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THE ROLE OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN IMPROVING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN WESTERN RURAL AREA DISTRICT, SIERRA LEONE.

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the role of Boards of Governors in improving the performance of senior secondary schools in the Western Rural District. The objectives of the study were to: examine the roles of Board of Governors in the Recruitment of Staff, determine the Role of Board of Governors in School Financial Management, assess the performance of Board of Governors in School Discipline, find out the Role of the Board of Governors in School Curriculum and Instruction Management. A descriptive cross-sectional design was employed, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study revealed that school boards play a critical role in managing school finances, infrastructure, and discipline. However, it also found that boards face several challenges, including staff selection and recruitment, retention, and supervision of school property. Additional challenges include a limited financial base, role conflicts, and external interference. The study recommends that boards budget within available resources, undertake capacity-building initiatives, ensure merit-based recruitment, and strengthen the school's financial base through networking. The Ministry of Education should reassess the formation of school boards and provide oversight and guidance on their roles. Furthermore, it is recommended that a regional or district-level training program be implemented to provide board members with at least a week of training on facilitating quality education in schools.

Keywords: Role, Board of Governors, Improving, School Performance, Senior Secondary Schools, Western Rural, Sierra Leone.

INTRODUCTION

Internationally, school management bodies exist in different countries and are referred to in various names such as management committee, overseers and local boards. They are charged with daily duties of running schools. Kogan, M. (2018) noted that the school boards have the overall authority to run and manage the school affairs. These include determining the acquisition of resources, allocation and use. Thus, the school board of management carries the weight of many daily decisions that touch the lives of children and their education. Marcus further noted that apart from decision making, most school boards deal with matters such as finance, personnel, curriculum and facilities.

School board of management is the collective name given to the individuals who oversee the operations of an education institution directly serving the public interest (Education Act 2023), Effective management is an integral competent factor for running successful organisations. The management of educational institutions in Sierra Leone by the board members is therefore critical because they play an effective role in the performance of the school goals and objectives.

In Britain, the boards serve institutions that contain the eighth to twelfth grade students Cowan, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2016). This is also common in most European countries and some developed countries in the Far East. The primary role of boards of management at these institutions is to assist the principal in running the school. Similarly, school boards are an integral part of education management in United States of America (USA). Cowan, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2016) noted that all schools in USA were required to establish a board of management to run the daily affairs of the institution. The school boards of management have a duty to work very closely with the local municipalities and regional governments to ensure adherence to laid out government educational policies. However, members of school boards of management must have achieved some minimum criteria that includes: minimum educational experience, community standing and resourcefulness based on their knowledge and expertise.

Troeger, M. (2022) states that many times, the types of units amongst USA teachers and the school administrators involved teachers meeting jointly as a group to discuss ways of mitigating problems facing students from achieving the school set goals and the teacher beginners are allowed to work with expertise teachers. The survey report explains that the teachers were not effectively supervising one another in the classroom situation and giving the outcome to the authority concerned. Therefore, this indicated that those who performed highly worked together as a team.

In Malawi and South Africa, the school board of management is selected from prominent members of the society who have excelled in their areas and considered as role models in their line of specialization Amadi, E. S. (2020). In Zimbabwe, the government has laid down rules and regulations regarding recruitment or appointment and duties of school board of management in primary schools; the minimal level of education for qualification is a first-degree school certificate Ng'eno, J. K., & Chesimet, M. C. (2016).

The administration of secondary schools like other learning institutions such as middle level colleges and Technical Industrial, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TIVET) is vested in school board and the head teacher as its secretary and chief executive officer. According to Samoei, A. K., & Ndede, F. (2018) they states that, it is the responsibility of the boards to effectively

manage the human personnel and physical and material resources for smooth running of institutions and for better results

In Kenyan case, management of secondary schools by board came into place after independence following recommendation of the Ominde Report on education matters Indire, F. (2022). This aimed at giving each school its own personality and decentralization of authority for effectiveness. The Education Act 2013 and the sessional paper No. 1 of 2005, States that for better running of the schools, the boards must carry out their responsibilities effectively by balancing all areas that is human and other material resources. In the sessional paper No. 6 of 1988 shows that the government accepted the recommendations of the Presidential working party on manpower training that the Board of management and school committee to be appointed from among individuals who have qualities of commitment, competence and experience which would enhance effective management and development of educational institutions Mburu, F. W., Kamau, A. W., & Macharia, S. M. (2021). It is important to point out that school governing bodies and parent-teachers association are all volunteers but the former has legal mandate.

