

**Boards of Governors' Roles and Management of Government Aided
Secondary Schools in Kyenjojo District, Uganda**

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Abstract

This study sought to establish the relationship between boards of governors' (BOGs) roles and management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District. The objectives were to establish the relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools, to establish the relationship between BOGs' supervisory role and management of government aided secondary schools, to establish the relationship between BOGs' control role and management of government aided secondary schools; and to determine the major predictor of management of government aided secondary schools out of the three aspects of BOGs' roles. A correlational research design was used. A total of 90 respondents drawn from 108 BOGs and nine head teachers were selected as sample for the study using stratified random sampling and census inquiry respectively. The instruments used were questionnaire and interview guide. Quantitative data was analysed using Pearson product-moment correlation and regression, while thematic analysis was used on qualitative data. The study found a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools ($r=.626$, $p=.000$); a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between BOGs' supervisory role and management of government aided secondary schools ($r=.591$, $p=.000$); and a statistically weak positive and significant relationship between BOGs' control role and management of government aided secondary schools ($r=.280$, $p=.015$). All the three aspects of BOGs' roles account for 38.4% of the influence on management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo district (adjusted $r^2=0.384$, $p=.000$). The researchers recommend that BOGs should be well trained in management of schools in order to be effective in their work. Head teachers should not be dictators but create a conducive climate for planning, supervision and control by the BOGs.

Keywords: planning, supervisory, control, role, management

Education reform is top of the agenda of almost every country in the world. School management constitutes part of the school governance structure (OECD, 2012). In many education systems in developing countries like Uganda, Kenya, Pakistan, Burundi, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Congo among others, there are tensions and conflicts in the roles of Boards of Governors (Dunne, Akyeamong & Humphreys, 2013). According to Ramani and Zhimin (2010), role conflict involves real differences in role definitions, expectations or responsibilities between individuals who are interdependent in social systems. If there are ambiguities in role definitions in an organization or unclear boundaries of responsibilities, then the stage is set for interpersonal frictions between the stakeholders.

The Boards of Governors' (BOGs) members are the external managers of schools and they are expected to be in constant touch with the schools, students and teachers as well as other stakeholders. The roles of the board among others include (1) governing the school; (2) administering the property of the school, whether movable or immovable; (3) administering any funds, chattels or things of the school derived by way of fund-raising or auction, on behalf of the school; (4) providing for the welfare and discipline of students and staff, and fixing fees and other charges with the approval of the minister; and (5) performing such other functions as are prescribed by the Education Act (2008) regulations. From the above, it is clear that the board is expected to play crucial roles in secondary schools in Uganda (Education Act, 2008).

Naidu (2011) observed that management includes those processes both mental and physical, which result in other people executing prescribed formal duties for organization's goal achievement. Managing secondary schools in Uganda has been left in the hands of the school head teachers and the BOGs nominated by stakeholders and appointed by the minister of education.

Planning is an on-going process; the effective school board should be able to collaborate with the head teacher to plan for the school development. School head teachers (secretaries to the boards) are mainly entrusted with the supervisory role by the rest of board members as they oversee day to day running of the school.

Controlling involves comparing the performance and standard laid down. Kochhard (2001) points out that an administrator must constantly check on his teams and his performance to see that it corresponds to the standards laid down, the BOGs are expected to carry out the control measures.

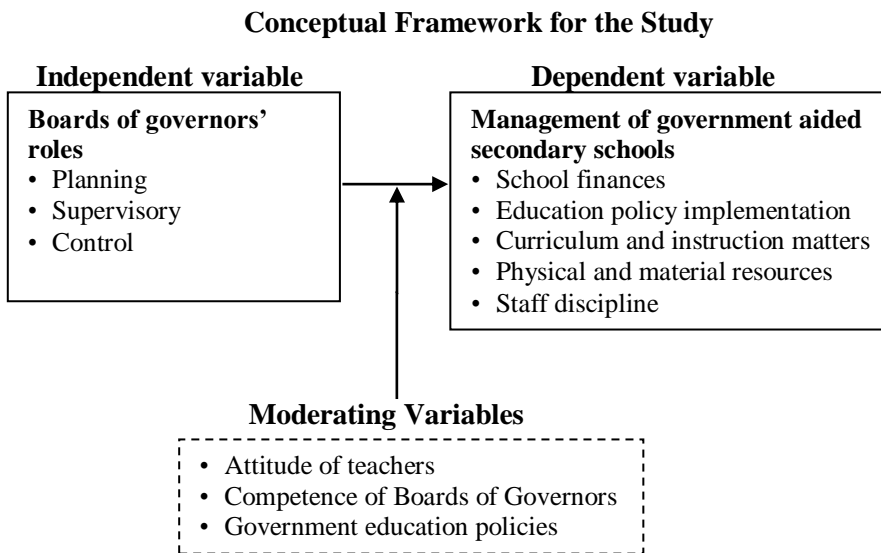


Figure 1. Conceptual framework showing boards of governors' roles and management of government aided secondary schools

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1 focuses on explaining the relationship between BOGs' roles, management of government aided secondary schools and moderating variables. And, when all put together create a relationship with management of any government aided secondary schools. Basing on all the variables pointed out, it was management of government aided secondary school that was of the primary interest for the study under investigation.

