



## **Absorption of Allocated Funds and Teaching/Learning Environment in Public Secondary Schools in Rachuonyo East Sub County, Kenya**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Delivery of efficient and effective services while upholding the values and ethics of management has continued to be a major concern to the education sector of any government. The performance of managers has become a common phenomenon locally and worldwide especially in developing countries like Kenya. Teachers Service Commission introduced performance contracting (PCs) system in 2016 where teachers in public secondary schools and principals agree on what to be accomplished for effective delivery. With performance contracting, it was expected that the school administrators would mobilize the available resources with transparency and integrity towards the realization of the goals of the school that is academic performance. The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching/ learning environment in public secondary schools. The research problem used a descriptive survey design. The target population of the study comprised of 6 curriculum support officers (CSOs), 1 Sub-County Director of Education, 1 Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Director, 47 Principals and 47 Board of Management (BOM) chairpersons. Purposive sampling was used to select all 6 curriculum support officers (CSOs), 1 Sub-County Director of Education, 1 Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Director, 47 Principals and 47 Board of Management (BOM) chairpersons in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo East Sub-County. The study used a document analysis guide, interview schedule for the Sub-County Director of Education (SDOE), Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Director (SCDTSC) and a questionnaire for Principals and Board of Management (BOM) chairpersons to collect data. Before collecting the actual data, the researcher conducted a pilot study in six secondary schools in Rachuonyo East Sub-County sampled from each of the six zones. The researcher used content validity to ascertain the instruments by giving them to a team of experts including the researcher's supervisors. Reliability of the instruments was determined using a coefficient of correlation which was calculated using Pearson's product moment correlation formula. A coefficient (Pearson's  $r$ ) of 0.70 or more imply that there is a high degree of reliability. Qualitative data was transcribed in themes, sub-themes and categories then reported in an on-going process. Quantitative data was collected and analyzed using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means, percentages and t-Test at  $\alpha = 0.05$  and 95% confident interval.

**Key Words:** *Absorption, Allocated, Environment, Funds, Teaching/learning,*

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Financial stewardship represents the care, conservancy, planning, attention, upkeep, and management of allocated financial resources and choices at the institution level (Trumbull, 2018). In contrast, Thesaurus.com shows ignorance, negligence, squandering, and waste as antonyms of stewardship. This does not limit financial stewardship to having professional or technical skills in financial calculations and accounting but rather emphasizes on personal responsibility to befit the status of the office one is holding. Several studies have done to establish the relationship between financial stewardship and performance as empirically discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Waithe, Mwebi and Ajowi (2018) conducted a study to find out the financial management challenges facing newly appointed head teachers in public day secondary schools in Siaya sub-county, Kenya. The study used descriptive survey design and was influenced by Henry Fayol financial management theory of 2011. The study targeted 27 head teachers, 27 deputy head teachers, 27 accounts clerks and 1 SQASO. Data collection instruments were questionnaires and interview schedules. On the issue of procurement challenges facing the newly appointed head teachers, the study found out that school debt, frequent changes in policy, delay in FSE funds and influence from sponsors were the main procurement challenges. The financial accounting challenges were lack of accounting books, poor record keeping, fraud and theft and lack of financial skills. On the concern about financial budgetary challenges, the study found out that inadequate financial skills, influence from stakeholders, inflation and school debt were the budgetary challenges facing the newly appointed head teachers. The significant auditing challenges were delayed audit reports, ignorance of head teachers on financial skills, irregular auditing and doubling up of head teachers' roles in schools. It was concluded that auditing challenges were the real issues affecting the newly appointed head teachers. The reviewed study focused on heads of public primary schools who have little funds to manage while the current study will focus on public secondary school principals who have plenty of financial resources at hand compared to head teachers. Also, the study pinpoints the existence of challenges in financial stewardship and discipline among schools' heads but does not go further to establish the contribution of the performance contracting policy to coping with these challenges which is the knowledge gap that will be filled by the current study.

