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## **Effects of Governance Practices on Performance among Secondary Schools in Buuri Sub-County; Meru County**

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# Effects of Governance Practices on Performance among Secondary Schools in Buuri Sub-County; Meru County

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to establish the effects of governance practices on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It targeted a population of fifteen secondary schools in Buuri Sub County, Meru County. The study used purposive sampling method in selecting 60 respondents from all the schools. The researcher used questionnaires to collect primary data. The study adopted the drop and pick method in collecting the data. Validity and reliability of the data collection instrument was done to ensure that it measures the constructs of the study. Descriptive statistics such as mean and percentages were computed to capture the characteristics of the variables under study while inferential statistics, specifically the Pearson correlation and regression coefficient was used to assess the relationship of the independent and dependent variables. The findings indicated that governance practices (stakeholders support, leadership style, communication and board composition) have a positive and significant effect on performance of learning institutions. However, organizational politics was found to have a negative and significant effect on performance of learning institutions. Based on the findings, the study recommended that learning institutions in Meru County need to strengthen their stakeholders support, leadership style, communication, organisational politics and board composition related aspects. The results have enormous implications on running of the learning institutions. The study has provided valuable contributions in the learning institutions and informs policy formulation on good governance in the education sector.

**Keywords:** *Governance Practices, Performance, Secondary Schools*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The Kenyan education sector is regarded to be the biggest and quickly developing segment representing 15.97% of the National Budget (Odude, 2013). In this way those taking part in education decision making process in Kenya are worried about the proficient assignment of instruction assets. The effectiveness of an instructive framework can be characterized mostly by the net advantages in life term profit, work profitability and individual fulfillment accumulated to people with more training than those collected to people with less. Instructive Institutions go for giving their graduates these preferences by ingraining in them credits thought about important to acquire such points of interest. These qualities are both subjective scholarly accomplishment and manual abilities, for example, compelling confidence, reliability, inventiveness and inspiration.

Since 1985 the education system in Kenya has been having 8-4-4 system. Where, Students undergo 8 in primary school, 4 years in secondary school and 4 remaining years of minimum basic university education. At the end of form four students take the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E). Good performance at this level is necessary for selection of higher learning and in jobs (Odude, 2013). The need for standard education in Kenya is important and has led to increased competition in secondary schools both public and private. There is a general belief among the Kenyan population that success comes when one is able to competitively pass well in the national examinations. Most courses at the university level require more than a C+ grade for admission besides a good combination in the course cluster. Governance has been described as proper functioning of institutions and their acceptance by the public (Harry, 2007). Governance has long been regarded as the bed rock of institutional management world over.

Kenyan schools have especially experienced untold problem occasioned by ineffective governance in schools. Kaufmann and Mastruzzi (2007) illustrated that governance is the institutions and traditions where the management of an institution exercises for a common goal, mostly including the process of selection of individuals who are in authority. Also have the capacity to select those who are in the institution to be responsible with the utmost accountability.

Governance is the core of performing institutions all over the world. Gomper (2013) defines governance as a way for scrutinizing the actions, decisions and policies of an organization. Governance therefore is the mechanism in which organizations are managed and directed to enhance their performance. Certainly, administration provides the basis through which associations find guidance for their destinations, while considering the social set up, management and the channels to advertise. The management structure determines the implementation of rights and obligations to be done by various members in the firm and indicates the rules and systems for enhancing choices in the organizational issues (Donalson, 2011).

Monyoncho (2015) observes that the concept of corporate governance is as old as management itself. Corporate governance enhances accountability of the managers and upgrades the performance of institutions by promoting effectiveness and efficiency in the utilization of institution's resources. When the corporate framework functions well, it benefits the organization through providing access to finances which have lower costs, better performance of the organization and satisfaction of all the stakeholders of the firm (World Bank, 2003).

Evidently, superior corporate governance is a precondition for increased investment in any economic sector, education notwithstanding; and a vehicle for speedy economic growth of a country.

Rubin et al. (2010) acknowledge that academic performance can be defined in various ways. They observe that there is an operational and a conceptual definition of academic performance. According to them, equating academic performance to the cumulative grade point average amounts to operational definition of academic performance while a conceptual definition entails measuring the students' ability to share knowledge in the classroom. In Kenya, the measure of academic performance is usually the test scores and grades achieved in the two Kenyan national examinations in primary school and secondary school levels.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Education institutions have a mandate to equip learners with both the curricular and the co-curricular knowledge and skills (Odude, 2013). To this end, Kenya Education Act 2013 outlines the school management structure, specifically spelling out the composition of the BOM as the organ responsible for the management of secondary education in Kenya. Indeed, the Principal runs the school on behalf of the BOM. Further, towards achieving a level playground for all the learners, Ministry of Education has adopted governance practices for all the secondary schools aimed at promoting excellent performance, transparency and accountability of the school managers to all the stakeholders.

Despite, this management structure suggested by the Ministry of Education for all the schools, there has been great variability in the performance of schools in Kenya. This is particularly so considering the performance of students in the national O-levels examination, KCSE. For instance, none of the 15 secondary schools in Buuri Sub County of Meru County was featured in the top 50 lists of best secondary schools in Kenya for the last five years.

