

Research Article

Boards of Management Instructional Management Practices on School Development in West Pokot County

Kapchanga Martin^{*1}, Kiprop Julius Maiyo² and Kipkenei Simon³

^{1,2&3}School of Educational Planning and Management, Kibabii University, Kenya

^{*}Corresponding Author Email: martinkapchanga@gmail.com

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Abstract: There are variances in terms of school development of most public secondary schools in Kenya despite there being a policy establishing Boards of Management charged with the responsibilities such as setting vision, establishing goals, developing policies, allocating resources and assuring accountability. The purpose of this study therefore was to investigate the effectiveness of Boards of Management Instructional Management Practices on school development in West Pokot County, Kenya. The study was based on open systems theory in operationalizing the variables in the study. The target population was all the 120 principals of public secondary schools, 1800 BoM members, 1 County Director of Education and 4 Sub-County Directors of Education officers which totaled 1925. A suitable sample of 332 respondents was determined through the Yamane formula. The study applied mixed research approach with descriptive survey design. The study utilized simple random and purposive sampling techniques in identifying a suitable study sample of 332 respondents for data collection. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Reliability of the instruments was determined through a test-retest method and a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of at least 0.7 was computed, which was considered sufficient for use of the questionnaires in the actual study. The findings of the study were presented in tables and figures. The study revealed that the mean scores BoM instructional practices and school development was average. However, inferential statistics showed that, Board of Management's instructional practices had significant positive influence on school development with a ($B=.486, p<.001$).

Keywords: School Development, Boards of Management, Instructional Management.

Introduction

In the United States of America, the Schools' Boards of Management have considerable influence over education decisions, such as the management of resources. A school board in the USA has the following responsibilities: Develop policies and regulations, control operations of schools, control school finances, equipment purchase and maintenance, and resource management. The school boards initiate educational policies at the local level and have a responsibility towards excellence in education (World Bank Group, 2014). In England, United Kingdom (UK) and across Northern Ireland, which are benchmark countries for students' achievements, BoMs with similar roles to those in the US were found as they managed strategic planning, staff engagement and dismissal, administration, accountability, staff review and assessment (Department for Education (DfE), 2013). In addition, they also monitored and evaluated performance, approved the school budget, set strategic objectives, appointed the head teacher, acted as crucial companion who provided support and cohesion between the community and the school. Whereas there is information in the United Kingdom on the role of BoMs and school development in terms of student achievement, there is paucity of information on the role of BoMs in West Pokot County and their influence on school development, a gap that this study sought to fill.

Heystek (2011) outlines the education governance structure in South Africa. Heystek indicates that in the post-apartheid South Africa, different leaders have focused on increasing the literacy levels in the country. Individuals mandated to lead different departments at the provincial level are responsible for training board members on the fulfillment of their mandate (Heystek, 2011). There is an elaborate structure or program to orient individuals into these roles. Otherwise, appointment of a less knowledgeable and skilled individual especially among parents affects the effectiveness of the board. The responsibilities of the board include the management of school funds generated from student fees, determining the feasible projects and determining the short-term and long-term education objectives of the school. The objectives must align with the national government's objectives of providing quality education. Hence, school governing boards in South Africa enjoy considerable power compared to their counterparts in Morocco.

Osei-Owusu and Sam (2012) conducted a study on assessing the role of school management committees in improving quality teaching and learning in Ashanti Mampong Municipal basic schools, Ghana-West Africa. The findings of the study indicated that school management committees were ineffective in the monitoring and supervising head teachers, teachers and pupils' attendance. Whereas the study in Nigeria provided evidence on the role of school management committees in improving quality teaching, there is paucity of information on the influence of Board of Management strategies on school development in West Pokot County, Kenya, a gap that this study sought to fill.

