



EMPOWERMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL BOARDS IN MANAGING SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KILIMANJARO, TANZANIA

Christina Moses Maeda

Department of Management

Moshi Co-operative University - Tanzania

Emails: maedachristina5@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The article reports on a qualitative study on empowerment and effectiveness of school boards as community representatives in managing schools where the main objective was to examine the access of school boards on financial and human resources of the schools managed together with finding out the level of autonomy possessed by board members in influencing the schools' decisions. Primary data were collected from 34 respondents and secondary data reviewed from materials on empowerment and education policy of Tanzania. It was found that, school boards have been provided with the opportunity to manage school affairs and so far, they have helped the schools to excel in managing student discipline and community mobilization in improving school infrastructure. Level of empowerment and effectiveness remains questionable due to number of challenges including low resource capability, lack of managerial skills and low autonomy levels. It is recommended that; review of school boards powers is needed to ensure the use of decentralised framework to influence matters at school level. There is a need to improve skills and capacities of Board members to achieve higher effectiveness.

Keywords: Community Empowerment; School Management; School Boards, effectiveness

Paper type: Research paper

Type of Review: Peer Review

1. INTRODUCTION

Empowerment of community in matters affecting their own local growth is a widespread issue mostly in the emergent economies (Gergis, 2009; Manor, 2018). This comes as a result of decentralisation by devolution that were meant to improve governance and democratic leadership (Pomuti and Weber, 2012; Mollél and Tollenaar, 2013). Several mechanisms for community to participate were then formed and includes but not limited to direct citizen participation in development like building schools, hospitals, establishing self-help projects and the like but several representative bodies were also introduced to represent the community in development issues. The representative mechanism to community participation came as user committees' concept that thought to empower the community to take major decisions in their local areas by choosing few representatives to manage the development in a specified area. A school board is taken as an example to user committee because through it few citizens from a specific local area are chosen to represent others in managing secondary schools. The introduction of user committees concepts suggest that user committees can either empower or disempowered the local community depending on the nature of their formation procedure, resource capability, and autonomy level (Crook and Manor 2018).

User committees formation may take various forms including but not limited to those formed through democratic elections and promises to get true representatives from a specified locality and others are formed through combining bureaucrats and community members of which many suffers from elites influence (De Grauwe, 2005). Others are formed through selections of people from a specified locality example parents associations in a certain schools that may end up favouring the well-off parents from counterparts poor. The empowerment theory also suggest that for community to be able to influence local decisions there are such elements that need to suffice including high literary level, management skills, resource availability, and freedom or power granted in accomplishing the responsibilities given (Joo, *et al*,2020 ;Alsop *et al.*, 2006).The empowerment elements tested through empirical studies indicate to have impact in user bodies' effectiveness example Masue and Askvik (2017) in their study on school committee empowerment they had also found that the procedures of recruiting the school governing members had impact on members' empowerment though there was indirect relationship with the committee effectiveness. On other hand Liguluka, and Onyango (2020) on their study on effectiveness of school boards in attending student disciplinary cases found that school boards could not give the final decision on the student disciplinary cases due to power limits they possessed.

The empowerment of user committees such as school boards needs the representatives to understand their roles and being on the position to foster good relationship between themselves and other actors in the same realm. The study by Mncube and Mafora (2013) who studied the empowerment and democratic character of school governing in South Africa noted the issue of the power relation struggles between school governing bodies and school management teams due to conflicting roles and issues on power limits. . The study by Etongo *et al.*,(2018) on community managed water projects highlighted on the lack of repairs and accounting skills as one among the main challenges that was affecting the sustainability of community borehole project in Uganda. Empowerment theory also suggest that for empowerment to take place effectively then the individuals needs to enjoy highest level of freedom in making the decision in hand and not merely implementing what has been directed from elsewhere (Naidoo, 2001). Decentralisation by devolution that took place in late 1990's therefore strengthens the community to take change in managing education development in their areas and this changed the structural roles of school boards from school management advisers to have power in schools through making important school decisions.