Previous studies have examined the concept of governance practices and performance of schools. Kalungu (2015) explored the impact of Board of Managements' budgetary administration on open auxiliary schools in Westlands District, Nairobi County, Kenya. Ongeru (2015) study examined the effectiveness of boards of management in facilitating quality education in secondary schools in Kajiado County, Kenya. Carriere and Bourque (2009) explored the impacts of authoritative correspondence on work fulfillment and hierarchical duty in a land ambulance benefit and the intervening part of correspondence fulfillment. Omar (2016) assessed the effect of leadership style on School performance of secondary schools in Wadajir District, Mogadishu- Somalia.

However, to the best knowledge of the researcher, no study had focused on performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county. Therefore, the current study sought to fill the existing contextual and conceptual gaps by establishing the effects of governance practices on the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The study develops new knowledge in regard to the role of governance practices (stakeholders support, leadership style, school organization politics, communication, and composition of the board of management) and how they influence performance of learning institutions.

### 1.3 Research Questions

1. To examine the effect of stakeholders support on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County
2. To establish the effect of leadership style on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County
3. To determine the effects of the school organization politics on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County
4. To find out the effect of communication on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County
5. To assess the effect of the composition of the board of management on the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County

### 1.4 Research Hypotheses

1. **H<sub>01</sub>**: There is no significant relationship between stakeholders support and the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County.
2. **H<sub>02</sub>**: There is no significant relationship between leadership style and the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County.
3. **H<sub>03</sub>**: There is no significant relationship between school organization politics and the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County.
4. **H<sub>04</sub>**: There is no significant effect of communication on the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County.
5. **H<sub>05</sub>**: There is no significant effect of the composition of the board of management on the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

#### 2.1.1 Conservation of Resources Theory

The theory was developed by Hobfoll (2002) taking into consideration the assumption that some resources are important in increasing new resource and facilitating the betterment of an organization. According to this theory, resources are items which are valued by people and hence they work hard to obtain, protect and also retain. The hypothesis assumes that there is mutual benefit in job engagement and resources, indicating that both are essential in providing strength to each other, especially when job resources have been provided to the employees, many times such employees become more engaged, and it is clear that engaged employees are mostly more encouraged to take advantage of the available job opportunities and resources and as a result such employees are provided with more motivation to establish new resources. The attention and the encouragement that is brought about by engaging the employees enable them to maximize their potential in the job that they are undertaking consequently increasing their productivity.

According to Xanthopoulou *et al* (2009), from the past studies, it is clear that job resources which involves social support that one gets from workmates and those supervising them, variety of skills, independence, feedback on the performance of the employees and opportunities for further education among others are all positively associated with and lead to



employee engagement. Job resource facilitates the achievement of organizational goals and lead to the employee motivation – both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Van den Broeck et al. (2008) argues that literally, job resources facilitate the growth of the employees, development and learning, as a result to achieve the basic needs such as independence and being competent. He continues to argue that on the other hand, job resources help the employee in achieving the organizational goals. As such, work conditions which give various resources mostly to enhance the effort and dedication when working (Meijman & Mulder 1998). In such a situation, it is likely that undertakings will be finished in a powerful way. Assets for the activity can be found in various zones including the association, (for example, pay, vocation improvement and preparing), social relations, (for example, administrator and colleague bolster), the association of work (for instance participative basic leadership) and errands (for example skill variety and independence).

One of the weaknesses of the conservation resource theory is that it assumes that at any given point in time, individuals or organizations have a finite set of resources and are required to make resource allocation (investment) decisions to accomplish personal goals within a dynamic environment (Halbesleben et al., 2014). However, this is not always the case, since some individuals or organizations do not always allocate resources appropriately. In most cases, a large portion of the resources is misused.

The conservation of resource theory is relevant to this study since it explains various governance practices that enhance organization performance. In particular, the theory addresses the aspect of stakeholders' support, good leadership and communication skills. Support from stakeholders is a key resource that learning institutions need to achieve efficiency. Good leadership is also a significant factor in influencing performance of learning institutions. In addition, communication should be effective since it is an important resource in promoting good performance of the learning institutions. Therefore, the conservation of resource theory informs this study by linking various resources (governance practices) to improved performance.

### **2.2.2 Agency Theory**

The hypothesis was advanced by Jerisn and Meckling (1976) and proposes that the interest of administration and investors regularly struggle since supervisors attempt to meet their interest to the detriment of investors. Thus investors who are proprietors need to screen and direct the administrators. The creators characterize agency hypothesis as "the connection between the principals, for example, investors and specialists, for example, the organization administrators and managers". In this hypothesis, investors who are the proprietors or principals of the organization, contracts the operators to perform work. Principals appoint the running of business to the executives or administrators, who are the operators to the investor (Clarke, 2004). As indicated by Daily et al. (2003) two components can impact the noticeable quality of organization hypothesis. To begin with, it is a basic hypothesis that decreases the enterprise to two members of managers and investors. Second, agency hypothesis proposes that representatives or supervisors in associations can act naturally intrigued.

In view of the hypothesis, investors anticipate that the specialists will act and settle on choices to the advantage of the principals. However, the agent may not really settle on choices to the greatest advantage of the principals (Padilla, 2000). The possibility of issues emerging from the division of possession and control in agency hypothesis has been affirmed by (Schoorman & Donaldson, 1997). In agency hypothesis, the agent might be surrendered to self-intrigue,

astute conduct and missing the mark regarding compatibility between the goals of the principal and the specialist's interests.

