

Functions of the Board for Effective Corporate Governance in Early Childhood Education; Bahati Division, Kenya

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Abstract: *Proper application of corporate principals enables achievement of stated goals in management of Early Childhood Education (ECE). The study draws a correlation between adoption of principals of corporate governance and performance of the ECE sector. This study sought to examine function of the board for effective corporate governance in (ECE) management in Bahati Division, Kenya. This was suitable in this study as it helped the researcher establish the existing levels of compliance with principals of corporate governance at the ECE schools and their influence on performance. It further allowed identification of standards and norms with which to compare the stakeholder's involvement in proper management of ECE in the Division. This eventually impacts curriculum implementation. The target population was 41 ECE centers in Bahati Sub-County and 123 teachers in the same area. A sample of 10 pre-school teachers, 10 pre-school head teachers and 10 preschool committee members was taken for the study. A pilot study was carried out on a different set of respondents to better plan for the research. The test-retest procedure was used for testing reliability and it yielded favorable results to warrant reliance on the data collected and its findings. Qualitative and quantitative data was obtained through questionnaires. This was further analyzed and presented through narratives, tables and graphs. The study revealed that majority of the Pre-School teachers felt that skills mix – knowledge and experience had an influence with distribution of assignments and duties with regard to management structure of ECE with a mean of 3.0000. This study on the principles of corporate governance in ECE management in Bahati division Nakuru north sub-county has opened more research avenues in order to improve and benefit with increased investment in. In agreement with Crawford (2007), the management ought to be able to fulfill its duties and responsibilities irrespective of those who do not act in accordance to stated guidelines. The study recommends the Involvement of all stakeholders in all aspects of the management of ECE as a way of observing adherence to principals of corporate governance.*

Keywords: Bboard, corporate governance, early childhood education, Nakuru County, Kenya

1. Introduction

In today's 'corporate' climate, the issue of 'governance' is a hot topic and one which every school need to consider in the context of its unique environment. There is a time when for many schools, and corporations, governance issues are considered to be little more than warm and fuzzy 'motherhood statements' full of good intent but of little hard, practical application (OECD, 2004).

By implication, ECE centers should at all-time embrace principles of corporate governance (Aglietta *et al*, 2005) in their management. Legislators, courts and insurers, go through more stringent demands from stakeholders such as schools or organizations, whether major public corporation or a member of the "not for profit" sector, to implement and integrate "governance practices" throughout its organization. The OECD (2004) explains that the essence of the School Board's governance is to oversee all aspects of the school, appoint the Principal and ensure a strategic approach to the School's future by setting major objectives, policy frameworks and strategies. The school board must also monitor adherence to systems of risk management, ensure compliance with legal obligations, and, undertake periodic performance reviews. However, it is not the Board's responsibility to become involved in the day to day management and operations of the School. This is the responsibility of the Principal and the school's senior management team.

The globalization of the educational sector within this context has ushered in an era (Clarke, 2009) where the

traditional dimensions of corporate governance defined within local laws, regulations and national priorities are becoming increasingly challenged by circumstances and events having an International Impact.

The performance of ECE in the study area is minimal and could be due to lack of adherence to principles of corporate governance. This portends a great risk in realization of Vision 2030 and the Millennium development goals and leads to the research question; what is the extent of application of principles of corporate governance in the management of ECE programs in Bahati Division?

The purpose of this study was to examine functions of the board for effective corporate governance in ECE management in Bahati Division, Nakuru North Sub-County. This study was guided by human relations theory postulated by Mary Parker Fouet, Felton Mayo and Frite Rotuelisberger between 1920 and 1930 also advocated by Okumbe (1998). This theory is useful in developing and maintaining dynamic and harmonious relationships for the success of an institution. The human relation theory stresses in its principles that workers are more comfortable when they perform as members of a team rather than as individuals, specialization creates efficiency and informal leaders need to be recognized and be given responsibilities. Since, educational managers should be people oriented, this theory therefore, finds its place in this current study (Clarke, 2009). The findings of this study are likely to help head teachers, teachers, and ministry of Education and Policy makers establish the effects of principles of corporate governance in ECE management. This is key in decision making towards

improvement corporate governance and thus academic performance. The findings may further help the school administration find ways of adhering to principles of corporate governance thus ensuring that their children are properly supported by the schools management to enable them perform better.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study used descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey is useful (Low and Albert, 2008) when the researcher wants to describe specific behavior as it occurs in the environment. The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables (Khalid 2011); he/she can only report what has happened or what is happening. It also includes attempts by researchers to discover causes even when they cannot control the variables (Kothari, 2004).

2.2 Target Population

The study targeted all 41 public ECE centers in Bahati Sub-County. It involved all managers of the 41 ECE centers and 123 teachers.

2.3 Sampling Techniques

Sample size refers to specific number of individuals or cases that are used as the representative of the target population. Mugenda & Mugenda, (2003) defines sampling as the process of selecting the subject or cases to be included in the study as representative of the target population. Purposeful sampling was done.

2.4 Sample Size

The researcher took 10 preschools head teachers, 10 pre-school committee members and 10 pre-school teachers. This ensured that each member of the target population had equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. This ensured that the sample was representative of the total population under study.

2.5 Data Collection tools and Procedures

In this study, questionnaires, Focus Group Discussion and Observation Checklist were used. The questionnaire was preferred because the respondents were literate and it is easy for them to fill in within a short period of time. As the head teacher filled in the questionnaire, the researcher conducted focus group discussion with the teachers selected in the respective school. At the same time the researcher made observations and recorded them respectively.