Despite the fact that there have been quite a good number of studies that has been done on the area of effectiveness of user committees that are similar to school boards, none were generalisable or concentrated their focus on empowerment and effectiveness of school boards from Kilimanjaro. Most of the studies done on these decentralised units still suggested a contradictory view with regards to empowerments and effectiveness of these user bodies Bartoszko, (2021),Dolezal, and Novelli, (2020), Crook and Manor, (2018) and Masue and Askvik (2017). Crook, and Manor (2018) contends on fast formation and consolidation of user committees as ways to allow community to engage in development, though there is a need for more studies on the procedural creation, authority and responsibilities granted to them together with their effectiveness. The article was in response of this gap through establishing the degree to which school boards from two nominated cases are empowered to achieve the granted responsibilities. Specifically, the study objectives are four fold: (i) To examine school boards formation procedures and its effects on empowerment and effectiveness; (ii) To find out school boards autonomy in accomplishing their instituted functions effectively; (iii) To examine the extent to which school boards have access to school resources; and (iv) To find out as to whether school boards have skills and education required to carry out their roles effectively.

2. METHODOLOGY

In analysing the empowerment levels for school boards, the researcher employed comparative case study design with embedded units which suited the investigative nature of the research problem (Thomas, 2021). The comparative cases involved were two schools chosen from two different localities. The schools were Anonymised to school A and School B from Moshi Rural District Council and Hai District Council respectively. The Anonymity was attributed to schools' consent conditions. For triangulation purposes the study used data from multiple sources including interview, documentary review and observations. The samples of 34 participants were interviewed using the semi structured, face to face interview as indicated in Table 1. Several research documents related to empowerment of user committees were reviewed together with government educational policies, plans and reports. Finally, observations were directly done on school revenue generating projects managed by school boards from studied cases and the records were taken about availability of such projects such as farms, livestock projects, building etc. A sample of 34 respondents was drawn purposively considering the availability and data potentiality. The sample included five categories of respondents which were parents, school teachers, educational officials, board members and students from chosen schools. Data were analysed qualitatively using content analysis and phenomenological analysis which allowed the participant experiences and perceptions to be shared.

Table 1: Sample size distribution

Respondent's Category	School A	School B	Total (n)
Education officers	7	7	14
Parents	1	1	2
Students	3	3	6
Teachers	3	3	6
Total	14	14	28

The study involved the investigation of two main cases which were secondary schools selected from two different local government authorities with consideration of older – newer school. The main aim was to see if there was a different in empowerment of school board in these two settings. School A is a public owned school which was older compared to school B. It is among the first schools inherited from colonial masters and situated in Rural District. It serves more than 500 students. The school serves about 570 student and 53 working staff. The modality of public involvement in these schools includes the use of parent teacher councils, school boards with public members, offer of direct labour power in enhancing school infrastructures. School B is also a government school which was also selected from rural setting. The school serves about 325 students yearly and there were about 25 teaching and operation staffs. The school is among, many schools which resulted from decentralisation policy of 1990's which required every ward to have a secondary school. Community participation in these kinds of schools happens to a larger extent as they are participated from the scratch when the schools are being established, community participate in school construction through offering labour power and cash contribution.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 School boards meaning and statutory composition

School board is a statutory governing body for secondary schools in Tanzania. School boards are established by education Act 1978 together with amendment Act no 10 of 1995 which establishes that it's a mandatory for every public school to have a school board which combine the members from the school management, members from the community and local government representatives. The Acts has mandated the Minister responsible for Education to appoint members to the board but the findings from the two studied cases showed that the practice was delegated to local government authorities, and school

levels. The composition of school board was provided by subsidiary legislations for education policy and it is constituted by 13 members.

The procedures for selecting the members learned from the two cases included appointment, co-optation, and permanent membership. One way the procedure for selecting the board members was empowering the grassroots levels because it was done at the lowest governing levels which included the Local Government and Schools as the initiator for the whole procedure. However, the procedures for selection were not empowering the community directly in determining who should represent them in school management because from both schools A and B the members were rather appointed than being elected democratically. None of the members were democratically elected. Similar findings were reported by McPartlon (2016) his study on Water User Committees in Uganda he indicated that there was no one modality of getting the committees members as some were appointed and others elected but also the elected ones were not so democratically rather it included the prominent people in the area.

