

## INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA

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**Abstract:** *The main purpose of this study was to assess the influence of school Board of Management on academic performance in public primary schools in Garissa Sub- County, Garissa County, Kenya. The study applied the stakeholder involvement theory, school management theory and academic achievement theory. This research adopted quantitative and qualitative methods and applied both descriptive survey and phenomenological research designs. Sample size in this study included 67 teachers and 9 head teachers as representatives of BoM. Stratified random sampling procedure was used to arrive at the sample. Interview guides were used to collect qualitative data from the head teachers who represented the BoM while questionnaire were used to collect data from teachers. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically along the objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages and inferentially using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 23) and presented using tables. The study established that in many public primary schools, KCPE performance has been on a downward trend with a progressive decrease for the last five years (2017 to 2021). A positive correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.766$  was also established, indicating that there was a significant relationship between members of school BoM and academic performance in public primary schools. The study recommended that it is imperative for the government to prioritize the provision of essential skills and resources to BoM members in order to enable them to maximize their influence on students' academic achievements.*

**Keywords:** *Board of Management, Academic Performance, Students' academic achievement, Garissa Students' achievement*

### INTRODUCTION

Stakeholders in the education sector encompass a diverse group of individuals and organizations concerned with the well-being and success of schools and students. This includes parents, government entities, school boards, and public benefit organizations. Their involvement varies, from providing tools, curriculum support, teachers, physical facilities, to supervising instruction and guiding students in adapting to new learning strategies. Lucas and Mbiti (2012) observes that the influence of the Board of Management (BOM) on academic performance in public primary schools in Garissa Sub-County, Garissa County, Kenya, is a critical factor that shapes the quality of education in the region. The BOM plays a pivotal role in the administration, management, and oversight of schools, and its influence on academic outcomes cannot be underestimated.

According to the Ministry of Education (2019), the BOM is responsible for hiring and managing school staff, including teachers. The selection of competent teachers is vital for improving academic performance. An effective BOM can ensure that qualified and motivated teachers are recruited, which can positively impact student learning. Conversely, a poorly managed BOM may make poor staffing decisions that negatively affect academic performance. Agrian (2012) observes that the BOM manages the school's financial resources. Adequate funding and efficient allocation of resources are crucial for providing a conducive learning environment. A BOM that prioritizes the allocation of funds to support academic programs, purchase teaching materials, and maintain infrastructure can significantly enhance academic performance. Conversely, mismanagement or embezzlement of funds can lead to a decline in educational quality.

According to Hassan (2019), the Board of Management (BOM) plays a crucial role in enhancing education by setting policies that improve teaching and learning processes, fostering community engagement to support academic initiatives, and conducting regular monitoring and evaluation of school performance. These activities can lead to a more conducive learning environment, additional resources, and targeted interventions, ultimately contributing to improved academic outcomes and the overall quality of education in regions like Garissa County.

The Board of Management in public primary schools in Garissa Sub-County, Garissa County, Kenya, wields significant influence over academic performance. Its responsibilities in teacher recruitment, financial management, policy development, community engagement, and monitoring and evaluation collectively shape the quality of education. Therefore, a well-functioning and dedicated BOM can play a pivotal role in raising academic standards and improving the overall educational experience for students in the region (Hermalin & Weisbach, 2013). However, studies and reports reveal ongoing challenges, including mismanagement of physical facilities, curriculum issues, poor community relations, and financial misallocation in some regions, highlighting the need for continued improvement and accountability in primary school management.

In Garissa Sub-county, the scenario is the same and stakeholders' involvement in primary school management and their roles cannot be overemphasized. Despite these assertions, academic performance of public primary schools in national examinations has been low. For example, a report by the Ministry of Education (2021) shows that public primary schools in Garissa Sub-county have registered low grades in national examinations (KCPE) compared to the national statistics which reveals that there is a decreasing trend in the performance of pupils in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). To mitigate these challenges, school heads have initiated strategies to involve stakeholders in the management of public primary schools. Despite these observations, few empirical studies have interrogated the extent to which stakeholders' involvement in management influences academic performance of public primary schools; hence the need for this study.

