

Nexus Between Bom Decision Making Competencies And Governance Of Public Primary Schools In Mombasa County, Kenya.

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Abstract

Effective governance in public primary schools is crucial for ensuring the delivery of quality education. Boards of Management (BOM) play a significant role in this governance. However, the inadequate competencies among BOM has severally been blamed for poor governance outcomes such as mismanagement of resources and failure to adhere to educational policies in public primary schools. This study was set out to evaluate the influence of BOM decision making competencies on governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study was anchored on stewardship theory. It used a pragmatism research philosophy and a cross-sectional survey with an embedded design of mixed methods. The target population was 97 public primary schools in Mombasa County involving 97 head teachers, 97 chairpersons of the BOM, and six Sub-County Directors of Education from Ministry of education. Two hundred and eight respondents were sampled. The researcher employed census method when selecting all the six Sub-County Directors of Education, and applied simple random sampling technique in selecting 97 public primary schools. All the BOM chairpersons and head teachers from the sampled schools participated in the study. Data was collected using questionnaires which was self-administered to head teachers and BOM Chairpersons, while interview guide was used on Sub-County Directors of Education. Piloting of the questionnaires was done in Kilifi County using 20% of the target population. Content, face and construct validity were ensured, while the Cronbach Alpha coefficients with a threshold of 0.7 was applied. Data analysis was done with the help of SPSS, where, mean and standard deviation, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis were used. The findings were presented using tables, figures, themes and excerpts. The study found that decision-making competencies significantly influence the governance of public primary schools, explaining 52.7% of the variations in governance. Additionally, the demographic characteristics of BOM members, such as age, education, and gender, play a key moderating role in this relationship. The study concludes that effective governance in Kenyan public primary schools is driven by strategic decision-making, which can be improved through training. Educational qualifications, gender, and age of BOM members are also crucial in enhancing governance. The study recommends targeted training for BOMs in decision-making. The Ministry of Education should guide the recruitment of diverse board members and establish mechanisms for continuous professional development and community engagement to enhance governance. This study has provided valuable insights into how enhancing the competencies of Boards of Management can significantly improve the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya, thereby ensuring better educational outcomes.

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I. Background Of The Study

A system's ability to respond to problems, interruptions, or events arising from both internal and external sources can be attributed to the structures that govern, manage, and safeguard a variety of activities within the system (Partelow & Nelson, 2020). The ability of the governance viewpoint to offer a framework for comprehending evolving governing processes is what gives it its worth, according to Stoker, (2018). More so, there are various types of governance, including mutual-aid, market-driven, networking-based, egalitarian, and hierarchical governance (Moulaert et al., 2022).

The current dynamic within an organization between shareholders and management, or controllers and owners, is known as corporate governance. According to Al-Matari et al., (2017), it is described as the framework that directs and controls commercial enterprises. In addition, Mustapha et al., (2020) emphasizes the significance of establishing a trustworthy corporate governance system that guarantees equity, responsibility, and openness in corporate reporting; corporate governance addresses organizational effectiveness and the creation of broader

company policies. Another point to consider within the corporate governance structure of the company, is to ensure traditional stakeholders are supplemented by pertinent NGOs or civil society organizations (Murphy & Smolarski, 2018).

Corporate governance is the term used to describe the connections that exist among an enterprise's shareholders, managers, trustees, and other stakeholders. It is a system that looks out for the interests of other stakeholders in addition to shareholders. Corporate governance's main objective is to guide a company's management and board of directors toward the optimum course of action for handling its business. As a result of repeated corporate failures, interest in organizational stakeholders has grown in both the corporate and academic environments (Nwanji & Howell, 2007).

Governance of the educational system is critical. In recent years, school governance has been responsible for advocating for equity, excellence, accountability, and choice (Allen & Plank, 2005). Besides, decentralized management, school-based community mobilization, and service delivery from the center to the school level in funding, material supply, and training, according to (MoE, 2016), are tangible outputs of good governance that are being practiced in community schools.

Effective governance is the act of translating the aspirations of the citizens into public policies through the establishment of regulations that allow for the efficient service delivery to all citizens of the state. Good governance is characterized by public participation, openness, accountability, plus management of resource, equity and access to information, including other elements that foster accountability for goals and objectives.