Table 1: Membership category and recruitment modality for school board members

Membership category	Nature of recruitment	No.
School owner/representative	Appointment	1
District Education Officer	Automatic	1
Head of school	Automatic	1
Representative teacher	Elected by teacher	1
Community members	Appointed by head teacher	7
Ex-official	Co-opted	2
Total		13

3.2 School boards access to school financial and human resources

Access to resources is an empowerment element which suggests that school boards need to have access to resources such as financial resources and human resources to be on the position to function effectively. It is an important element that acts as an engine for the community to be in good position to carry out the community functions like that of managing schools etc. Therefore, for empowerment purposes study investigated two cases on availability and effectiveness of both Financial and Human resources, where in financial resources the concentration was done on sources of school funds and whether school boards were empowered in deciding on the same. On human resources the study investigated on education levels and capacity of boards' members in executing their duties.

3.3 School boards access to financial resources

Financial resource is marked as an important resource needed in any organisational setting without which goals are hardly achieved or not achieved at all. From the studied cases it was learned that school's access finances from various sources including government grants, NGO's grants, and school projects as well as from community contributions.

3.3.1 School boards influence on government provident fund transferred to school

Findings from nominated cases have shown that schools acquire finances for running the school affairs from government provident Fund, which is the financial pool under the ministry of finance. Through the assistance of main treasury attached to the ministry the school funds get allocated to regional sub treasury before it is transferred to respective schools accounts. This government allocated funds are based on the financial budgets that have been allocated to Ministry of education and hence schools receive various directives on its use. Example money sent can be directed to construction or renovation purposes etc. Despite the fact that the two studied cases have acknowledged to have received provident funds

provided but there was an query on its sufficiency which also tend to affect effectiveness of school boards in carrying out management functions . A board member from school A said:

“...Currently we don't get sufficient finances compared to previous time... so it's difficult to manage the school....

Shortage of funds experienced by secondary schools have been attributed to increase in student enrolment enticed by fee free education policy accompanied by decrease on education ministry budget apportionment. Similar findings were reported by Godda(2018) in Singida Region when he was analysing the challenges met by head of schools and boards in managing the fee free education policy. It is the same reasons tend to affect boards performance and effectiveness because schools depend largely on governmental grants in implementing various education directives. Respondents were also asked about the autonomy of the school boards in allocating such government provided funds but it was clearly learned that school boards had no autonomy to allocate such funds as it is transferred to the schools with the directives on how to use it. The school boards had rather a mandate to oversee the implementation and on otherwise.

3.3.2 School boards access to revenue earned from school projects

Decentralisation by devolution had empowered the schools to enjoy what is called fiscal authority which enables the schools to generate its own revenue. From the two studied cases it was realised that schools through school boards had come with different revenue rising projects which helps the schools to generate its own revenue. The development projects observed during field work ranged from food crops farms mainly maize and beans, poultry and cow rearing. There was differences noted between the two studied cases where school A had bigger and stable projects as compared to school B. The differences noted can be explained based on various matters such as the history of the schools differed as school A was established during colonialism it was inherited from religionists hence having many development project is not a surprise because it came so far as compared to school B which was established in 2000's during decentralisation period so is still in its initial stages of development. Not only that but during the field visit it was noted that school B was experiencing the huge financial burden as it could not even afford to build enough classrooms let along other needed facilities as teachers houses and library room. Most of the revenue generating projects needed enough land so the school had only few acres that will be enough for school academic activities.

3.3.3 School boards influence on financial contribution from the community

Community contributions mark another source from which boards are accessing funds for enabling various school activities. During the interview with boards member from both schools it was realised that School A mostly accessed funds from community in form of what is called good Samaritan's contributions, these include people who are closely related to the schools such as alumni and school friends who usually fundraise for improving their former school. Board members from this school witnessed that through contacting and sharing ideas with alumni they had done a lot of improvement including doing renovation for their school. It was however noted that school B did not solicit contributions directly from the community surrounding the schools and the reason given was that the school was not known as a community owned school so it was not under that category which will allow them to get funds from the community. On other hand school B which was a community school was getting community contribution directly from citizen in the village where the school was located. This school is one among many schools that are owned by the community therefore to exercise the ownership community members contribute monetary resources and other non-monetary resources such as labour power and building materials for improving the school. School board plays a big role in this contribution as they co-operate together with village government in mobilising and monitoring for such contributions.

