

KEMI Journal of Educational Leadership and Management

KJELM

[ISSN 3079-4048]

Volume: 2 Issue: 3 | Nov-2026

Board of Management curriculum implementation practices and students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya

Jackline Tabitha Nzoka[1], **Daniel Mange Mbirithi**[1], **Onesmus Muroki Thuo**[1]

Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies, School of Education, Kenyatta University, Kenya[1]

Corresponding Author Email: Jtkinyua1@gmail.com

Cite this article in APA

https://doi.org/10.68147/eb3b28a7

Copyright: ©2026 by the author(s). Open access under CC BY.

Abstract

This study examined the influence of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices on students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya. Despite increased investment in secondary education, concerns persist regarding students' academic outcomes in many public day secondary schools. Effective curriculum implementation requires adequate instructional resources, learning facilities, curriculum monitoring, and support systems, which are partly facilitated by Boards of Management. Guided by Open Systems Theory, the study adopted a correlational research design. The target population comprised Board of Management chairpersons, principals, heads of departments, student leaders, County Directors of Education, and Sub-County Directors of Education. A sample of 361 respondents was selected using stratified, purposive, and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and simple linear regression, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that Board of Management curriculum implementation practices had a positive and statistically significant influence on students' academic outcomes ($r = .455$, $p = .000$). Regression analysis further showed that curriculum implementation practices significantly predicted students' academic outcomes ($\beta = .455$, $t = 9.231$, $p = .000$) and explained 20.7% of the variation in academic outcomes ($R^2 = .207$). The study concludes that effective curriculum implementation

practices significantly enhance students' academic outcomes. The study recommends strengthening the capacity of Boards of Management through continuous training on curriculum implementation, resource mobilization, and instructional support to improve educational outcomes in public secondary schools.

Key terms: Board of Management, curriculum implementation, academic outcomes, educational governance, public day secondary schools, Kenya

Introduction

Students' academic outcomes remain a key indicator of the effectiveness of education systems worldwide. Achievement of desired learning outcomes depends not only on classroom teaching but also on the availability of adequate instructional resources, effective curriculum support mechanisms, and sound governance structures. School governing bodies play an important role in creating conditions that facilitate successful curriculum implementation and improved learner achievement through resource mobilisation, policy oversight, and support for instructional programmes (Abenaitwe, 2025; UNESCO, 2021).

In Kenya, Boards of Management (BOMs) are mandated to support the management and development of public secondary schools. Their responsibilities include resource mobilisation, infrastructure development, monitoring curriculum implementation, and providing strategic direction for school improvement (Republic of Kenya, 2013). Despite increased government investment in secondary education and the implementation of Free Day Secondary Education, many public day secondary schools continue to register below-average academic outcomes in national examinations (Republic of Kenya, 2025).

The study was guided by Open Systems Theory, which views schools as open systems that transform educational inputs into outputs through interconnected organisational processes. Within this perspective, curriculum implementation practices supported by Boards of Management constitute important inputs that influence teaching and learning processes and ultimately students' academic outcomes (Bertalanffy, 1968; Lunenburg, 2010). Effective provision of instructional resources, learning facilities, and curriculum support mechanisms can therefore enhance learner achievement.

Previous studies have established that instructional resources, learning facilities, curriculum monitoring, and educational support systems positively influence students' academic outcomes (Ajiboye, 2022; Kisiang'ani et al., 2024; Mbogo, 2023). However, limited empirical evidence exists on how Boards of Management specifically support curriculum implementation and influence students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kenya, particularly in Kitui and Embu Counties. This knowledge gap informed the current study.

Objective of the Study

To determine the influence of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices on students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

H_0: Board of Management curriculum implementation practices have no statistically significant influence on students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya.

Literature Review

Curriculum implementation is a critical determinant of educational quality and learner achievement.

Effective implementation requires the availability of adequate instructional resources, supportive learning environments, curriculum monitoring mechanisms, and stakeholder involvement in the teaching and learning process. Schools that successfully implement curriculum programmes are more likely to achieve improved academic outcomes because learners are provided with opportunities to access quality instruction and essential learning resources (UNESCO, 2021; Lezotte, 2010).

Studies conducted in different educational contexts have demonstrated that availability and effective utilization of instructional resources contribute significantly to students' academic success. Adequate provision of textbooks, laboratory equipment, information and communication technology facilities, and other teaching-learning materials enhances curriculum delivery and supports learners' achievement of intended learning outcomes. Conversely, inadequate instructional resources often hinder effective teaching and negatively affect students' academic performance (Ajiboye, 2022; Osuji & Iheanyichukwu, 2021; Kisiang'ani et al., 2024).

