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Factors Influencing Board of Management Members' Decisions on Effective Management of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Garissa Sub-county, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors influencing Board of Management member's decisions on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa Sub-County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to examine the extent to which board of management exposure to in-service training and their levels of education influence their effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa Sub-County. The study employed survey research design. The target population composed of 117 BOM members and 9 school principals from the nine public secondary schools in Garissa Sub-County. Simple random sampling was used to obtain 54 BOM members out the nine public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county while census method was used to obtain 9 principals from the 9 public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. Data was collected by use of Questionnaires and interviews. Cronbach's alpha index was used to test questionnaires' reliability and was found to be .810 while interview's was done by highly restructuring the interviews items. Quantitative data was analyzed using Pearson r, while that from interviews were analyzed thematically. The study findings may be useful to BOM, education officers and principals as it will give them an insight on their roles to ensure effective management of teachers.

Key words: Board of Management, Workshop / Seminars, Effectiveness, Efficiency.

Introduction

Boards of management (BOM) carry with them the success or failure of school's management. The success of the BOM is seen through good academic performance and high discipline standards in the learning institutions. Poor management of the learning institutional resource both human and financial on the other hand may lead to unrest and the dissolution of the board and nomination of other BOM members who can manage the schools better. Performance of the BOM members may be as a result of their academic levels and through attending of short in-service courses which will in-turn sharpen their human resource skills hence leading to effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. The idea of human resource management emphasize more on the personnel management in improving the productive contribution of people in the organization. Human resources form an important component of resources in schools because it is this resource that manipulates other resources for performance (Levacic, 2000; Gori 2014).

It is this reason that during selection of BOM members the appointing authority should consider their levels of education and should be provided with in-service course in order to sharpen their human resource skills since the overall management of secondary schools is vested in the BOM members. It is imperative that the members of these boards not only be persons with good education but also be people with sufficient practical knowledge in educational management. The BOM members are charged with the responsibility of policy making and policy implementation, discipline, upholding high academic standards for the schools, promoting public image of the schools. They are also in-charge of recruiting members of the teaching staff and none teaching staff, controlling of financial management and initiation of development projects for the schools (Asiago, 2010).

Background to the Study

Human resource is an essential resource in teaching/learning environment because of their contribution to teaching and management of learners' discipline. According to Haniff and Saba (2002) the importance of human resource in any educational institution cannot be over emphasized. This is because the quality of the human resource in educational system determine to a great extent the quality of the system itself. School management has done great work over the past years all over the world. Studies done by Beatie (1990), traces the school management boards to a period as early as between 1870 and 1902. She observed that the schools were under the management of Patchwork of elected school boards, more so, board of governors or managers often manage individual schools.

According to Beket (1998), it was noted that in Britain, the school Governors are nearly as old as the country's democracy. Board of governors who are currently referred to as managers therefore serve various purposes in schools, such as representing the parent, staff and community interest within the school. Board of management is the central policy-making organ of all educational institutions in the United States. In Britain however, the board of management is found from the 8th grade up to the 12th grade whose sole task is to effectively assist the principal in managing the institutions. Smoley (1999) argues that board of management in Asia and China specifically are accountable for the performance of the schools under which they have been appointed. In Japan, the schools' board of management are expected to meet the ministry of education once every year to report on the challenges and the success they have endured in line with improving holistic performance in their schools.

In Africa, before colonialism there was informal system of education. Later the Europeans brought western education which was formal. The missionary managed the school and provided teaching learning materials. The local communities only provided free labor through *Harambee* Schools in Kenya. The combined effects of economy, demography and ideology have produced a new set of understanding and skills from an enthusiastic and committed people from a range of background and with different experience to become a school governor to provide effectiveness and efficiency in the management of schools.

In South Africa, the South African School Act (SASA) which was formed in 1966 created school governing bodies (SGBS), that consisted the head teacher, elected representative of parent's teachers and none teaching staffs and students. This Act mandated the establishment of school governing and vested the governance of every public secondary schools on its governing body. Marishane (1999), for instance points out that the concept of decentralization of school governance emanates from the belief that the state alone cannot control the school but should share power with other stakeholders, particularly those close to the school on a partnership basis. Indeed the complexity of modern society requires a closer cooperation between the community and the school in order to achieve educational goals and improve learner achievement.

