

# BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT SUPERVISORY PRACTICES AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIPKOMO SUB COUNTY, KENYA

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## Abstract

*The quality of management especially at secondary level is and continues to be a major concern of the government of Kenya. In the world, the school governing bodies are the external managers of the schools and are expected to be in constant touch with school, students, and teachers as well as with other stakeholders. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence Boards of Management (BOM) supervisory practice on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, Kenya. The study adopted descriptive research design with a target population of 962 persons comprised of 32 school principals, 642 teachers, and 288 BOM members. The study adopted a stratified random sampling technique and sample size of 278 determined using Krejcie and Morgan table (1970). The study used structured questionnaires and interview guides as the main tools of data collection. The instrument was validated by the experts in the area of study. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot study in the neighbouring Trans Nzoia East Sub-County. Thereafter, Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.79 was obtained from the instrument. This indicated that the instrument was reliable. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in tables, while qualitative data was analyzed according to the themes based on research questions and the objectives and thereafter, inferences and conclusions drawn. The study will benefit the academicians, policymakers, and community members. The study concluded that BOM's supervisory practices influence students' academic performance in public secondary schools. It was recommended that the policy makers and community should consider Boards of Management Governance practices such as BOM's supervisory practices when working towards improving students' academic performance in public secondary schools.*

**Key Words:** Boards of Management, Supervisory Practices, Students' Academic Performance

## INTRODUCTION

A school as a social system is a small society that is situated within the larger one, the community. The school is an organization and has its managers who oversee all its functions. To achieve its objectives, proper management practices must be observed. The participation of BOMs in schools has been widely acknowledged in both developing and developed countries. The history of secondary school management in Kenya can be traced back to the colonial times and in early years of independence when education was highly decentralized as the colonial government-controlled education. In those days, school systems were small, and management was relatively easy. The school management was almost left entirely in the hands of missionaries who provided teachers, finances, spiritual and moral guidance. The local community was involved in the provision of labor for building educational facilities (Republic of Kenya (RoK), 2012).

The nomination panel is constituted three months before the expiry of the life of the existing board. The BoMs panel comprises of six elected parents of the students in school or the local community in case of County schools, one person nominated by the County Education Board (CEB), three representatives of the sponsor, a representative of persons with special needs, and one person to represent special interest groups in the community. The following are members of ad hoc nominated BOMs: The county assembly representative responsible for the area where the institution is located; the chief of the area; sponsor, if any, of the institution, a representative of the parents' association. The principal of the school shall be the secretary; A representative of the County Director of Education; Member of the National Assembly and a representative of the County Education Board. The BoMs are the agents of the Ministry of Education and TSC. The TSC delegates the function of recruitment of teachers to BoMs in their school. They are required to keep pace with the trends and demands of education and training and to ensure that the education system in Kenya is responsive to the needs of Kenyans by ensuring quality education. They are responsible for the protection of all the movable and non-movable properties of the school. The BoMs entrusts the day today running of the school to the head teacher (secretary to the board) with full responsibility for internal organization, management and discipline of the students and supervision of the teaching and non-teaching staff (Education Act, 2013).

School boards need to have knowledge on how to strategically allocate scarce resources to maximise student performance. Allocation of resources at the school level and ensuring accountability are management practices which should be aligned with the goals, priorities, and the strategic plan of the board. The Republic of Kenya through the Ministry of Education places a significant value to the academic performance at secondary school level as not only a pointer to the effectiveness of the school, but also as a major determinant of the well-being of the youths and the nation in general. Some of the financial management tasks assigned to the Boards of Management by Kenya's include administering and supervising school resources; and receiving, collecting, and accounting for any funds accruing to the school. Boards thus need to have competences in financial management to enable them to supervise the preparation of books of accounts, trial balances, and competently deliberate on audited reports. This will consequently lead to improved student performance (Republic of Kenya, 2017).

On the other hand, poor financial management lead to fraud, embezzlement, stagnated growth of the school, poor learners' welfare, under-enrolment, unrests, high levels of indiscipline and consequently poor school performance. One major reason that derails effective management of schools is poor budgeting which can lead to overspending or under-spending, bringing about misappropriation and mismanagement of school funds (Mobegi, 2012). The government has put in place several guidelines to safeguard usage of these funds in secondary schools. Despite such efforts, it is reported that in most schools, due to the ignorance of most of the board members, school funds continue to be mismanaged or misappropriated. A budget drawn competently by BOMs should be based on a thorough analysis of the education requirements of the school and be in accordance with financial regulations as set in Public Audit Act. (Republic of Kenya, 2013). However, Muturi (2013) findings showed BoM's performance in budgeting to be average.