In Sierra Leone (Education Act 2023), “the board of governors shall consist of 13 to 15 members including the Chairman, and the following other members – (a) 4 persons nominated by the proprietor of the school one of whom shall be appointed Chairman by the Minister; (b) 4 persons nominated by the Minister; (c) The Chief Education Officer or his representative in the district; (d) The Education Secretary or his representative in the district; (e) the District Deputy Director, Sierra Leone Teaching Service Commission; (f) a local council representative from the district or city council; (g) a Chiefdom authority, where applicable; (h) a representative of the old pupils' association of the school, where applicable; (i) the Chairman, of the Community Teachers Association. The composition of the Board members must be gender balanced”.

The Board of Governors (BOG) are supposed to work together to manage the school without any bias either to their own interest or to the interest of the people who appointed them to the post in order to bring development to the school. Based on this the research aimed to establish the effectiveness of board in improving school performance in senior secondary Schools in western Rural district of Sierra Leone. In 2016, the Ministry of Education offered in-service training programmes for boards in rural parts of the country. This was done to uplift their leadership skills.

The board contributes a lot towards uplifting educational development in their various schools in a number of ways, monitoring curriculum delivery, develop institutional policies, promote quality education, provide adequate facilities and encourage community relations in their schools. Shepler, S., & Williams, J. H. (2017). argues that in England, board of management of schools give great contributions to the education system while in Sierra Leone their contributions are highly hidden from the public view. The role of the board includes – decision making, monitoring of infrastructural development, financial issues as well as overseeing the delivery of educational programs and monitoring educational standards and others are the recruitment and selection of employees both teaching and non-teaching (MEST, 2015). The task of educational management entails prudent utilization of funds and equipment to enhance efficiency in delivering of quality Education JERONO, A. (2019).

According to the Onger, J. K. N. (2015) the appointment of unqualified and incompetent board members had a bearing on the quality of management of schools hence recommended that board be appointed from persons of integrity with a minimum qualification of form four levels of education. Further they suggested need for induction of boards on code of management and policy to be implemented on their training to enlighten on roles of board. Martin, K., Maiyo, K. J., & Simon, K. (2022).

found in his study that the school boards assisted the schools in acquisition of physical resources and promote discipline initiatives that eventually helped the school in achieving proper implementation initiatives.

The board also has the responsibility of teacher management and staff and students' discipline which would be realized if board members are conversant and well educated on educational programs and management tasks MBII, M. (2021). The working relationship of the board and teachers was also examined since effective implementation of the curriculum depended on the teachers to a larger extent any board infringement on teachers would create tension and thus negatively affect a smooth running of educational programs and also a student performance. However, when there is constant consultation among the teachers and sometimes board members who are very useful to the schools, the level of managerial efficiency in school can be uplifted Spillane, J. P., & Coldren, A. F. (2015).

According to the Education for All and First Track Initiative Fudam, N. (2018). training of head teachers and board members is a pre-requisite for quality education and management of Schools in Kenya. Therefore, to be competitive in the labour market, secondary schools in Africa need more qualified head teachers and board who are equipped with modern knowledge and better managerial skills.

Onger, J. K. N. (2015) noted that the board members closely monitor the students and report any indiscipline cases to the teachers and the head teacher and this has led to the establishment of proper discipline among students in many secondary schools in Kenya. The board plays a critical effectiveness in organizing and purchasing of physical facilities and material resources for the purpose of teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Kenya. Onger, J. K. N. (2015). has underscored the fact that adequate and proper learning materials which are one of the major roles of the boards are pre-requisite in many learning institutions.

The effectiveness of any school programs entirely lies on the hands of overall commitment of all stakeholders in Education. The board of management is responsible for the management of the personnel and resources for effective operations, infrastructure, development and provision of teaching learning resources MOEST (2005). The boards are lawfully mandated by the Ministry of Education, Act 2023 to manage the secondary schools in Sierra Leone. The boards have been mandated to carry out the planning and development of physical facilities in the schools; sourcing for funds to undertake infrastructure improvement in the school, monitoring and supervising physical projects in the school and proper use and maintenance of physical facilities and material resources such as; classrooms, library, lab equipment, labs, fields and classroom textbooks Kaswili, D. N. (2016). The boards' effectiveness in facilitating quality education includes; financial management, staff and students' discipline management of curriculum and instructional programs and management of school community

relationship Tibo, A. O. (2020). These management roles delegated to the boards by the Minister are enormous. Therefore, the board is expected to be conversant with the management process whose general functions are planning, organizing, staffing, budgeting and evaluating.