Similarly, Abdikadir (2018) conducted a study to establish the influence of board of managements' corporate governance practices on financial management in public Secondary schools in Moyale sub-county, Kenya. The study adopted cross sectional research design. Multiple regressions were applied to assess the influence of board of managements' corporate governance practices on financial management in public Secondary schools in Moyale sub-county, Kenya. The findings of the study show that Majority of BOM who were 25 (40%) to a moderate extent indicated that budgeting was practiced to a moderate extent in schools, but they were not made available for public scrutiny. There was agreement to a great extent by 20 (33%) of the BOM that accounting knowledge is vital in order to improve financial management in schools since the school had employed accounting staff. Transformative leadership was to a little extent practiced in many public secondary schools in Moyale-sub county as indicated by 20 (32%) of the BOMs. To a no extent invoices stamped were recorded into the system correctly, and clearly marked for account code assignment as indicated by 22 (35%) of the respondents. The reviewed study used a cross sectional research design to establish the influence of board of managements' corporate governance practices on financial management while the current study will employ a descriptive survey research design to establish the influence of performance contracting by principals on conducive learning environment.

A similar study by Savuli (2018) sought to investigate factors that influence the effectiveness of school heads in Financial Management of Public Secondary Schools in Mwingi Central Sub- County, Kitui County. The study also used the descriptive survey design with a target population of 120 persons and a sample size of 93 respondents. The researcher used questionnaires to collect the data. The study found that the independent (Principals' management training on financial management, school boards, school sponsors and the government) have greater influence on principals' effectiveness on financial management in secondary schools. Majority of the respondents 60 (85.7%) indicated that principals require financial management training, and again another equal percentage observed that newly appointed principals are not good in financial management and that experience in financial management is important to the principals. The reviewed study did not focus on the contribution of performance contracting to school heads' financial management since its introduction was to handle this concept too. The current study will go further to fill this gap by establishing the influence of performance contracting with respect to financial management.

### ***1.2 Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo East Sub County, Kenya.

### ***1.3 Significance of the Study***

The study will be important to the teachers service commission (TSC). The study will provide the TSC with insight into misses and gains of performance contracting in public secondary schools and help them streamline it further. This study will enable the ministry of education to understand the status of the implementation of the performance contracting and further know its strengths and weaknesses especially in promoting accountability through financial management.

The principals of public secondary schools who are representatives of the T.S.C. and the ministry of education in the institutions they are stationed will also benefit from this study. They are supposed to oversee the signing of the performance contracts at their station. This study will assist them to understand why they need to uphold the values of the performance contracting policy for their personal development and job satisfaction. Scholars will also find this study important as the study will increase to the body of knowledge in this area and provide possible research questions for future studies.

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## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

### ***2.1. Research Design***

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design as it helps in drawing valid conclusion from facts that have been discussed. Descriptive research design is commonly used when examining social issues that are in communities like education, gender and culture. In this design, data collection was carried out in a structured process. According to Kumar (2005) the goal of descriptive research is to describe the characteristics of a selected phenomenon and involves the collection of data without manipulation of variables. Descriptive survey research was helpful in indicating trends in attitudes and behaviors and enables generalization of the findings of the research to be done (Neuman, 2000). The researcher employed this research technique to get insight into the overall influence of performance contract on teaching and learning environment in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo East Sub-County, Homabay County, Kenya as it best suits the study under investigation.

### ***2.2. The study area***

The study was undertaken in Rachuonyo East Sub-County in Homabay County. The Sub-County has an approximate surface area of 210.80 Km<sup>2</sup>. Rachuonyo East Sub-County borders Rachuonyo North to the north and Rachuonyo south to the south. The sub-county has a total of 47 public secondary schools of which 3 are Girls' schools, 3 are Boys' schools and 41 are mixed schools. According to the records of sub county education office all the 47 principals signed their performance contract with the TSC county director at the beginning of the year. The sub-county was chosen because of its poor performance compared to the other sub counties in Homabay County.

**2.3. Target population.**

The target population of the study was drawn from public secondary schools in Rachuonyo East Sub-County that have posted Kenya Certificate of Secondary School Education (KCSE) results from the year 2017 to 2020.

