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Board of Managements' Initiatives Influencing Quality Education in Secondary Schools in Kajiado, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the initiatives of the Board of Management that influences the provision of quality education in secondary schools in Kajiado West-sub County, Kajiado County. The study employed a descriptive survey design since the data to be collected required a quantitative and qualitative approach. The study targeted 42 public secondary schools in Kajiado County. Sixteen schools (16) were randomly selected from a pool of 42 schools in Kajiado County. Census technique was used to select 16 principals from selected schools. Further, simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 108 BoM from a total of 272 Board of Management members. Result findings showed that management of physical resources, teachers' professional development influences provision of quality education. Based on research finding it can be concluded that involving Board of Management initiative in the management of physical resources, teacher professional development influences provision of quality education. The Board should ensure that teachers' professional development is supported through in service training. It is also recommended that school resources be spend sparingly and appropriately in acquiring learning materials, constructing classes, laboratories and recruiting extra Board teachers in order to enhance quality education.

Key words: Board of management initiatives, quality education, secondary schools, Kajiado County.

1.0 Introduction

The Social Pillar in Kenya Vision 2030 aims at creating a comprehensive, equitable and just society based on democratic ideals. Under this pillar, education and training is expected to be the principle catalyst towards realization of Vision 2030. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 makes education a basic right under the Bill of Rights where basic education is guaranteed for all children and the state is obliged to make its provision possible progressively.

School Boards of Management are in charge of significant amount of school resources. The central focus of Boards of Management is to manage schools on behalf of the Ministry of Education (Gamage & Hansson, 2008). Board of Management are a source of innovation and ideas and their efforts to advance teacher capacity are directly relevant to conditions of teaching and learning. Boards of Management engage in a number of initiatives aimed at promoting quality education. The initiatives include management of resources and teacher professional development.

Management of physical resources necessitates the achievements of quality education in Secondary Schools. Board of Management and administrators use different strategies of management to monitor the use of school resources in enhancing teaching in schools. The school administrators manage the physical resources and teachers in order to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning. Every educational establishment has responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the service and the quality of resources being provided for its children and young people. In educational establishment especially secondary school BoM has many things to take into account when measuring effectiveness of the institution such as, health and safety, financial management, attendance, staff development, child protection, of course curriculum implementation and teaching and learning.

Teacher professional development can help overcome shortcomings that may have been part of teachers' pre-service education and keep teachers abreast of new knowledge and practices in the field (UNICEF, 2000). A study by Caena (2011) indicated that there is a significant, positive correlation between teacher professional development and provision of quality education, as most important within-school factors explaining performance, and between in-service training and student outcomes, are consistently borne out by research. The highest quality teachers, those most capable of helping their students learn, have deep mastery of their subject matter and pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

The in-service training for teachers can have a direct impact on student achievement. Dialogue and reflections with colleagues' peers and supervisor observations and keeping journals are all effective ways for teachers to advance their knowledge (UNICEF, 2000). A programme in Kenya, the Mombasa School Improvement Project (SIP), built on this approach of professional development showed that teachers supported with in-service as well as external workshops training improved significantly in their abilities to use child centred teaching and learning behaviours (Anderson, 2000).

The Education Act 2013 and the sessional paper No. 1 of 2005, States that for better running of the schools, the BoMs must carry out their responsibilities effectively by balancing all areas that is human and other material resources. According to the Education Act 2013 the Board of Management appointed by the county Education Board consist of 13 members who include: six persons representing parents or local community, a nominee of the county Education Board,

one representative of teaching staff, three representatives of sponsors, one representative of special interest group and a representative of a person with special needs (GOK, 2013). The BoMs are supposed to work together to manage the school without any bias either to their own interest or to the interest of the people who appointed them to the post in order to bring development to the school.

Kajiado West Sub-County is an administrative component of Kajiado County. Despite being relatively close to the capital Nairobi, the Sub-County is considerably underdeveloped in terms of infrastructure, social services and education is no exception.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Kenyan government through the Ministry of Education has initiated different educational policies tailored to improve quality of education rendered to students. In public secondary schools, most of these roles are left to the Board of Management to ensure that these policies and guidance laid down to schools are implemented effectively. This effectiveness according to UNESCO (2009) is judged by the extent to which schools generally meet the expectations of the society within which they are established. However, effective implementation of this curriculum to yield high quality education depends largely on the initiatives employed by Board of Management and their relationship with teachers, schools' heads and parents.