In Kenya, The Education Act (1968) CAP 211 Laws of Kenya section 10, gave rise to the establishment of board of governance which has it is own root in 1988 when it was agreed through among other reports that board of Governors should be part of management of the school (Republic of Kenya, 1988). Therefore, the Act in essence paved the way for the establishment of schools boards for secondary schools, teachers' colleges, polytechnics, institutions of technology except universities. BOM were established to manage public secondary schools on behalf of the cabinet secretary for education. The Act came up with regulations to be used by board of governors to ensure smooth running of the schools (Okumbe, 2001). The Gachathi committee Report (Republic of Kenya, 1976) endorsed that secondary schools be run by Board of Governors and given a large degree of delegation in order to enhance effective management of schools, especially the need to maintain discipline, to manage the aspect of academics, finances and general administration. The Kenya report (Republic of Kenya, 1988) saw the establishment of BOG as a noble intention to decentralize the day today management of educational institutions to the boards and principals. It is further acknowledged that the role played by the BOM in the management of educational institutions was crucial and therefore, boards should be appointed on time and members carefully selected to ensure that the boards had committed members with adequate knowledge, financial management skills, relevant administrative experience and proper in-service training as it sharpen their human resource management skills. Thus the management of secondary schools and all aspect of school administration are vested on the BOM.

Statement of the Problem

The current policy for selecting secondary schools' BOM members with at least a Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education certificate raises the gap on the effectiveness of the BOM and management of teachers. The teachers in secondary schools are employed with a degree qualifications with exceptional few cases of diploma. Currently, the Teachers Service Commission has created the gap further by requiring that the Principals and deputy Principals to have a master's degree. Normally, BOM in Kenya are selected to positions of management on voluntary basis and as such this creates challenges of attracting members with higher qualifications. A report by the sub-county Director of education in Garissa Sub-County found that out of thirteen BOM members, seven members are graduate while the rest are certificate holders or form four leavers (ROK, 2006). The report further reveals that BOM lack competence on financial management, administrative skills and regular in-service training. There has been persistent low academic performance in secondary schools in Garissa Sub-County, a phenomenon that is associated with BOM decisions in schools.

Research Hypotheses

This research was guided by the following hypotheses.

1. There is no significant relationship between board of management academic level and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa Sub-County.
2. There is no significant relationship between in-service training of board management members and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa Sub-county.

Literature Review

According to Okumbe (2001), the overall management of secondary school is vested in the BOM. It is imperative that the members of these boards not only be persons with good education but also be people with sufficient practical knowledge in educational management. The BOM members are charged with the responsibility of policy making and policy implementation, discipline, upholding high academic standards for the schools, promoting public image of the schools, recruiting members of the teaching staff and non-teaching staff, controlling of financial management and initiation of development projects for the schools (Asiago, 2010).

Magri (2005) cited in Gituma (2007) asserts that members of the BOM were not fully aware of their roles in the management of the school human and financial resources which eventually lead to over-reliance on deliberations of the schools heads. This may lead to fraud and misappropriation of the school resources, this is mainly because the BOM members lack substantial education and training on management. Wangai (2001) did a study in Meru Central District and found out that all the BOM members were not inducted after appointment and were therefore performing most of their duties through trial and error. The same is happening in Garissa Sub-County since during the selection of the BOM members, the principals don't consider much the academic level of the BOM members hence making them to depend on the direction given by the school principals. Mwiria (2004) attributed poor management of secondary schools' resources to the BOM members because majority of them were semi-schooled and lack capacities to plan and implement school policies hence making the school not to achieve their pre-determine objectives.

The function of BOM members of any education institution, includes promotion of the best interest of the school and striving to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all students, adopt of a code conduct among themselves and supporting the principal and other staff members in their performance of their professional functions. In his study, Mullins (2007) has emphasized on the importance of understanding of HRM by management and stated that they need to understand importance of good managerial practices and how to make best out of people. Conflict among BOM members on employing of support staff and teaching staff have led to wrangles hence closure of schools (Koech, 1999). According to UNESCO (2000), in many countries of the world, the roles, responsibilities and tasks of school governing bodies have become extensive and complicated and require certain competencies and abilities in order to govern schools effectively. These competencies depend on their skills, knowledge and experience. For instance they need financial management skills, management expertise, and participatory decision-making.