There are numerous functions assigned to BOM of basic education institutions by the Basic Education Act in sub-section 59. For purposes of this study, the functions have been grouped into four namely: financial management practices; human resource management practices; physical and material management practices and students' welfare management practices. Under financial management boards should oversee tasks like administration and supervision of school resources; and receive, collect and be accountable for all the funds accrued to the school. Among the human resource practices boards are mandated by the Act to recommend the staffing needs of the school to CEB, to engage, hire and pay the support staff as required by the school (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

Board of Management Instructional Management Practices and School Development

A study commissioned by the World Bank found out that most of the public schools suffered deficits in terms of the requisite teacher numbers (Nzomo, Onsume & Obiero 2012). In most instances the schools were helpless in the sense that they relied on government subsidy to finance their activities which entails recruitment of teachers to bridge government shortfalls. The need to have teachers employed by the BoMs is at times overlooked owing to other pressing demands within the schools in form of the recurrent expenditure needs. This exposes the BoMs to the risk of projecting an image of failure due to happenings beyond their control (Nzomo *et al.*, 2012).

According to Francalanci (2001) school Boards of Management are a bridge between the parents and the school. This arrangement enables the parents, who are key stakeholders in the school community, to be represented in the decision-making processes which influence instructional processes of a given school. The study argues that to a large extent, the difference between performances of two schools lie in the quality of the school management boards. Further, through representation in the Board of Management reduce possible conflicts among the staff that may hinder the good performance of the respective schools. Francalanci (2001) further draws examples from the US where the policy set high standards for qualifications for one to make it to the school governing board with an aim of ensuring high standards of quality decision making process which impact on Instructional Management Practices of the school.

A study by Hou, *et al.*, (2019) which looked into the 'impact of Instructional Management Practices on high school student academic achievement in China,' indicated that after controlling for student background, school context, and principal demographics, overall Instructional Management Practices showed a significantly moderating influence on the relationship between high school entrance scores

and college entrance scores for students. Regarding the four different dimensions, different influence trends were observed. The dimensions of managing instruction, defining the school mission and goals, and promoting teacher development were found to influence students' college entrance scores in both direct and indirect ways; however, no significant impact on students from managing public relations was found in the study.

Nkundabanyanga, Taurigana and Muhwezi (2014) conducted a study on the relationship between Boards of Management and the academic performance of schools. It was evident that the school boards played a central role in enhancing academic performance. As the management unit in the school, the board had the overall responsibility to ensure that the quality of learning offered in the institution met the expected standards. The study further explored the effectiveness of school boards in carrying out various roles including financial management based on its activities and composition. In this case activities included the frequency of meetings, size and financial expertise of the members of the BoM.

The Basic Education Act (2013) explains that the role of the Board of Management is to enhance learning through provision of quality education opportunities to Kenyan children. This is in agreement with Wraggs (2010) who says the role of school management is to oversee curriculum implementation in schools. This means that BoM in every school should support curriculum by monitoring its implementation. Where necessary and possible, the board should facilitate curriculum implementation by looking for ways to supplement the curriculum materials for learners (Mwangi, 2009). Mukiti (2014) held that the BoM should also understand the MoE provisions on facilitation of curriculum implementation. This prepares the members of the management to comprehend the curriculum scope and their roles in facilitation of curriculum implementation. Board of Management member should remain abreast with the developments occurring in the education sector to promote continuous development in their respective institutions. They ought to work closely with the teachers and education officials in their respective jurisdictions who possess knowledge on the curriculum implementation.

A study by Kiptum (2018) on the correlation between Instructional Management Practices and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Baringo County, Kenya showed that a significant relationship exists between the teachers' Instructional Management Practices and students' academic achievement. The students taught by teachers with high Instructional Management Practices abilities tend to perform better in their academic work. A strong association existed between Instructional Management Practices and students' academic achievement and that an outstanding leadership was a key characteristic of schools that perform well in examinations. Instructional Management Practices is such a critical component for curriculum implementation, evaluation and supervision aspects that lead to higher students' academic performances. In order to improve learning and students' achievement, focus should be on the development of qualified and experienced teachers with strong Instructional Management Practices abilities. This is an important assignment for the Boards of Management members.

Studies in Uganda showed that the liaison between teachers and the Boards of Management affected the capacity of schools to provide teaching and instructional materials for pupils, (Nabukenya, 2012). The ability of the public primary schools to undertake their functions with due diligence influenced their access to teaching and instructional materials. In some situations some unscrupulous managers misappropriated funds leading to diminished trust and falling out with the school Boards of Management affecting the supply of instructional materials. This disadvantaged the pupils and caused them to post poor academic performance (Nabukenya, 2012). A survey undertaken by Gakure (2013) showed that the quality of the school management boards put in place in Murang'a County had a correlation with the performance of the respective schools. The study among other negatives established that, majority of the board members hardly attended meetings, implying that majority of the decisions made to run the school was without their voice and contribution. This kind of

misrepresentation the study argues negatively affects school performance. Whereas there is information on the effect of Board of Management representation and school performance, there is a dearth in knowledge on the effect of Board of Management on Instructional Management Practices as a factor that affects school development, a gap that this study endeavoured to fill.