The board act as an agent of the Education Ministry and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and has been authorized to carry out the role of recruitment of teachers by identifying staff shortage and then declare the vacancy to the District Education Office who in turn informs the TSC. The board has a responsibility of receiving the application forms, select the qualified candidates by forming academic sub-committee which then does the interviews. The recruitment criteria have to be adhered to and the guidelines from the Ministry of Education on recruitment, selection, appointment and training implemented to the letter or the boards to be effective. This will ensure that those recruited into the school management are people of integrity, who are qualified.

The board contributes to educational developments in that they ensure learning takes place without availing things such as lack of teaching and non-teaching staff, lack of adequate classrooms and lack of motivated teachers and students. According to Kokemwa, K. O., et al . (2020), the involvement of boards in management is greatly recognized in both developing and developed countries. The better performance at large in various schools is as a result of the parents effectively being involved in the school activities.

Massey, M. (2019) states in support of parental effectively getting involved in the schools, that it is a mistake to underrate the willingness and capability of many parents who are working with the schools. Johnson Jr, et al 2019). argues that the performance of schools cannot only be attributed to the quality of teachers in the school but the role played by the boards of governors. These is one of the claims that necessitated this study to determine the Role of Board of Governors in Improving School Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in the Western Rural District of Sierra Leone.

Objectives of the Research

1. To examine the roles of Board of Governors in the Recruitment of Staff
2. To determine the Role of Board of Governors in School Financial Management
3. To assess the performance of Board of Governors in School Discipline
4. To find out the Role of the Board of Governors in School Curriculum and Instruction Management

Research Questions

1. What are the roles of Board of Governors in the Recruitment of Staff?
2. What are the Role of Board of Governors in School Financial Management?
3. What is the performance of Board of Governors in School Discipline?
4. What are the Role of the Board of Governors in School Curriculum and Instruction Management?

Methodology

The study adopted a description survey design. Descriptive is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals Koskei, B. K., & Kilel, J. K. (2017). Descriptive research design was employed to investigate the role of board of governors in improving school performance in

senior secondary Schools where the researchers' primary interest is describing and making interpretations about the research phenomenon without manipulation Ploder, A., & Hamann, J. (2021). The study established the effectiveness of board of management in facilitating quality education. A survey was appropriate since this study attempts to collect data on the role of boards in towards school performance. This is related to survey where it involves determining the status of a population with respect to one or more variables by use of questionnaires, interviews and observation schedule Roulston, K., & Choi, M. (2018).

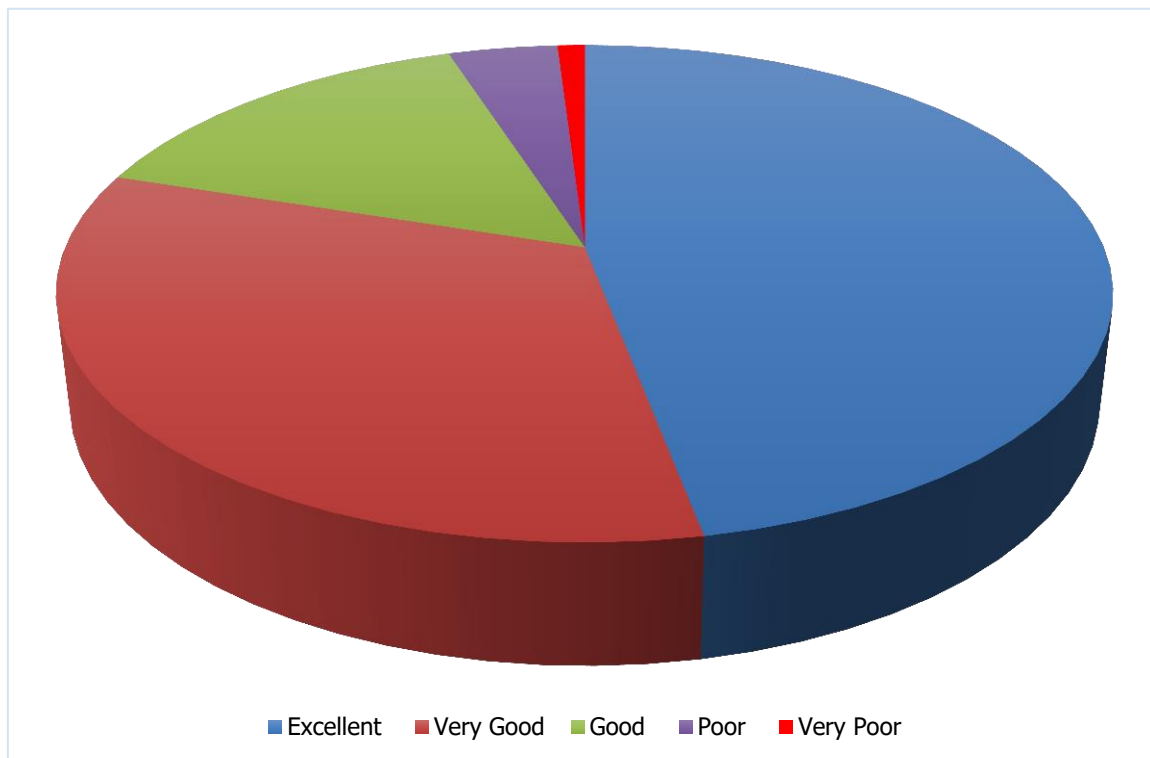
According to Muturi, W., & Njeru, A. (2019) descriptive survey approach was used when collecting data or opinions on a variety of issues. According to Cheeli, B. P. (2024) phenomenological approach, describes peoples' experience of a phenomenon. Data was collected from individuals to get of their experience on a particular situation. Interviews were conducted with individuals to