According to the conceptual framework above, three constructs of BOGs' roles (planning, supervisory, and control) were used to explain the extent to which they relate with management of government aided secondary schools. If the BOGs perform all these roles effectively, regularly and efficiently, then improved management of any government aided secondary school should be achieved.

Attitude of teachers, competence of BOGs, government education policies would be an added advantage in improving management of any government aided secondary schools. This would improve both financial and non-financial management.

Statement of the Problem

Owing to the Education Act (2008) of Uganda, the BOGs are obliged to manage human and other resources so as to facilitate smooth financial operations, curriculum and instructional implementation, infrastructural development and provision of teaching and learning materials (MOES, 2008). However, according to the MOES committee on review of education reform in

Uganda (2012), the BOGs presently seem not to be effectively playing their roles in many secondary schools including those in Kyenjojo. This is because Kyenjojo district education committee report (2016) revealed concerns over the issues of disagreements between secondary school head teachers and BOGs on management issues. Such disagreements have even led to unrest and strikes in some of the schools. It was upon these issues that this study sought to establish the relationship between BOGs' roles and management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo district. The BOG roles were limited to the three constructs and these included; planning, supervisory and control, while management of government aided secondary schools was limited to financial, policy implementation, curriculum and instruction, physical and material resources and staff discipline.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish the relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools.
- ii. To establish the relationship between BOGs' supervisory role and management of government aided secondary schools.
- iii. To establish the relationship between BOGs' control role and management of government aided secondary schools.
- iv. To determine the major predictor of management of government aided secondary schools out of all the three aspects of BOGs' roles (planning, supervisory and control).

Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between BOGs' supervisory role and management of government aided secondary schools.
- H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between BOGs' control role and management of government aided secondary schools.
- H₀₄: There is no major predictor of management of government aided secondary schools out of all the three aspects of BOGs' roles (planning, supervisory and control).

Methodology

A correlation research design was used in this study. The researcher ensured that both quantitative and qualitative data was collected using survey method. For the quantitative data, a questionnaire survey was used among a sample of 90 Board members. These were randomly stratified from nine schools, while for qualitative data, the interviews were used for in-depth information from 9 head teachers of the 9 government aided schools in Kyenjojo District using the census inquiry method.

The data was analysed using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Also, linear regression analysis was used to determine the major predictor of management of government aided secondary schools out of the three aspects of board of governors' roles (planning, supervisory and control). Thematic analysis was used to analyse data from interviews.

Findings

Objective One: To establish the relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools.

In Table 1, the Pearson product-moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District. The results show a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between BOGs' planning role and management of government aided secondary schools ($r=0.626^{**}$, $p<0.01$). The study concluded that the BOGs' planning role had a statistically positive moderate and significant relationship with management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo district. This means that with planning by the BOGs, there is a positive effect on school management.

Table 1

Pearson Product Moment Correlation between BOGs' Planning Role and Management of Government Aided Secondary Schools

Variables	Computed index	BOGs planning role	School management
BOGs planning role	Pearson Correlation	1	.626**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	86	86
School management	Pearson Correlation	.626**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	86	86

Source: Primary Data (2018)

This finding indicates that the BOGs are important in improving management of government aided secondary schools but not the fact that the BOGs are perfect, effective and efficient in performing the planning roles. These results mean that the BOGs have the ability to stimulate better school management if the right processes were employed by the managers on the ground and mitigated with the schools' concerns.

Also, if the BOGs regularly, effectively and efficiently participated in making school development plans; contributed towards staff development; involved in implementation of education policies, curriculum and instruction issues; and maintained physical facilities, they would enhance management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District. Similarly, Mutende (2013) found that the BOGs have a direct role and influence on the management of public secondary schools. This they achieve by planning, setting goals,

strategic planning, development of work plans and setting targets to achieve help BOGs to be focused in their roles.

During interviews when one head teacher was asked about how often he involved BOGs in planning, he revealed that:

BOGs are not always involved in curriculum and instruction implementation. Most of the members have no significant influence in the management of school affairs so I don't see any need of involving them in planning. First of all, most of the members appointed on the school board are not highly learned and are ignorant of their roles so why should we consult them on issues like school development plan as well as staff development?