Despite the obstacles, the hypothesis was presented essentially as a detachment of proprietorship and control (Bhimani, 2008). Holmstrom and Milgrom (1994) contended that as opposed to giving fluctuating impetus installments, the specialists will just concentrate on ventures that have an exceptional yield and have a settled wage with no motivating force part. In spite of the fact that this will give a reasonable evaluation, yet it doesn't kill or even limit corporate wrongdoing. Here, the positivist approach is utilized where the operators are controlled by main influenced rules, with the point of optimizing investors' returns. Thus, a more individualistic view is connected in this hypothesis (Clarke, 2004).

The Agency Theory has been criticized on the basis that it presents a narrow model of human motivation and that it makes unnecessary negative moral assessment regarding people. In particular, the assumption about self-interested and opportunistic behavior is considered problematic or false. The critics argue that, focusing on self-interest behavior makes it possible that for the wider range of human motives to be ignored.

The hypothesis relevant to this research since it explains the link between management and stakeholders. In this study, the school management acts as the agent and serves the interest of stakeholders including students, parents and government. As such, the school management is expected to put the interest of the stakeholders first. Poor performance by the schools could be as result of the management failing to perform their duties as expected. The Agency theory, therefore, links governance practices (organization politics and BOM composition) to performance of learning institutions.

### **2.2.3 Social Exchange Theory**

According to Saks (2006), Social Exchange Theory offers a very strong theoretical rationale for studying the engagement of employees. He describes Social Exchange Theory as the obligations that are brought up through a progression of collaborations between parties who rely upon each other and commonly advantage from their relationship. The principle contention of social trade hypothesis is that connections form after some time of trust, steadfastness and common duty as long as the two gatherings comply with the guidelines that guide their association with each other. These guidelines of trade ordinarily entail the reimbursement or correspondence deciding the end goals of the activities on a gathering which will lead to a positive or negative reaction or activities by the other party.

According to Sak's, the only way that individuals can reimburse their association is through their level of commitment. This implies by and large workers can draw in themselves to varying degrees relying upon the measure of assets they get from their association. This argument is in line with definition of engagement by Robinson et al (2004) where he describes engagement as being relationship with two dimensions involving the employee and the employer. Balain and Sparrow (2009) concluded that in order for individuals to get the real cause of engagement and also the cause of engagement such individuals need to describe the point in a theory that is well established and that can give a good explanation of what engagement really is. The theory that is considered most appropriate to carry out this task is social exchange theory.

The social exchange theory has been criticized in that it reduces human interaction to a purely rational process that arises from economic theory, it favors openness as it was developed in the 1970s when ideas of freedom and openness were preferred, but there may be times when openness isn't the best option in a relationship, it assumes that the ultimate goal of a

relationship is intimacy when this might not always be the case and places relationships in a linear structure, when some relationships might skip steps or go backwards in terms of intimacy.

The social exchange theory is important to this study as it elaborates the relationship between various parties in an organization and how this translates into improved performance. Similarly, governance entails proper working relationship between various parties in an organization. According to the theory, the level of interaction between parties in an organization determines their performance. As such relationships between parties grow over a long period in loyalty and mutual trust as long as both parties obey the rules that guide their relationship with each other.

This study focuses on performance of secondary schools as influenced by governance practices such as organization politics and BOM composition. Based on the social exchange theory, there must be proper interaction between parties in charge of learning institutions, which is likely to translate into improved performance. Therefore, the theory informs this study by linking governance practices to better performance of learning institutions.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

Kiteme (2013) study investigated the impact of stakeholders' involvement in completion of infrastructural projects. The objectives of the study were: to establish the role of school management, BOM members, parents, sponsor and government officials in the completion of infrastructural projects of the school. The study used descriptive survey design. The findings revealed that school management especially the principal in conjunction with the BOM is tasked with various roles including management. It further indicated that the school management was in the hands of the BOM and the school principal who must not do everything alone but should involve other partners in planning, decision making and execution. It was established that the major financiers for secondary school projects were the parents through payment of school fees and PTA levies. However, Kiteme's study presented a conceptual gap since it did not focus on academic performance of the schools.

Nkire (2013) study investigated the impact of secondary school principals' on leadership styles in Kenya certificate of secondary education performance in Nairobi. The study used descriptive survey research design. Findings revealed that head teachers who had adopted autocratic leadership styles had their schools KCSE mean score of between 4.1- 6.0 points. On the other hand, schools whose head had adopted democratic leadership style had relatively higher mean scores of 6.1 to 9.0. Head teachers who used situational leadership had mixed results; whereby, some schools reported low mean scores while majority reported mean scores of 4.1 – 9.0 points. In light of the discoveries it was presumed that open optional schools had embraced situational authority style. Schools which had received situational authority style had blended outcomes in the KCSE; discoveries demonstrate that most had accomplished mean scores of six focuses; in any case, there are likewise the individuals who performed well while other performed ineffectively.

Maina (2010) study sought to investigate the policies employed by principals in secondary schools to enhance their improvement of academic performance goals in Embu West District. The study used a descriptive survey design. The findings revealed that majority of the schools always employ strategies on instructional leadership. It was also revealed that majority of schools employed strategies for clarification of vision and mission.