**2.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

The study used stratified sampling to identify sub-groups in the target population; the sub-groups were principals, BOM chairpersons, Sub County Director of TSC Sub-County Director of Education and CSOs. Purposive sampling is a method used to select the subjects who have the required information (Oso and Onen 2009). Therefore purposive sampling was used to select public day secondary school because they had the required information the researcher needed. Simple random sampling was used to select samples without bias from the accessible population; it was justified because it accorded each member of the population equal and independent chance of being

A sample is a smaller group obtained from the accessible population. This research drew a sample size using Yamane’s formula. The sample size was determined from target population using the Yamane’s formulae (Yamane, 1967).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

$$1 + N(e^2)$$

n = the desired sample size N = the total population

e = the level of statistical significance Therefore the sample size for the study is

$$n = \frac{102}{1 + 102(0.05^2)} = 83$$

$$\text{Non-response} = \frac{5}{100 + 102} = 5$$

$$\text{Total sample size} = 83 + 5 = 88$$

The sample size for each strata was determined using proportionate stratification approach. With proportionate stratification, the sample size of each stratum is proportionate to the population size of the stratum. Strata sample sizes was determined by the following equation

$$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$$

Where

$$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$$

$n_h$  = sample size for strata

N = the total population size n = the total sample size

$N_h$  = population size for strata

$$n_h = \frac{47}{102} \times 88 = 41$$

**Table 1: Sample Size**

	<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Target population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
1	Curriculum Support Officer (CSOs)	6	5
2	Sub-County Director of Education (SDOE)	1	1
3	TSC Sub County Director (SCDTSC)	1	1
4	Principals	47	41
5	Board of Management (BOM) chairpersons	47	41
	<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>89</b>

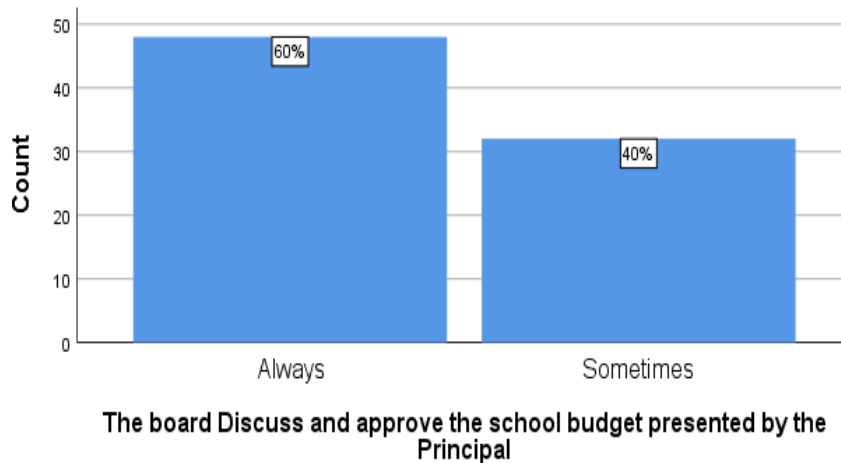
### 2.5 Data collection instruments

The study used three research instruments to collect data: document analysis guide, interview and questionnaires. Interview schedule was used to collect data from SDOE, SCDTSC and CSOs while questionnaires was used to collect data from Principals and BOM chairpersons.

## 3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Examine the relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching/ learning environment in public secondary schools.

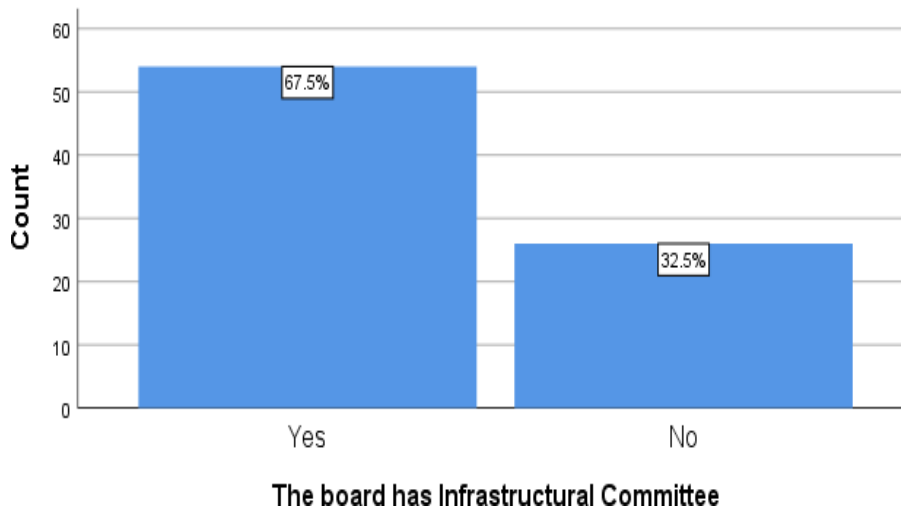
The researcher sought to find out whether the school board had discussed and approve the school budget presented by the Principal. The results are presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: The approval of budget**

In Figure 1, the results shows that 60% of the board chairpersons discuss and approve the school budget presented by the Principal while 40% agreed that sometimes they approve the budget presented by the Principal.