get their perspective and every day experience with the phenomenon. It was suitable for this study since it was aimed at getting the principals, board members, teachers and DEO's opinion on training of board and their everyday experience on the effectiveness of the process. For this study the researcher had no power to manipulate such variables as resource management, provision of physical facilitates, supervision of approved school projects, student and staff discipline, curriculum and instruction management and management of schools community relations. The study basically sought to investigate in depth the effectiveness of role of board of governors in improving school performance in senior secondary Schools in Western Rural District

Results and Discussion

Analysis for Answering the Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the roles of Board of Governors in the Recruitment of Staff?



Source: Field Survey 2024

Figure 1: Role of the Board in the Recruitment of Staff

The study findings show that majority of the respondents (47%) indicated that the involvement of the board was excellent, while (33%) said it was very good, (15%) stated that it was good, 4% said it was poor, while 1% said the involvement of the board was very poor. The results show that only a few of the respondents did not think that the board was involved substantially in the recruitment of staff. The findings mean that the boards were involved in the recruitment of the staff in secondary schools in the Western Area Rural District.

In this section the study sought to determine how the involvement of boards in staff recruitments enhanced teacher motivation. The findings are presented in subsequent sections. The findings indicated the extent to which the board was involved in recruitment of staff in secondary schools.

According to the findings, 40% of the members were very effective in discussing audit reports, 20% were effective in the discussion, 20% were slightly effective in the role, while only 20% were not effectively involved. In organizing and raising funds for the school programs, 50% of the members were effectively involved, another 30% were very effective in the school fund raising activities, 10% were slightly effective in the activities while only 10% was very ineffective of this role. The board members were asked whether they were involved in the schools' strategic planning to which 50% of them were reported that they were very effective in the participation, 40% of them effective in the participation, while only 10% was slightly involved.

Research Question Two: What are the Role of Board of Governors in School Financial Management

No	Effectiveness of Board	VE		E		SE		NE		VI	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Prepares school budgets	24	40.0	27	45.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	15
2	Approves school budget	30	50.0	18	30.0	0	0.0	10	16.7	2	3.3
3	Analyses monthly trial balance	27	45.0	21	35	12	20	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	Discuss audit reports	24	40	12	20	12	20	12	20	0	0.0
5	Organizes fund raising activities to fund school programs	30	50	18	30	6	10	0	0.0	6	10
6	Board effectiveness in schools' strategic planning	30	50	24	40	6	10	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table1: the Role of Board of Governors in School Financial Management

According to the findings it revealed that 40% members were very effective in the participation of school budget preparation another 45% were effective in preparation of the school budget, while 15% were very ineffective of the school budget preparation role. On the other hand, 50% were very effective in participation in approval of school budgets, while 30% were effectively involved, 15% of board members were not effective in the school budget approval, while another 5% were ineffective of the budget approval role.

Asked to indicate how they were involved in analysing the monthly trial balance, 45% members of board reported being very effective in analysing monthly trial balance participation, another 35% were effectively involved, while 20% were slightly effective involved in secondary schools in Western Area Rural District.