The need for quality education is the driver for every school management; however this has not materialized in Kajiado West Sub County. Kajiado West Sub county is majorly inhabited by Maasai community who are majorly pastoralists and stick much to some of harmful traditions like marrying off girls at tender age and subjecting them to circumcision. The problems undermine the provision of quality education.

Quality education is a critical condition in better school performance. According to the literature reviewed Board members ensure quality education through their management or resources and teacher professional development (Kiprotich, 2014). Akungu (2014) indicated the importance of school facilities in relation to quality education. Empirical studies also indicated that professional development of teachers is vital in the provision of quality education. However, these studies have not distinctively and exclusively outlined the roles played by Board of Management in the organization and implementation of the aforementioned initiatives. This study discussed these roles played by Board of Management while at the same time linking to the focus of the study which is provision of quality education. This study therefore attempted to investigate BoM initiatives influencing quality education.

1.3 Research objectives

- i. To examine the effect of Board of Management's provision of physical resources on the provision of quality education in Kajiado West sub-County.
- ii. To establish how the Boards of Management's use of teacher professional development enhances quality education in Kajiado West sub-County.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Quality Education

A quality education is one that satisfies basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living. Evidence over the past decade has shown that efforts to expand enrollment must be accompanied by attempts to enhance educational quality if children are to be attracted to school, stay there and achieve meaningful learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2005). Today's struggle in Kenyan education is no longer about seeking to regain control of the school, both privately and publicly; instead, it concerns the scarce resources have frequently been used for expanding systems with insufficient attention to quality improvement in areas such as teacher training and materials development.

Recent assessments of learning achievements in some countries have shown that a sizeable percentage of countries are acquiring only a fraction of the knowledge and skills they are expected to master (UNESCO, 2005). What students are meant to learn has often not been clearly defined, well taught or accurately assessed. Here, education is looked as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context, where establishing a contextualized understanding of quality means including relevant stakeholders who often hold different views and meanings of educational quality (Motala, 2000). An expanded definition of quality set out the desirable characteristics of learners (healthy, motivated students), processes (Competent teachers using active pedagogies), content (relevant curricula) and systems (good governance and equitable resource allocation).

2.2 Board of Management role in the management of physical resources and quality education

Physical facilities refers to the school plant, that is, the school buildings, classrooms, library, laboratories, toilet facilities, offices and other materials and infrastructures that would likely motivate students towards learning. Physical facilities are germane to effective learning and academic performance of students. Availability of physical resources in terms of teaching and learning resources enhances the effectiveness of schools as these are basic things that facilitate provision of quality education among students. Provision and utilization of these learning facilities is the responsibility of school management (National Policy on Education, 2012). Board of Management is involved in the purchase of teaching and learning resources.

Akungu (2014) indicates the importance of school facilities in relation to quality education. Difference in school facilities would be seen to account for difference in academic achievement. Physical facilities include classrooms, administrative block, libraries, laboratories, workshops, play grounds, assembly halls, students' dormitories, kitchen, cafeteria, and toilet amongst others. Akungu further asserts that learning experiences are fruitful when there are sufficient learning resources. The physical resources invested in schools influence not only the education provided to students but also aspects of teachers and student motivation and consequently the educational outcomes.

Okorie (2001) study indicated that student learning outcomes in schools is largely dependent on availability and appropriate utilization of resources, because the students acquire skills using these resources. These resources include buildings, furniture, playground, compound, toilet facilities, lighting, books, and teaching materials, among others. These facilities play a pivotal role in the actualization of the educational goals and objectives by satisfying the physical and

emotional needs of the staff and students. Johan (2004) study on educational facilities found that educational outcomes in schools are closely linked to utilization and adequacy of teaching/learning resources in different ways; poor utilization, underutilization, unqualified educators brings forth low educational achievement. The inadequacy of physical and material resources in schools is a major factor responsible for learning outcome of students. The quality of the products bears a direct relationship with the qualities of the facilities deployed in the process of production.