Skills deficit among School Governing Body (SGB) members weakens their effective functioning. (Tsotetsi, Van Wyk & Lemmer, 2007). According to the deputy principal in a rural school in Guateng province in South Africa, training makes a difference (Bush & Heystek, 2003). Tsotetsi Van Wyk & Lemmer, (2008) observe that 'without training school governing body (SGB) members cannot exercise their governance responsibilities successfully.' Therefore, in-service training for BOM remains a priority.

Research Methodology

This study was carried out in Garissa sub-county in Kenya. The target population comprised of 117 BOM members and 9 school principals from the nine public secondary schools in Garissa Sub-County. Simple random sampling was used to obtain 54 BOM members out the nine public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county while census method was used to obtain 9 principals from the 9 public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. The researcher applied survey research design. According to Patton (2002) this research design does not allow the manipulation of variables. This design was used since it helps to obtain information concerning the current phenomenon and wherever possible to draw a valid general conclusion from the facts discussed. The questionnaire items were based on the two major phenomena, BOM members academic qualification and BOM in-service trainings against effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. Collected data were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Interpretation of results were based on α (.05), 54 degrees of freedom (df), probability level (p) and r -critical (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). Results from the tests were presented using tables.

Questionnaire's Reliability and Validity

Estimation of the tool's reliability is essential for reliable results (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). The tool's reliability for data collection was tested using Cronbach's alpha index and was found to be .810. To ensure whether the measure reflected the content of the concept in question, the researcher applied face validity before the items were used to collect data from BOM members of public secondary schools and principals that formed the accessible population. This was done by seeking the expertise of the supervisors who ascertained the validity before the items were used.

Presentation of Data Analysis, Research Findings and Interpretation of Results.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between board of management academic levels and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

To establish whether there was a relationship, a Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to assess the relationship between BOM members academic levels ($M = 1.99$, $SD = .509$) and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools ($M = 1.37$, $SD = .475$) as indicated in Table 1. With 54 degrees of freedom, at an alpha level of 0.05, the analysis produced an r of .402 and p value of .003. Results of the computation (see Table 2) indicated that there was a strong positive correlation between the two variables ($r(54) = .402$, $p < .05$). These results show a positive significant relationship which means that if the appointing authorities will consider BOM members with high academic level during the selection process this will result proper management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

Table 1 Study Variables' Means and Standard Deviations

| Variable | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|--------------------|
| Low Academics for BOM Members | 1.99 | 0.509 |
| Level of in-service training for BOM Members | 2.10 | 0.577 |
| Effective management of teachers | 1.37 | 0.475 |

Table 2

Pearson's Correlation Analysis of the Relationship Between BOM Members' Academic Level and Effective Management of teachers in Public Secondary Schools.

| | | Level of Education for BOM Members | Effective Management of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Level of Education for BOM Members | Pearson correlation | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | |
| Effective Management of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools | n | 54 | |
| | Pearson correlation | 0.402 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.003 | |
| | n | 54 | 54 |

$P < .05$, $df = 52$.

With a p-value less than the chosen alpha of .05 in this analysis, it meant that the null Hypothesis was rejected and it could now read as "There is a significant relationship between BOM members' academic level and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. The findings in this study are in line with Okumbe (2001) findings who found out that "the overall management of secondary school is vested in the BOM. It is imperative that the members of these boards not only be persons with good education but also be people with sufficient practical knowledge in educational management.