Nevertheless school B board experienced a lot of difficulties when it comes to community contributions because most of the community members were not participating due to extreme poverty experienced in that community. The following quotation from board member school B said:

"...Village leaders have been so helpful in mobilising the community to contribute for this school, though we don't get as expected, people always complains on poverty ... others says that government is providing education for free...."

With regards to empowerment the above findings show an indication that although the government has empowered school board to find extra revenue from community still school boards especially the one in rural areas did not want to contribute cash to schools because of the misconception most of the community members have on the fee free education policy that government will provide for everything concerned with the school. The similar findings were also done by Godda (2018) and Kapinga (2017).

3.4 School boards access to education and school management skills

Education qualification is an essential element in empowering people to participate in their own development (Metto et al., 2020 and Mchopa; et al., 2020). This is because education expands someone's knowledge and, in that way, he /she can take informative decisions. The existence of opportunities will be useless in absence of education which enables someone realise and utilise the opportunities for his own development. The decentralisation supporters had always said that decentralisation will be meaningless if there are no skilled people to undertake the activities being decentralised (Naidoo, 2005). The same applies to school boards that the school management has been decentralised to school boards therefore they need to have enough management skills and knowledge if this function is to be done effectively. The examination was done in two studied cases to establish the degree of board members educational achievement with comparison to their ability to complete the entrusted tasks. The results clearly stipulate that members appointed in the boards should have minimum secondary education level. The findings indicates that school A board members were well educated as all of them had met the requirement and 3 had university education but it was different in school B where 5 members had primary level and only 6 members were meeting the qualification of secondary level education. The higher education possessed by members from school A had positive impact on their performance. The head of school A attested that:

"...we tend to mix in recruiting members but we ensure we meet the requirement. Mine have all the requirement and because of that they really participate, they know what to do...."

School B was experiencing challenges to get the boards members with required education level and this was attributed to its location which was remote area, where most of educated people migrate to urban areas looking for jobs. Furthermore, the result indicated that the less educated prevalent in this area had however played notable role in establishing the school hence important in including them in managing the schools.

"...yes, we have this requirement (secondary level) but it is hard meeting it We just use what we have, some are not secondary school levers but they are founders, you can't ignore them.... (Head Teacher School B)."

The findings and discussion above give clear evidence that education is an important element which empowers people to do well in management activities. The clear indication of this was shown by the differences in board performance between the two cases. School A which was having most educated members was perceived to be better in performance when compared with school B which was having most of its members with lower education. The same findings were reported by Mncube, and

Mafora(2013) on their study on school governing bodies in South Africa where they explained that parent involvement did not provide significant effectiveness in schools because of low education.

3.5 School boards access to capacity building programmes on school management

This refers to a method of advancing someone's skills and knowledge through trainings and workshops. The study did examination on school boards in the two studied cases to realise if they have special programmes for building boards capacity in managing schools. The findings from both cases showed most of its members were not having the management skills so capacity building deemed important. Furthermore, the findings from the two cases showed availability of short- term capacity programmes to the board members which was provided in form of orientations. This capacity building programmes were those done for new appointed members to acquaint them with board responsibilities and power. However, the findings suggested shortage to long term capacity building to the board members and this was attributed to the shortage of funds as such programmes require sufficient resources to be carried out. However, the interview with individual board members exposed opposing responses where it was learned that there was no formal trainings done for board members because most of the interviewed members claimed to have not seen or attended any training program. Members of the two school boards pointed out that:

"...I have never seen board members being trained here (board member school-A, September 2018),...I have been here for three good years but there is no such thing..."(Board member school).

"...There is no such thing, I have not noticed it here and I have been appointed for three phases consecutively..." (Board Member school B).