From the study carried out by White, Vance and Stafford (2010), it was found out that when the internal organization communication is satisfying facilitated a sense of community and made employees feel more responsible to the organization and as such those employees feel the need to act as an advocate for their various organizations at a personal level. Given these findings therefore, it is clear as to why organizations are putting a lot of emphasis on internal communication channels. From the study, it was found that employee's value face-to-face communications with their bosses and as such, such form of communication increases their level of engagement. Employees involved in the study indicated that communicating directly to their bosses enabled them to have a sense of disclosure of all the necessary information and this enabled them to feel valued. However, a contextual gap exists, since the study did not concentrate on secondary schools.

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It targeted a population of fifteen secondary schools in Buuri Sub County, Meru County. All the fifteen secondary schools formed the study population. This is because the number of schools was small. The study used purposive sampling method in selecting 60 respondents from all the schools. The researcher used questionnaires to collect primary data. Data constituted governance practices that the respondents employ in running of schools. The study adopted the drop and pick method in collecting the data. Validity and reliability of the data collection instrument was conducted to ensure that it measures the constructs of the study. Descriptive statistics such as mean and percentages were computed to capture the characteristics of the variables under study while inferential statistics, specifically the Pearson correlation and regression coefficient was used to assess the relationship of the independent and dependent variables.

### **4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Descriptive Analysis**

##### **4.1.1 Influence of Stakeholders Support on Performance of Learning Institutions**

The first objective of the study was to examine the effect of stakeholders support on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Results in Table 1 indicated that 59.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the community living around the institution is supportive, 71.2% agreed that the County Government of Meru is supportive, 82.6% agreed that the religious leaders living around the institution are supportive, 71.2% agreed that the parents are supportive of the school program.

Further, 82.7% of the respondents agreed that the school relates well with other neighboring schools, 59.6% noted that the government agencies are supportive, 75% agreed that there is harmonious relationship between the school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders which influences the performance of secondary schools, 67.3% of the respondents agreed that there is conflicting interest between stakeholders which influences the performance of secondary schools, 69.2% agreed that there is regular meetings with the school stakeholders to discuss matters of performance in the secondary schools while 71.1% agreed that the school has got effective policies that guides the education stakeholders. However, 53.8% of the respondents disagreed that there is conflict between school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders which influences the performance of secondary schools.

The overall mean of the responses was 3.72 which showed that most of the participants were in agreement with the statements on stakeholders support. However, the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.21. The study findings are consistent with the work of Gituto (2010), who alluded that including partners in a participatory investigation and basic leadership around group and school execution issues is a vital operational technique. Further, Mulwa (2013) noted that the completion of school projects fails due to poor stakeholders support.

**Table 1: Stakeholders support**

Statements	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
The community living around the institution is supportive	9.60%	17.30%	13.50%	25.00%	34.60%	3.58	1.38
The County Government of Meru is supportive	3.80%	19.20%	5.80%	25.00%	46.20%	3.90	1.29
The religious leaders living around the institution are supportive	7.70%	3.80%	5.80%	40.40%	42.30%	4.06	1.16
The parents are supportive of the school program	1.90%	11.50%	15.40%	30.80%	40.40%	3.96	1.10
The school relates well with other neighboring schools	0.00%	3.80%	13.50%	40.40%	42.30%	4.21	0.83
The government agencies are supportive	7.70%	19.20%	13.50%	32.70%	26.90%	3.52	1.29
There is harmonious relationship between the school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders which influences the performance of secondary schools	3.80%	13.50%	7.70%	26.90%	48.10%	4.02	1.21
There is conflict between school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders which influences the performance of secondary schools	19.20%	34.60%	23.10%	17.30%	5.80%	2.56	1.16
There is conflicting interest between stakeholders which influences the performance of secondary schools	1.90%	23.10%	7.70%	36.50%	30.80%	3.71	1.19
There is regular meetings with the school stakeholders to discuss matters of performance in the secondary schools	9.60%	15.40%	5.80%	34.60%	34.60%	3.69	1.35
The school has got effective policies that guides the education stakeholders	9.60%	11.50%	7.70%	36.50%	34.60%	3.75	1.31
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.72</b>	<b>1.21</b>

#### 4.1.2 Influence of Leadership Style on Performance of Learning Institutions

The second objective of the study was to establish the effect of leadership style on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Results in Table 2 indicated 80.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement that school leaders communicate a clear and positive vision of the future, 90.4% agreed that school leadership treats staff as individuals, supports and encourage their development, 86.5% agreed that school leadership gives encouragement and recognition to the staff while 76.9% noted that school leadership fosters trust, involvement and co-operation among team members. Further, 78.8% of the respondents agreed that school leadership encourages thinking about problem in a new way, 62.9% agreed that school leadership is clear about its values, 78.9% agreed the school leaders practices what they preach while 84.6% agreed that the school leaders inspire others by being highly competent.

The overall mean of the responses was 4.09 which showed that most of the participants were in agreement with the statements on leadership style. However, the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 0.93. The study findings concur with the findings by Omar (2016) who concluded that schools run by principals who use appropriate leadership styles perform better compared to those who do not use poor leadership styles. Further, Loren and Matthew (2008) found out that many failures in schools occur due to poor leadership styles.