In this study, good governance is defined as a collection of duties, roles and practices utilized by a government or institution to give strategic direction and guarantee that educational goals are accomplished via successful and optimal resources management, accountability, and public engagement in decision-making. According to Zaman and Saeed (2019), excellent governance in Pakistani education refers to how a school system develops policies, raises money, spends it, trains instructors to teach, organizes curricula, and controls the student body. This indicated that the effectiveness, quality, and accountability of the school are within the control of school government.

The freedom of schools to manage their personnel, budget, and physical assets is known as school governance (Grauwe, 2005). Besides, it is expected of the school stakeholders to make informed decisions based on the actual conditions of the school (Hopkins, 2012). As a result, the principal of the school ought to encourage sound school administration. The practice of managing schools to improve their development and accountability is known as good governance and equally crucial in order to legitimize schools as institutions (Pang & Chan, 2021).

Board size has a favorable and significant association with the success of Bangladeshi banking enterprises, as demonstrated by Muttakin et al., (2015). Larger boards enable a firm with broad expertise and abilities that contribute to operational excellence, based on the resource dependency theory. Additionally, the choice of independent directors is crucial in this regard as well. First of all, they can guarantee greater transparency for minority owners. Lastly, by offering insightful information to the company, they can help it make more profit (Tarigan & Antonius, 2023).

Statement of the problem

In an ideal educational setting, Boards of Management (BOM) in public primary schools are expected to exhibit high levels of competency across various domains, including decision-making, budgeting, human resource management, and physical resource management. Effective governance in public primary schools is crucial for ensuring the delivery of quality education. Boards of Management (BOM) play a significant role in this governance by ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently, decisions are made with the best interests of the students in mind, and that human and physical resources are managed optimally. This is supported by the Education Act Cap. 211 and Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, which both declare that boards of management should oversee human and other resources in schools to support efficient operations, the development of infrastructure, and the provision of instructional materials (Kamunge, 1988). When BOMs are competent, they provide strategic oversight and support that enhances the overall quality of education and fosters an environment conducive to student achievement and institutional success (Makhanu & Ndunda, 2017; Njeri, 2020).

However, the inadequate competencies among BOM has severally been blamed for poor governance outcomes such as mismanagement of resources and failure to adhere to educational policies in public primary schools. In Mombasa County, Kenya, many public primary schools face challenges related to the competencies of their BOMs. Previous studies such as Karanja and Ndirangu (2021), Oduor (2015) indicate that BOMs often lack the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage school governance responsibilities. This incompetency manifests in poor decision-making, inadequate budgeting, ineffective human resource management, and suboptimal use of physical resources, which collectively undermine the quality of education (Karanja & Ndirangu, 2021; Otieno, 2022). The result is a governance framework that fails to support the schools' educational objectives and leaves learners with reduced opportunities for academic success. This situation raises

concerns about how varying levels of competency among Boards of Management affect the overall governance of schools and their ability to deliver quality education.

Previous studies such as Mwangi and Wanjiru (2019); Kamau (2023), and Oduor (2015) have predominantly focused on general governance issues without investigating the detailed competencies of BOM members and their direct effects on school performance. As much as there is extensive literature on governance challenges in schools, there is a lack of focused analysis on how budgeting competencies of BOMs specifically influence governance outcomes. This study aims to address these gaps by evaluating the specific competencies of BOMs and their influence on school governance in Mombasa County.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish the Nexus between BOM decision making competencies and governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya.

II. Literature Review

The core of the stewardship philosophy is the individual self-actualization attitude (Corbetta & Salvato, 2004). The steward is driven by Maslow's higher needs, like self-realization, acknowledgment, accomplishment, and respect, and places service before self-interest (Davis et al., 1997). Stewards are inspired internally to complete their task. This suggests that the fundamental tension between the principal and delegate, which is the basis for agency theory, has lessened or might even disappear (Caers et al., 2006). Stewards are managers who work for the company, according to Wasserman (2006).

