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The Strategic JOURNAL of Business & Change MANAGEMENT
ISSN: 2312-9492 www.strategicjournals.com
Vol. 9, Iss. 4, pp 1299 – 1317. November 10, 2022. www.strategicjournals.com, ©Strategic Journals

SCHOOL ACCOUNTS MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHWISERO SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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Accepted: November 3, 2022

ABSTRACT

This study was interested in investigating the effect of School Accounts Management and Financial Accountability of Public Secondary Schools in Khwisero Sub-County. The study further established the moderating influence of school factors on the relationship between school accounts management and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Kenya. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The target population had 51 stakeholders comprising of the principal and the bursar per school, this entailed 25 public secondary schools in Khwisero sub-county, Kenya. Using census survey, all 51 stakeholders were incorporated as the county school's auditor was incorporated in charge of all schools under study. Structured questionnaires were used as the instruments for data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation analysis and simple linear regression analysis). This was aided by statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Data was presented by use of tables. The study found that School budget development, School budget implementation and fee Collection strategies had a positive and significance influence on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero sub County, Kakamega County. Furthermore, school factors had a moderating influence on school accounts management and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero sub County, Kakamega County. The study recommended that on school budget development, public secondary schools should seek an increase in budget allocation from the ministry of education for each child to increase fund generation. On school budget implementation, public secondary schools should ensure budgets generated are realized and funds should clearly indicate the expenditures realized. On fees collection strategies, public secondary schools should find means in which fee collection can be enhanced to ensure there is adequate cash flow and since school factors has significant effect on financial accountability, it should also be included into main key elements that public secondary schools should consider when handling school fund accounts.

Key Words; *School Accounts Management, Financial Accountability, Public Secondary Schools, School Budget Development, School Budget Implementation, School Fees Collection Strategies*

CITATION: Rotich, A. C., & Mungai, J. N. (2022). School accounts management and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub-County, Kenya. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management,* 9 (4), 1299 – 1317.

INTRODUCTION

The government manages her money in terms of funds as guided by fund accounting technique. School fund therefore stems from the broader fund accounting technique, which is an accounting system for recording resources whose use has been limited by the donor/financier. It emphasizes on accountability rather than profitability and is used by non-profit making organizations and governments (Mothibi & Musvoto, 2017). School accounts management refers to the process of controlling of monies provided by the government or raised by parents of respective secondary schools to finance running of the school. Public secondary schools being non-profit oriented suitably qualify to use fund accounting technique to record their resources. This technique is suitable for use by such schools since it aids in separation of funds in terms of activites such as boarding fees, medical fees, personal emoluments. The other advantage of fund accounting technique to public schools is that it makes it easier to audit disbursed funds. It should be noted that fund accounting technique in public secondary schools aims at two things; to enhance transparency and stewardship. It is the aim of the financier to see the school serve the needs of his/her donation. The financier can easily review the accountability of each fund he/she contributed to the school. At school level financial accountability refers to the schools general financial health over a certain time frame measured by budget variance, project completion level, creditors level, staff remuneration rate and nature of audit report (Mohamed & Omar, 2016).

The school fund is the money contributed by the public or raised by the parents of secondary schools in Kenya in order to finance the operation of those schools. The ability to accurately record financial transactions and create reports is essential for school administrators. Receipt books, bank paperwork, and cash books are all examples of the types of financial records that aid in efficient management of funds and guarantee sustainable development in secondary education (Laurie & Nonoyama, 2016).

Fund accounting theory serves as the basis for the school's financial reporting. A fund's status as a functional unit, interest hub, or legal entity has been the primary focus of the established fund theory. The fund theory makes it possible to conduct audits free of the influence of the auditor's personality and other subjective factors on the integrity of the audited financial statements. The concept of a "fund" is central to the study of financial markets and investments. According to Goncharenko (2018), a fund's liabilities govern the extent to which the fund can use its assets for a certain purpose.

The funding for educational institutions is used for their daily operations and activities. Planning the school budget to fulfill the school's goals and, more importantly, good financial management is the responsibility of the school's principal and administrative staff in secondary schools (Sharma, 2020). In an effort to better manage finances, many nations have delegated this responsibility to schools. It is highlighted that despite the importance placed on financial resources in bringing about much-needed reform and delivery of services, the resource is sometimes mismanaged and plundered by those in authority. Less money is needed to provide a quality secondary education in countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Egypt, and Nigeria.