Educational governance structures have also been identified as important contributors to curriculum implementation. School governing bodies support teaching and learning through policy formulation, resource mobilization, infrastructure development, and oversight of educational programmes. Effective governance promotes accountability, strengthens curriculum supervision, and facilitates the provision of resources necessary for quality instruction. Consequently, schools characterized by active and supportive governance structures tend to demonstrate better educational outcomes than those with ineffective governance systems (Amakyi, 2022; Chen, 2022; Lafortune, 2022).

Within the Kenyan education system, Boards of Management are legally mandated to support curriculum implementation through mobilization of resources, development of school facilities, and monitoring of educational programmes. Their support is particularly important in public day secondary schools, which often experience resource constraints that may affect effective curriculum delivery. While previous studies have established the importance of instructional resources and school leadership in promoting students' academic achievement, limited empirical evidence exists regarding the specific contribution of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices to students' academic outcomes (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

The present study addresses this gap by examining the influence of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices on students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya. Guided by Open Systems Theory, the study conceptualizes curriculum implementation support as a critical educational input that influences teaching and learning processes and ultimately contributes to students' academic outcomes (Gwada, 2024; Mbii, 2021; Mbogo, 2023).

Conceptual Framework

The study was guided by the assumption that Board of Management curriculum implementation practices influence students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools. Curriculum implementation practices constituted the independent variable and included support for instructional resources, provision of learning facilities, curriculum monitoring, and facilitation of teaching and learning programmes. Students' academic outcomes constituted the dependent variable. The relationship between the variables is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship between Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices and Students' Academic Outcomes

Independent variable

Dependent variable

Intervening variable

Source: Researcher (2026)

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational research design to examine the influence of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices on students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya. The design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to establish the nature and strength of the relationship between the study variables without manipulating the study environment (Creswell, 2014).

The target population comprised Board of Management chairpersons, principals, heads of departments, student leaders, County Directors of Education, and Sub-County Directors of Education from public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties. A sample of 361 respondents was selected using stratified sampling, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling techniques to ensure adequate representation of all categories of respondents. The sample size was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination formula.

Data were collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires were administered to Board of Management chairpersons, principals, heads of departments, and student leaders, while interview schedules were administered to County Directors of Education and Sub-County Directors of Education. Questionnaires were considered appropriate because they enabled the collection of data from a large number of respondents within a relatively short period, while interview schedules facilitated the collection of in-depth information from education administrators (Orodho, 2004; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The research instruments were subjected to expert review to establish content validity. Reliability of the questionnaires was determined through pilot testing, and the reliability coefficients obtained met the acceptable threshold for educational research. Similar approaches have been recommended for enhancing the validity and reliability of educational research instruments (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and simple linear regression analysis were used to test the study hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. Correlation analysis established the strength and direction of the relationship between the study variables, while regression analysis determined the extent to which Board of Management curriculum implementation practices predicted students' academic outcomes (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative data obtained through interviews were transcribed, organized, and analyzed thematically. The qualitative findings were used to complement and enrich the interpretation of quantitative results through triangulation of evidence from different respondent categories (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Ethical clearance and research authorization were obtained from the relevant authorities before commencement of the study. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage of the research process. The study further adhered to accepted ethical standards governing educational research involving human participants (Creswell, 2014).

Findings and Discussion

Response Rate and Respondent Characteristics

The study sought views from Board of Management chairpersons, principals, heads of departments, student leaders, County Directors of Education, and Sub-County Directors of Education from public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties. The response rate achieved was considered adequate for statistical analysis and generalization of findings. Respondents represented key stakeholders involved in curriculum implementation and school management, thereby providing diverse perspectives on Board of Management curriculum implementation practices and students' academic outcomes.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Respondent Category	Kitui (n)	Embu (n)	Total (n)	Percentage (%)
Board of Management Members	96	70	166	46.0
Principals	7	5	12	3.3
Heads of Departments	30	22	52	14.4
Prefects	73	53	126	34.9
Sub-County Directors of Education	2	1	3	0.8
County Directors of Education	1	1	2	0.6
Total	209	152	361	100.0

Source: Adapted from the study sample selection data.

The study obtained data from 361 respondents drawn from Kitui and Embu Counties. The respondents comprised 166 Board of Management members (46.0%), 126 prefects (34.9%), 52 Heads of Departments (14.4%), 12 principals (3.3%), three Sub-County Directors of Education (0.8%), and two County Directors of Education (0.6%). Of the respondents, 209 (57.9%) were drawn from Kitui County while 152 (42.1%) were drawn from Embu County. The diversity of respondents provided perspectives from key stakeholders involved in curriculum implementation and school management, making the data suitable for addressing the study objective.

Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices

Respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement with statements relating to Board of Management curriculum implementation practices. The statements focused on the provision of instructional resources, support for learning facilities, monitoring of curriculum implementation, and facilitation of teaching and learning programmes.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
BOM Responses	3.0311	0.73586
Principals’ Responses	2.9300	1.15758

HoDs' Responses	2.8459	1.11474
Prefects' Responses	2.9065	1.15010

The findings indicate that Board of Management curriculum implementation practices were moderately implemented across the sampled schools, with a composite mean score of 2.93 and a standard deviation of 1.04. The results suggest that respondents were generally undecided regarding the adequacy of curriculum implementation practices undertaken by Boards of Management. Key challenges identified included inadequate teacher staffing, shortage of instructional resources, limited ICT integration, insufficient laboratory equipment, and inadequate curriculum support facilities. , , ,

These findings suggest that while some curriculum implementation practices such as the establishment of academic committees and student discussion groups were evident, significant gaps remained in the provision of learning resources and curriculum support systems. The findings are consistent with Open Systems Theory, which views curriculum resources as critical inputs that influence school processes and ultimately affect educational outputs. ,

Relationship Between Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices and Students' Academic Outcomes

To determine whether there was a relationship between Board of Management curriculum implementation practices and students' academic outcomes, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was conducted. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices and Students' Academic Outcomes

Variables	r	p-value
Curriculum Implementation Practices and Students' Academic Outcomes	0.455	0.000

** Correlation significant at p < .01 (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between Board of Management curriculum implementation practices and students' academic outcomes ($r = .455$, $p = .000$). The findings indicate that schools with better management of curriculum implementation resources are likely to experience better academic outcomes. Effective provision of instructional materials, ICT facilities, laboratory equipment, and other curriculum-support resources enhances curriculum delivery and students' learning experiences.

The findings are consistent with previous studies that established that curriculum support mechanisms and educational resource management contribute positively to students' academic performance. The results further support Open Systems Theory, which posits that educational inputs influence organizational processes and ultimately determine educational outputs. ,

Influence of Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices on Students' Academic Outcomes

To determine the influence of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices on students' academic outcomes, simple linear regression analysis was conducted.

Table 4: Model Summary for the Influence of Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices on Students' Academic Outcomes

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
.455	.207	.205	.46098

The model summary results indicate that Board of Management curriculum implementation practices explained 20.7% of the variation in students' academic outcomes (R^2 = .207). This implies that curriculum implementation practices make a meaningful contribution to academic outcomes, although other factors also influence students' performance.

Table 5: ANOVA Results for the Influence of Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices on Students' Academic Outcomes

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	18.106	1	18.106	85.203	.000
Residual	69.275	326	.213		
Total	87.381	327			

The ANOVA results reveal that the regression model was statistically significant, F(1,326) = 85.203, p = .000. Since the significance value was less than .05, the model confirms that curriculum implementation practices significantly influence students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients for the Influence of Board of Management Curriculum Implementation Practices on Students' Academic Outcomes

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.494	.167		8.973	.000
Curriculum Implementation Practices	.496	.054	.455	9.231	.000

The regression coefficients indicate that curriculum implementation practices were a statistically significant predictor of students' academic outcomes (β = .455, t = 9.231, p = .000). The positive regression coefficient (B = .496) indicates that a one-unit improvement in curriculum implementation practices leads to a 0.496-unit increase in students' academic outcomes.

Based on these findings, the null hypothesis stating that Board of Management curriculum implementation practices have no statistically significant influence on students' academic outcomes was rejected. The study therefore concludes that Board of Management curriculum implementation practices significantly influence students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya.

The regression model is expressed as:

$Y = 1.494 + 0.496X + \varepsilon$

where:

Y = Students' Academic Outcomes

X = Curriculum Implementation Practices

ε = Error Term

Conclusion

The study examined the influence of Board of Management curriculum implementation practices on students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kitui and Embu Counties, Kenya. The findings established that curriculum implementation practices had a statistically significant positive influence on students' academic outcomes. The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive and significant relationship between curriculum implementation practices and students' academic outcomes ($r = .455$, $p < .05$), while regression analysis showed that curriculum implementation practices significantly predicted students' academic outcomes ($\beta = .455$, $p < .05$). Furthermore, curriculum implementation practices accounted for 20.7% of the variation in students' academic outcomes ($R^2 = .207$).

The study concludes that effective provision, allocation, monitoring, and utilization of curriculum implementation resources contribute significantly to improved students' academic outcomes. Availability of instructional materials, laboratory equipment, ICT facilities, reference materials, and other curriculum-support resources enhances teaching and learning and subsequently improves academic achievement. The findings further demonstrate that Boards of Management play a critical role in supporting curriculum implementation through resource mobilization, resource allocation, and oversight of curriculum-related activities. Schools with stronger curriculum implementation support were more likely to report better academic outcomes than schools experiencing shortages of instructional resources and curriculum support facilities.