Stewardship theory could be applied in two ways: explanatory and prescriptive. It can be used as an explanatory theory to look back and see if certain occurrences can be described by the theoretical model. Dicke, (2002), uses stewardship theory to explain accountability gaps in human service contracts. Van Slyke (2006) uses the stewardship theory to investigate the management of contracts between the government and organizations. Boon (2016) used the stewardship theory to analyze publicly funded research on shared service centers.

The operationalization of steward theory begins with the current governance architecture amongst government departments and agencies. State departments execute at least 6 various functions, both ex ante and ex post, when public activities are allocated to them (Schillemans, 2012). Government departments must; select a contractor (who will complete the work); communicate their choices; include additional due diligence process in their agreements; Supervision standards, rewards (and how would the agency be compensated?), and relationship building are all ex post measures. According to stewardship theory, players are not just inspired by their own self-desires, but are also stewards of ideals and outcomes in many situations, particularly ideologically driven ones like government, and frequently have aims that are aligned with their principals. The connection between bureaucrats and contractors is founded on trust and collaboration in stewardship theory (Awortwi, 2012). Regardless of whether the steward and principal have divergent goals, the steward values cooperation more because it benefits him or her more in the long run.

This theory supports this study since it addresses various issues of stewards working on behalf of principals and in this case the BOM is the steward and the government is the principal. Specifically, this theory is in support of independent variable (decision making) and dependent variable (governance). The way BOM makes decisions and the quality of decisions they make will greatly influence governance of the school in one way or another.

Empirical Review

Making decisions is the most significant and fundamental action in running any business or institution (Kumar, 2018), and it also affects the management structure. It is the procedure of selecting among a variety of options in a bid to pursue a preferred course of action (Bratton et al., 2007). Making a decision is an action that demonstrates how a person identifies, thinks about, and chooses an alternate way to solve a problem (Aboudahr & Olowoselu, 2018).

Study on good school governance by Supriadi et al., (2021) expose that involvement of teachers, students and non-teaching staff in an institution through enablement, allocation of duties and involved decision making leads to shared decisions hence good governance. More specifically, Cheung et al. (2016) found that teams with substantial status differentials were the only ones that demonstrated how sharing information may have a beneficial indirect impact on team creativity when functional background diversity is present when affect-based trust was low (Sung & Choi, 2019).

III. Methodology

It used a pragmatism research philosophy and a cross-sectional survey with an embedded design of mixed methods. The target population was 97 public primary schools in Mombasa County involving 97 head teachers, 97 chairpersons of the BOM, and six Sub-County Directors of Education from Ministry of education. Two hundred and eight respondents were sampled. The researcher employed census method when selecting all the six Sub-County Directors of Education, and applied simple random sampling technique in selecting 97 public primary schools. All the BOM chairpersons and head teachers from the sampled schools participated in the study. Data was collected using questionnaires which was self-administered to head teachers and BOM Chairpersons, while interview guide was used on Sub-County Directors of Education. Piloting of the questionnaires was done in Kilifi County using 20% of the target population. Content, face and construct validity were ensured, while the Cronbach Alpha coefficients with a threshold of 0.7 was applied. Data analysis was done with the help of SPSS, where, mean and standard deviation, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis were used.

Response Rate

The study was conducted in Mombasa County and involved the 97 public primary schools where the chairpersons of the BOM and the Head teachers were the main respondents. A total of one hundred and seventy-five (175) responses were received out of a target population of two hundred and eight (208) respondents. This represented 84.1% response rate. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), response rates above 50% are deemed suitable for analysis and reporting, above 60% are commonly regarded as good, and above 70% are deemed excellent. Thus, based on these suggestions, it can be inferred that the study's response rate was sufficient, boosting confidence in the study's ability to be generalized. This information served as the foundation for the analysis and findings presented in this chapter. Khan (2011) offers a similar guideline, stating that a response rate of more than 70% is considered to be extremely good.

From interview data, five Sub-county Director of Education (MOE) were available for the interview. Only one of them was unavailable even after making several trips to the office. This represented 83.3% response rate. According to Dixon and Royce A. Singleton (2012), a response rate of 50% is deemed adequate, and a rate of 70% or higher is regarded as very good.

