role more efficiently	6(6%)	7(7%)	1(1%)	31(33%)	49(52%)
Average Level of BOM effectiveness in Budget administration	Mean (%Mean) 2.8243 (56%)	Std. Dev. .50380	Std. Error .05142	Min. 1.00	Max. 4.00

Source: Field Data (2021)

Table 2 shows that the responses of head teachers on whether boards were involved in administration of school budget varied from one aspect of budget administration to another. For example majority 57(59%) of the head teachers were undecided on whether there was delegation of duties among the board members involved in budget implementation process. Further, 21 (22%) of the head teachers strongly agreed on boards adheres to school financial management procedures and criteria compared to only 1 (1%) who strongly agreed on board usually reviews financial statements to ensure resources are deployed in line with student needs and those who remained undecided on BoM needs to be improved to play its financial role more efficiently respectively. Contrarily,49 (52%) of the head teachers were of the same opinion as the preceding statement by strongly agreeing that boards needs to be improved to play its financial role more efficiently. Overly, majority of the head teachers were undecided on this item. Based on the head teachers responses, the study concluded that an overall average level of boards effectiveness in the management of school finances through budget administration among the selected primary schools in Trans-Nzoia County was 56 % (mean =2. 8243, Std. dev. = 0.5038) rated average (see table 4.10). Obonyo (2012) found out that lack of clear roles and responsibilities besides incompetency in managerial skills and weaknesses in developing the budget by the treasurer affected the effectiveness of the school boards of management. The findings however differ with the findings of Rout (2014) studied the operation of the School Management Committee in a rural primary school in India's Balasore District. Throughout this study, it was discovered that School Management Boards played an active part in achieving universal enrolment by closely monitoring student attendance and absence, enhancing school facilities, and carefully allocating finances for such growth. Munge, *et al.*, (2016) echo this finding in the study carried out in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study found out that budget management and financial controls positively and significantly influence financial management.

Correlation between School Boards involvement in Management of Finances and Academic Achievement

The study sought to assess the strength of the relationship between boards' involvement in management of school finances and academic achievement. Table 3 displays the correlation matrix for the relationship between boards involvement in management of school finances and school academic achievement in Trans-Nzoia County.

Table 3: Correlation between Financial Management and Academic Achievement

		Academic achievement	
School Boards involvement in Financial Management	Correlation coefficient	.664**	
	p-value	.000	
	N	81	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data (2021)

Table 3 shows that the correlation coefficients were significant (r = 0.664, p=000). The sign of the coefficient was positive; these indicates a positive significant correlation between boards' involvement in management of school financial and school academic achievement. Gravetter *et al.*, (2014) indicates that a coefficient of 0.5 and above indicate a strong relationship. The study therefore concluded that there was strong positive relationship between school boards involvement in management of finances and primary school achievement in Trans-Nzoia County.

Linear Regression between School Boards Involvement in Management of Finances and Academic Achievement.

To achieve this, the study tested the null hypothesis (H₀); The hypotheses being tested was;

H₀: There is no statistically significant relationship between school boards involvement in management of finances and primary school academic achievement in Trans-Nzoia County.

Table 4. Linear regression results for Boards involvement in management of finances and school academic achievement

Model Summary						
Model	R	r-square	Adjusted r-square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.664	0.441	0.433	20.33718		
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	25726.376	1	25726.376	62.201	.000
	Residual	32674.481	79	413.601		
	Total	58400.857	80			
Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p-value
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	117.295	15.419		7.607	.000
	Financial Management	39.635	5.026	.664	7.887	.000

Source: Field Data (2021)

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) shown in Table 4 reveals that the F-statistic was significant, F (1, 79) = 62.201, p = 0.000. These results suggested that the linear regression model was a good fit in modelling the casual effect of school board of management involvement in financial management on the academic achievement. Table 4 suggests that school boards involvement in management of school finances explained up to 44.1% of the variation in school academic achievement (R²=0.441). The unstandardized beta coefficient for boards involvement in management of school finances was significant (β= 39.635, p = 0.000). With these results, the study rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that boards' involvement in management of finances had a statistically significant positive effect on school academic achievement.

To predict the school academic achievement the study adopted the model as;

$$\text{Academic Achievement} = 117.295 + 39.635 \text{ Financial Management}$$

Figure 2 shows the mean plot for the overall school mean score in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education at different levels of boards' involvement in management of school finances.

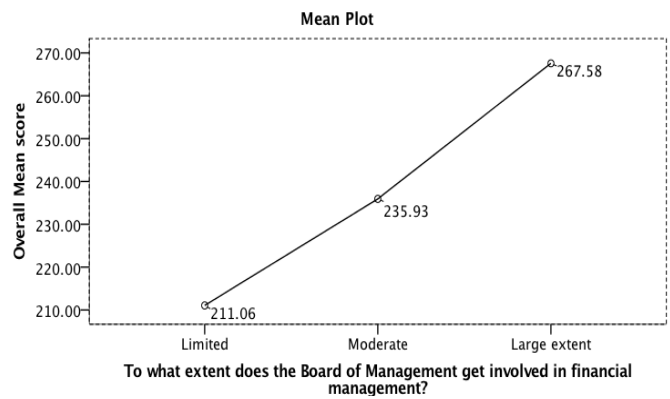


Figure 2. Mean Plot (Source: head teachers field data)

Figure 2 shows that for those schools in which the Board of Management was highly engaged in the management of the school finances, they were able to record high academic achievement (mean score = 267.58) compared to when the level of involvement is moderate (mean score = 235.93) and when it is limited (mean = 211.06). These findings are supporting the test of the null hypothesis (H₀) findings which indicates that the more the school board of management involvement in the management of finances, the higher the academic achievement the school is likely to realize. The findings indicate that the school Boards of Management are expected to improve their level of involvement towards managing school finances so as to realize improvement in the school academic achievement. The study also gathered information in form of views and opinions from key informants in terms of what they thought the school board of management should do to enhance management of school finances and the findings were as quoted:

Board of management at schools should develop action plan on financial management, initiate a financial management policy, and ensure proper budget administration. They should also enhance activities involved in budget enhancement which includes; good planning, participating in budget drawing, budget implementation, monitoring the expenditures, auditing, accountability, proper decision making, and overseeing of procurement of equipment and teaching/ learning materials. They should also establish a subcommittee in charge of financial management within the main school board of management. If all these are considered, there will be effective control of school finances towards school development which will result to improved and quality teaching and learning hence realization of improvement in the school overall performance including academic achievement.

Therefore, school Boards of Management in primary schools in Trans-Nzoia should embrace the findings of this study and use them to enhance management of school finances towards enhancing and promoting quality teaching and learning that in return leads to the realization in overall school performance including improved academic achievements.

CONCLUSION

Basing on the study findings, it can be concluded that for most of the public primary schools in Trans-Nzoia County, though the Boards are involved in the management of school finances, the level of involvement is not adequate enough. There was also a positive significant correlation between boards' involvement in financial management and academic achievement.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the conclusion, this study recommended that school boards of management should be developing an Action plan on financial management and ensure proper budget administration.

Authors' Contributions

Author 1 designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript under guidance and supervision of Author 2 and 3. Authors 2 and 3 managed all the sections and approved the final manuscript.

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