Not a single board member interviewed attested to have joined in any training as a board member despite the fact that they recognised training as a beneficial tool for sharpening their managerial skills. Equivalent result was reported by Etongo, *et al.*, 2018 in their study on community managed water supply in Uganda where their findings suggested that most of the borehole project were not sustainable because the committee members had no capacity in repairing and managing the projects. The findings provide are clear indication to lack of proper capacity building programmes which end up affecting the performance of school boards when it comes to school management. Taking into consideration that most of the members had low level education and they were not having management skills lack of training programmes have adversarial effects on their performance. One among responsibilities of school boards is to manage on implementation of education policies and programmes at the school level, this rise a clear doubt on how they are able to carry out this function considering that these programmes change in short period of time as they may be implemented yearly or after two three years. Reliable capacity building programmes to board members remains vital because of its role in improving board members awareness and knowledge on how to manage schools and improving their accountability to schools and to the general community.

3.6 School board autonomy and school decisions

Autonomy refers to the freedom exerted by someone in making decision (Dieltiens, 2014). Autonomy is another element of user committee and decentralisation theories whereby , under user committee Masue and Askvik (2017) had this proposition that most of the user committees like school boards have no adequate autonomy in making choices for their community but rather were used as tools to exercise what is dictated by upper authorities (Masue and Askvik, 2017).On other side decentralisation theory trust in total transfer of autonomy to the public to promote effective participation and democracy. The article then based its focus on the two theories through screening the school boards from the nominated cases to ascertain school board freedom in making choices and decisions on school affairs. Empowerment and

effectiveness were anticipated to have been attained when school boards had authority and freedom to decide on school developments without intrusion from other education stakeholders or politicians.

Two tactics were employed to examine school boards autonomous level in school studied, where the first tactic was to ask a direct question on how the decentralisation policy was effective in enabling the board members to carry out their functions without being intruded and the second approach was to screen through 4 main function entrusted to boards members and see the level of influence they ad in each of the functions. The results from first tactic found out that although decentralisation by devolution was sought to bring powers to lowest school levels this was still unaccomplished promise because some of the participant said that they did not see any changes that was brought by this policy. The participant pinpointed that Top-down decision-making approaches was still influencing the education and bottom-up approaches were mostly ignored and this made the community to feel non ownership of the schools

A teacher from school A said: “...Everything is done the same way like before decentralisation. Citizen are not aware of the changes...”.

Similar explanations were given by one parent form school A who said that transfer of power to the community did not happen because head of the schools were not accountable to the community as devolution principles require. He said that head teachers continue to be too powerful even the chairperson of the school boards cannot have any influence over the school decisions. The findings show clear indication that devolution of authority have not being effective in practice as there was still features of centralisation on the decentralised functions. Similar verdicts were given (Muñoz *et al.*, 2017) when they were accessing the level of decentralisation between primary schools and health centre in Tanzania where they found community was unable to make some decisions and await on what was directed from above.

On other hand, the study found out that there was a contraction between the decentralisation framework and the law that established school boards and it affected the school boards power in making school decisions. Example a member form school A said:

“...The issue is on the rule that created the school boards it's very old since 1978. But also are only recognised as advisors, that is what the law is saying...”.

The law that created the school boards was older compared to the revised decentralisation policy which took place in 1996. Furthermore, the law that recognised school boards as the advisory councils and not the decision makers of the school, this creates a lot of conflicts among the board members and other school management teams and hence affects the overall performance of the board effectiveness.

3.7 School boards autonomy on the roles and responsibilities provided by law

The second tactic of learning on school board autonomous level involved screening four main school boards functions as stipulated on Secondary Education Development Program I and II (SDEP 1&11) SEDP I and II explains school board as statutory governing body that is entrusted with responsibilities of managing secondary education development at the school level.

3.7.1 School board autonomy over school Budget

School boards under the government school board order of (2002) are charged with school planning responsibility which includes budgeting and other school plans. The two schools under study were examined to see the board's autonomy on this function. Discoveries from two area studied show that school boards had a limited influence on school budget and planning in general because they were mainly regarded mere advisors rather than an active actor but also most of the members had little or no skills in this particular role. This was revealed by board member from school A said:

“...The budget is initiated by SMT (school management teams), they are here always they know what is required here, the head of the school is the main implementer of the budget, we only advice to ensure the funds are used well...”.