Regional research indicates that school financial management is experiencing difficulties. It has been noted that the administration of school money in Zimbabwe has been difficult. Principals and school improvement councils have botched their responsibilities in this regard. The Ministry of Education has blamed this on insufficient or nonexistent education. In fact, examples of manipulation of cash and abuse of teacher incentives have been reported at schools led by administrators in Mashonaland East province (Chatiza, 2020). (Segiovanni, 2019). Wushe, Ndlovu, and Shenje (2021) found a lack of basic management and financial skills among Zimbabwean school development committees, and they argued that proper decision making and use of school resources requires concerted efforts from school principals, school development committees, and other stakeholders like the community. The authors observed that secondary school administrators in Harare lacked the requisite financial skills for the responsible handling of school funds.

According to Bua and Adzongo (2021), a number of issues contribute to the inept handling of institutional finances in Nigeria. These include delays in the distribution of cash, insufficient training for school administrators, and a lack of oversight from school finance officers. In a similar vein, Bua and Adzongo (2021) attributed the deteriorating condition of schools in Nigeria's Benue State on mismanagement of funds, including a failure to create sufficient internal revenue and the wasteful redistribution of funds already at hand.

Secondary government schools in Kenya fall under the purview of the Ministry of Education. The government provides some funding through its Free Day Secondary Education scheme, which is used to operate the institutions (Mito &Enose, 2019). Educator leaders and a governing board are responsible for their operation. The board is responsible for ensuring high quality education at an affordable price (GoK, 2018). It is the principals, however, who are ultimately responsible for overseeing the school's budget (Ministry of Education, 2019). Principals are responsible for creating school budgets, making purchases, and overseeing the maintenance of school buildings (Teachers Service Commission, 2017).

By "financial accountability," we mean a company's method of holding an employee responsible for carrying out a financial activity, such as a crucial control operation inside a financial transaction process, in an efficient and accurate manner. It sets up dependable monetary procedures (Amalendu, Somnath & Gautam, 2016). Financial responsibility in schools is distinct in how they function, and hence, any judgments made about such accountability must be carried out in a special fashion (Momanyi, 2018). In this scenario, success will be determined by factors such as budget overrun, percentage of completed project, number of creditors, staff compensation rate, and audit report content. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to examine how the administration of the school's funds affects the schools' ability to account for their money in the Khwisero subcounty of Kakamega county, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Sustainable development goal number four emphasises on inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations, 2017). This international framework are domesticated by the constituency countries by intergrating the rallying call in their development blue print. In the Kenyan context, the social pillar of vision 2030 actualises this dream by the government deliberately undertaking major flagship projects in the health sector and even in the education sector. Among these flagship projects in the education sector are implementation of Free Primary Education as well as Subsidized Secondary Education (MOE, 2020). However, a number of concerns are being raised as noticed on the public complaint on hidden fees charges by some school managers. Even though the government of Kenya pays tuition fees for every student in public secondary schools, there has been signs of mismanagement of public funds in learning institutions. Audit reports from national and international bodies like the world bank, teachers' unions and civil organizations oriented from education have all come up to condemn misuse of funds in public learning institutions. The epitome of these problems is characterized by unprecedentedly high fees collection strategy on every student, budget development process as well as budget implementation (Magak, 2018). It is pointed out that incompetency in school fund account preparation is a major setback (Magak, 2018). The composition of school board of management, the school principal management style and the school category for instance national school,extra county schools and county schools have played a role on the magnitude of financial challenges per school.

Multiple researchers have examined the topic of financial management in the Kenyan secondary school education sector. Wango and Gatere's (2019) research suggests that principals and other school administrators should demonstrate accountability and openness by assigning roles and responsibilities for managing the school's budget. The researchers observed that loss of cash was prevalent in Kenyan secondary schools and had a detrimental impact on financial accountability. Other scholars noted that school accounts management positively affected financial accountability of learning institutions (Demba,2018, Miriti and Wangui,2021 and Magak's, 2018). None of the above researchers did school budget development, school budget implementation, and school fees collection strategies. Therefore this study investigated the influence of school accounts management on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County.

Research Objectives

- To determine the influence of school budget development on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero sub county.
- To examine the effect of school budget implementation on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero sub county.
- To establish the contribution of school fee collection strategies on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero sub county.
- To assess the influence of school factors on the relationship between school accounts management and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Kenya.