**Table 2: Leadership Style**

Statements	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Communicates a clear and positive vision of the future	0.00%	13.50%	5.80%	42.30%	38.50%	4.06	1.00
Treats staff as individuals, supports and encourage their development	0.00%	3.80%	5.80%	40.40%	50.00%	4.37	0.77
Gives encouragement and recognition to the staff	0.00%	11.50%	1.90%	51.90%	34.60%	4.1	0.91
Foster trust, involvement and co-operation among team members.	1.90%	13.50%	7.70%	53.80%	23.10%	3.83	1.00
Encourages thinking about problem in a new way.	0.00%	3.80%	17.30%	28.80%	50.00%	4.25	0.88
Clear about his/her values	0.00%	17.30%	13.50%	32.70%	36.50%	3.88	1.10
Practices what he/she preaches	0.00%	9.60%	11.50%	46.20%	32.70%	4.02	0.92
Inspire others by being highly competent	0.00%	5.80%	9.60%	42.30%	42.30%	4.21	0.85
<b>Average</b>						<b>4.09</b>	<b>0.93</b>

#### 4.1.3 Influence of School Organization Politics on Performance of Learning Institutions

The third objective of the study was to determine the effects of the school organization politics on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Results presented in Table 3 indicated that 55.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement that appointment of School authority is highly politicized, 65.4% agreed that school community is divided along political line, 67.3% agreed that school has good mechanism of conflict

resolution brought about by infighting and politics, 69.2% agreed that there is conflict between schools board members, school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders and this affects school performance.

Further, 73.1% agreed that there is political support to certain schools which influences the performance in secondary schools, 76.9% agreed that the school sponsors have some influence which negatively affects the performance, 53.9% agreed that there is students and teachers conflicts and this affects the school performance. However, 51.9% of the respondents disagreed that all the employees are not treated equally and this affects the school performance. The overall mean of the responses was 3.66 which showed that most of the participants were in agreement with the statements on organization politics. However, the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.30.

The study findings agree with the work of Gordon (2010) who noted that most secondary schools are politically influenced and this influences their completion. Further, Pandey (2009) found that budgetary process of secondary schools has been characterized by politics within the schools administration as facilitated by monthly, quarterly or other short interval reports from each school head and this is politically influenced.

**Table 3: Organization Politics**

Statements	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Appointment of School authority is highly politicized	5.80%	11.50%	26.90%	21.20%	34.60%	3.67	1.23
School community is divided along political line	5.80%	13.50%	15.40%	32.70%	32.70%	3.73	1.22
School has good mechanism of conflict resolution brought about by infighting and politics	3.80%	23.10%	5.80%	26.90%	40.40%	3.77	1.31
There is conflict between schools board members, school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders and this affects school performance	3.80%	13.50%	13.50%	25.00%	44.20%	3.92	1.22
There is political support to certain schools which influences the performance in secondary schools	7.70%	9.60%	9.60%	30.80%	42.30%	3.90	1.27
The school sponsors have some influence which negatively affects the performance.	1.90%	13.50%	7.70%	34.60%	42.30%	4.02	1.11
There is students and teachers conflicts and this affects the school performance	11.50%	23.10%	11.50%	30.80%	23.10%	3.31	1.37
All the employees are not treated equally and this affects the school performance	26.90%	25.00%	3.80%	11.50%	32.70%	2.98	1.67
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.66</b>	<b>1.30</b>

#### 4.1.4 Influence of Communication on Performance of Learning Institutions

The fourth objective of the study was to find out the effect of communication on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Results presented in Table 4 indicated that majority (71.2%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that there is proper channels of communication in the school and this has impact on the performance, 73.1% agreed that there is open communication within the school and this influence the school performance, 92.3% agreed that there is good feedback mechanism that ensures flow of information and this influences the school performance, 86.6% agreed that there is proper channels for airing grievances and this have influenced the school performance while 82.7% agreed that there is effective policy on school communication and this have enhanced the performance.

The overall mean of the responses was 4.05 which showed that most of the participants were in agreement with the statements on communication. However, the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.06.

The findings were consistent with the works of White, Vance and Stafford (2010) who found that when the internal organization communication is satisfying, it facilitates a sense of community and makes employees feel more responsible to the organization. Further, Storey (2007) observed that communication is key in any organization since it's the only way the employees can know what is expected of them and it is also a means through which the employees can give their feedback.

**Table 4: Communication**

Statements	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
There is proper channels of communication in the school and this has impact on the performance	1.90%	17.30%	9.60%	30.80%	40.40%	3.90	1.18
There is open communication within the school and this influence the school performance	3.80%	13.50%	9.60%	42.30%	30.80%	3.83	1.13
There is good feedback mechanism that ensures flow of information and this influences the school performance	1.90%	3.80%	1.90%	40.40%	51.90%	4.37	0.86
There is proper channels for airing grievances and this have influenced the school performance	5.80%	3.80%	3.80%	40.40%	46.20%	4.17	1.08
There is effective policy on school communication and this have enhanced the performance	3.80%	9.60%	3.80%	48.10%	34.60%	4.00	1.07
<b>Average</b>						<b>4.05</b>	<b>1.06</b>

#### 4.1.5 Influence of Board Composition on Performance of Learning Institutions

The fifth objective of the study was to assess the effect of the composition of the board of management on the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Results presented in Table 5 indicated majority (67.3%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that there is gender balance in appointment of BOM, 80.8% agreed that there is good



delivery of service where membership is well educated, 55.7% agreed that there is good delivery of service where membership is well experienced, 82.7% agreed that BOM members are committed to the wellbeing of the school while 78.9% agreed that composition of BOM is well balanced in terms of professional mix. On the other hand, 53.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that there is conflict of interest in manners which school supplies are handled while 55.9% disagreed that there is evidence that appointment of BOM chairs is a long tribal line, religious line or political line. The overall mean of the responses was 3.56 which showed that most of the participants were in agreement with the statements on composition of the board. However, the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.25.