The same idea was supported by a board member from school B who said that all the financial activity were done by head of schools and for them is just to deliberate and advice on how the finances were spent. From these finding, it is evident that School boards had less influence on the school budget this is because they are informed of the pre- determined decisions of which Bingöl, (2021), associated with unreal participation method which offers limited opportunity to community to effect own development. Despite the fact that school boards had an opportunity to give some inputs in improving the school budget, the involvement is considered infective because they only enter as advisers and not active decision makers. The biggest influence on budgeting and planning was seen on the Head of schools as they were directly involved in budgeting together with SMT's but also, they were the only one with the access to school bank account while no one else from the board had this access. The limited influence of the school board diverges from what is happening at the primary school level where Masue and Askvik (2017) recorded higher influence of school committees over the school finances as they were even participated in budgeting and buying school materials.

3.7.2 School boards autonomy education policy and management

This is another School Boards Function where they are supposed to advice both local government and the commissioner concerned with secondary schools on the policy matters. Under this function board give advices on the implementation of policies, but also give ideas to the school heads on the improvement of the school management. The findings from the two studied cases showed mixed findings where on one hand school boards were effective in the function something that suggested higher influence but on other hand school boards were seen to have little influence over this responsibility because of lack of skills and information especially on the policy matters. All these were clearly indicated by the Education Officers from both cases. The officers said that they depend a lot on school boards contributions in running the schools and they witnessed that boards have always come up with challenging ideas that improves the schools. The picture that is created on above findings is that school boards have autonomy in providing advices to the school management but also to the local government concerning school improvement. However, there was a contradictory finding which were provided by the board members themselves that their views or ideas didn't have any impact in the school management because the ideas were not considered and reasons given were linked to financial constrains as most of the ideas provided needed money to be implemented well. These findings coincide with the argument by (Bingöl, 2021; Silva, 2020). who provided that in most cases citizen are involved to meet the condition and not to challenge or question what is decided on and for that matter which they cannot be sure if their decisions will be incorporated in the policy making?

Another issue that was recorded to affect the board members ability to do this function was the lack of information on educational matters. Because most of the members had less education then this affected their ability to give the constructive judgement on school management as well as on the policy implementation. The boards had three to four meetings that could not allow them to be fully exposed to the matters that they need to advocate for. The similar findings occurred in study on Papua New Guinea School where it was found that school governing bodies concentrated so many efforts on building and construction issues and forgotten about important part, they need to play in effecting the education policy (Bray, 2001). The management of secondary schools is derived from the framework of education policy, so for someone to advice on what to be done they need to have sufficient knowledge on what is going on. Lack of understanding on policy issues may be caused by the fact that board members do not

have sufficient time in gaining information concerning policies; the three to four board meetings in a year may not be enough for them to get enough information with which they can provide constructive ideas. There is a need to ensure that board members are scientifically selected to meet the need but also there should be a proper way to channel policy information to the board member so that they can be aware on what is going on for them to advice well on policy issues.

3.7.3 School boards in influence over student's discipline

The investigation was done to find out the degree of autonomy possessed by boards in dealing with issues of student discipline and it was found out that school boards are actively involved in disciplining the student although the process is initiated from the teachers who are directly in contact with the student every day. In other word school boards is the final disciplinary stage for student especially on the aggressive disciplinary cases that may involve student suspensions or dismissal. Example board member from school B said:

"...We are very much concerned with student discipline; we help teachers in creating school by laws that makes school a better place. We insist our students to be disciplined and where we see that they go contrary then we take some actions, involve parents and even the police sometimes if its serious issues..."

Moreover, findings from both cases concluded that school boards are used as appeal board when students are not satisfied with the disciplinary measures taken before going to the higher education authorities. The board autonomy has gone far to the extent of coming up with new by-laws that helps in regulating the student's behaviours. This finding is contrary to what is suggested by Liguluka and Onyango (2020) who did their study on the effectiveness of school boards in dealing with student discipline in Morogoro where they found out that, boards were weak as they only discuss the disciplinary cases without giving further disciplinary actions.