On the same variable, nine (9) principals were assigned numbers for the purposes of interviewing. Nine principals were interviewed with the aim of getting their opinion on the importance of considering BOM members academic qualifications for effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county when selecting them to management positions. They were asked, during selection of BOM members whether they considered their academic qualifications and why. Respondents 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 had this to say. Respondent one said “yes, we consider their academic qualification because they help us in the management of learners, support staff and teachers’ discipline;” Respondent 4 had said this “yes. To help us in decision making on management related issues. For easy communication on matters relating to conflict management within the school;” Respondent 5 said this “yes. It is a requirement by the MOE that a BOM member must be a form four and above;” Respondent 6 said this “yes. They help us in the formulation and implementation of policies that help the institution to achieve it is predetermined objectives.” When the same question was directed to respondent 7 he said this “yes of course. They assist us in the management of the school”. Respondent 8 argued that “BOM members who are educated help me in decision making on serious management issues.” on the other hand, respondent 2 said this “we don’t consider BOM members academic qualification because we normally look for retirees who have time for school matters”. Respondent 3 said “No. we don’t consider their academic achievement. Because they don’t help us in the management of the school properly because they don’t possess knowledge to manage the learning institutions because the MOE requires just a form four leaver to be BOM member.” While respondent 9 said “No. mostly highly educated members of the society do not want to be BOM members because they don’t have time for school matters. He further argued that BOM members in Kenya are selected on voluntary basis and as such this creates a challenge in attracting BOM members with higher qualifications”.

To get the principals response on BOM members academic qualifications question 1, 2 and 3 of the structured questions were used. Majority of the respondent that is 6 or 67% of the respondent agreed with findings of this study on BOM academic qualifications that indicated that there was a strong positive correlation between the two variables ($r(54) = .402, p < .05$). These results show a positive significant relationship which means that if the appointing authorities will consider BOM members with high academic level during the selection process this will result proper management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. The findings from the research questions 1 on BOM academic level specifically from respondent 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 agree with Okumbe (1998) who argues that for effective and efficient functioning of the school governing bodies, there is need for literacy which contribute positively to their ability to participate fully in decision making. Adequately trained BOM members can perform efficiently and effectively and hence produce quality results. According to Mweseli and Owiya (2005), if the board have to accomplish their managerial task, they should possess relevant qualifications with good experience, commitment and intelligence, be persons who can integrate the past, the present and future. They should be in a position to interpret the Education Act and other policies pertaining to maintenance and proper use of school resources.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between in-service training of board of management members and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

To establish whether there was a relationship, a Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to assess the relationship between BOM members in-service training levels ($M = 2.10, SD = .577$) and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools ($M = 1.37, SD = .475$) as indicated in Table 1. With 54 degrees of freedom,

at an alpha level of 0.05, the analysis produced an r of .434 and p value of .001. Results of the computation (see Table 3) indicated that there was a positive correlation between the two variables ($r(54) = .434, p < .05$). These results show a positive significant relationship which means that in-service training of the members has great impact on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

Table 3

Pearson's Correlation Analysis of the Relationship Between BOM Members' in-service training and Effective Management of teachers in Public Secondary Schools.

| | | Level of Education for BOM Members | Effective Management of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| In service training for BOM Members | Pearson correlation | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | |
| | n | 54 | |
| Effective Management of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools | Pearson correlation | 0.434 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.001 | |
| | n | 54 | 54 |

$P < .05$ df =52

With a p -value less than the chosen alpha of .05 in this analysis, it meant that the null Hypothesis was rejected and it could now read as "There is a significant relationship between BOM members' in-service training and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. The findings of this study is in line with Kindiki (2009) who observes that due to the increase of secondary schools, the government is not able to fully offer trainings through Kenya education management institute, hence school administration should organize workshops and in-service training courses for their BOM and teachers to enlighten them on the changing trends and approaches in curriculum implementation.

On the same variable nine (9) principals were assigned numbers for the purpose of interviewing them. Data from the interviews of the principals revealed this when asked "whether they agreed that their BOM members have got sufficient in-service training. Respondent 1 said "No, they don't have sufficient formal or informal in-service training. Respondent 2, said this "No, they don't have knowledge on human resource management" Respondent 3 said this "No, they don't go for such important courses". Respondent 4 said this "our BOM members do not go for in-service training because the MOE does not provide funds for such courses". Respondent 6 said this "No, they don't have sufficient in-service training since they are not provided for funds from MOE to undergo the same training. After they are appointed they are only inaugurated". Respondent 7 had this to say "No, they don't have sufficient in-service training that help in the management of teaching staff properly". Respondent 8 said this "No,

they don't go for in-service training because the MOE does not provide funds and we cannot finance them from the school accounts because the financial resources are scarce.' and Respondent 9 said this "No, we don't send them for in-service courses." On the other hand, it is only respondent 5 who said "they occasionally go for workshops that are locally done." Findings from this interview are in line with findings of hypothesis two that implied that BOM members in-service training has a relationship with effective management of teachers in public secondary schools and Tsotesi et al (2008) who observed that without training school Governing bodies cannot exercise their governance responsibilities and that in-service training for BOM members remains a priority.