According to the findings, 40% of the members were very effective in discussing audit reports, 20% were effective in the discussion, 20% were slightly effective in the role, while only 20% were not effectively involved. In organizing and raising funds for the school programs, 50% of the members were effectively involved, another 30% were very effective in the school fund raising activities, 10% were slightly effective in the activities while only 10% was very ineffective of this role. The board members were asked whether they were involved in the schools' strategic planning to which 50% of them were reported that they were very effective in the participation, 40% of them effective in the participation, while only 10% was slightly involved.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	33	55
Effective	15	25
Slightly Effective	9	15
Very Ineffective	3	5
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table2: Keeping Proper Accounting Records by Board members

Majority (55%) of the respondents indicated that board members were effective in keeping proper accounting records. In an education organization its financial administration activity means bringing all possible input from staff, parents, students and the community together to render the service of quality education Segoe, B. A., & Bisschoff, T. (2019). In this respect, organizing of school finances should include aspects such as drawing up a school financial policy; setting up a structure within the school to handle administrative and financial matters; delegating certain functions to clerks, class teachers and the treasurer; and coordinating activities King, J. L. (2020).

Research Question Three: What is the performance of Board of Governors in School Discipline

No	Effectiveness of Board	VE		E		SE		NE		VI	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Finances counselling sessions in school	12	20.0	27	45.0	9	15.0	12	20.0	0	0.0
2	Involved in matters of students' discipline in school	36	60.0	12	20.0	6	10.0	0	0.0	6	10.0
3	Get reports on discipline during BOM meetings	42	70.0	12	20.0	0	0.0	6	10.0	0	0.0

4	Consults and supports the head teacher on matters of discipline	36	60.0	6	10.0	0	0.0	12	20.0	6	10.0
5	Determines the selection of students to join the school	24	40.0	18	30.0	12	20.0	6	10.0	0	0.0
6	Motivates the students and teachers to work harder	30	50.0	12	20.0	12	20.0	6	10.0	0	0.0
7	Follows the laid down procedure on the matters of discipline	36	60.0	12	20.0	6	10.0	0	0.0	6	10.0

Source: Field Survey 2024

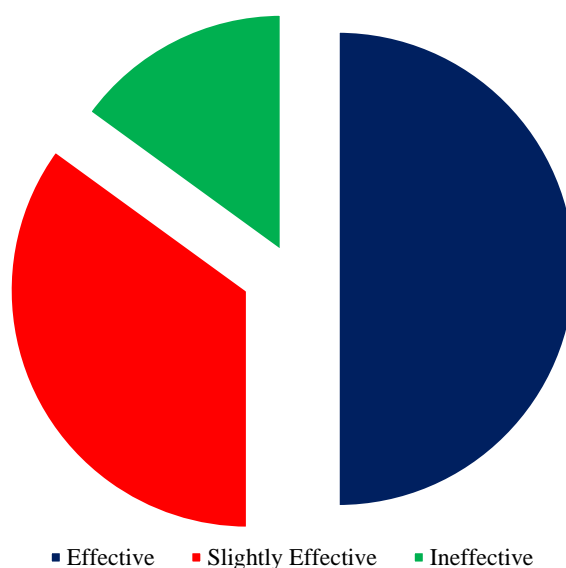
Table 3: the performance of Board of Governors in School Discipline

The third objective of the study was also to determine the effectiveness of teachers and staff discipline. Asked the involvement in financing counsel session for students, teachers and staff discipline (Table 3) 20% of the board members were reported that they were very effective in the participation, 45% were effectively involved, 15% were slightly effective in the participation while 20% were not effectively involved in personnel discipline. The study shows that 60% of board members were involved in matters of students, teachers and staff discipline, 20% were effectively involved while 10% were slightly effective in the involvement, another 10% were very ineffective in the role. Regarding obtaining reports on discipline during board meetings 70% were very effective in the participation, 20% were effectively involved, while 10% were not effective of this role.

Table 3. further indicates that 60% of the board members were very effective in the participation in consulting and supporting the head teacher on matters of students, teachers and staff discipline, 10% were effectively involved, 20% were not effectively involved while 10% were very ineffective. 60% of board members were very effective in the participation in following the laid down procedure on the matters of discipline, 20% of board members were effectively involved on this, 10% were slightly effective in the participation while another 10% were very ineffective in this role. The study shows that board members were slightly effective in motivating teachers and non-teaching staff which enhanced discipline in the secondary schools the Western Area Rural District.