In many public primary schools in Garissa Sub-county, this has not been the case since performance in national examination (KCPE) has been on a decreasing trend. A report by the Ministry of Education (2021) shows that Garissa Sub-county registered a meanpoint grade of 5.7

in 2016 in KCPE, 5.042 in 2017, 4.613 in 2018, 3.917 in 2019 and 3.012 in 2020 which paints a picture of declining academic performance in public primary schools. Efforts to mitigate this challenge such as introduction of remedial teaching and increased staffing levels have not yielded much remarkable progress. Given this background, this study intended to examine the influence of Board of Management on Academic performance in primary schools in Garissa County, Kenya.

### METHODOLOGY

The study utilized two research designs, employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The quantitative aspect was addressed through a descriptive survey research design, which involved collecting quantifiable data using questionnaires. This design was chosen for its ability to yield well-validated and substantiated quantitative findings. On the other hand, the qualitative dimension was explored using phenomenological research design, focusing on lived experiences within a particular group and using interviews to gather data. Combining both approaches allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the influence of stakeholder involvement in primary school management on academic performance.

To determine the sample size, the researcher employed Yamane's Formula, which yielded a representative sample of 238 respondents. Stratified sampling was used to ensure homogeneity by creating three strata based on the number of zones in Garissa Sub-county. The sample included headteachers, teachers, members of school Boards of Management (BoMs), coordinators of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), and the sub-county director of education. This was applied as follows:

$$N_0 = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where  $N_0$  = desired sample size at 95% confidence interval

$N$  = Target Population

$e$  = Confidence level of 5% (decimal equivalent is 0.05)

Thus, the desired sample was:

$$N_0 = \frac{591}{1 + 591(0.05)^2}$$

$$N_0 = 238 \text{ respondents}$$

To determine the sample size, the researcher employed Yamane's Formula, which yielded a representative sample of 238 respondents. Stratified sampling was used to ensure homogeneity by creating three strata based on the number of zones in Garissa Sub-county. The sample included headteachers, teachers, members of school Boards of Management (BoMs), coordinators of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), and the sub-county director of education. These procedures enabled the researcher to realize a sample of nine (9) headteachers, 201 teachers, 18 members of school BoM, nine (9) coordinators of PBOs and one Sub-county Director of Education as shown in Table 1;

Table 1  
Sampling Grid

Categories	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Headteachers	28	9	Purposive sampling
Teachers	302	201	Simple random sampling
Members of School BoM	260	18	Purposive sampling
Coordinators of PBOs	13	9	Purposive sampling
Sub-county Director of Education	1	1	Purposive sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>238</b>	

Research instruments included a standardized questionnaire for teachers and an interview guide for headteachers and the sub-county director of education. The questionnaire was divided into sections covering demographic information, academic performance, and stakeholder involvement in school management. Likert scale responses were used to gauge agreement levels. Data analysis involved coding, frequency counts, descriptive statistics, and inferential analysis using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically based on study objectives.

## RESULTS

### Demographic Information of the respondents

In terms of gender, majority, 4(87.5%), of the headteachers were male whereas only 1(12.5%) were female. Similarly, most, 118(80.3%), of the teachers were male with 29(19.7%) being female. In the same token, majority, 12(70.6%), of the members of School BoMs were male whereas female counterparts constituted 5(29.4%). Two-thirds of the PBOs, 6(66.7%), were male whereas their female counterparts constituted a third, 3(33.3%) of the proportion. However, the Sub- County Director of Education was a male.