Reliability assessment

Evaluating the internal consistency of the data gathered through research questionnaires was the aim of the reliability evaluation process. Cronbach Alpha was calculated to gauge this and determine how reliable the data was gathered. When assessing dependability in a research study, a Cronbach Alpha value of more than 0.7 is considered good. These test results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Reliability Assessments

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha Values
Decision Making Competencies	7	0.945
Governance of Public Primary Schools	6	0.983

The data shown in Table 1 indicates that the Cronbach alpha values for each of the following variables were higher than 0.7: decision-making competencies and governance of public primary schools. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that the assessed constructs possessed the required dependability for the ensuing analytical phases, since each Cronbach Alpha value exceeded 0.7. This implied, as suggested by Mohajan (2017), that the elements included in the tools for each variable were trustworthy. Mohajan states that a Cronbach's alpha value of at least 0.70 is typically acceptable and signifies good data reliability.

Gender of BOM and Head Teacher

The first demographic characteristic sought in this study was gender. The information about gender was critical in this study because it was one of the moderating aspect. The results on gender are shown in Figure 1.

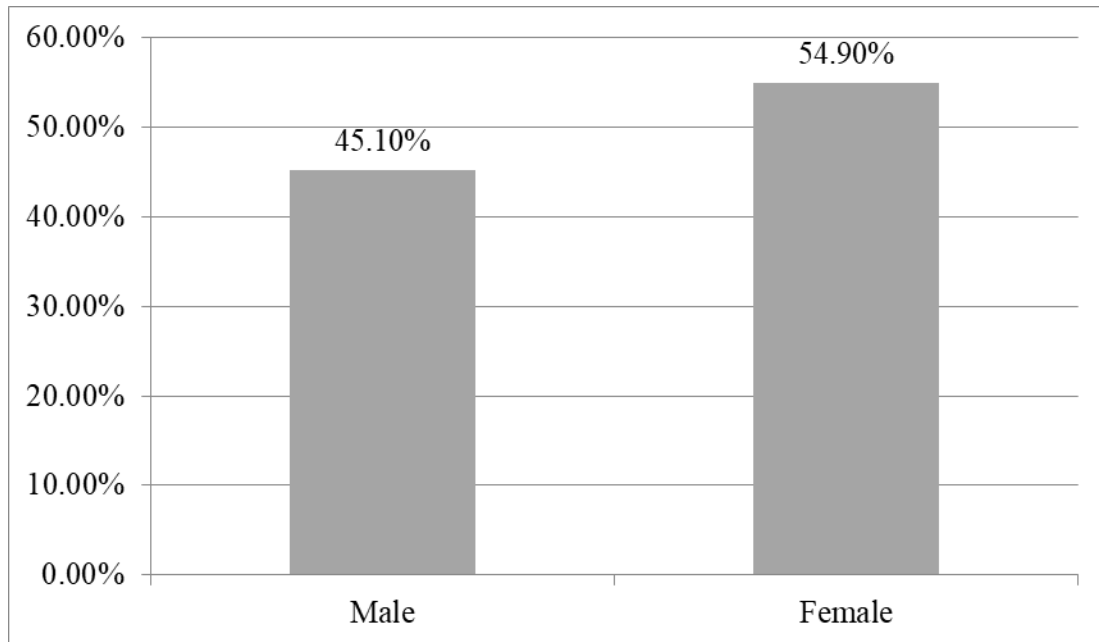


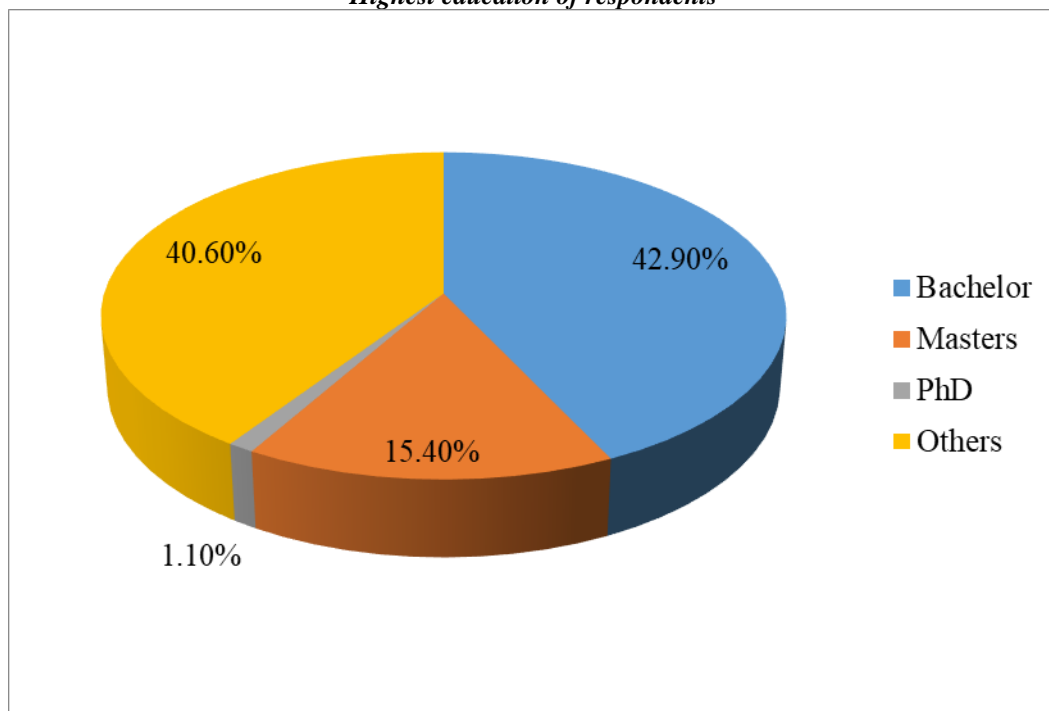
Figure 1
Gender of the of BOM and Head Teacher

According to Figure 1, women made up the majority of respondents (54.9%), with men making up 45.1%. According to this gender distribution, there were more women than males employed at Kenya's public primary schools in Mombasa County. Moreover, it implies that this sector is more women oriented. The female respondents were a slight majority indicating which was consistent with the studies by Akinyi (2013); Nyongesa and Otiende (2017) which established a similar status in among principals in public schools in Siaya and Kisumu Counties.

Highest Education of Chair of BOM and Head Teacher

The next demographic aspect sought was education level. The results are presented in Figure 2

Figure 2
Highest education of respondents



According to the results (Figure 2), 42.9% of the participants had a bachelor's degree, which was the highest level of education. Master's degree holders made up 15.4% of the population, while Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) holders made up 1.10%. Additionally, it is shown that 40.6% of the respondents held additional credentials, such as professional certifications and qualifications, diplomas, and certificates. This suggests that the respondents have a good education and are aware of the problems with public primary school governance in Kenya's Mombasa County. These results were consistent with Migwi (2018).

Influence of Decision-Making Competencies on Governance of Public Secondary Schools