The study findings agree with those of Kija (2015) who concluded that school boards are central to the leadership and management of community secondary schools. Kalungu (2015) further established that Board of Management individuals' level of instruction, proficient status, sexual orientation and the idea of occupation done had positive impact on the adequacy of BOMs budgetary administration.

**Table 5: Composition of the Board**

Statements	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
There is gender balance in appointment of BOM.	3.80%	13.50%	15.40%	32.70%	34.60%	3.81	1.17
There is good delivery of service where membership is well educated.	3.80%	13.50%	1.90%	50.00%	30.80%	3.90	1.11
There is conflict of interest in manners which school supplies are handled.	23.10%	30.80%	7.70%	23.10%	15.40%	2.77	1.44
There is evidence that appointment of BOM chairs is a long tribal line, religious line or political line.	15.40%	40.50%	5.80%	23.10%	15.30%	2.88	1.40
There is good delivery of service where membership is well experienced	9.60%	17.30%	17.30%	26.90%	28.80%	3.48	1.34
BOM members are committed to the wellbeing of the school.	3.80%	5.80%	7.70%	38.50%	44.20%	4.13	1.05
Composition of BOM is well balanced in terms of professional mix	9.60%	3.80%	7.70%	38.50%	40.40%	3.96	1.24
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.56</b>	<b>1.25</b>

#### 4.1.6 Performance of Learning Institutions

The dependent variable in this study was performance of secondary schools. Results in Table 6 indicated that majority (67.3%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that School performs well in the County in National Examination, 51.9% agreed that School performs well in Buuri Sub-County, 67.3% agreed that School performs well in games and sport compared

with other schools, 63.4% agreed that School have healthy relationships with outsiders, 65.4% agreed that employees are happy working for the school, 71.2% agreed that the students enrolment rate is on upward trend while 80.8% agreed that the school mean score have improved consecutively.

Further, 88.4% agreed that at least every year we have students who join university, 67.3% agreed that the teaching staff are highly motivated while 80.8% agreed that the school has income generating activities which increase its liquidity ratio. However, 57.7% of the respondents disagreed that school performs well in National Examination while 51.9% disagreed that school have adequate sporting facilities.

**Table 6: Performance of Secondary Schools**

Statements	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
School performs well in National Examination	25.00%	32.70%	9.60%	11.50%	21.20%	2.71	1.50
School performs well in the County in National Examination	0.00%	17.30%	15.40%	50.00%	17.30%	3.67	0.96
School performs well in Buuri Sub-County	3.80%	28.80%	15.40%	32.70%	19.20%	3.35	1.20
School have adequate sporting facilities	17.30%	34.60%	3.80%	13.50%	30.80%	3.06	1.56
School performs well in games and sport compared with other schools	3.80%	9.60%	19.20%	26.90%	40.40%	3.90	1.16
School have healthy relationships with outsiders	5.80%	23.10%	7.70%	26.90%	36.50%	3.65	1.34
Employees are happy working for the school	9.60%	13.50%	11.50%	30.80%	34.60%	3.67	1.34
The students enrolment rate is on upward trend	3.80%	9.60%	15.40%	38.50%	32.70%	3.87	1.10
The school mean score have improved consecutively	3.80%	7.70%	7.70%	40.40%	40.40%	4.06	1.07
At least every year we have students who joins university	0.00%	0.00%	11.50%	53.80%	34.60%	4.23	0.65
The teaching staff are highly motivated	3.80%	13.50%	15.40%	32.70%	34.60%	3.81	1.17
The school has income generating activities which increase its liquidity ratio	0.00%	5.80%	13.50%	34.60%	46.20%	4.21	0.89
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.68</b>	<b>1.16</b>

## 4.2 Inferential Analysis

### 4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis results in Table 7 indicated a positive, strong significant association between stakeholders support and performance of learning institutions( $r=0.819$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). The results indicated a positive, strong significant association between leadership style and

performance of learning institutions ( $r=0.861$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Further the results showed a positive, strong significant association between communication and performance of learning institutions ( $r=0.769$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and a positive, strong significant association between board composition and performance of learning institutions ( $r=0.675$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). These findings implied that stakeholders support, leadership style, communication, board composition and performance of learning institutions, change in the same direction.

In addition, results indicated a negative, strong significant association between organization politics and performance of learning institutions ( $r=-0.655$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This finding implied that organization politics and performance of learning institutions change in opposite direction.