### Influence of School BoM and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools

The study sought to examine how school Board of Management influences academic performance in public primary schools. Descriptive data were collected from teachers and results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2  
Teachers' Views on the Influence of School BoM on Academic Performance

Test Items	Ratings									
	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
In public primary schools, BoM collaborates with other stakeholders to offer leadership	76	51.8	17	11.4	9	5.7	9	5.7	37	25.4
In public primary schools, BoM takes part in the monitoring of students' discipline	79	53.9	22	15.0	8	5.7	16	10.9	21	14.5
Public primary school BoMs source alternative funds for school programmes	84	57.5	14	9.3	11	7.3	14	9.3	24	16.6
School BoMs ensure that their schools have adequate curriculum support materials	71	48.2	27	18.7	8	5.7	14	9.3	27	18.1
Collaboration with public primary school BoMs has improved management approaches	98	66.8	17	11.4	5	3.6	8	5.7	18	12.5

As shown in Table 2, 76(51.8%) of teachers strongly agreed with the view that primary school BoM collaborates with other stakeholders to offer leadership as did 17(11.4%) who agreed. However, 9(5.7%) were undecided, 9(5.7%) disagreed whereas 37(25.4%) strongly disagreed. Similarly, 79(53.9%), of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public primary schools, BoM takes part in the monitoring of students' discipline while 22(15.0%) agreed. However, 9(5.7%) were undecided, 16(10.9%) disagreed whereas 21(14.5%) strongly disagreed. Majority, 85(57.5%), of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that public primary school BoMs source alternative funds for school programmes while 14(9.3%) agreed. However, 14(9.3%) disagreed whereas 24(16.6%) strongly disagreed.

A fair proportion, 71(48.2%), of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that public primary school BoMs ensure that schools have adequate curriculum support materials whereas 27(18.7%) agreed. A paltry, 9(5.7%) were undecided, 14(9.3%) disagreed whereas 27(18.1%) strongly disagreed.

Majority, 98(66.8%), of the teachers strongly agreed that school BOMs have improved management approaches while 17(11.4%) agreed. However, 9(5.7%) disagreed whereas 18(12.5%) strongly disagreed.

On their part, the head teachers and Members of School BoMs also responded in favor of the view that schools collaborate with parents to pay fees as a way of improving school

management. They supported the view that management of public primary school has been smooth since parents are frequently involved in the decision-making. Headteacher, H3, noted;

*In my primary school, I always involve parents in all decisions right from academic activities to discipline issues. This has made running of School efficient and smooth.*

In the same token, the sub-county director of education stated that parental involvement in the critical aspects of school management is mandatory.

The SCDE2 observed;

*Parents are supposed to own every decision taken by school Management and this cannot happen if they are not made part of it Right from the beginning.*

However, these views were not supported by the coordinators of PBOs who stated that, on many occasions, parents are just consumers of decisions made. On further probing, CPBOs1, affirmed;

*We witnessed a scenario where parents whose children were involved in cases of indiscipline were informed when already letters had been written suspending the students. This left many parents wondering at what point are they are supposed to be involved in such matters.*

Despite these contradictions from respondents, these views point to the vitality of parental involvement in school management decisions. As noted earlier, these findings attest to the fact that collaboration with parents in making key decisions concerning their children is paramount. Besides, on occasions where parents are fully involved in decision-making and academic activities in public primary schools, cases such as indiscipline tend to reduce and students perform better in their examinations.

### **Association between BoM and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools**

The study sought to establish whether there was an association between BoM and academic performance in public primary schools. Table 3 shows a correlation between BoM and academic performance in public primary schools.

Table 3  
Correlation between BoM and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools

			Frequency of Collaboration with School BoM	Academic Performance in KCPE
Frequency of Collaboration with School BoM	Pearson Correlation	1	.766*	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.027	
	N	8	8	
Academic Performance in KCPE	Pearson Correlation	.766*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027		
	N	8	8	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in table 3, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Test Analysis which generated correlation coefficients of  $r = 0.766$  with corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.027 which was less than the predetermined level of significance, 0.05, that is,  $p\text{-value} = 0.027 < 0.05$ . Thus, there is significant influence of members of school BoM on academic performance in public primary schools.