Research Question Four: What are the Role of the Board of Governors in School Curriculum and Instruction Management

Figure 2: Role of Board on School Curriculum



Source: Field Survey 2024

Figure 2: the Role of the Board of Governors in School Curriculum and Instruction Management

The study findings from the respondents indicated that 50% of the board members were effectively involved in evaluating academic programs in the school, 35% were slightly effective in the evaluation while 15% were very ineffective in the evaluation. The same number was also involved in the funding of prize giving days to motivate students and teachers. The respondents indicated that members were concern in provision of facilities for curriculum expansion and in monitoring academic discipline and in financing co-curricular activities in the school. The study findings mean that

the involvement of board members in curriculum and instruction helped in facilitating quality education in secondary schools in the Western Area Rural District.

In this section, the study sought to determine how the involvement of board in curriculum and instruction management enhanced learning. The respondents were asked whether the head teachers involved the board members in evaluation of academic programs in the school to which they responded that they effectively involved the board members.

Discussion of Findings

From the interview on what the roles of the Board of Governors are in the recruitment of staff, it could be noted that teachers, including vice principals and principals of secondary schools, are recruited through open advertising by the School Board of Governors, which includes a representative of the Chief Education Officer. The final appointment is approved by the MBSSE. The process of vice principal or principal recruitment includes BoG advertises the position. The applicant submits a completed application to the BoG. BoG receives applications and shortlists eligible candidates. BoG invites shortlisted candidates for an interview. Shortlisted candidates attend an interview conducted by the BoG. The BoG recommends the selected candidate to the Chief Education Officer (CEO) of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE). CEO writes an appointment letter (MBBSE) to the successful candidate with a copy to the BoG. A successful candidate accepts the offer in writing. From the data collected some of the respondents were of the view that board members did assist in the recruitment of staff. One of the interviewed board Chairpersons reported: "The school has a shortage of teaching staff and it is the responsibilities of the Board of Governors to effectively participate in the recruitment of staff. There was need to know as a first step whether the BoG members are involved in the short listing of the applicants for the advertised vacancies. From the findings, an overwhelming majority interview stated that BoGs do not participate in short listing of candidates to be interviewed for the teaching jobs; instead school leaders do it on behalf of the BoG. Short listing is done in line with the TSC recruitment guidelines

From the interview on the second research question what are the Role of Board of Governors in School Financial Management. A school principal said: "Management of school Financial resources is a challenge to the board. This is because still many pupils share textbooks thus making it hard for teachers to give enough assignments and homework. The classrooms are overcrowded and staffing for teachers is low but the board has been with us in providing leadership towards this challenge".

While another principal had stated that: "In our school, we are faced with a challenge of inadequate teaching and learning facilities such as library and classrooms. We need also to construct an ablution block to cater for high enrolment. The inadequacy of the facilities interferes with our role of managing resources".

The finding suggested that though there are challenges of school materials, the school boards assist school management in providing the necessary teaching and learning facilities hampered. The overstretched resources interfere with education standards. This is because the intended objectives would not be achieved in situations where resources are not enough to facilitate proper management of the same.

This finding agreed with a study carried out by Charles, A., & Mkulu, D. G. (2020). on school management and students' academic performance: How effective are strategies being employed by school managers in secondary schools had revealed that most schools had inadequate teaching and learning resources and the board members have the adequate skills on management of school resources.

While another Chairperson had this to comment: "One of the mandates of the board of management is to approve construction of physical facilities in the school. Although the Free Education

money we receive is not sufficient to help us build more facilities for learning". This implied that board in majority of the schools struggle with the capacity to facilitate construction of adequate physical facilities. The schools depended on Free Education capitation which was not sufficient to put up more physical facilities for learning. Sufficient physical resources are critical in teaching and learning process as it will motivate the pupils and teachers to excel in their academic work. The dearth of the physical resources in schools will definitely hamper execution of academic activities optimally and lower productivity.

The finding is similar to a study conducted by King'oina, J. O., et al (2017). on views of board members on management of schools. The findings of the study indicated that schools were constrained with physical facilities however, the board members were found to have knowledge and understanding of Education Act and sponsorship of teachers for capacity building programmes. Ikgbusi, N. G., & Iheanacho, R. C. (2016) as well agreed with the finding by asserting that high enrolment of pupils in schools put pressure on a few facilities within the schools thus head teachers, teachers and pupils were affected by inadequate facilities. In some schools due to overcrowding of pupils in classrooms, the teachers were forced to conduct lessons outside classrooms. Similarly, Mayaka, C. (2019) agreed with the finding by reporting that inadequate physical facilities and material resources was the cause of low students' performance in the national examinations.

Similarly, another Chairperson quipped: "As a board, we require regular workshops to equip us with knowledge on how to govern this school. We need some funds for this professional training. There is need for funds to sponsor teachers to attend professional development courses too and take pupils out for academic trips. Low performance of pupils and teachers in various subjects hinder us from soliciting for more funds from stakeholders".