Research Methods

According to (Bryman & Bell, 2011), a research design is a strategy for data collection and analysis to generate answers to the research problem. This study employed a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design was appropriate for this study since the study sought to use both quantitative and qualitative tools through questionnaires and interview schedules respectively (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The design also has enough provision for protection from bias and maximizes reliability (Kothari, 2011). In Article 56, sub-section 2 of the Basic Education Act (2012), the Board of Management (BoM) is allowed to co-opt a person from time to time whom it is satisfied possesses experience and skills that would assist in the discharge of the Board's functions. The study therefore adopted an average of 15 Board members after purposively targeting the principals as key respondents from the upper limit of 17 Board of Management members. Hence, 1800 BoM members were targeted. The study also targeted 4 Sub County education officers and 1 county director of education. Yamane (1967) formula was used to select a sample of respondents from the study population. Quantitative and qualitative tools were used to collect data from the respondents. Quantitative data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics running it in software Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 and presented through frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations.

Findings

Board of Management Instructional Practices and School Development

The study sought to find out the influence of school Board of Management instructional practices on school development in West Pokot County. A response rate of 285 respondents fully filled the questionnaire and returned on whose analysis this study is based. One of the correlates of effective schools according to Lezotte (2010) is strong instructional management, which is characterized by having instructional leaders or teams that are implementing the curriculum instructional practices. Responses were based on a 6-item 5-point scale and mean scores were interpreted using the mean ranges: 4.3-5=strongly agree; 3.5-4.2=agree; 2.6-3.4=undecided; 1.9-2.6=disagree and 1-1.8=strongly disagree. Table 1 shows the mean scores and standard deviations obtained by the respondents on emphasis placed on various aspects of instructional management.

Table 1. Instructional Practices

Statement	N	Mean	SD
My school BoM sets focused set of annual school-wide goals and endeavours to achieve them	285	2.41	1.188
The boards use formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development and protects instructional time	285	2.33	1.503
The board uses analyzed students' academic performance to set achievable performance targets for teachers	285	2.31	1.184
The board has developed a simple and yet efficient channels of communication with the school community which enhances school development	285	2.72	.999
The board supervises curriculum and instruction and gives incentives to teachers and monitors student performance	285	2.56	1.424
The boards through their own initiatives invest in staff professional development	285	2.96	1.694
Average	285	2.55	1.332

From results in Table 1 observed that mean scores obtained from the respondents on the ability of the Boards of Management to invest in staff professional development was of 2.96 (SD= 1.694) indicating that the respondents were undecided on the whether the board invest in staff promotion and development since the range of the means were within 2.6-3.4 showing undecided level of the respondents. Similar results were revealed on the sub variable, the board of management's ability to develop simple and yet efficient channels of communication with the school community which recorded a mean mark of 2.72 (SD= 0.999). Further, the study revealed that majority of respondents 2.56 (SD= 1.424) were in disagreement that the Boards of Management did not have ability to develop capacities among the teaching staff, that the Boards of Managements did not supervise curriculum and instruction and give incentives to teachers and to inspire student performance. The study also revealed that majority of the respondents with a mean of 2.41 (SD= 1.188) were in disagreement that the ability of the Board of Management to set focused set of annual school-wide goals and endeavours to achieve them scored a mean score. The study further revealed that majority of the study respondents were in disagreement that the Boards of Management's did not have the ability to use formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development and protects instructional time and the board ability to analyze students' academic performance hence, were not able to set achievable performance targets with mean scores of 2.33 (SD= 1.503) and 2.31 (SD= 1.184) respectively.

Overall, the mean scores for the all the sub constructs produced an average weighted mean of 2.55 (SD= 1.332) indicating that majority of the respondents were in disagreement that the school boards of management were able to manage Instructional Management Practices in schools in West Pokot County.