**Table 7: Correlation Matrix**

		Performance of learning institutions	Stakehol ders support	Leader ship Style	Organizat ional politics	Comm unicati on	Board composi tion
Performance of learning institutions	Pearson Correla tion	1.000					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
Stakeholders support	Pearson Correla tion	.819**	1.000				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000					
Leadership Style	Pearson Correla tion	.861**	.601**	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000				
Organizational politics	Pearson Correla tion	-.655**	-.679**	-.593**	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Communication	Pearson Correla tion	.769**	.717**	.701**	-.617**	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
Board composition	Pearson Correla tion	.675**	.782**	.765**	-.701**	.647**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

#### 4.2.2 Regression Analysis

Table 8 showed that the coefficient of determination also called the R squared was 80.3%. This means that jointly, the predictor variables (board composition, organizational politics, leadership style, communication, stakeholder support) explain 80.3% of the total variations in the dependent variable (performance of learning institutions). The correlation coefficient of 89.6% indicates that the joint effect of the predictor variables has a strong correlation with performance of secondary schools.

**Table 8: Model Fitness**

Indicator	Coefficient
R	0.896
R Square	0.803
Adjusted R Square	0.782
Std. Error of the Estimate	0.20754

Table 9 provides the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicated that the overall model was statistically significant. Further, the results implied that the independent variables are good predictors of performance of learning institutions. This was supported by an F statistic of 37.484 and the reported p value of 0.000, which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 at 5% level of significance.

**Table 9: Analysis of Variance**

Indicator	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8.073	5	1.615	37.484	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	1.981	46	.043		
Total	10.054	51			

Table 10 presented results on regression of coefficients. The results indicated that stakeholders support and performance of learning institutions are positively and significantly related ( $\beta=0.270$ ,  $p=0.016$ ). The results further indicated that leadership style and performance of learning institutions are positively and significantly related ( $\beta=0.669$ ,  $p=0.010$ ). It was further established that organizational politics and performance of learning institutions are negatively and significantly related ( $\beta=-0.175$ ,  $p=0.034$ ). In addition, the results showed that communication and performance of learning institutions are positively and significantly related ( $\beta=0.251$ ,  $p=0.029$ ). Finally, the findings indicated that board composition and performance of learning institutions are positively and significantly related ( $\beta=0.250$ ,  $p=0.034$ ).

This implied that an increase in stakeholders support, leadership style, communication and board composition by 1 unit would lead to an improvement in learning institutions' performance by 0.270, 0.669, 0.251 and 0.250 units respectively. Further, an increase in school politics by 1 unit would reduce performance of the learning institutions by 0.175 units.

The findings are consistent with the work of Gituto (2010), who alluded that including partners in a participatory investigation and basic leadership around group and school execution issues is a vital operational technique. Further, Omar (2016) concluded that schools run by principals who use appropriate leadership styles perform better compared to those who do not use poor leadership styles. Gordon (2010) noted that most secondary schools are politically influenced and this influences their completion. Storey (2007) observed that communication is key in any organization since it's the only way the employees can know what is expected of them and it is also a means through which the employees can give their feedback. In addition, Kija (2015) concluded that school boards are central to the leadership and management of community secondary schools.

**Table 10: Regression of Coefficients**

	$\beta$	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.461	0.644	0.715	0.478
Stakeholder support	0.270	0.111	2.43	0.016
Leadership Style	0.669	0.25	2.68	0.010
Organizational politics	-0.175	0.08	-2.188	0.034
Communication	0.251	0.111	2.261	0.029
Board composition	0.250	0.115	2.181	0.034

The optimal model for the study was;

Performance of learning institutions =  $0.461 + 0.27 \text{stakeholders support} + 0.669 \text{leadership style} - 0.175 \text{organizational politics} + 0.251 \text{communication} + 0.25 \text{board composition}$

#### 4.2.3 Research Hypotheses

The t statistic was used for hypothesis testing. The criterion was to reject the null hypothesis if the calculated t value was greater than the critical t value at 5% level of significance. Based on regression of coefficient results, all the null hypotheses in this study were rejected since the calculated t values ( $t_{cal} = 2.43, 2.68, -2.188, 2.261$  and  $2.181$ ), were greater than the critical t value of 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, stakeholders support, leadership style, organization politics, communication and composition of the board have a significant influence on performance of learning institutions.

## 5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Summary of Findings

#### 5.1.1 Influence of Stakeholders support on performance of learning institutions

The first objective of the study was to examine the effect of stakeholders support on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The findings indicated that majority of the schools relate well with other neighboring schools, there is harmonious relationship between the school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders, there are effective policies that guides the education stakeholders, religious leaders living around the institution are supportive, parents are supportive of the school program and the county government of Meru is supportive.

Further, the correlation results indicated that there is a significant and positive association between stakeholders support and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by



a correlation coefficient of 0.819 and p value of 0.000. The regression results indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between stakeholders support and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a regression coefficient of 0.270 and a p value of 0.016.

In addition, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between stakeholders support and the performance of learning institutions was rejected since the calculated t value of 2.43 was greater than the critical t value of 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between stakeholders support and performance of learning institutions was accepted.

### **5.1.2 Influence of Leadership style on performance of learning institutions**

The second objective of the study was to establish the effect of leadership style on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The findings indicated that in majority of the schools, leaders communicate a clear and positive vision about the future, school leadership treats staff as individuals, supports and encourage their development, they give encouragement and recognition to the staff and leaders inspire others by being highly competent.

Further, the correlation results indicated that there is a significant and positive association between leadership style and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a correlation coefficient of 0.861 and p value of 0.000. The regression results indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between leadership style and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a regression coefficient of 0.669 and a p value of 0.010.