2.6 Instrument validity and reliability

Validity is the extent to which research instruments measure what they are intended to measure, Oso & Onen (2008). In this study, the pilot study was done in two schools that were not involved in the actual study. The researcher constructed instruments in accordance with the objectives of the study,

theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the study. To test the reliability, the test-retest was used. The questionnaires were given to the respondents to fill in and then after one week, the same questionnaires were given again to the same respondents. After the two tests are administered, the Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to determine whether the scores on the test correlate. A correlation coefficient of 0.7 was considered appropriate (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

3. Results and Discussion

From the questionnaires distributed to pre-school teachers, head teachers and school committee, a 100% response was achieved.

Pre-school teacher's age

The resultant responses are explained in the table 3.1

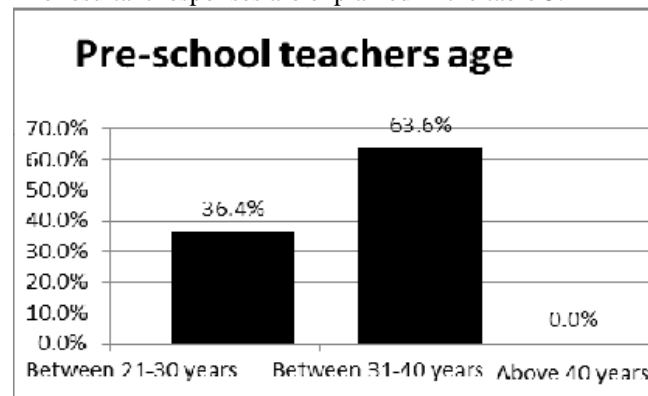


Figure 3.1: Pre-school teachers' age

Figure 3.1 shows that majority of the parents were aged between 31 - 40 years of age (63.6%) and thus were mature and experienced in the education system. This is a clear indication that they are well informed on effects of principles of corporate governance on management of ECE in Bahati division Nakuru County thus best for the case study. The rest were between ages of 21 – 30 years representing 36.4% of the respondents.

In the study, the researcher needed responses on the extent to which Pre-School teachers agreed with the following statements on functions of board of management in their school In order to investigate the functions of board of management, case study being Bahati, Nakuru North sub-county, the study used a Likert-type scale in which 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 represented continuum scores for *Very great extent*, *Great extent*, *Moderate extent*, *Little Extent* and *No extent* respectively.

These enabled the tabulation and interpretation of the responses from the research instrument. The main statistics derived are mean, standard deviation and variance. The mean illustrated the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagreed with the statements put forth on functions of board of management with regard to corporate governance framework. This is well elaborated in the table 3.1 and narratives which shows the respondents and the statistics.

Table 3.1: Functions of Board of management

Functions of Board of management	N	Std.		
		Mean	Deviation	Variance
Tendering	11	3.4545	1.03573	1.073
Staff discipline	11	4.5455	0.82020	0.673
Performance	11	4.1818	1.25045	1.564
Staff Meetings	11	2.5455	1.50756	2.273
Adherence to Government Policies	11	2.5455	1.12815	1.273

Table 3.1 above shows that in primary schools in Bahati, Nakuru North sub-county majority of the respondents felt that board of management influences performance with regard to corporate governance with a mean of 4.1818 whereas the standard deviation of 1.25045 implied that the results recorded could be relied upon in making generalizations about the study. Another portion of respondents with mean of 4.5455 felt that staff discipline has everything to do with how board of management functions in schools though recording a standard deviation of 0.82020.

Pre-School teachers' view on distribution of assignment and duties in school

In the study, the researcher asked with regard to management structure of ECE in the school, to what extent do the Pre-School teachers agreed with the following statements on distribution of assignment and duties in their school.

Table 3.2: Distribution of assignments and duties

Distribution of assignments and duties.	N	Std.		
		Mean	Deviation	Variance
Internal Management regulation	11	2.8182	1.60114	2.564
Operating principle	11	2.6364	1.50151	2.255
Collective delegation of powers	11	1.9091	0.83121	0.691
Skills mix – Knowledge and experience	11	3.0000	1.48324	2.200
Assessment of school financial position	11	2.0909	1.22103	1.491

Table 3.2 above shows that in primary schools in Bahati, Nakuru North sub-county majority of the Pre-School teachers felt that skills mix – knowledge and experience had an influence with distribution of assignments and duties with regard to management structure of ECE with a mean of 3.0000 whereas a standard deviation of 1.48324 was recorded. Another portion with mean of 2.8182 and 2.6364 felt that internal management regulations and operating principle respectively had an influence on the distribution of assignments and duties in the schools; this recorded a standard deviation of 1.60114 and 1.50151 respectively.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

All the questionnaires distributed to Pre-School teachers were collected representing 100% response rate. Another 10 questionnaires were distributed to Head teachers and also collected all 10 representing 100% response from head teachers. Majority of Head teachers in the study were male at 60% while female were 40%. There was much larger percentage of male with the school committee, representing 80% while female respondents remained at 20%. To ensure effective corporate governance, the institutions have to clearly outline the division of labor especially among

employees and management. The study findings showed that majority of Pre-School teachers felt that having staff discipline enhanced effective corporate governance, whereas head teachers and school committee on the same line majority felt that adherence to governance policies enhance effective governance in ECE management. As the study results show, there is clear guidelines to outline the division of labor, especially among supervisory employees and especially the board of management. This study on the principles of corporate governance in ECE management in Bahati division Nakuru north sub-county has opened more research avenues in order to improve and benefit with increased investment in.

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