2.3 Board of Management involvement in teacher professional development and quality education

Teacher professional development is multidimensional activity and various aspects of a teacher's life and work. Its aim is not only to train the teacher how to teach but to make an effort to develop their initiative, to re-shape their professional attitudes and to develop skills to improve professionalism (Bennet, 2000). Inadequate programs of teacher education and insufficient professional merits of teacher educators, insufficient refresher trainings for teachers demonstrate a low mastery of essential competencies needed to ensure quality teaching in schools (Kita &Tilya, 2010). Therefore the claim that the quality of education in school system is poor because of the low quality of teachers' professional development cannot be disputed (Temu, 2007; Tilya & Mafuniko, 2010).

Initial teacher education can be regarded as the first step in professional development (Hansen & Simonsen, 2001), and it provided a strategic opportunity for ensuring that all teachers are ready and able to teach for sustainability when beginning their career (Ferreira, Ryan & Tilbury, 2007). For this reason, in service trainings are important in educating competent teachers and developing teachers' professional development.

Their professionalization has been a center of much concern among educators and researchers (Nkwanga, 1992). Its importance is not only for repute, differentiations from members of other professions, but in a sociological sense, a form of social control. Therefore, for an educational institution to excel, it must focus on the quality, competence, knowledge and commitment of the teaching profession code of conduct. This is because career development is linked to professionalism that determines the outcome of the school. The influence of school boards may also be seen through encouraging professional development of teachers and principals through various training and development programs; ensuring effective utilization of resources and objectivity in personnel decisions like hiring, promotions, rewards and recognitions, feedback, among others.

According to Oluwakemi (2011) in a study on teacher professional development as determinant of teacher productivity in Oyo Metropolis Senior Secondary schools, teachers are an important component of school performance. The study found that school management had not facilitated forums for in-service training such as workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers to improve their competencies. This is because professional development of teachers has a direct impact to the provision of quality education. Tamil Nadu (2011) conducted a study on In-service Teacher Training and it was found that 1) of the 56 sample teachers, a higher proportion of 53 teachers (95%) informed that they have gained clarity and confidence in planning and preparing for their classroom interaction. They have become more empowered to handle the classes effectively.2) about 86 per cent of the teachers (48) opined that the in-service training under SSA has motivated them to do their levels best in teaching.

2.4 Theoretical framework

The study was guided by the systems theory proposed by Biologist Ludwing Von Bertalanffy in 1956 and adapted for educational institutions by Koontz and Weihrich (1988). The theory asserts that any well-structured institution has surrounding in which it is set and functioned. Koontz and Weihrich argue that educational institutions are increasingly described as absorbers and processors. The environment serves as a generator which creates inputs. These inputs from the environment are absorbed by the school which then works as a processor to transform the inputs into outputs which then come out of the system back to the outside.

As adapted in this study, secondary schools absorb students and teachers from the society (inputs). They are tied for a collective goal of providing education by the managers (BoM). According to the system theory it is assumed that BoM put in place initiatives that engage teachers in activities that transform the students through curriculum instruction and interaction. The students exit the system with high performance in examination and having acquired skills, knowledge, attitudes and values.

The theory also believes that BoM influence the teacher and the teachers' interaction between the students on the other side effects quality of learning hence students' achievements. The theory suits into this research because secondary schools are systems which have students, teachers and Board of Management and their initiatives are (inputs). Processes include curriculum supervision learning and teaching. Outputs include performance in examinations and acquisition of skills and competencies by students. It is from this theory that this study examines BoM initiatives influencing the provision of quality education in secondary schools.

2.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework shows how the variables interact with each. The independent variables (inputs) are the initiative put in place by BoM in providing quality education in schools which include resource management and teacher development. The independent variables (inputs) are the initiatives undertaken in promoting quality education in schools which include teacher professional development and presence of adequate physical facilities.