## DISCUSSION

Majority, 85(57.5%), of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that public primary school BoMs source alternative funds for school programmes. This was supported by 14(9.3%) of them who were in agreement with the statement. This supports the findings of a study carried out in Nigeria in which Enueme (2010) established that school BoM ensure that teachers are provided with instructional materials to aid the process of curriculum implementation. This indicates that implementation of curriculum is one of the key functions of school BoM and to achieve this, they ensure that schools are supplied with suitable and adequate teaching and learning resources. The school BoM is important since they are tasked with the responsibilities of coordinating and monitoring school activities. Just like in quantitative findings, these views further corroborate the views expressed by Deborah (2014) that school BoMs are useful in developing a school culture conducive to teaching and learning through shared leadership and decision-making, risk taking as well as management of students' discipline. On funding, the interviewees also responded in favour of the view that collaboration with primary school BoMs has made it easy to source alternative funds for school programs.

Regarding whether school BOMs have improved management approaches, Majority, 98(66.8%) of the teachers who took part in the study agreed with the statement. This is consistent with the assertions of Chapman and Burchfield (2014) that strategies adopted by BoMs are key to prudent management of school resources. According to Chapman and Burchfield (2014), partnering with the school BoM is the main source of the organizational development and academic growth of students. This indicates that school BoMs are crucial to the management of primary schools. Though not the panacea to all managerial challenges bedeviling schools, school Boards of



Management constitute a major pillar in the daily operations and governance of primary schools and thus, cannot be overlooked.

It was established that that in public primary schools which often collaborate with members of BoM, have improved learners' academic performance. The major focus areas of the improvement in management and governance is school leadership and management, parent and community partnership, student- centered learning, professional development and collaboration and quality instructional program. This further corroborates the assertions of Chapman and Burchfield (2014) that collaboration with the school BoM is paramount since it the driving force and main source of the organizational development and academic growth of students.

79(53.9%), of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public primary schools, BoM takes part in the monitoring of students' discipline while 22(15.0%) agreed with the statement. These findings corroborate the assertions of Baysinger and Butler (2014) that partnership with school management is important in they are tasked with the responsibilities of coordinating and monitoring school activities, manage the school resources economically, efficiently and effectively for the purposes of the school. In the same token, these findings support those of a study carried out in Kuala Lumpur by Deborah (2014) which established that school BoMs are useful in developing a school culture conducive to teaching and learning through shared leadership and decision-making, risk taking, management of students' discipline and co-curricular activities. These findings indicate that school BoM plays a major role in the day today running of school operations such as offering guidance and monitoring instances of indiscipline among staff and students.

### **CONCLUSION**

Drawing from the above findings, it is evident that, in many public primary schools in Garissa County, performance of students in KCPE has been on a downward trend with a progressive decrease for the last five years (2017 to 2021). It is also evident that primary schools collaborate with their BoM to offer leadership, source alternative funds for school programmes and ensure provision of adequate curriculum support materials. From the study findings, the government funds school programmes, provides infrastructure, instructional resources as well as undertake recruitment of teachers. These findings emphasize the significant role of school Boards of Management in improving management approaches, enhancing resource management, promoting curriculum implementation, and ultimately contributing to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of schools in response to evolving societal needs and educational standards. It is also important to note that schools BoMs are crucial to the management of primary schools. Though not the panacea to all managerial challenges bedeviling schools, school Boards of Management constitutes a major pillar in the daily operations and governance of primary schools and thus, cannot be overlooked.



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# Mount Kenya University

REF: MKU/ISERC/2556

Date: 09 February 2023

TO: ABDI ADEN DIGALE

REG: MED/2015/33172

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN GARISSA SUB-COUNTY, GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA**

This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **1629**. The approval period is **09/02/2023 - 07/02/2024**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,



The Chairman  
Mount Kenya University  
Ethics Review Committee  
P. O. Box 342-0100, Thika

Dr. Peter G. Kirira  
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC