

The Effect Of Stakeholder Participation On Students' Academic Performance In Public Secondary Schools In Kibwezi Sub County, Makueni County, Kenya

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Abstract

The ultimate goal of every learning institution is to produce excellent academic results. This is coupled with producing students with the worthwhile skills, attitudes and knowledge and it lays a firm foundation for them to further their studies in higher education. This will eventually make them experts in their areas of specialization and training. This study aimed at the effect of stakeholder participation on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub county, Makueni county. The study was guided by four theories of learning; institutional theory, resource-based view theory, organizational learning theory and innovative diffusion theory. The target population of the study was 65 school principals, 260 academic HoDs, and 650 teachers. The data was collected by use of questionnaires and was analysed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). It is expected that the findings of the study will enable the school principals and other key administrative staff to formulate strategic policies in their schools which will motivate the students and trigger a competitive spirit among them in order to improve their academic performance. It will also challenge the administrators, and other key stakeholders to innovate and create funds which will improve the school facilities to improve the teaching and learning process.. The study established that students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County was significantly affected when parents and teachers motivated students to work hard (P=0.010), showed interest in students' academics (P=0.040), and when stakeholders evaluated academic programs (P=0.054)." Students' academic performance was significantly influenced by the availability of calculators for all students (P=0.001), ample teaching and learning materials (P=0.000), sufficient facilities in the Agriculture store/room (P=0.001), and access to alternative power supply in case of blackouts (P=0.051). Teacher behaviours such as updating professional documents (P=0.031) and ensuring the early completion of the syllabus (P=0.041) significantly impact students' academic performance. The academic performance of students is significantly affected by the presence of a well-equipped computer lab (P=0.002), internet connectivity (P=0.001), student access to computers (P=0.000), teachers using computers to demonstrate concepts (P=0.000), and the use of phones and electronic gadgets as teaching aids (P=0.007). Based on the findings, the study recommended that there is need for our parents and teachers to motivate students to work hard, our parents show interests in students academics, and our stakeholders evaluate academic programmes;

Key terms: Kenya, Makueni, Stakeholders Participation; Resource Allocation ; Performance Monitoring; ICT Integration

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Background of the Study

Strategy is a detailed blueprint for an organization which aims at proper administration and achievement of success. Every organization requires a strategy to map out plans which will enable it to succeed. When organizations do not plan well, they are bound to fail. There is therefore need for strategic management in every organization. Strategic management is the process by which managers develop and implement strategies that may result in a lasting competitive advantage in the long run (Momoh & Itoah, 2023). It is a process that involves the identification and exploitation of opportunities for growth and sustainability. It aims at making a manager to transform an organization for it to achieve its highest ideals. Managers of organizations ought to be strategic and formulate policies that will propel the organization forward amidst other competitors and also to overcome the day today challenges.

Statement of the Problem

Public secondary schools are always in competition to produce excellent results in national examinations. On the overall, KCSE results in many secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub County have remained low, with the mean grade of the sub county being 3.5 in year 2023. (Kibwezi sub county Education Office, 2023). The maximum KCSE National mean grade score is 12, and the least grade score necessary for university admission is 7.0. This suggests that many students in Kibwezi sub county score badly on national exams, with just a small percentage qualifying for public universities. A research conducted on teacher-level determinants of academic accomplishment on academic performance conducted in Kenya's Mumias and Kuria East Sub-Counties by Ejakait, Olel, Othuon, and Khasenye (2016) concluded that lack of motivation, retention, self-efficacy, and self-regulation were identified as important factors impacting academic progress among elementary school students.

Kirui (2012) studied the factors affecting effectiveness of strategic planning in secondary school administration in Kericho District. According to the report, they included non-existent training for Head teachers and teachers, strategic planning ability, and time arising from overloaded teaching schedule. The survey also discovered that schools lacked enough support from key stakeholders, and that frequent changes in head teachers had an impact on teaching and learning tasks. It also discovered that some principals lacked vision, and that schools in general lacked the financial resources to cover all of the procedures necessary for developing strategic plans.

Gathumbi, Migosi & Mwania (2015) conducted a research on teacher empowerment and performance of students in KCSE among public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub County. The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers professional development and KCSE performance among the students. Based on the findings, the study

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concluded that empowering teachers significantly especially through in-service training influenced KCSE performance. The extent of studies attributed to the influence of strategic management practices on learner performance in public schools in Kibwezi sub county, Makueni County is scanty. This study closed the gap by investigating the influence of strategic management practices on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub county, Makueni County, Kenya.