Discussion

According to Haniff and Saba (2002) the importance of human resource in any educational institution cannot be over emphasized. This is because the quality of the human resource in educational system determine to a great extent the quality of the system itself. School management has done great work over the past years all over the world. Studies done by Beatie (1990), traces the school management boards to a period as early as between 1870 and 1902. She observed that the schools were under the management of Patchwork of Elected schools boards, more so, Board of governors or managers often manage individual schools.

Performance of the BOM members may be as a result of their academic levels and through attending of short in-service courses which will in-turn sharpen their human resource skills hence leading to effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. BOM members with adequate academic qualifications are essential for effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. Like many sub-counties in Kenya, during selection of BOM members the appointing authorities does not focus more on the BOM members with higher academic qualifications. This study had revealed that majority that is 25 or 46.3% of the BOM members were certificate holders. The reason behind this large number of BOM members with certificate as their highest level of education could be attributed to the fact that BOM members in Kenya are selected to positions of management on voluntary basis and as such this create challenges of attracting members with higher academic qualifications.

This study agree with Mwira (2004) who attributed poor management of secondary schools resources to BOM members because majority of them lack capacities to plan and implement policies hence making the schools not to achieve their pre-determined objectives. The implication from this result analysis is that the selecting authorities like County Director of Education have to select the most qualified personnel to be BOM members for effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. Study hypothesis one was rejected out of the analysis done. The implication for the rejection of null hypothesis one is that if during the selection of BOM members the selecting authorities like County Director of Education do not consider their academic qualification then it will impact negatively on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. BOM members' in-service training is essential for effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

Data from interviews from principals revealed that 88% of BOM members in Garissa sub-county do not go for in-service courses reason being lack of budget from the MOE to conduct these essential in-service courses for the BOM members and the training is not compulsory. Hypothesis two was rejected out of the analysis done. The rejection of null hypothesis two implies that if the BOM members are not provided with proper in-service training then it will impact negatively on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. This study has revealed that in-service courses need to be provided for BOM members. Data from the interviews of the principals revealed that 89% of the BOM members do not go for in-service courses.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to find out whether BOM Members' level of education and in-service training has an impact on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county. To establish this, interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data from 54 BOM members and 9 school principals. Quantitative data was analyzed using Pearson r with the help of SPSS software while data from interviews was analyzed thematically and reported verbally. The findings revealed that there was a relationship between BOM Members' level of education and their in-service training and effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

This study established that BOM members with adequate academic skills and proper in-service training will effectively manage the teaching staff in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county, hence improving the academic achievement of learners in public secondary school in Garissa sub-county. From the findings of the study, for secondary schools in Garissa sub-county to perform well, the appointing authorities like County Director of Education need to consider BOM members' academic qualifications and they should be provided with regular in-service training for effective school management. In other words, the proper selection of BOM members and provision of in-service training for BOM members will lead to effective management of teachers hence improve the academic achievement of learners in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.

Recommendations and Further Research

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. Appointment of BOM members should be based on merit that is during the selection of BOM members they should be persons with at least degree from a recognized university.
2. BOM members should be remunerated by Ministry of Education since it will motivate them to work closely with school principals and have more time for the learning institutions.
3. BOM members should be sent for compulsory in-service courses annually in order to sharpen not only their human resource skills but also their financial resource management skills.
4. The MOE and CDE should ensure during the selection of BOM members they should be persons' with administrative experience of not less than five years in a recognized institution.

There are many factors that affect BOM members' decisions on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county that were not considered in this study. There is need to consider other factors that are likely to affect BOM members' decisions. In this regard further research should be considered in the following areas:

1. Research on whether the Gender of the BOM members has an impact on BOM members' decisions on effective management of teachers in public secondary schools in Garissa sub-county.
2. This study has focused only on public secondary schools, an independent research should be conducted on factors influencing BOM members' decisions on effective management of teachers in private secondary schools in Garissa sub-county, for comparison purposes and inclusiveness.

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was recorded by the authors

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