From the interview with the County Director of Education, responses indicated that the Boards of Management play a role in instructional practices in public secondary in the West Pokot County. He said for instance:

".... first, the BoMs are well informed and facilitated to perform their functions. Immediately they are inaugurated, induction courses are conducted to build their capacity and one of such areas of induction is on instructional management. Hence, their awareness level in terms of Instructional Management Practices is high. In a scale of 1-5, I give it 3.

When the Sub County Director, Pokot South was asked the same question he said,

".....each Board of Management in every school works through committees. One such committee is the committee on instructional management. This committee is expected to assist the principal in developing better instructional climate both in terms of infrastructure and human resource motivation. It is the committee responsibility to identify the instructional needs and make recommendations to the whole board on how the needs should be met and executed.

When asked how he rated the Board of Management in terms of instructional management, the Sub County Directors scored them at 2.5 which is an average performance.

The same question was posed to the Sub County Director, Pokot West and he had this to say:

"...policy requires every Board of Management to set the vision and mission of the school. One such vision and mission is to succeed in performance. This therefore makes Instructional Management Practices an integral component of the school management. Therefore, it is true that the schools in the Sub County have Boards of Management that are ideally expected to manage the instruction component. The difference lies on the reality in executing this

mandate in schools. When asked how he would rate the BoMs on instructional practices, the director rated them at 3 which is slightly above average score.

Comparing these responses to the descriptive analysis, it is observed that there is a deficit between the ideal in empowering the Boards of Management in Instructional Management Practices and the reality on implementation of the same. Whereas the BoMs are empowered to support the instructional practices, their performance on ground is below average.

The study further conducted inferential statistics to make inferences on this construct of Instructional Management Practices. Linear regression was conducted on the variables to determine whether the independent variable (Instructional Management Practices) could predict the dependent variable (school development). Before linear regression was run to establish if the data set fitted into the linear regression model, tests of linearity were conducted as below:

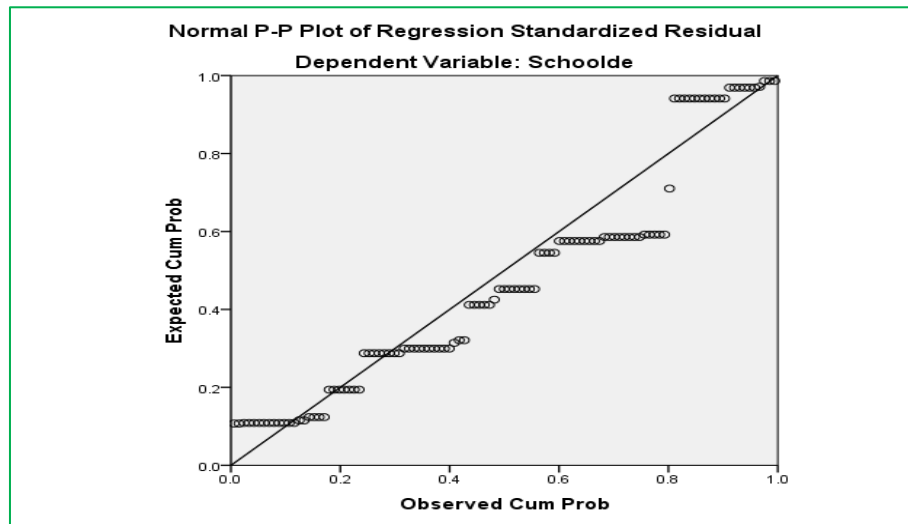


Figure 1. P-P plot of Regression Standardized Residual

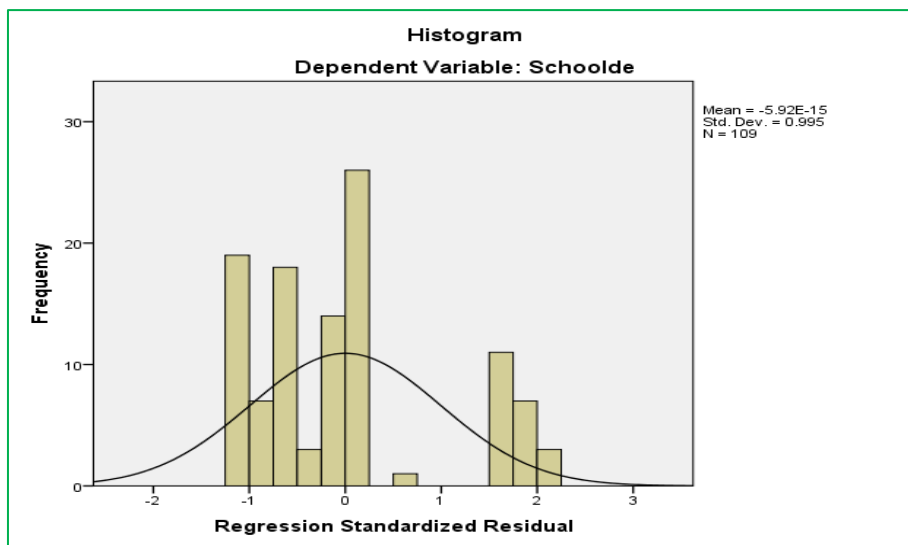


Figure 2. Regression Standardized Residual

Figure 1 indicates that an analysis on the standardized residuals contained no outliers (Standard Residual mean Minimum= -5.92, Standard Residual mean Maximum = 0.995). Residual plots showed homoscedasticity and normality of the residuals. This allowed the study to compute the linear regression and the following was observed. Linear regression was conducted to determine whether the Board of Management's instructional practices could predict school development. The

scatter plot (Figure 1) showed that the relationship between Board of Management's instructional practices influence on school development in West Pokot County was positive and linear and did not reveal any bivariate outliers.

Table 2. ANOVA for Instructional Practices

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.429	1	11.429	198.746	.000 ^b
	Residual	6.153	107	.058		
	Total	17.582	108			
a. Dependent Variable: School development						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Instruct Practices						

Table 2 indicated that Board of Management's instructional practices statistically significantly influenced school development $F(1,107)=198.746$, $p\text{-value}<.001$. Statistically, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant relationship between the Boards of Management Instructional Management Practices and school development in West Pokot County, Kenya," was rejected since $p<0.05$. Thus, the study accepts the alternative hypothesis and concluded that indeed, there is a statically significant relationship between the Boards of Management Instructional Management Practices and school development in West Pokot County.

Table 3. Model Summary for Instructional Practices

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.806 ^a	.650	.647	.23980	.650	198.746	1	107	.000	.163
a. Predictors: (Constant), Instruct Practices										
b. Dependent Variable: School Development										

The R^2 value of .650 shows that about 65.0% of changes in school development is explained by the independent variable while 35.0% is explained by the error term. The adjusted R^2 value of .647 shows that 64.7% changes in school development is explained by the instructional practices while the difference, 35.5% is captured by the error term hence showing a model with a good fit (Cohen, 1988).

Table 4. Coefficients for Instructional Practices

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.486	.078		6.259	.000	.332	.640
	Instructional Practices	.406	.029	.806	14.098	.000	.349	.463
a. Dependent Variable: School Development								

The study further established from the coefficients of regression that the correlation between Board of Management's instructional practices was statistically significant $r(80.6) = .406$, $p<.001$ an indication that schools with strong instructional culture are more likely to realize better development compared to schools with weak instructional culture.

The regression equation for predicting school development from the Board of Management's instructional practices was $Y = .486 + .406X$

Board of Management's instructional practices has positive significant influence on school development in schools ($B=.486$, $p<.001$). The influence is significant as indicated by positive t-value (6.259) and probability value of less than 0.001 (<0.00). In quantitative terms, the regression estimates of 0.029 means that, holding other factors constant, an increase in relational practice effectiveness by one unit, the school development increase by 0.029 units. This study has found that relational practices have significant influence on school development. The study is in line with studies by Francalanci (2001) who argues that schools with functional Board of Management reduce conflicts between and among stakeholders consequently improving school performance by influencing instructional processes of a given school. The study argues that to a large extent, the difference between performances of two schools lie in the quality of the management boards. In the same study Francalanci (2001) maintains that through representation in the Board of Management in Instructional Management Practices reduces possible conflicts among the staff that may hinder the good performance of the respective schools.