The researcher in this study sought to establish the influence of the various attributes of board of management competencies on the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County. The various attributes of board of management competencies included decision making, budgeting, human resource management, and physical resource management. The establishment of the extent of decision making, budgeting, human resource management, and physical resource management, and the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County in Kenya was done using descriptive statistics.

In evaluating the findings of this study, the quantitative data which was gathered from the head teachers and chairs of BOM was predominant in informing major observations. The quantitative data was analyzed by computing mean and standard deviation. The results were supplemented through embedment design of mixed methods with qualitative data gathered from Sub-County Directors of Education from Mombasa County who were key informant in this study considering their oversight role the governance of public primary schools in Kenya. The qualitative data were thematically analyzed and presented in prose form.

To evaluate the influence of decision making competencies on governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya, which was the first objective, respondents were requested to respond on seven attributes of decision making competencies of the public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya they represented. The attributes focused on effect of decision making, rational decisions, emotional decisions, political decisions, programmed decisions, and non-programmed decisions by the BoM. Table 4.2 presents these analyzed results of data from the respondents pertaining the extent of Decision Making Competencies of the public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Table 2
Responses on Decision Making Competencies

Decision Making Competencies	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
• To what extent do you think decision making has an effect on governance in your School?	175	4.3657	.61865
• The BoM of this school makes rational decisions	175	3.1029	1.09373
• In this school, emotional decisions are made by the members of the board	175	2.5829	1.07892
• There are occasions where political decisions are made by the board	175	2.2639	1.08254
• In our school programmed decisions are always made by board members	175	3.1257	1.22998
• Non-programmed decisions are made by board members in this school	175	2.2629	1.03920
Average		2.9506	

The mean score for the influence of decision-making on governance was high (M=4.3657M, SD=0.61865), indicating that respondents believe decision-making significantly affects governance in their schools. This high mean reflects a strong consensus on the importance of effective decision-making in the governance process. The low standard deviation suggests that respondents generally agree on this perception, reinforcing the notion that sound decision-making is crucial for effective governance.