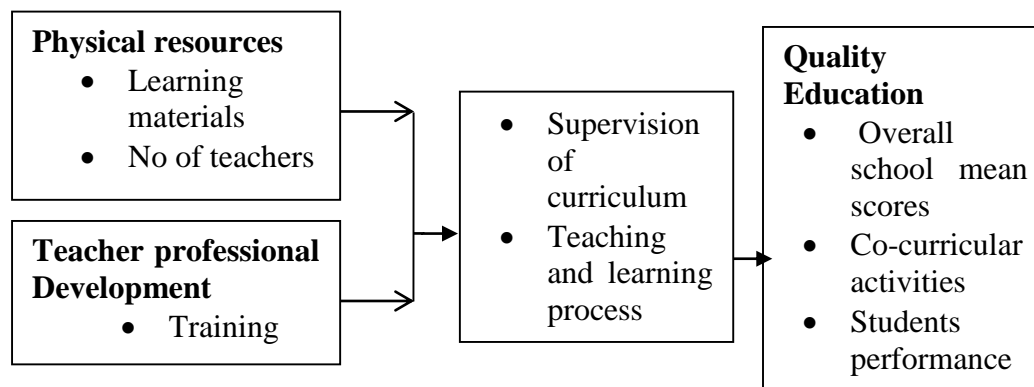


Figure 1 Relationship between BoM initiatives and provision of quality education in secondary schools

3.0 Research Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used since the data to be collected requires a quantitative and qualitative approach. The target population for the study was 42 public secondary schools in Kajiado County. Sixteen schools (16) were randomly selected from a pool of 42 schools in Kajiado County. Census technique was used to select the 16 principals from selected schools. Further, convenient sampling technique and simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 108 Board of Management members. The Board of Management consists of 7 Board members in every school. Questionnaires and interview guide was used for data collection. Validity and reliability test were conducted to ensure that research instruments are adequate and reliable. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The researchers evaluated, analyze and interpret the data. Quantitative data collected by use of questionnaires were presented in frequency tables. Chi square was used to check on the relationship between the variables. Qualitative data collected by use of interview guide was analyzed qualitatively through content analysis and presented in prose form.

4.0 Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation

4.1 Instruments' response rate

The return rate provides a profile of respondents who participated in the study. The respondents of the study were Board of Management members and principals. Response rate for the study is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Response rate

Respondents category	Administered	Returned	Unreturne d	Percentage returned
Board of Management	108	103	5	95.4
Principals	16	14	2	87.5

The response rate for Board of Management members was 95.4% while that for principals' was 87.5%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003); Kothari (2004) a response rate of above 50 percent is adequate for a descriptive study. Based on these assertions from renowned scholars, a response rate of 95.4% for Board of Management members and a response rate of 87.5% for principals was very good for the study.

4.2 Involving Board of Management in the management of physical resources and quality education

The respondents were asked to respond on whether Board of Management initiatives in the management of physical resources influenced provision of quality education. Physical facilities are closely related to effective learning and academic performance of students. Availability of physical resources in terms of teaching and learning resources enhances the effectiveness of



schools as these are basic things that facilitate provision of quality education among students. The responses were rated on a five Likert scale and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: BoM management of physical resources and provision of quality education

Function	Unaware	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always	Mean	SD
i. Avails funds to buy textbooks	14.6%	6.8%	12.6%	39.8%	26.2%	3.6	1.3
ii. Mobilizes resources	11.7%	8.7%	17.5%	31.1%	31.1%	3.6	1.3
iii. Finances purchase of furniture	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%	26.2%	47.6%	4.0	1.3
iv. Maintains buildings through facelift	6.8%	14.6%	10.7%	33.0%	35.0%	3.7	1.3
v. Ensure that the school lab is well equipped	7.8%	10.7%	8.7%	40.8%	32.0%	3.8	1.2
vi. Conduct an audit of the school's facilities annually	7.8%	5.8%	5.8%	56.3%	24.3%	3.8	1.1

Results in Table 2 revealed that majority 66 percent (39.8%+26.2%) agreed that BoM is mandated to avail funds to buy textbooks. The results also showed that majority of the BoM members 62.2 percent (31.1%+31.1%) agreed that board mobilizes resources to put up physical structures like dorms classes, library, lab. The results also showed that majority of the BoM members 74.8 percent (26.2%+47.6%) agreed that Board of Management finances purchase of furniture. The results also show that 68 percent (33.0%+35.0) of the BoM members agreed that the Board maintains buildings through facelift. Results also showed that 72.8 percent (40.8%+32.0) of the BoM members agreed that the Board of Management ensures that the school lab is well equipped, and 80.6 percent (56.3%+24.3%) of the respondents indicated Board of Management conducts an audit of the school's facilities annually. Financing purchase of furniture had the highest mean of 4.0 indicating that the initiative had not been fully addressed. Ensuring the school lab is fully equipped, conducting audit of school facilities, maintaining school infrastructure, mobilizing acquisition of resources and availing funds to buy textbooks had means of 3.8, 3.8, 3.7, 3.6 and 3.6 respectively. However, none had a mean of more than 4.0 showing that the initiatives have not been fully addressed in the school. The results agree with that of Akungu (2014) who indicated the importance of school facilities in relation to quality education. Difference in school facilities would be seen to account for difference in academic achievement. Akungu further asserted that learning experiences are fruitful when there are sufficient learning resources. The physical resources invested in schools influence not only the education provided to students but also aspects of teachers and student

motivation and consequently the educational outcomes. The results also agree with Okorie (2001) study who indicated that student learning outcomes in schools is largely dependent on availability and appropriate utilization of resources, because the students acquire skills using these resources. Results in Table 3 mean score results for schools and management of school resources.

Table 3 Cross tabulation between school physical resources and school mean scores

		Quality education	
		Mean scores	Chi-square (p value)
Management of school physical resources	Bad	4.527	79.224 (0.000)
	Good	6.491	

Results in Table 3 show that that the mean scores for schools where management of school physical resources was bad had a mean score of 4.527 while schools where management of school physical resources was good had a mean score of 6.491. The study findings were statistically significant supported by a chi square of ($\lambda =79.224$, $p=0.000$). This implies that management of school physical resources influences school mean scores. The results concur with Johan (2004) that educational outcomes in schools are closely linked to utilization and adequacy of teaching/learning resources in different ways; poor utilization, underutilization, unqualified educators brings forth low educational achievement. The inadequacy of physical and material resources in schools is a major factor responsible for learning outcome of students. Management of physical resources necessitates the achievements of quality education in Secondary Schools. Every educational establishment had responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the service and the quality of resources being provided for its children and young people. The results from the interview guide indicated that Board Members were involved in the management of physical facilities in the school. Provision of physical facilities and material resources enhanced learning conditions.

4.3 Boards of Management participation in teacher professional development and provision of quality education

The respondents were asked to respond on whether Board of Management participation in teacher professional influenced provision of quality education. The responses were rated on a five Likert scale and presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Boards of Management participation in teacher professional development and quality education

Statement	Unaware	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always	Mean	SD
i. Get involved in teacher development	10.7%	12.6%	7.8%	39.8%	29.1%	3.6	1.3
ii. Help finances teachers refresher courses	21.4%	0.0%	0.0%	64.1%	14.6%	3.5	1.4
iii. Conduct annual appraisals on teachers	4.9%	6.8%	13.6%	51.5%	23.3%	3.8	1.0
iv. Motivate teachers through rewards	5.8%	5.8%	7.8%	49.5%	31.1%	3.9	1.1
v. Are involved in matters relating to teachers' welfare	7.8%	7.8%	12.6%	43.7%	28.2%	3.8	1.2
vi. Respond to training needs of teachers	9.7%	5.8%	10.7%	54.4%	19.4%	3.7	1.1
vii. Provide teachers with the necessary materials for teaching	2.9%	7.8%	7.8%	58.3%	23.3%	3.9	0.9
viii. Conduct orientation for new teachers and closely monitors their progress	5.8%	0.0%	5.8%	58.3%	30.1%	4.1	0.9

Teacher professional development is multidimensional activity and various aspects of a teacher's life and work. Teacher professional development can help overcome shortcomings that may have been part of teachers' pre-service education and keep teachers abreast of new knowledge and practices in the field (UNICEF, 2000). Results in Table 4 revealed that majority of the respondents 68.9 percent (39.8%+ 29.1) agreed that BoM should get involved in teachers' professional development. The results also showed that majority of the respondents 78.7 percent (64.1%+14.6%) agreed that Board of should help finances teachers refresher



courses. The results in Table 4 also show that majority 74.8 percent (51.5%+23.3%) of the BoM members agreed that conducting annual appraisals on teachers was important in the provision of quality education. The results also show that 80.6 percent (49.5%+31.1%) of the BoM members agreed that the board should motivate teachers through rewards. Results also showed that 71.9 percent (43.7%+ 28.2%) of the BoM members agreed that the Board of Management should be involved in matters of relating to teachers welfare, and 73.8 percent (54.4+19.4%) of the respondents indicated that Board of Management should be responding to training needs of teachers. Further, results showed that 81.6 percent (58.3%+23.3%) of the BoM members agreed that the board should provide teachers with the necessary materials for learning. Finally, 88.4 percent (58.3%+30.1) of the BoM members agreed that conducting orientation for new teachers and monitoring their progress is important in the provision of quality education.

Orienting and monitoring progress for new teachers had the highest mean of 4.1 indicating that the initiative had been partially addressed in the school. Providing teaching materials, motivating teachers through rewards, addressing teachers' welfare needs, conducting annual appraisals for teachers, respond to teachers training needs, teacher involvement in professional development and finance refresher courses for teachers had means of 3.9, 3.8, 3.8, 3.7, 3.6 and 3.5 respectively. However, none had a mean of more than 4.1 showing that the initiatives have not been fully addressed in the school. The results agree with Caena (2011) that indicated a significant, positive correlation between teacher professional development and provision of quality education, as most important within-school factors explaining performance. The highest quality teachers, those most capable of helping their students learn, have deep mastery of their subject matter and pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, 2012). These findings agrees with Nzoka & Orodho (2014) that student achievement, depends largely on teacher's command of subject matter and their ability to use that knowledge to help students learn. Results in Table 5 show mean score results for schools and teachers professional development.

Table 5 Cross tabulation between teachers professional development and school mean scores

		Quality education	
		Mean scores	Chi-square (p value)
Teachers' professional development	Low	4.067	80.319 (0.000)
	High	6.854	

Results in Table 5 shows that that the mean scores for schools where teachers' professional development was low had a mean score of 4.067 while schools where teachers' professional development was high had a mean score of 6.854. This implies that teachers' professional development influences school mean scores. The study findings were statistically significant supported by a chi square of ($\lambda =80.319, p=0.000$). Chi square test therefore imply that teachers' professional development influences provision of quality education. Inadequate programs of teacher education and insufficient professional merits of teacher educators, insufficient refresher trainings for teachers demonstrate a low mastery of essential competencies needed to ensure quality teaching in schools (Kita & Tilya, 2010). Therefore the

claim that the quality of education in school system is poor because of the low quality of teachers' professional development cannot be disputed (Tilya & Mafuniko, 2010). The results also agree with that of Oluwakemi (2011) that teachers are an important component of school performance. The study found that school management had not facilitated forums for in-service training such as workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers to improve their competencies. The results also agree with the findings by Jahangir, Saheen and Kazmi (2012) that there was a significant change in perception of the trainees between pre and post in-service training programs. An interview session with the school principal indicated that the Board of Management supported teachers' professional development by enabling teachers to enroll in in-service training.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Based on research finding it can be concluded that involving Board of Management in the management of physical resources influences provision of quality education. Management of physical resources necessitates the achievements of quality education in Secondary Schools. Board of Management and administrators should use different strategies of management to monitor the use of school resources in enhancing teaching in schools. The school administrators manage the physical resources and teachers in order to ensure that there is effective teaching and learning.

Further, it can be concluded that Boards of Management participation in teacher professional development enhances provision of quality education in Kajiado West Sub-County.

5.2 Recommendations for study

The following recommendations were made;

Since the Board is involved in the management of school physical resources, the MoE should ensure that qualities of transparency and accountability are considered when selecting BoM members. This will ensure that school resources are used and spend appropriately by acquiring learning materials, constructing classes, laboratories and recruiting extra Board teachers in order to enhance quality education.

To teachers, they are encouraged to further their professional development through in service training and educational related seminars. The Board should ensure that teachers' professional development is supported by providing funds for in service courses. This will ensure that teachers are fully equipped with necessary skills when teaching students.

Principals should work closely with BoM in order to identify beneficial programmes for teachers and the resources needed in the school to improve on quality education.

Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) to design courses for BoM to help them manage schools and be proactive in determining initiatives that work better in their schools.

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