

**INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAPACITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS IN THE  
MANAGEMENT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION FUNDS IN TRANS-  
NZOIA WEST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the capacity of School Management Boards in the management of free primary education funds in Trans-Nzoia West District. The study was guided by the following objectives: to investigate compliance to the policy requirement in the recruitment of school Management Board Members, examine the competencies of School Management Board Members serving in the study area, to identify and examine cost-effective strategies used by school management boards in execution of projects to satisfactory completion and to examine the challenges encountered in the management of FPE funds in the study area. The study was guided by Contingency Management Theory, propounded by Fiedler (1967), cited in Sergiovani and Carver (1980) and Kipkoech (2012) which outlines factors that influence leadership effectiveness. The study employed descriptive survey design. The target population included all 552 members of management boards of primary schools in Trans-Nzoia West Sub-county of whom head teachers are inclusive, 1 county Director of Education and 1 Sub-County Education Officer. Therefore, the target population was 554 subjects. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 28 primary schools from the 92 in the district. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select 28 head teachers and 28 treasurers of the sampled schools. Furthermore, purposive sampling technique was used in selection of County Director of Education and Sub County Education Officer. Data analysis was by use of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. To answer the study objectives the General Linear Model –GLM ANOVA statistical procedure was used. Findings from the study revealed that there was a significant difference in leadership effectiveness between board members who acquired fourth form education and those who did not. This implies that professionalization of school boards is way behind and thus impacting negatively on the performance of school boards and consequently likely to affect overall school performance. Oversight or supervisory boards should be formed comprising government officials from anti-corruption department, parents and teachers to ensure that no shortcuts are taken when recruiting members of school boards. There was a significant difference in leadership effectiveness between board members who were more experienced in financial knowledge and those who were not. Although training has financial implications, it is also true that there are many institutions which are willing to give back to the community through Corporate Social Responsibility programs such as Price Coopers Waterhouse. Such avenues should diligently be looked into to find out how beneficial they can

be in training board members. Board members who did not adopt adequate building maintenance programs or practice cost saving techniques, tended to score less on leadership effectiveness compared to those who reported adequate building maintenance programs. Training on preparation of effective building maintenance programs, essentials of bulk purchasing, and Cost oriented restructuring would go a long way to reduce costs of running primary schools. The most important problem was fund management training at score 8.51, this was followed by Unpredictable budgeting needs at score 7.91. De-motivated teachers was the third most important challenge at score 6.36 and then Delay in disbursing of funds and lastly Perceptions of the FPE at scores 4.82 and 4.70 respectively.