The perception of the BoM making rational decisions yielded a moderate mean score (M=3.1029M, SD=1.09373). This suggests that while some respondents view the board's decisions as rational, and a few may have concerns about the decision-making process, reflecting slight mixed experiences or expectations regarding the rationality of decisions.

The mean score for the occurrence of emotional decisions was relatively low (M=2.5829M = 2.5829M, SD=1.07892). The standard deviation was around one highlighting less diverse experiences and perceptions regarding the influence of emotions on decision-making. This implies that respondents generally perceive emotional decisions to be less common among board members. The perception of political decisions made by the board received the lowest mean score (M=2.2639M, SD=1.08254). This suggests that respondents believe political decisions are infrequent, and the responses did not vary significantly among respondents.

Regarding programmed decisions by the board respondents reported a moderate perception (M=3.1257M, SD=1.22998). The mean suggests a moderate belief that programmed decisions are common among board members. The mean score for non-programmed decisions was also low (M=2.2629, SD=1.03920),

indicating that respondents perceive such decisions as infrequent. From these results, there is a strong perception that decision-making influences governance positively. There is a moderate belief in rational decision-making but a lower perception of emotional, political, and non-programmed decisions being prevalent. The minimal variability in responses, suggests experiences and opinions among respondents did not differ significantly as indicated by the standard deviation that was around one. These outcomes line up with those of a different study that Brezicha et al. did in 2019 and discovered that when principals involve teachers in curricular decisions and pedagogical practices, instructors become more dedicated, which increases students' academic progress. According to the findings, decision-making styles and work environment are both related to employee performance (Abubakar et al., 2019).

The involvement of the BOM in running schools has undergone many policy changes so as to improve its effectiveness and school governance based on different education acts. The study found that the development of most primary schools in Mombasa County heavily relies on the competence and efficiency of Board of Management (BOM) in management, as stipulated by the Ministry of Education's Basic Education Act (2013). The investigation reported that participating in decision making support governance supporting the research hypothesis. People's participation competency in decision-making processes is an important aspect of good governance. It contributes to ensuring that decisions are made with the input of all stakeholders and that the results are more likely to be accepted and implemented. Involving more people with diverse viewpoints and information improves decision-making (Azeska et al., 2017; Supriadi et al., 2021). The involvement of BOM members' ideas is an adherence to democratic principles that results in more responsive and democratic governance. Governance establishes the parameters within which people operate. It specifies who is in charge of making which decisions and the process they use to make legitimate decisions.

During the interview session, the SCDE 03 underscored the importance of BOM in decision making process in carrying it function to enhance governance. The officer supported investing in education by saying, *"Investment in decision making in school level ensuring good leadership and betterment of school in general, this budgeting facilitates the activities and improper budgeting would have direct issues in governance."*

When Sub-County Director of Education was contacted during interview regarding their opinion on investment in decision making and school's governance they responded in affirmative. SCDE 05 said, *"Investing in schools as poultry farming activities help to generate income whose proceed can be used to buy school desks, pay BOM teachers, and do some repairs among others."* Another Sub-County Director of Education, SCDE 02 noted, *"A BoM with strong decision-making skills can develop and implement strategic plans that align with the school's goals and educational standards. Effective decision-making ensures that the school's vision, mission, and long-term objectives are clearly defined and pursued."* There was a general consensus that the decisions made by the board inform the way resource are allocated, including budgeting on staffing, and infrastructure development. This helps in optimizing the use of available resources to support educational programs and initiatives.