Specific Objective

To determine the effect of stakeholder participation on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub county, Makueni county.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research will be important to the government, the education sector and to other stakeholders. To the government, it will assist in formulating education policies aimed at improving the general performance of students in Public Secondary Schools in regions similar to Kibwezi Sub county. To the school management, it will be both a source of information and reference point on the strategic formulation process. It will assist them in the formulation of the mission, vision and the core values of their institutions.

Scope of the Study

The study confined itself to investigating the influence of strategic management practices on academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub county of Makueni county. The Study specifically looked at the role of stakeholders participation in academic performance, how resource allocation affects academic performance, effects of performance monitoring and controls on academic performance, and the effect of ICT integration in teaching on academic performance.

Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of the study were that the respondents gave accurate and reliable information and its analysis will give reliable findings for future reference. Another assumption was that the data collection and analysis tools provided accurate results about the study, and that the data collection tool was not biased in any way.

Stakeholder Participation and Students Academic Performance

According to Uleanya, Gamede and Kutame (2020), education stakeholders are people or organisations who have influence in the daily operation of happenings in institutions of learning. Rahman and Chowdhury (2019), further state that education stakeholders include parents, community leaders, all education officers, as well as all teachers such as head and assistant teachers. According to Zollinger (2011), the stakeholder approach became popular in the mid-1980s as a tool for advancing public interests. Since then, the stakeholder notion has grown in favour among academics, the media, and business leaders. The main aim of stakeholder management is to mediate and incorporate interests of shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and other groups in a way that ensures the firm's long-term success.

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Stakeholder involvement has grown in importance as a means of transferring ethics to management practice and strategy.

A study conducted in South Africa by Gamende and Uleanya (2021) on the impact of stakeholders participation in schools showed that lack of shareholders involvement in running of the schools had contributed to poor academic achievements of the learners. The study went on to state that the role of education stakeholders such as community members, leaders, industries, government at various levels, parents of learners, learners themselves, amongst others is pivot, thus the need for collaborative efforts from all education stakeholders in ensuring the achievement of the desired success in schools. The study recommended that roles of specific stakeholders should be clearly stated, and all stakeholders should know the different expectations and action point to be carried out. They should be made to give reports following tasks assigned to them during their regular meetings.

Nicholas (2000) investigated the dynamics of stakeholders' engagement in school management in Karachi, Pakistan. The findings demonstrated that individual, institutional, and group dynamics had a substantial impact on stakeholders' engagement. For effective stakeholder engagement, the research advised broader participation in policy creation and the use of a participatory management strategy. A study carried out in Uganda by Elepu et al (2023) on stakeholder participation in academic performance among primary schools in Alebtong District concluded that stakeholders participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of academic programmes had a significant effect on pupils academic performance. The study recommended that school authorities should continue their efforts to encourage parents and other significant stakeholders to take interest and participate in education matters in schools.

In a research conducted by Gichohi (2015) on stakeholder participation in schools in the twenty-first century for academic success in Nakuru Municipality public elementary Schools, the findings demonstrated that most schools welcomed stakeholder participation. The research showed that school management committees were actively engaged in managerial decision in schools. These findings are consistent with another study conducted by Karimi, Mulwa, and Kyalo (2020) who investigated how stakeholder engagement affects the performance of literacy and numeracy on educational programs in Nairobi County. As evidenced by a correlation coefficient that was statistically significant, stakeholder engagement for monitoring and evaluation had a significant impact on the performance of literacy and numeracy on educational programs.

Research Design

A research design refers to the procedures to be employed to achieve the objectives of the research (Mutai, 2001). Chandran (2004) refers a research design as the arrangement and analysis of data in a way that combines their relationship with the purpose of the research to the economy of procedures. The descriptive research design gives a description of the state of affairs as they exist at present (Kothari, 2018). Kothari also asserts that a good research design is characterized by flexibility, appropriateness, efficiency and economy. The method also has a high external validity since the respondents are in their natural environment hence no variable are manipulated.

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Target Population

Mugenda (2003), defines a population as a group of individuals, items or objects that have at least one characteristic in common and from which samples are drawn. It is also the aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of specification (Chein, 1981). The study targeted the school principals, Heads of Departments and teachers. The area of study was Kibwezi sub-County of Makueni County. The Sub-county has 65 public schools. The study focused on all the 65 schools. Out of the 65 schools, six were extra-county schools, ten are County schools and forty nine were Sub-county schools. The current study targeted 975 respondents from all the 65 public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County of Makueni County. Thus, 65 School principals, 260 academic HoDs, and 650 teachers comprised the target population.

Sampling and Sample Size

A sample is a small portion of a target population which can be used in a study as a representation of that population. Sampling is the selecting of a given number of subjects from a defined population to represent the entire population. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define sampling as the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected is representative of the larger group from which they are selected.

The study adopted simple random sampling to select the schools to be used. Since the target population, N, is known, the study used Yamane, Taro (1967) formula to determine the sample size, n from the study population, N and e, the probability of error (within the desired precision of 0.05 for 95% confidence level).

Data Analysis And Discussion Of Results

Questionnaire Return Rate

Table 1 presents the sampled respondents' questionnaire return rate. Questionnaire return rate according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a 50% response rate is adequate, and a response rate greater than 70% is very good.

Table 1: Response Rate of the Sampled Respondents

Category	Targeted sample (n)	f	Response rate %
Teachers	189	160	84.66
HODs	76	60	78.95
Principals	19	15	78.95
Total	284	235	82.75

Source: Field Data

The study aimed to reach 189 teachers, 76 heads of departments (HODs), and 19 principals, and received responses from 160 teachers, 60 HODs, and 15 principals. This indicates a return rate of 84.66% for the teachers, 78.95% for the HODs, and 78.95% for the principals. The researcher considered a response rate of 82.75% sufficient to proceed with data analysis.

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Effect of Stakeholder Participation on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Table 2 presents the effect of stakeholder participation on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub County, Makueni County.

The findings presented in Table 2 regarding our stakeholders' involvement in raising funds for school physical structures show that six respondents (40.00%) agreed. This means that less than half (40.00%) of the principals supported the idea that their stakeholders raised funds for school physical structures. Concerning the statement about parents showing interest in students' discipline, the results indicate that four respondents (26.67%) strongly agreed, and nine (60.00%) agreed. This suggests that the majority (86.67%) of the principals supported the statement that their parents show interest in students' discipline. Regarding the statement about parents and teachers motivating students to work hard, the results show that nine respondents (60.00%) strongly agreed, and five (33.33%) agreed. This indicates that the majority (93.33%) of the principals supported the idea that their parents and teachers motivate students to work hard.

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Table 2: Effect of Stakeholder Participation on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

		SD	D	MA	A	SA	Pearson Chi-Square Test
Our stakeholders raised funds for school physical structures	<i>f</i> (%)	1 6.67	0 0.00	8 53.33	6 40.00	0 0.00	Chi ² =6.01 P=0.739
Our parents show interest in students' discipline	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	2 13.33	9 60.00	4 26.67	Chi ² =4.24 P=0.644
Our parents and teachers motivate students to work hard	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	1 6.67	5 33.33	9 60.00	Chi ² =16.91* P=0.010
Our stakeholders evaluate academic programmes	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	1 6.67	2 13.33	10 66.67	2 13.33	Chi ² =20.76*** P=0.054
Our parents show interest in students academics	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	2 13.33	8 53.33	5 33.33	Chi ² =13.18** P=0.040
The government and parents funds co-curricular activities	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	1 6.67	11 73.33	3 20.00	Chi ² =7.11 P=0.311
Our stakeholders are involved in school key decision making processes	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	3 20.00	10 66.67	2 13.33	Chi ² =12.22 P=0.201
Students academic performance can be improved when stakeholders are involved	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	1 6.67	4 26.67	10 66.67	Chi ² =8.063 P=0.234
The school has recorded high performance when teachers are involved in key decision making	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	0 0.00	1 6.67	3 20.00	11 73.33	Chi ² =3.55 P=0.738
The suppliers are consulted when their payments may delay	<i>f</i> (%)	0 0.00	1 6.67	7 46.67	6 40.00	1 6.67	Chi ² =11.61 P=0.236

Note: *, **, *** indicates 1%, 5 % and 10% level of significance respectively

Source: Researcher, 2024

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When it comes to the statement about stakeholders evaluating academic programs, the results show that two respondents (13.33%) strongly agreed, and 10 (66.67%) agreed. This means that the majority (80.00%) of the principals supported the statement that their stakeholders evaluate academic programs. Similarly, the statement about parents showing interest in students' academics received support from the majority of principals, with five respondents (33.33%) strongly agreeing, and eight (53.33%) agreeing, resulting in a total of 86.66% support. The statement about the government and parents funding co-curricular activities also received strong support, with three respondents (20.00%) strongly agreeing, and 11 (73.33%) agreeing, totaling 93.33% support.

In terms of stakeholders being involved in key decision-making processes, the results show that two respondents (13.33%) strongly agreed, and 10 (66.67%) agreed, with a total of 80.00% support. The statement that students' academic performance can be improved when stakeholders are involved received strong support, with 10 respondents (66.67%) strongly agreeing, and four (26.67%) agreeing, totaling 93.34% support. The statement about the school recording high performance when teachers are involved in key decision-making received support from the majority of principals, with 11 respondents (73.33%) strongly agreeing, and three (20.00%) agreeing, resulting in 93.33% support. Lastly, the statement about consulting suppliers when their payments may be delayed received support from less than half of the principals, with one respondent (6.67%) strongly agreeing and six (40.00%) agreeing, totalling 46.67% support.

In addition, the results in Table 4.2 from the Pearson Chi-square test produced statistics whose probability (P) were less than the conventional values of one percent (0.01), five percent (0.05), and 10 percent (0.10) for only three indicators out of the 10 indicators. In particular, the Pearson Chi-square test statistics whose probability (P) was less than the conventional value of one percent (0.01) indicates that students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County was significantly affected if our parents and teachers motivate students to work hard (P = 0.010). Furthermore, the Pearson Chi-square test statistics whose probability (P) was less than the conventional value of five percent (0.05) indicates that students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County was significantly affected if our parents show interests in students academics (P = 0.040).

Moreover, the Pearson Chi-square test statistics whose probability (P) was less than the conventional value of 10 percent (0.10) indicates that students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County was significantly affected if our stakeholders evaluate academic programmes (P = 0.054). This indicates that stakeholder participation was associated with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County, Makueni County. Hence, stakeholder participation did affect students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County, Makueni County. Similar sentiments were echoed by one of the principals who observed that;

“Schools need to involve stakeholders in all academic issues for improvement”, and another principal who noted that;

“keen interest of stakeholders in academic performance of schools automatically leads to improved results”.

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The current study findings agrees with those in South Africa by Gamende and Uleanya (2021) who established that the impact of stakeholders' participation in schools showed that lack of shareholders involvement in running of the schools had contributed to poor academic achievements of the learners. In addition the study conforms to those deduced in Uganda by Elepu et al (2023) which concluded that stakeholder's participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of academic programmes had a significant effect on pupils academic performance.

Summary of Study Findings

The majority (86.67%) of the principals supported the statement that their parents show interest in students' discipline. Additionally, 93.33% of the principals supported the idea that their parents and teachers motivate students to work hard. Furthermore, 80.00% of the principals supported the statement that their stakeholders evaluate academic programs. Similarly, the statement about parents showing interest in students' academics received support from the majority of principals, resulting in a total of 86.66% support. The statement about the government and parents funding co-curricular activities also received strong support, totaling 93.33% support. In terms of stakeholders being involved in key decision-making processes, a total of 80.00% support was recorded. The statement that students' academic performance can be improved when stakeholders are involved received strong support, totaling 93.34%. The statement about the school recording high performance when teachers are involved in key decision-making received support from the majority of principals, resulting in 93.33% support. It was found that students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County was significantly affected when parents and teachers motivated students to work hard, showed interest in students' academics, and when stakeholders evaluated academic programs. This indicates that stakeholder participation was not significantly associated with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County, Makueni County. Hence, stakeholder participation did not affect students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County, Makueni County.

Conclusion

The conclusions which emanate from the established study findings. The parents take an interest in student discipline, and both parents and teachers motivate students to work hard. Meanwhile, stakeholders evaluate academic programs. Similarly, parents are involved in students' academics, the government and parents fund co-curricular activities, and stakeholders are involved in key decision-making processes. When stakeholders are involved, students' academic performance can be improved, and the school records high performance when teachers are involved in key decision-making. The academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County was significantly affected when parents and teachers motivated students to work hard, showed interest in students' academics, and when stakeholders evaluated academic programs.

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Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- i. There is need for our parents and teachers motivate students to work hard, our parents show interests in student's academics, and our stakeholders evaluate academic programmes.
- ii. In order to improve students' academic performance there is need to ensure all students have calculators, teaching and learning materials are adequate, facilities in the Agriculture store/room are adequate, and ensure there is an alternative power supply in case of power blackouts.
- iii. To enhance students' academic performance, teachers should update all their professional documents, ensure early completion of the syllabus for proper revision, and supervise students during prep time.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study suggests the following as areas for further research;

- a) Future studies may need to be conducted to ascertain the effects of various factors on students' academic performance in private school settings.
- b) There is a need for a study to be conducted showing the various effects of the respective indicators on students' academic performance through a structural equation model.

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