Francalanci (2001) further draws examples from the US where the policy sets high standards qualifications for one to make it to the school governing board with an aim of ensuring high standards of quality decision making process which impact on Instructional Management Practices of the school. The study is in tandem with How, *et al.*, (2019) who indicates that after controlling for student background, school context, and principal demographics, overall Instructional Management Practices showed a significantly moderating influence on the relationship between high school entrance scores and college entrance scores for students.

The study is in agreement with studies by Fullam (2010) who posits that where school management bodies attract right people in the management and administration of the schools, there is a likelihood of better achievement of the boards' responsibilities. They argue that the essence of having responsible persons was to ensure that the rightful activities take place and the requisite results from the responsibilities at hand realized. Positions of leadership in Boards of Management thus need to be accorded to informed, experienced and devoted individuals, especially for the realization of teaching and learning supervisory practices. Further, the study is in line with Calvert (2010) who hold that a board that has delegated their functionalities into smaller units like a committee to manage Instructional Management Practices in school can attain better performance than those boards that do not delegate their activities.

The study further agrees with studies by Devariecs and O' Brien (2011) who argue that effective school board can clearly help with the success of their schools. They state that while contributing to the good performance of the school, the council can improve the conditions of training and teaching, and thus the school results of the pupils. It also is reinforcing the governance, support a democratic participation and create links between the schools and the community. Just like the study the current has established that there is a significant positive relationship between Board of Management Instructional Management Practices and school developments, studies by Hou, *et al.*, (2019) which looked into the 'impact of Instructional Management Practices on high school student academic achievement in China,' showed similar results. The study indicated that schools where management boards had active participation, they tended to have better academic performance. The study also established a similar finding by Luboya (2018) who in their study, "school board and participation of the parents: critical analysis of the some experiencing cases across-countries.

The study further agrees with studies by Naidoo (2012) who opine that for school to obtain efficiency in terms of academic performance, they need to enforce and reinforce curriculum standards in schools. Just like the recommendations that this study is making, Naidoo (2012) study recommends that for effective curriculum development supervision ought to be implemented by the school management boards strictly. The study also is in agreement with studies by Devariecs and Brien (2011) who argues in their study that the quality of curriculum implementation by those charged by the law, the School Management Boards ought to exercise a balanced decision-making act. As a key

organ of the school's decision making, the boards ought to provide curriculum instruction leadership. Just like in Uganda, where studies by Nkundabanyanga, Taurigana and Muhwezi (2014) who conducted a study on the relationship between Boards of Management and the academic performance of schools which indicated that there is a significant and positive relationship between school management boards and academic performance. Equally, the study was in line with findings by Kiptum (2018) on whose 'Instructional Management Practices and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Baringo County,' which showed that, a significant relationship exists between the teachers' Instructional Management Practices and students' academic achievement. The study indicated that students taught by teachers with high Instructional Management Practices abilities tend to perform better in their academic work. The current study as well observed a statistically significant positive difference between Instructional Management Practices and school development where academic performance was of the key development indicators.

This study as well is in concurrence to Gakure (2013) whose study showed that the quality of the school management boards put in place in Murang'a County had a correlation with the performance of the respective schools. The study showed that where boards are not engaged in their duties including attending meetings, tend to register poor performance to schools where boards are purposely engaged instructional management. The current study too indicator to a similar argument observing that boards which are kin on implementation of instructional practices register better performance given that there was an observable significant and positive relationship between Instructional Management Practices and school development.

Conclusions

Based on the study findings, this study made the following recommendations. The study concludes that there is a significant positive association between the Board of Management instructional practices and school development in West Pokot County. The study further concludes that the school board instructional practices are critical in addressing public school development challenges in West Pokot County.

Recommendations

- a) The Educational Policy Makers should develop clear policies that guide the Boards of Management on Instructional Management Practices in public secondary schools with the view of enhancing school development.
- b) The study also recommends that there is need to review the current policy on qualifications of Board of Management members to ensure value addition in streamlining Instructional Management Practices in public secondary schools.
- c) Further, the study recommends that the Boards of Management in public secondary schools should set achievable school-wide goals, employ formal and informal methods that have a potential to secure staff input, communicate effectively to the stakeholders, and better their instructional supervision function with an aim improving school development.

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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