The findings support Open Systems Theory, which views curriculum implementation resources as critical educational inputs that influence school processes and ultimately determine educational outputs. Effective curriculum implementation practices therefore remain essential for improving students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

The Ministry of Education should strengthen the capacity of Board of Management members through continuous training on curriculum implementation, instructional support, resource mobilization, and educational governance to enhance their effectiveness in supporting teaching and learning programmes.

Boards of Management should prioritize the provision, maintenance, and effective utilization of instructional resources, including textbooks, laboratory equipment, ICT facilities, teaching aids, and library resources required for effective curriculum implementation.

School administrators should strengthen collaboration with Boards of Management in planning, monitoring, and evaluating curriculum implementation activities to ensure that resources are aligned with instructional needs and educational objectives.

County and Sub-County education offices should establish mechanisms for regular monitoring and support of Board of Management involvement in curriculum implementation to enhance accountability and improve educational outcomes.

Schools should increase investment in ICT infrastructure, internet connectivity, laboratory facilities, and other curriculum-support resources that facilitate learner engagement and improve academic achievement.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to educational management literature by providing empirical evidence that Board

of Management curriculum implementation practices significantly influence students' academic outcomes in public day secondary schools. The study established that curriculum implementation practices explain 20.7% of the variation in students' academic outcomes, thereby demonstrating the importance of governance-related curriculum support in enhancing educational effectiveness.

The study further extends the application of Ludwig von Bertalanffy's Open Systems Theory within the context of secondary school management by demonstrating that curriculum implementation resources constitute critical educational inputs that influence school outputs in the form of students' academic outcomes.

Additionally, the study provides policy-relevant evidence for strengthening the role of Boards of Management in supporting curriculum implementation and improving educational outcomes in public day secondary schools in Kenya. The findings may inform decision-making by educational policymakers, school administrators, and Boards of Management seeking to enhance academic achievement through effective curriculum support practices.

References

1. Abenaitwe, J. (2025). Managing school resources effectively. Newport International Journal of Current Issues in Arts and Management, 6(1), 1-7.
2. Adegbola, F., & Adeleke, F. (2023). Literacy curriculum development for basic science in secondary schools in Nigeria. European Journal of Education and Pedagogy, 4(1), 15-20.
3. Ajiboye, T. (2022). Educational resources availability and utilization as determinant of students academic performance in South West Nigeria. African Journal of Education and Practice, 8(5), 45-63.
4. Amakyi, M. (2022). School governing board in the management of senior high schools in Cape Coast, Ghana. International Journal of Education and Research, 11(7).
5. Bertalanffy, L. von. (1968). General system theory: Foundations, development, applications. George Braziller.
6. Chen, G. (2022). Who oversees public schools? Public School Review. https://www.publicschoolreview.com
7. Creswell, J. W. (2014). Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed.). Pearson Education.
8. Gwada, N. O. (2024). Influence of management boards' practices on quality competency-based curriculum implementation in public junior secondary schools in Kisumu East Sub-County, Kenya (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
9. Kisiang'ani, E. A., Wamocha, L., & Buhere, P. (2024). Effect of institutional resources on student academic achievement in Kakamega County, Kenya. African Journal of Empirical Research, 5(4), 627-643. https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.4.51
10. Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30(3), 607-610. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308
11. Lafortune, J. (2022). Understanding the effects of school funding in California. Public Policy Institute of California. https://www.ppic.org
12. Lezotte, L. W. (2010). What effective schools do: Re-envisioning the correlates.
13. Lunenburg, F. C. (2010). Schools as open systems. National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal, 27(4), 1-5.
14. Mbii, M. (2021). Relationship between boards of management practices and students' performance at

Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Kitui and Makueni Counties, Kenya (Doctoral dissertation, Kenyatta University).

15. Mbogo, S. M. (2023). Influence of educational resources on quality of education in public day secondary schools in Embu County, Kenya(Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
16. Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (2003). Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches. Acts Press.
17. Mwangi, T. J. (2022). Classroom use of digital resources in teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools in Nyeri County, Kenya (Master's thesis, Kenyatta University).
18. Orodho, A. J. (2004). Techniques of writing proposals and reports in educational and social sciences. Masola Publishers.
19. Osuji, U. C., & Iheanyichukwu, C. (2021). Material resources management for effective teaching and learning in Nigerian tertiary education: Implications for quality tertiary education delivery. International Journal of Innovative Education Research, 9(3), 13-28.
20. Republic of Kenya. (2010). The Constitution of Kenya, 2010. Government Printer.
21. Republic of Kenya. (2013). The Basic Education Act, 2013. Government Printer.
22. Republic of Kenya. (2025). Kenya National Examinations Council annual examination report. Kenya National Examinations Council.
23. UNESCO. (2021). Global education monitoring report 2021. UNESCO.
24. Wekesa, V., & Kitainge, K. (2022). Academic performance of upgraded extra-county schools to national status in Western Kenya counties. East African Journal of Education Studies, 5(1), 25-36. https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.5.1.538