It is the responsibility of schools' board to always embark on routine inspection or supervision of schools to enhance effective development in the school system. This helps the board to identify some compelling problems or bottlenecks facing the schools under their tutelage. The rise of academies and free schools ('state-funded independent schools') has increased demand for good governance, notably as a means by which to discipline schools, in particular school governors are tasked with the legal responsibility of holding senior leadership to account for the financial and educational performance of schools. A condition and effect of school autonomy, therefore, is increased monitoring and surveillance of all school governing bodies (Wilkins, 2015). School boards are expected to monitor and enhance the educational quality of their schools. To know whether and how school boards can do so, we first need to know whether school boards are aware of the educational quality of their schools in the first place (Edith & Marlies, 2014).

It is the responsibility of schools' board to always embark on routine inspection or supervision of schools to enhance effective development in the school system. This helps the board to identify some compelling problems or bottlenecks facing the schools under their tutelage. It is also a sole responsibility of the schools' board to provide effective staff training to its staffs functioning of the school system, this training given to staff will arm them with new knowledge and dexterity to perform their duties effectively and enhances development in the school system (Okendu, 2012). Training of the members of the boards of governors was directly related to the implementation of the curriculum with those having higher training being able to effectively assist the school to implement the curriculum. The school boards of governors also assisted the schools in promoting discipline initiatives that eventually helped the school in achieving proper

implementation initiatives (Kindiki, 2009). Most of the board members and teachers were hardly involved in disciplining students. The study showed the need for members of boards and parents to be updated to make more significant contributions towards quality of education in their schools (Mutai, 2003).

Okendu (2012) conducted a study on the role of School Board, School Heads and Parent-Teachers Association in the Effective Management of Public Schools. Hypotheses, research questions and one null hypothesis were posed to guide the study to a logical conclusion. A structured research questionnaire was administered on a sample size of two hundred and fifty-one (251) secondary school teachers in Khana local government area. Data generated from the research questions were treated with statistical t-test of two independent sample means of pooled and non-pooled variances and Pearson Product Moment Correlational Statistics (Pearson r) and the data generated from the null hypothesis was treated with One-Way Analysis of Variables (ANOVA) and was followed up with a sheffé test. The results of the data analyzed indicated that the controlling functions of school heads, and parents-teachers association has a significant relationship with the management operations of public secondary schools, while school board has no significant relationship with the school management system. Recommendations were proffered based on the findings to improve the role of school board, school heads, and parents-teachers-association in the effective management of secondary school in Khana local government area, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Edith and Marlies (2014) conducted a study on whether School Boards were aware of the educational quality of their schools. Taking Dutch school boards in primary education as an exemplary case ( $N = 332$ ) we developed and tested a path model using structural equation modelling to analyze the extent to which school boards discern educational quality in their schools. The results show that, in general, school boards in primary education believe that they can contribute to enhancing the quality of school education. School boards are expected to monitor and enhance the educational quality of their schools. If the school board and school(s) management stick to their governing and management roles respectively, this positively affects the extent to which the school board can identify educational quality in the schools it governs.

Mutinda (2015) conducted a study on challenges facing Board of Managers in the management of public secondary schools; Kamwangi District, Kenya. To accomplish this task, a survey method was used in conducting the study. A total of 13 schools out of 26 were selected comprising of 9 mixed secondary schools, 2 Boys schools, and 2 Girls secondary schools. Stratified random sampling technique and purposive sampling were employed to identify study sample. A questionnaire and interview guides were used for data collection. Qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed for data analysis. The study revealed that the ministry of education should establish a mandatory training course at KEMI for all BOMs chairpersons after inauguration to familiarize them on their managerial roles. The BOMs chairpersons should consider curriculum implementation as a critical role by visiting schools frequently to assess the curriculum implementation. The BOMs chairperson should ensure adequate provision of physical and material resources for effective implementation of the curriculum. They should enhance both staff and students' discipline for effective curriculum implementation.

**Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive survey research design in determining the influence of BOM governance practices on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in West Pokot Sub-County. To enable the researcher to collect adequate data on the study, the choice of research methods was of utmost concern. Descriptive survey research design has been described by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), as a form of research design that presents the existing conditions, beliefs, opinions, practices, and perceptions the way they are, to develop an interpretative meaning. The choice of the design was made because the researcher was only interested in the situation in the schools, and no variable is to be manipulated.

A target population is a large group from which the researcher needs data to draw conclusions about the study's theme areas (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The study's target population was 32 school principals, 642 teachers, and 288 BOM members. Table 1 provides a summary of the targeted group.

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents**

<b>Respondent category</b>	<b>Population</b>
Principals	32
Board of Management	288
Teachers	642
<b>Total</b>	<b>962</b>

A sample is a more limited group or subgroup selected from a population that is available (Orodho & Kombo, 2013). Krejcie and Morgan used the table to establish the sample size (1970). The table shows that a target population of 962 people equals a sample size of 278. The sample represents 28.90% of the population, and the 20% recommended for educational research is sufficient (Van Dalen 2019). Since the studied phenomenon is not uniformly distributed, a large proportion is sufficient to compensate for the bias introduced in the parameter estimates (Kothari, 2004).

Sampling is the procedure of choosing a portion of examples to make conclusions regarding the complete population. A sample is a small portion of a larger population that is considered representative of the larger population. All pattern declarations must be true for the entire set (Orodho, 2004). As Kumar (2005) points out, factors such as cost, time and availability prevent researchers from obtaining information from the entire population. Consequently, data must be obtained from a subgroup, or subset of the general population so that the knowledge gained is representative of the general population being studied. Selection of the sampling method was as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Sampling Frame**

Respondents' category	Population size	$n_i = (N_i \times n)/N$	Sample size
Principals	32	$(32 \times 278)/962$	9
Board of Management	288	$(288 \times 278)/962$	83
Teachers	642	$(642 \times 278)/962$	186
Total	962	$(962 \times 278)/962$	278

The study utilized questionnaires and interviews in the collection of data. In this study, the questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers and BOM members. This was because it assumed that all BOM members and teachers were literate, hence, this method of data collection saved the researcher on time. Qualitative data was also collected using interviews. To obtain accurate information through interviews, a researcher needs to obtain maximum cooperation from respondents. The researcher, therefore, established a friendly relationship with the respondent (Principals) prior to conducting the interview (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). The principals were interviewed about the school establishment, the practices, norms, standards, and the culture in the schools. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the information they would provide, because it was meant for the purposes of the study only. The rights of the informants were not violated by the researcher in any way. Hence, the privacy, informed consent and confidentiality of the respondent were highly adhered to.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to tabulate, code, and process the information gathered from the surveys (SPSS). Using the computer program SPSS version 25.0, quantitative data were analyzed, and the results were presented in tabular form. The application offered crucial resources for processing data and coming to conclusions. Thematic approaches were used to categorize, code, and analyze qualitative data whereas descriptive methods were used to evaluate quantitative data. The analysis's focus was on the responses.

**Results**

The study adopted descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. This helped to determine the influence of BOM's supervisory practice on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, West Pokot County, Kenya. For analysis, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and mean distribution) for the level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale of the variable, BOM'S supervisory practice was determined and summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics for Schools Management Boards (SMBS) supervisory practice and students' academic performance**

Statements		SD	D	U	A	SA	MEAN
BOM members closely monitor the student and staffs to enhance the educational quality of their schools	F	14	18	16	107	97	4.01
	%	5.6	7.1	6.3	42.5	38.5	
BOM members reports any indiscipline case to the teachers and head teachers for improved school academic performance	F	3	32	16	99	102	4.05
	%	1.2	12.7	6.3	39.3	40.5	
BOM members help the school handle workers' discipline problems for enhanced school academic performance	F	6	11	34	81	120	4.18
	%	2.4	4.4	13.5	32.1	47.6	
BOM members visit schools frequently to perform controlling functions for improved school academic performance	F	31	4	16	98	103	3.94
	%	12.3	1.6	6.3	38.9	40.9	

Table 3 shows that 107(42.5%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that BOM'S members closely monitored the student and staffs to enhance the educational quality of their schools, 97(38.5%) strongly agreed, 18(7.1%) disagreed, 16(6.3%) were undecided and 14(5.6%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The study findings suggested that the respondents agreed (Mean=4.01) that BOM'S members closely monitored the students and staff to enhance the educational quality of their schools. This was supported by an interviewee who had the following to say;

*"...Among the many roles Board of Management perform, the monitoring role of the board has received the most attention recently, resulting in higher demands on boards and directors to be vigilant monitors. In so far as boards are, to a given extent, they are free to define their own delegation policy..."* Female Participant, 45 years, Members of the CDF committee.