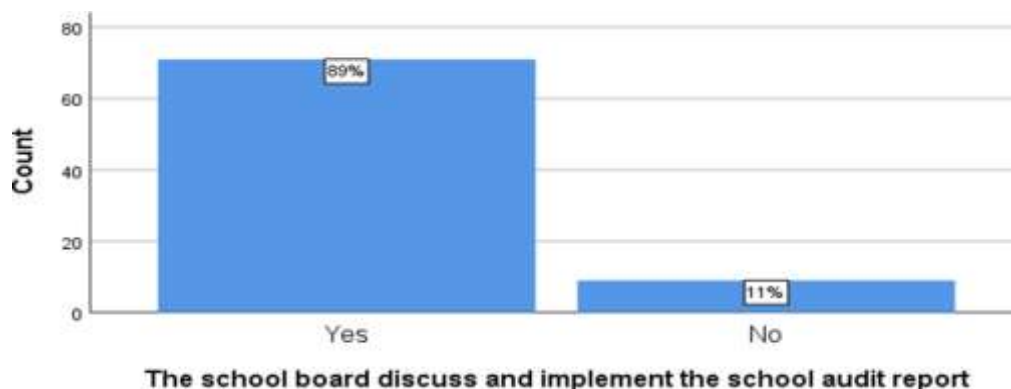
The researcher also sought to find out whether the board has infrastructural committee. The result is presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Infrastructural committee**

In Figure 2, the results shows that 67.5% of the board chairpersons are of the opinion that the board has infrastructural committee while 32.5% are of the contrary opinion.

The researcher also sought to find out whether the school board discuss and implement the school audit report. The results are presented in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Implementation of school audit**

In Figure 3, the results shows that 89% of the board chairpersons discuss and implement the school audit report while 11% do not audit the report. The researcher sought to examine the relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching/learning environment in public secondary schools. To examine this, bivariate correlation test was used. The study utilized the following null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment in public secondary schools.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis**

Correlations			Teaching and learning environment
Absorption of Allocated funds			
Absorption of Allocated funds	Pearson Correlation	1	-.140
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.216
	N	80	80
Teaching and learning environment	Pearson Correlation	-.140	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.216	
	N	80	80

In Table 2, the results shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient for absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment is -.140, which is not significant ( $p > .05$  for a two-tailed test), based on 80 complete observations i.e. absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment are not statistically significant in linear relationship ( $r = -.140, p > .05$ ). This implies that the direction of the relationship is negative (i.e., absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment are negatively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to move in opposite direction. Based on these results, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment in public secondary schools. Findings from the interview schedules indicate that indeed, there is absorption of funds in schools, however, the funds are not utilized efficiently on the allocated votes. This is because some funds are diverted to other activities like payment of BOM teachers. In addition, the absorption of this funds have no relationship with the teaching and learning environment which explains why the academic performance of learners is poor. This finding is similar to that of the quantitative analysis since it indicates that there is no significant relationship between absorption of funds and the teaching/learning environment. However, more studies need to be conducted to identify the causes of poor academic performance of learners in public secondary schools.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there is no relationship between absorption of allocated funds and teaching and learning environment in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo East Sub-County. Funds allocated have been fully utilized in the vote heads but not much changes has been realized in the teaching/learning environment since most schools still lag behind in infrastructure development in terms of library, resource centres and laboratories which is a prerequisite for good performance in KCSE. Among the principals responded majority required and had used the capitation funds from the Ministry of Education but most of them did not invest in teaching /learning resources.

#### 5.0 RECOMMENDATION

This study recommends that the Ministry of Education in conjunction with Teachers Service Commission to organize for workshops and seminars to capacity build Principals and BOM members on procurement procedures in order to equip the school administrators with knowledge and skills on finance. This can be done during Head conferences. The Ministry of Education should also sent money for capitation for schools in time in order to enable the

school Principals to acquire teaching and learning materials in good time especially text books, charts, laboratory equipments because some respondents indicated that they experience delays in funds disbursement.

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