3.7.4 School boards influence over teachers' discipline

School boards also deals with teacher's discipline, where they are supposed to ensure teachers are conforming with teacher's code of conduct but they are more responsible in advising the TSC on teachers discipline on the schools they manage. The findings about the autonomy of school boards in this particular function from both cases showed that school boards had a very limited influence on teachers discipline because they were less involved in teachers' issues. More over the lack of power in managing teachers' discipline was associated with the fact that teachers are hired by the regional secretariat under the direction of responsible ministry, generally the procedure of getting teachers is still highly centralised and teachers fills more accountable to their employer. Further more teachers have some assumptions that school board is there to deal with student disciplinary issues together with construction activities. The teacher from school B said:

"...I am not sure whether the board can deal with teachers' issues because any misconduct involving a teacher is reported to DEO and taken further to the ministry. For what I know boards deal only with student and construction thing..."

The similar arguments were presented in school B by teachers and some board members. The above finding is a clear indication of low board autonomy in dealing with teacher's issues. The finding shows differences on the practice of other school governing bodies example the in El Salvador where they have community associations which resemble school boards in Tanzania, the associations are given power to deal with teachers matters including selecting, dismissing and training, monitoring performance of teachers which increased the accountability of teachers to these association (Jimenez and Sawada, 1999). The fact that school boards have no autonomy on teachers' matters may have adverse effects in effecting

some of their duties, example the obligation of making sure that teachers are observing to professional code of conduct is jeopardised.

4.5 School boards autonomy in deliberating on the quarterly school performance reports

School boards are also instituted with the function of reflecting on school performance reports that are generated by various school committees including SMT and boards small committees. The findings from the two studied cases exhibited that school board does this function though it was not done in its effectiveness because of several factors including mismatch in meetings schedules together with board capacity in deliberation process. Both schools had suffered from meeting mismatch as board meetings were conveyed only once or twice in year while the deliberation was supposed take place quarterly therefore this provide clear picture that there were some quarterly reports that were not deliberated something that could create hindrance on the next quarter if the deliberation was to take place due to loose of focus or overload in the whole process. Another factor indicated by the findings was lack of capacity and skills on deliberation among the board members. School A reported to have high number of skilled members as compared to school B and this had affected their ability to deliberate effectively. Most of the reports to be deliberated were financial based hence required the members to have at least basic knowledge in finance and budgeting generally but because some of the members in school B were less educated this function was challenging. Lack of skills and mismatch in meeting schedule affects board's autonomy to the large extent as many reports pass by un-deliberated but also there were greater chance of having elite influence over the function and this affects the board autonomy over this function

5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings it is concluded that school boards form the two studied cases were empowered in some few areas of their responsibilities including ability to influence the financial resource mobilisation from the community and ability to maintain the students' disciplines. It was also concluded that empowerment and effectiveness of school boards were affected by lack of general management and financial management skills which has adversarial effects on their main functions of planning, budgeting and advising the education policy. Further, the study concluded that school board participation mechanism was identified to have big impact in empowerment and effectiveness of school boards as they were involved in tokenistic way as only advisors and not decision makers. The decentralised framework which demanded to have granted more autonomy to school boards to act on behalf of the community may have not provided clear line of power and this end up affecting empowerment and effectiveness of school board as it was seen in the two cases studied. The study therefore recommends the following to be done in order to improve the empowerment and effectiveness of school boards in managing secondary schools: Initiation of often capacity building programmes for board members to enable them acquires managerial, financial and other required skills to carry out their duties effectively. The need for restructuring the decentralised framework, education policy and review of the education act no 25 of 1978 and its amendment act no 10 of 1995 to redefine the powers of school boards for them to be able influence various school decisions. Moreover, community mobilisation campaigns should be done to influence community support over school's development project to increase schools and boards access to resources.