On the same perspective, another Chairperson stated: "The board needs training on how to conduct its duties particularly those ones that are protected by the law". From the BoM chairpersons' interviews it was revealed from excerpts that majority of BoM were constrained with financial resources hence were not able to attend to capacity building on the issues such as guidance and counselling thus hampering their role performance. Participation of board in schools' guidance and counselling programmes was health as they would be able to address challenges the pupils and teachers faced thus improvement of academic performance.

The finding concurred with the views of OPENYTHO, I. (2018) whose study findings had revealed that school management boards were ineffective in monitoring, guiding and supervising head teachers, teachers and pupils and this resulted to dismal performance in academic work. Similarly, Atsuwe, B. A., & Achebule, A. O. (2018) reported that guidance and counselling programme was not strengthened in schools and this led to poor academic performance among students. Results from the research also show that most respondents agreed that the board members ensured provision of quality education in schools.

From interviews on the third research question what are the performance of Board of Governors in School Discipline. The data collected revealed that most respondents believed that Board members participate in management of pupils' discipline in schools. From interviews with the Chairpersons of boards, it was indicated that majority of them participate in matters of discipline. This was reported by one of the respondents that: "We are frequent

in schools, our coming to schools are regular, not just for emergencies and board meetings. Our role in discipline is to approve pupils' suspension and teachers' interdiction".

While another Chairperson remarked that: "Indiscipline in this school is one of the causes of poor academic performance. There is an element of sabotage for instance parents do not supervise homework given to their children by teachers. Most teachers in this school come from the surrounding and they feel that parents do not respect them. This has resulted pupils becoming rude because they do not even complete assignments given by teachers leave alone chronic absenteeism committed by them. We have tasked the head teacher to liaise with Parents Teachers Association and come up with strategies to mitigate this issue".

On the same note another Chairperson further said: "As a board, we require training workshops to equip us with knowledge on how to deal with teachers and pupils' disciplinary issues. We need to clearly understand rules and regulations concerning discipline in order to enable us handle this important function. In most cases we rely on the Secretary of the Board (school principal) for guidance regardless of the consequences thereafter". This implied that much of the disciplinary issues were left on the hands of the head teachers. The issue could be that board members did not understand their role as pertaining to pupils' discipline. When work of discipline is left to principals alone, it may become difficult to control pupils and give a leeway to rampant indiscipline in schools which finally affect academic performance.

This finding is similar to the view reported by Olujuwon, O., & Perumal, J. (2015) who indicated that students' indiscipline, lack of enthusiasm for work, disregard of teachers and school regulations, and absenteeism negatively influenced academic performance in schools. Equally, King'oina, J. O., et al (2017). reported students' indiscipline negatively affected their academic performance. Nonetheless, The Washington State School Directors' Association, USA (2015) reported as well that school boards were rarely involved in management of disciplinary matters in their respective schools.

Interviews on the fourth research question what are the Role of the Board of Governors in School Curriculum and Instruction Management. A Chairperson commented: "As the highest organ of the school management, we ensure that there is adequate teaching and learning materials. We have encouraged departmental committees or subject panels to assist teachers learn from one another". Further, another Chairperson had this to say: "We motivate teachers and pupils by giving them prizes/ awards when they have performed well. Rewards boosts performance. We have seen it working very well. That is why in this school we have many pupils joining national schools.

Secondly, we provide a token of appreciation to teachers for carrying out remedial teaching and provide break tea and lunch to teachers. It motivates teachers. Third, we provide housing to teachers who do not hail from the community. It really motivates teachers to work hard". This was an indication that the board ensured that there was quality of education by providing resources in schools to improve the quality of education. However, in a number of schools, 26 % of the Head teachers indicated that the board members were not involved in the provision of quality education. This implied that the school administration could mismanage the resources since the watchdog of the Government which is the board was not functioning. This had a negative

influence on academic performance since the resources were not used for the intended purposes.

This finding is similar to Ihedioha, N. (2021) who opined that school management committees performed the role of checking learners' attendance and absenteeism, developing school infrastructure, utilization of finance prudently. Kitenda, A. (2018) as well concurred with the study finding by asserting that school management committees performed the role of motivating teachers through recognition and rewards and fostering good relationship among school stakeholders.

From interviews with the Chairpersons of boards, it was indicated that board in majority of the schools ensured provision of quality education. In one of the interviews, a chairperson stated that: "The Board ensures that there is good or quality education in school by availing necessary financial resources such as classrooms, pit latrines, offices and staffroom, teaching and learning materials".