In addition, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between leadership style and the performance of learning institutions was rejected since the calculated t value of 2.68 was greater than the critical t value of 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between leadership style and performance of learning institutions was accepted.

### **5.1.3 Influence of Organizational Politics on performance of learning institutions**

The third objective of the study was to determine the effects of the school organization politics on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The findings indicated that there is conflict between schools board members, school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders and this affects school performance, the school sponsors have some influence which negatively affects the performance, school community is divided along political line and appointment of school authority is highly politicized.

Further, the correlation results indicated that there is a significant and negative association between organization politics and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a correlation coefficient of -.655 and p value of 0.000. The regression results indicated that there is a negative and significant relationship between organization politics and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a regression coefficient of -0.175 and a p value of 0.034.

In addition, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between organization politics and the performance of learning institutions was rejected since the calculated t value of -2.188 was greater than the critical t value of 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between organization politics and performance of learning institutions was accepted.

#### **5.1.4 Influence of Communication on performance of learning institutions**

The fourth objective of the study was to find out the effect of communication on performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The findings indicated that there are proper channels of communication in the schools, there is open communication within the school, there is good feedback mechanism that ensures flow of information, there is proper channels for airing grievances and there is effective policy on school communication.

Further, the correlation results indicated that there is a significant and positive association between communication and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a correlation coefficient of 0.769 and p value of 0.000. The regression results indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between communication and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a regression coefficient of 0.251 and a p value of 0.029.

In addition, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between communication and the performance of learning institutions was rejected since the calculated t value of 2.181 was greater than the critical t value of 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between communication and performance of learning institutions was accepted.

#### **5.1.5 Influence of Board Composition on performance of learning institutions**

The fifth objective of the study was to assess the effect of the composition of the board of management on the performance among secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The findings indicated that in majority of the schools, there is good delivery of service where members are well educated, there is gender balance in appointment of board, board members are committed to the wellbeing of the school and that composition of board is well balanced in terms of professional mix.

Further, the correlation results indicated that there is a significant and positive association between board composition and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a correlation coefficient of 0.675 and p value of 0.000. The regression results indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between board composition and performance of learning institutions. This was supported by a regression coefficient of 0.250 and a p value of 0.034.

In addition, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between board composition and the performance of learning institutions was rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between board composition and performance of learning institutions was accepted.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the findings, the study concluded that stakeholders support has a positive and significant effect on the performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. In particular, the most essential aspects of stakeholders' support that were significant in driving the performance of learning institutions included; good relations with other schools, support from parents, effective policies, support from religious leaders and support from the county government.

From the findings, the study concluded that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on the performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. In particular, the findings provided several most essential aspects of leadership style that are significant in

driving the performance of learning institutions. These are: clear and positive vision about the future, respect for other employees, staff support and recognition.

From the findings, the study concluded that organization politics has a negative and significant effect on the performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. In particular, the findings provided several aspects of organizational politics that are significant in deterring the performance of learning institutions. These are: conflict between schools board members, school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders, negative influence of school sponsors on school performance, division of school community along political line and highly politicized appointment of school authority.

Based on the findings, the study concluded that communication has a positive and significant effect on the performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. In particular, the findings provided several most essential aspects of communication that are significant in driving the performance of learning institutions. These are: proper channels of communication in the schools, open communication within the school, good feedback mechanism that ensures flow of information, proper channels for airing grievances and effective policy on school communication.

Based on the findings, the study concluded that board composition has a positive and significant effect on the performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. In particular, the findings provided several most essential aspects of board composition that are significant in driving the performance of learning institutions. These are: delivery of service where members are well educated, gender balance in appointment of board, commitment of the board members to the wellbeing of the school and balanced board in terms of professional mix.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Findings from this study indicate that stakeholders support has tremendous influence on performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. As such, this study recommends the need for the learning institutions to strengthen their relations with the stakeholders. In particular, the institutions should focus on the following aspects; ensure that there are good relations with neighboring schools, support from parents, effective policies, support from religious leaders and support from the county government.

This study noted an imperative influence of leadership style on performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. It is therefore, important for the learning institutions to strengthen their leadership related styles. Particularly, they should ensure that their leaders have clear and positive vision about the future; leaders respect other staff, leaders support and encourage other employees to grow and also recognize other staff for their efforts.

The findings of this study established that organizational politics are distractive and could negatively influence the performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Therefore, the study recommends that the need for the learning institutions to restructure their politics. In particular, they should avoid conflict between schools board members, school leadership, parents and other education stakeholders, school community should not be divided along political line, appointment of school authority should be politicized and school sponsors should not introduce politics in schools.

Organization communication was empirically proved to have significant positive influence on performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. This point out the need for the learning institutions to strengthen their communication related aspects. These are: proper channels of communication in the schools, open communication within the school, good

feedback mechanism that ensures flow of information, proper channels for airing grievances and effective policy on school communication.

According to the findings, board of management composition was found to have a remarkable influence on performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. The study, therefore, recommends the need for learning institutions to strengthen their board composition related aspects. These are: having educated members, gender balance in appointment of the board, commitment of the board members to the wellbeing of the school and balanced board in terms of professional mix.

### 5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on how governance practices affect performance of secondary schools in Buuri sub-county; Meru County. Further studies need to be done on the effect of governance practices on performance, but focusing on other sectors such as health. This will enable comparison of results in different sectors.

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