Another head teacher said:

Most of the BOG members are not functional so as a head teacher, I am left to handle everything and they just wait to hear reports. Most times I intentionally don't involve majority of the board members because of the costs that would be involved in meeting transport refunds, airtime and sitting allowances. So I quickly fix most issues including maintenance of physical facilities without the knowledge of the school board members.

Another head teacher remarked:

The board members may not be aware of their roles and they don't interpret their roles properly. For instance some of the curriculum implementation issues are professional and technical in nature and so should be handled by the head teacher who runs the school on day-to-day basis. Some board members are incompetent, semi-literate, and irrelevant and have no idea about school planning and management. Appointments to the board should be determined by education qualifications to make them relevant.

According to most of the head teachers, the majority of members lacked the knowledge about the curriculum and instruction in addition to lack of relevant training. One head teacher preferred to fix most issues by himself, like maintenance of physical facilities. Such scenarios can lead to leakages in school management due to the fact that if head teachers decide to perform school duties without regular involvement of the school board, they are likely to go astray just because nobody is there to advise them. The interview results are consistently in line with the quantitative data. Almost all the key informants raised similar concern as regards BOG planning role and school management. This implies that if the BOG members as advisers and overseers of schools are infrequently and irregularly involved in planning; better school management is

likely to cease. This calls for a need to have members of the school boards to be well inducted on their roles and responsibilities at inauguration.

Objective Two: To establish the relationship between BOGs’ supervisory role and management of government aided secondary schools.

Results in Table 2 show the Pearson product-moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between BOGs’ supervisory role and management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District. The results indicate that the two variables have a statistically positive moderate and significant relationship ($r=0.591^{**}$, $p<0.000$). The relationship was statistically significant because the calculated p- value was less than 0.05 thus rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 2
Pearson Product Moment Correlation between BOGs’ Supervisory Role and School Management

Variables		Computed index	BOGs supervisory role	School management
BOGs supervisory role	Pearson Correlation		1	.591**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N		86	86
School management	Pearson Correlation		.591**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N		86	86

Source: Primary Data (2018)

The study concluded that BOGs’ supervisory role had a statistically positive moderate and significant relationship with management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo district. This implies that with proper supervision by the BOGs, school management is efficient and the reverse is true. The result was in consonance with the findings by Wandyetye (2017) in Mbale District who found that school governing committee supervisory role significantly affected performance of government secondary schools.

During interviews when one head teacher was asked about the frequency and regularity by which the BOGs performed their supervisory role, he revealed that:

Most of the board members are not highly learned and therefore have no capacity to effectively supervise teachers, head teachers and students. A number of them don’t have management skills, how do you expect them to supervise teaching and learning processes and above it all carry out the supervisory and management role effectively?

Another head teacher said:

I can even complete the whole term when majority of the board members do not visit or even supervise school activities, they only come to claim for money and ask many questions regarding USE grant fund, so they rarely mind much about non-financial issues of the school.

To add to the above statement, another head teacher claimed:

Resentments have always occurred in my school regarding BOGs' roles in education in general because they are regarded as non-professional and lay people operating in a foreign territory of professionals.

Yet another head teacher remarked:

Involving the BOGs is one of the key pillars government considers in enhancing quality education in secondary schools, but most of them lack the management skills; for example they lack understanding of their roles, they lack operational guidelines and always want to have more control and power on the management of finances.

Some other head teacher revealed:

The BOGs ineffectively and inefficiently supervise schools because of lack of commitment, skills and abilities for performing certain roles; so I rarely involve them in supervisory matters of the school.

Another head teacher noted that:

A good number of BOG members are not aware of their powers and supervisory roles and so I have a low opinion of them; I cannot involve such category in supervising school activities.

Interview responses about the supervisory role of the BOGs highlight the low opinion the sample head teachers had, citing lack of skills, commitment, and interest in money or allowances, regarding the BOGs. All the head teachers interviewed confirmed that board members only go to their schools on invitation.

Much as BOGs involvement in management of schools is underpinned by the assumption that they would contribute positively to school management and therefore the quality of education would improve and that their roles are driven by legislative reforms, questions have been raised in relations to their commitments, skills, abilities and capacity to perform certain roles. Such phenomenon could perhaps be creating gaps for conflicts in schools thus poor working relationship with BOGs and schools. The responses are consistently in line with the quantitative data. Almost all the key informants raised similar concern as regards BOGs' supervisory role and school management. This implies that if the boards of governors do not perform the supervisory role as expected, enhanced school management is likely to cease. This call for a lot of

support to enable BOGs builds capacity to effectively supervise secondary schools.

Objective Three: To establish the relationship between BOGs’ control role and management of government aided secondary schools.