Most of the respondents were of the view that board promoted the culture of dialogue and democratic governance in schools. Responses from the board Chairpersons' interviews also showed that board in majority of schools did not promote a culture of dialogue and democratic governance in schools. One interviewee had asserted that: "As we speak, our board of management is united because there are no differences which will affect school management. By speaking with one voice, we have ensured that staff and pupils share our vision.

This is why the school has been doing well over the years." Another Chairperson retorted: "There has been limited blame games and misunderstanding in the school due to reasonable dialogue and effective communication. We have commenced talking with teachers, pupils and other stakeholders on how we can boost performance. We are as well advocating for collaborative teaching and team work among teachers". It became apparent from the finding that the board in majority of schools had embraced promotion of a culture of dialogue and democratic governance in schools.

Promotion of the culture of dialogue and democratic governance creates harmony in school administration and improves the learning climate in schools. The maintenance of peace is a determinant factor to improved academic performance. The absence of dialogue would mean that pupils, teachers and administration worked as independent factors hence affecting academic performance negatively. This situation was also a threat to good academic performance as it would weaken the schools' management, interfere with smooth connection between board, teachers and pupils and affect self-esteem of all the stakeholders. This finding agreed with the education act of the country which stipulated that the board should encourage a culture of dialogue and participatory democratic governance in schools. Similarly, OCHEME, A. O. (2023) asserted that schools that embraced more democratic and participatory leadership that encouraged team work performed better than those that utilized autocratic leadership.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the study findings, it was concluded that the effectiveness of board members was undermined by the fact that majority of them were not trained on their roles on financial, human resource and physical facilities management as well as facilitation of curriculum implementation.

On financial management, it was concluded that majority of board members largely relied on their experience in financial management. The study concluded that board members handled the finances in the schools, adopted the proposed budget and monitored the expenditure of the school money despite the challenge.

On human resource management, the board members contributed in motivation of staff and managed the human resource in the schools. They recruited, employed and remunerated non-teaching staff. They also ensured employee satisfaction. However, majority of the members were not trained on how to conduct these roles.

Regarding the school community relations management, the board members played roles such as; participating in community projects, involving community in the school activities and educating the public about programs available in the school.

On physical facilities management, it was concluded that board ensured and assured the provision of proper physical facilities in the schools. They ensured constant repair and maintenance of the facilities and ensured adequacy of physical facilities for the schools.

The board members were also involved in a few roles in the curriculum and instruction management like; evaluating academic programs in the school, discussing examination results in the schools and financing co-curricular activities. The study also established that board members to a larger extent participated in education policy implementation roles such as; discussing guidelines from the Ministry of Education matters.

Regarding the management of the student discipline and staff personnel, the board members were slightly effective some roles such as; financing counselling sessions in school, involving in matters of students' and teachers' discipline, motivates teachers and non-teaching staff and finances teachers to attend refresher courses.

Also, from the study the board members did not have any training on any of the fields that they managed. It also emerged that there was inadequate government funding. Schools faced physical facilities challenges. The high cost of resources was also another challenge. The study concluded that lack of training and inadequate government funding for the schools affected the effectiveness of the members of the board in fulfilling their mandate as stipulated under the Basic Education Act and were therefore not performing to their full potential. However, from the study it was realised that the existence of school board contributes to the performance of schools in the Western Area Rural District.

Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendation based on the findings of the study;

- i. The Ministry of Education should reexamine the formation of school boards and provide supervision and guidance on their roles.
- ii. A program for training board members in each region or district should be rolled out to ensure that board members were trained for at least a week on ways of facilitating quality education in schools and funded fully schools and other organizations should be encouraged to take part in supporting this process.

- iii. The government should provide boards with the supervision skills through training so as to ensure the school gets value for its money in terms of development.
- iv. The Ministry of Education should devolve further their respect of policy making and bring more stakeholders on board especially boards. This will make boards own up whatever policies issues that come from the ministry as such make it easier to effectively implement them.
- v. Annual appraisals of board employees should be required of the ministry of education at the end of every year. The same should be used for purpose of promotion and remuneration.
- vi. The bureaucratic procedures in dealing with students' discipline need to be reviewed in an effort to have more control in managing this aspect to enhance school performance.
- vii. Though the boards participated in recruitment of the staff, they were not effective due to lack of enough training. The government should provide the boards with training so as to enhance their skills in recruitment and selection of the staff so as to ensure that the schools attract only the best talents.

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