REFERENCES

- Alsop, R., Bertelsen, M. F. and Holland, J. (2006). *Empowerment in practice: From analysis to implementation*: World Bank Publications.
- Bartoszko, A. (2021). Shadow Committees: On "Drug User Voice," Representation, and Mobilization in a Norwegian Drug Policy Reform. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 00914509211003731.
- Bray, M. (2001). *Community partnerships in education: Dimensions, variations and implications*: Unesco Paris
- Crook, R., and Manor, J. (2018). *Democratic decentralization* (pp. 83-104).Routledge.

- Dolezal, C., and Novelli, M. (2020). Power in community-based tourism: empowerment and partnership in Bali. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-19.
- Erdiaw-Kwasie, M. O., Abunyewah, M., Edusei, J., and Alimo, E. B. (2020). Citizen participation dilemmas in water governance: An empirical case of Kumasi, Ghana. *World Development Perspectives*, 20, 100242.
- Etongo, D., Fagan, G., Kabonesa, C. and Asaba B. R. (2018). Community-managed water supply systems in rural Uganda: The role of participation and capacity development. *Water*, 10(9), 1271.
- Gergis, A. (1999). Citizen Economic Empowerment in Botswana: Concepts and Principles: Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis.
- Godda, H. (2018). Free secondary education and the changing roles of the heads of public schools in Tanzania: are they ready for new responsibilities? *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(5), 1-23.
- Kabeer, N. (2001). Resources, Agency, Achievements. Discussing Women's Empowerment, 17.
- Kapinga, O. (2017). Assessment of school facilities and resources in the context of fee free basic education in Tanzania. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 5(6), 93-102.
- Liguluka, A. T., and Onyango, D. O. (2020) Effectiveness of Secondary School Boards in Managing Students' Discipline among Public Secondary Schools in Ulanga District, Morogoro Tanzania. *East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences (EAJESS)*, 1(3), 184-190.
- Maeda, Christina Mosses (2015). Empowering locals through school governance: A case of secondary school boards in Tanzania. MS thesis. The University of Bergen, 2015.
- Makenji, N. P. (2017). *Decentralization of educational management through school boards: a case of community secondary schools in Same district council, Kilimanjaro region* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Dodoma).
- Masue, O. S., and Askvik, S. (2017). Are school committees a source of empowerment? Insights from Tanzania. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 40(9), 780-791.
- Mchopa, A., Jeckoniah, J. N., Israel, B., & Changalima, I. A. (2020). Socio-Economic Determinants of Participation in Sunflower Value Chain among Smallholder Farmers in Iramba District Tanzania.
- Metto, W. K., Mahonge, C. P., and Komba, C. K. (2020). Effects of members' education types on their participation in savings and credit co-operative societies: evidence from uasin-gishu county, kenya. *East african journal of social and applied sciences (eaj-sas)*, 2(2): 23-34.
- Mncube, V., and Mafora, P. (2013). School governing bodies in strengthening democracy and social justice: Parents as partners. *Anthropologist*, 15(1), 13-23
- Muñoz, D. C., Amador, P. M., Llamas, L. M., Hernandez, D. M., and Sancho, J. M. S. (2017). Decentralization of health systems in low and middle income countries: a systematic review. *International journal of public health*, 62(2), 219-229.
- Perkins, D. D., and Zimmerman, M. A. (1995). Empowerment theory, research, and application. *American journal of community psychology*, 23(5), 569-579.
- Pomuti, H. and Weber, E. 2012. [Decentralization and School Management in Namibia: The Ideologies of Education Bureaucrats in Implementing Government Policies](#). *International Scholarly Research Network (ISR) Education*. Volume 2012, Article ID 731072.
- Silva, C. N. (2020). Citizen Participation in Spatial Planning in Portugal 1920–2020 Non-participation, Tokenism and Citizen Power in Local Governance. In *Contemporary Trends in Local Governance* (pp. 241-276). Springer, Cham.
- Thomas, G. (2021). *How to do your case study*. Sage.
- Wood, L., and Damons, B. (2017). Fostering a School-Community Partnership school-and community-based action research school-community partnership for Mutual Learning and Development: A Participatory Action Learning and Action Research Approach. *The Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research* (pp. 771-783): Springer.