Results in Table 3 indicate the Pearson product-moment correlation that was applied to establish the relationship between BOGs’ control role and management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District. The results indicate that the two variables had a statistically positive weak and significant relationship ($r=.280^{**}$, $p<.05$). The relationship was statistically significant because the calculated p-value was less than .05.

Table 3
Pearson Product Moment Correlation between BOGs’ Control Role and Management of Government Aided Secondary Schools

Variables	Computed index	BOGs control role	School management
BOGs control role	Pearson Correlation	1	.280**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.015
	N	86	86
School management	Pearson Correlation	.280**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	
	N	86	86

Source: Primary Data (2018)

The study concluded that BOGs’ control role had a statistically positive weak and significant relationship with management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo district. This means that there are weak control measures in the government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo, and it impacts negatively on school management. Compared to the above findings, Mutende (2013) also indicated that members of BOGs have a direct role but weak influence on the management of public secondary schools. This they achieve by controlling allocations in the budgets made, motivating teachers to work, and instilling discipline in the students.

These results mean that the BOGs have the ability to stimulate better school management if the right processes are employed by the managers. Also, if the BOGs are always involved in teacher recruitment and recommendation of teacher transfers, financial management matters, disciplining head teachers, teachers and students, acquisition of physical and material resources, teachers’ salary reviews, they can enhance management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District.

During interviews, a head teacher when asked about the effectiveness and regularity by which he involved BOGs in controlling their schools said:

Despite the fact that the BOGs are mandated to control schools, many members may not have the skills at all yet they are expected to carry out control and management functions.

Some other head teacher revealed that:

It's true that the BOGs are given sufficient powers by the legislative body to manage the schools effectively but in practice it is not so. Because the board is not always on the school premises it cannot get to know many occurrences until they get reports from the head teachers.

Another head teacher revealed:

The BOGs are rarely involved in school discipline matters and in most cases are just summoned by head teachers when funds from the ministry have been received for purpose of getting the chairperson's signature.

To add on the remarks above, another head teacher revealed:

Many times I handle the teachers' discipline myself unless the problems are out of hand. The BOG members are however involved to some extent in handling of discipline of students. Here, the members closely monitor the students and report any indiscipline case to the teachers and to me and this has resulted in establishment of proper discipline among students in my school.

However, another head teacher gave a different perspective when he said:

When it comes to handling the teachers' discipline, I often prefer to deal with BOG members to help me face a teacher whom I believe is errand than issuing transfer letters for the teachers to other areas that the teachers may not prefer.

To complement the statement above, another head teacher said:

You see, the BOGs are meant to help us acquire more facilities, and have tried to put effort to facilitate schools with adequate teaching learning facilities.

The above data from the interviews stress the fact that BOG members are rare on the ground thus making the control role weak. This is in agreement with the quantitative data above. The management of finances, teacher and student discipline according to the responses of the six head teachers out of the nine is monitored by them and they also choose what to report to the BOGs upon invitation for the meetings which they call as and when capitation grants are released.

This implies that if BOGs perform the control role as expected, they can improve on management of government aided secondary schools. This calls for a lot of support and consideration during board appointments to enable BOGs build capacity to effectively control secondary schools. The researcher is of the view that if these board members are properly reconstituted and the members are trained and made aware of their roles, they are likely to work better and accelerate quality education and overall school management in government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District.

Objective Four: To determine the major predictor of management of government aided secondary schools out of all the three aspects of BOGs’ roles (planning, supervisory and control).

Table 4
Model Summary Combined Regression of All the Three Aspects on Management of Government Aided Secondary Schools^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.626 ^a	.392	.384	2.13787	.392	47.045	1	85	.000

a. Dependent: School management
b. Predictors: (Constant), Planning, Supervision and Control

Source: Primary Data (2018)

In Table 4, The adjusted $R^2=0.384$ and $p<0.01$ indicate a positive and significant prediction of BOGs’ planning role, supervisory role and control role on management of government aided secondary schools. The linear regression model shows that BOGs’ role account for 38.4% of the influence on management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District. And, other factors which are beyond the scope of this study account for 61.6% of the influence on management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo District.

It was concluded that all the three aspects (i.e. planning, supervisory and control) had a positive and significant prediction of management of government aided secondary schools in Kyenjojo district. However, the planning role had the highest prediction, while the control role had the lowest prediction.

Recommendations

- 1) The BOGs should be well trained in management of schools in order to be effective in their work.

- 2) The BOGs' statutes should empower the BOGs with intervention measures to be taken against the head teachers and teachers who undermine and even ignore the role and existence of the school boards.
- 3) The MOES should ensure that the BOGs' members access information rather than depending entirely on the head teachers who ignore the presence and relevancy of the BOGs in schools.
- 4) The head teachers should clearly state and explain to BOGs about the necessity of performing their duties to boost management in schools.

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