When asked to explain the relationship between decision making competency of BOM and governance in public primary schools in Mombasa County, the Sub-county Directors of Education noted seven critical issues (themes) which stood out their responses. These were: strategic planning and direction, resource management, oversight and accountability, conflict resolution and adaptability, stakeholder engagement and communication, strategic risk management, and ethical and rational decision-making.

From the interview transcripts, the decision-making competency of the Board of Management (BoM) significantly influence the governance of public primary schools by influencing strategic planning, resource management, and overall operational effectiveness. Competent decision-making enables the BoM to set clear goals, allocate resources efficiently, and develop long-term strategies that align with the school's vision. It also ensures effective oversight, accountability, and the ability to resolve conflicts and adapt to changes. These practices contribute to a focused direction, operational efficiency, and financial health, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes and a stable school environment (Bakonyi, 2018).

Additionally, the BoM's ability to engage stakeholders and communicate transparently fosters trust and collaboration, enhancing inclusive governance. Ethical and rational decision-making promotes fairness and integrity, while strategic risk management prepares the school for potential challenges. By making informed and equitable decisions, the BoM supports a positive school culture, ensures adherence to standards, and improves overall governance. This comprehensive approach leads to a more resilient and effective school administration, benefiting both the educational institution and its community.

From both quantitative and qualitative results, it was clear that the competency of the Board of Management in decision-making plays a crucial role in shaping effective governance in public primary schools. By making informed, rational, and ethical decisions, the BoM ensures strategic direction, accountability, conflict resolution, stakeholder engagement, and adherence to standards (Hariri et al., 2016). This, in turn, leads to improved governance practices, enhanced school performance, and a supportive educational environment.

Effective decision-making competency by the BoM is thus fundamental to the successful governance and overall functioning of public primary schools.

Governance of Public Primary Schools in Mombasa County, Kenya

In order to assess the extent of governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya, as a result of BOM, respondents (head teachers and chairs of BOM) were asked to respond on six aspects of governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya they represent. The aspects covered were about oversight mechanisms, monitoring processes, quality assurance measures, evaluations, supervision, and accountability. Table 3 presents these results of analysis of data from the respondents regarding the extent of governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Table 3
The Governance of Public Primary Schools

Governance of Public Primary Schools	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is oversight in this school	175	3.1086	.94363
In this school there is regular monitoring	175	3.1143	.85000
There is presence of quality assurance in this primary school	175	3.1429	.90791
Evaluations are done in this public primary school	175	3.1829	.89747
Supervision is carried out in this primary school	175	3.1657	.88472
There is high level of accountability in my school	175	3.1771	.84930
Average	175	3.1486	.84748

The results indicate that respondents generally perceive governance in public primary schools to be positive across various dimensions such as oversight, monitoring, quality assurance, evaluations, supervision, and accountability. All mean scores hover around 3.1 to 3.2, suggesting a consensus towards agreement. The relatively low standard deviations, ranging from 0.84930 to 0.94363, further emphasize that most respondents share similar views on these governance aspects. The aspects on oversight and monitoring both scored mean values slightly above 3, indicating that respondents feel these functions are regularly performed but with some room for improvement. The standard deviations for these items (0.94363 and 0.85000, respectively) suggest moderate consistency in responses, with monitoring showing slightly less variability.

Similarly, the aspects on quality assurance and evaluations also received mean scores above 3, indicating these processes are recognized by respondents as being part of their schools' governance. The consistency in responses (SD = 0.90791 and 0.89747) aligns with other governance aspects, suggesting a uniform perception of their presence and effectiveness. Moreover, the aspects regarding supervision and accountability both received mean scores just above 3.16, with the lowest variability in responses (SD = 0.88472 and 0.84930). This suggests a slightly higher agreement and more consistent perception among respondents that these governance functions are effectively carried out. The findings indicate a favorable view of governance practices in public primary schools, with mean scores consistently suggesting agreement and relatively low variability, pointing to a uniform perception among respondents.

The interview data gathered from the Sub-County Education Directors indicated that competencies of the BoM are integral to the effective governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County. The findings further shown that by prioritizing education, promoting age diversity, and ensuring gender inclusivity, the BoM can enhance its decision-making capabilities and governance practices. Additionally, investing in ongoing training and capacity building, implementing transparent processes, and engaging the community can further improve the governance of these schools, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes and a more inclusive school environment.