This implies that BOM’S members closely monitor the students and staff to enhance the educational quality of their schools. This is in line with the findings of Hooge and Honingh (2014) that School boards are expected to monitor and enhance the educational quality of their schools. Similarly, 102(40.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that BOM’S members reported indiscipline case to the teachers and head teachers for improved school academic performance, 99(39.5%) agreed, 32(12.7%) disagreed, 16(6.3%) were undecided and 3(1.2%) strongly disagreed with the statement. It emerged from the study that the respondents agreed (Mean=4.05) that BOM’S members reported indiscipline case to the teachers and head teachers for improved school academic performance. This implies that BOM’S members report indiscipline case to the teachers and head teachers for improved school academic performance. This supports the findings of Mutinda (2015) that BOMs enhance both staffs’ discipline for effective curriculum implementation.

On whether BOM’S members helped the school handle workers’ discipline problems for enhanced school academic performance, 120(47.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 81(32.1%) agreed, 34(13.5%) were undecided, 11(4.4%) disagreed and 6(2.4%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The study findings suggested that the respondents agreed (Mean=4.18) that BOM’S members helped the school handle workers’ discipline problems for enhanced school academic performance. This was supported by an interviewee who had the following to say;

“... *The School Board of Management members also help the school handle students’ discipline problems. Expulsion from school is the ultimate form of indiscipline which is exercised by the School Board of Management. Dismissal from school through expulsion can be permanent in nature, probably by vote of the School Board of Management...*” Female Participant, 45 years, Members of the CDF committee.

This implies that BOM’S members help the school handle workers’ discipline problems for enhanced school academic performance.

Lastly, 103(40.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that BOM’S members visited schools frequently to perform controlling functions for improved school academic performance, 98(38.9%) agreed, 31(12.3%) strongly disagreed, 16(6.3%) were undecided and 4(1.6%) disagreed with the statement. It emerged from the study that the respondents tended to agree (Mean=3.94) that BOM’S members visited schools frequently to perform controlling functions for improved school academic performance. This implies that BOM’S members visit schools frequently to perform controlling functions for improved school academic performance. This agrees with the findings of Okendu (2012) that controlling functions of school heads, and parents-teachers’ association has a significant relationship with the management operations of public secondary schools.

These descriptive statistics of objective one was followed by a Chi-square test of association. The Chi-square test at  $p \leq 0.05$  significance level illustrating statistically significant association between BOM’s supervisory practice and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, West Pokot County, Kenya is as summarized in Table 5. To achieve this, the following stated hypothesis was tested.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** *There is no significant association between BOM’s supervisory practice and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, West Pokot County, Kenya*

**Table 4:** Chi-square test of association between Schools Management Boards (SMBS) supervisory practice and students’ academic performance

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	534.463 <sup>a</sup>	132	.000
Likelihood Ratio	276.084	132	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	93.807	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	252		

a. 152 cells (97.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

Table 5 shows that the p value ( $p=0.000$ ) for criteria used in allocation and disbursement of SECBF was less than 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis, “there is no significant association between BOM’s supervisory practice and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, West Pokot County, Kenya” was rejected. This implies that there is statistically significant association between BOM’s supervisory practice and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, West Pokot County, Kenya.

**Conclusion**

The study findings suggested that the respondents agreed that BOM’S members closely monitored the students and staff to enhance the educational quality of their schools. Similarly, it emerged from the study that the respondents agreed that BOM’S members reported indiscipline case to the teachers and head teachers for improved school academic performance. On whether BOM’S members helped the school handle workers’ discipline problems for enhanced school academic performance, the study findings suggested that the respondents agreed. Lastly, it emerged from the study that the respondents tended to agree that BOM’S members visited schools frequently to perform controlling functions for improved school academic performance. Chi-square test of association revealed that there is statistically significant association between BOM’s supervisory practice and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Kipkomo Sub County, West Pokot County, Kenya. From the findings, the study concludes that Boards of Management Governance practices such as BOM’s supervisory practices influence students’ academic performance in public

secondary schools. It is concluded that there is a statistically significant association between Board of Management supervisory practice and students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

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