To foster effective governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, several key areas need improvement in the competencies of the Board of Management (BoM). The responses from the Sub-County Education Directors indicated areas such as enhanced training and professional development, strengthening educational qualifications, improving transparency and accountability, diversity and inclusion, community engagement, and strategic planning and execution. Respondents noted that regular workshops, seminars, and certification programs tailored to the specific needs of BoM members can significantly improve their understanding of governance, resource management, and educational policies; a proposition which was also supported by Johnson and Lee (2018). Implementing minimum educational qualification criteria and providing specialized training in areas such as financial management, human resources, and strategic planning can further enhance their competencies (Miller, 2021). Consistent with Smith (2020), the findings also showed that strengthening transparency and accountability through regular audits and clear reporting mechanisms can ensure ethical management of school resources and improve overall governance.

Moreover, the act of encouraging diversity and inclusion within the BoM is also crucial. Promoting age diversity can combine the benefits of experience from older members and fresh perspectives from younger ones, enhancing the board's effectiveness (Brown & White, 2019). Ensuring gender balance can bring a wider range of viewpoints, leading to more inclusive decision-making processes (Williams, 2017). Effective community engagement is another important aspect; actively involving teachers, parents, and community members in governance processes ensures that decisions address the needs of the entire school community (Taylor, 2020). At the same time, implementing robust feedback mechanisms allows the BoM to make informed and responsive decisions. SCDE 01 noted, "Enhancing strategic planning and execution through long-term planning and regular evaluations of the BoM's performance can guide the school towards achieving its goals and ensure governance practices are aligned with the school's mission and vision." These improvements can lead to more effective governance, better resource management, and improved educational outcomes (Green, 2018) for students in Mombasa County's public primary schools.

Answering of Research Questions

Upon verifying non-violation of the aforementioned assumptions, the study employed Pearson correlation analysis to test how decision making competency of boards of management influenced the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya. Table 4 present bivariate correlation results.

Table 3: Bivariate Correlation analysis results

		Governance	Decision making	Deductions
Governance	Correlation Coefficient (Spearman's rho)	1.000	.527	Positive
	Sig. (P-Value)	.	.000	Reject H ₀
Decision making	Correlation Coefficient	.527	1.000	Positive
	Sig. (P-Value)	.000	.	Reject H ₀

How does a board of management's decision-making ability affect the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya? was the initial study topic. A moderately positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.527$) that is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) is displayed in Table 4.10's results. This indicates that the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya, and the BOM's ability to make decisions are positively and moderately correlated, as well as statistically significant which is consistent with the study by Johnson and Lee (2018). This means that effective decision-making processes are associated with improved governance in public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya.

IV. Conclusion

The study highlights that the decision-making competencies of the Board of Management (BoM) significantly impact the governance of public primary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya. High mean scores from quantitative data indicate a strong consensus among respondents that effective decision-making positively influences governance. Rational decision-making is perceived moderately well, whereas emotional, political, and non-programmed decisions are seen as less prevalent. The qualitative insights from Sub-County Directors of Education underscore the importance of the BoM's role in strategic planning, resource management, and stakeholder engagement, contributing to enhanced accountability, conflict resolution, and ethical governance. Overall, the BoM's decision-making competency is fundamental to the effective governance and improved performance of public primary schools, fostering a supportive and well-functioning educational environment.

V. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education and school administrations in Mombasa County should prioritize enhancing the decision-making competencies of the Board of Management (BoM) through targeted training programs. These programs should focus on rational and ethical decision-making, strategic planning, resource management, and stakeholder engagement to ensure effective governance. Additionally, involving diverse viewpoints from all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the community, can further improve decision-making processes. By investing in these areas, the BoM can develop clear goals, efficiently allocate resources, and maintain accountability, ultimately leading to better governance and improved educational outcomes in public primary schools. The board of management should define stakeholder roles, encourage open communication, involve diverse perspectives, and use consensus-building techniques. A culture of continuous improvement should be fostered by regularly reviewing and refining decision-making processes and governance structures based on feedback, evaluation data, and changing trends.

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