The study was guided by the following research hypotheses

- $H0_1$: There is no significant influence on school budget development on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Kenya.
- $H0_2$: School budget implementation does not significantly affect financial accountability of public secondary schools in Kenya.
- $H0_3$: Fee collection strategies do not significantly affect financial accountability of public secondary schools in Kenya.
- $H0_4$: School factors do not significantly affect the relationship between school accounts management and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Fund Accounting Technique Theory

Economist William Joseph Vatter developed the theory of "fund accounting" in 1947 as an alternative to the proprietary and entity theories of accounting. According to Goncharenko (2018), Vatter (1947) argued that the focus of the proprietary theory on the proprietor of assets and liabilities, which is not adequate to the modern reporting system, and the focus of the entity theory on the accountability of the business as a separate entity, both use insufficient accounting approaches. Vatter created the fund accounting theory with the goal of maximizing the utility of financial assets while maintaining their objective, impersonal nature. Vatter (1947), as cited by Goncharenko (2018), suggested that accounting data and reports have varying degrees of importance in three contexts: management, social control agencies or government, and the credit extension and investment process as a whole. If we're going to meet the needs of such a wide variety of people, we're going to need a more fundamental and objective approach than the proprietary and entity theories. Neither the proprietary theory nor the entity theory was able to solve practical accounting problems, as Vatter (1947) showed. As much as possible, he refrained from giving any entity a human face in his theory. To differentiate itself from preexisting theories, the developed fund theory defines a fund as "a unit of operations or a center of interests or the accounting entity." Personality and its implications for accounting practices and the reliability of financial statements can be removed from the equation thanks to the fund theory. It is the dominant theory because it removes the influence of parents and guardians from tuition rates, collection methods, budget formulation, and implementation. The board and the principal of a school should not be mistaken for the people in charge of the books.

Budget Theory

The budget theory was first explained by Bozeman and Straussman (1982). Two dimensions (descriptive and normative) are used in the theory. One of the defining characteristics of this descriptive metric is its emphasis on civic engagement. Events, trends, and inferences are all described by theorists. While the descriptive dimension focuses on facts, the normative one considers values. According to this theory's explanatory framework, budget planning necessitates, at a minimum, identifying desired service levels by activity and estimating the resources (human and material) needed to meet those objectives. According to this school of thought, individual departments should be able to ask for the resources they need to complete their work. According to the normative perspective of budget theory, the public should play a central role in the budgeting process, and the resulting budgets should be representative of the average person (Schick, 1973). Khan and Hildreth (2002) analyzed the public sector budget theory as well. According to Schick (1973), there is no need for a universal theory of budgeting, but rather a collection of theories, each tailored to a different aspect of the issue being tackled by the discipline. Budgeting for public secondary schools necessitates the participation of many parties, including parents, government representatives, financiers, and school administration. Plus, the budget needs to reflect the realities of most students' and parents' lives. That is to say, it shouldn't be too lofty that some parents will have trouble chipping in for the cost of the planned activities and expenses.

Based on the theory's illustrative section, which explains what resources various divisions need to carry out their missions, schools are included as a moderating variable. Members of the school's management board and the principal draw clear lines when asking for money to complete specific projects. This theory prescribes other variables that are participation to determine school fees charged, fee collection strategies, budget developments, and implementations based on the element of wide public participation in budgeting.

The Theory of Agency

Financial economist Michael Jensen and management theorist William Mackling proposed this concept (1976). By applying the principles of Financial Agency Theory, an employee can verify the actions of their principal. The theory also places an emphasis on the pros and cons of working with a principal agent. When management's actions are in line with those of shareholders, a positive agency cost results, while a negative agency cost reduces shareholder value. An agency relationship is defined by Jensen and Mackling as "a contractual arrangement whereby a principal engages an agent to carry out specified tasks on the principal's behalf." The principal trusts the agent enough to give him or her discretionary authority. They also claimed that the theory presupposed that the principal was responsible for handling every aspect of the business. They hand-pick the agents and keep a close eye on them to make sure they're performing at peak efficiency. Since secondary schools are governed by Boards of Management (BOM), and BOM members typically lack the financial management expertise necessary to oversee their schools' budgets, this theory is relevant to the study at hand. Bursars will be helpful in putting together fee collection strategies, even if the board (principal) ultimately makes that decision. The board serves as the principal and the bursar serves as the agent in charge of developing and implementing the budget. The board has delegated its authority to make decisions about the school to the principal. They keep an eye on how well these agents are carrying out their responsibilities. On an annual basis, they get together to plan out how best to run the nation's schools.

Conceptual Framework

According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2013) a conceptual framework is a review of the association between the study variables. This study examined the independent, dependent and moderating variables and their operationalization.

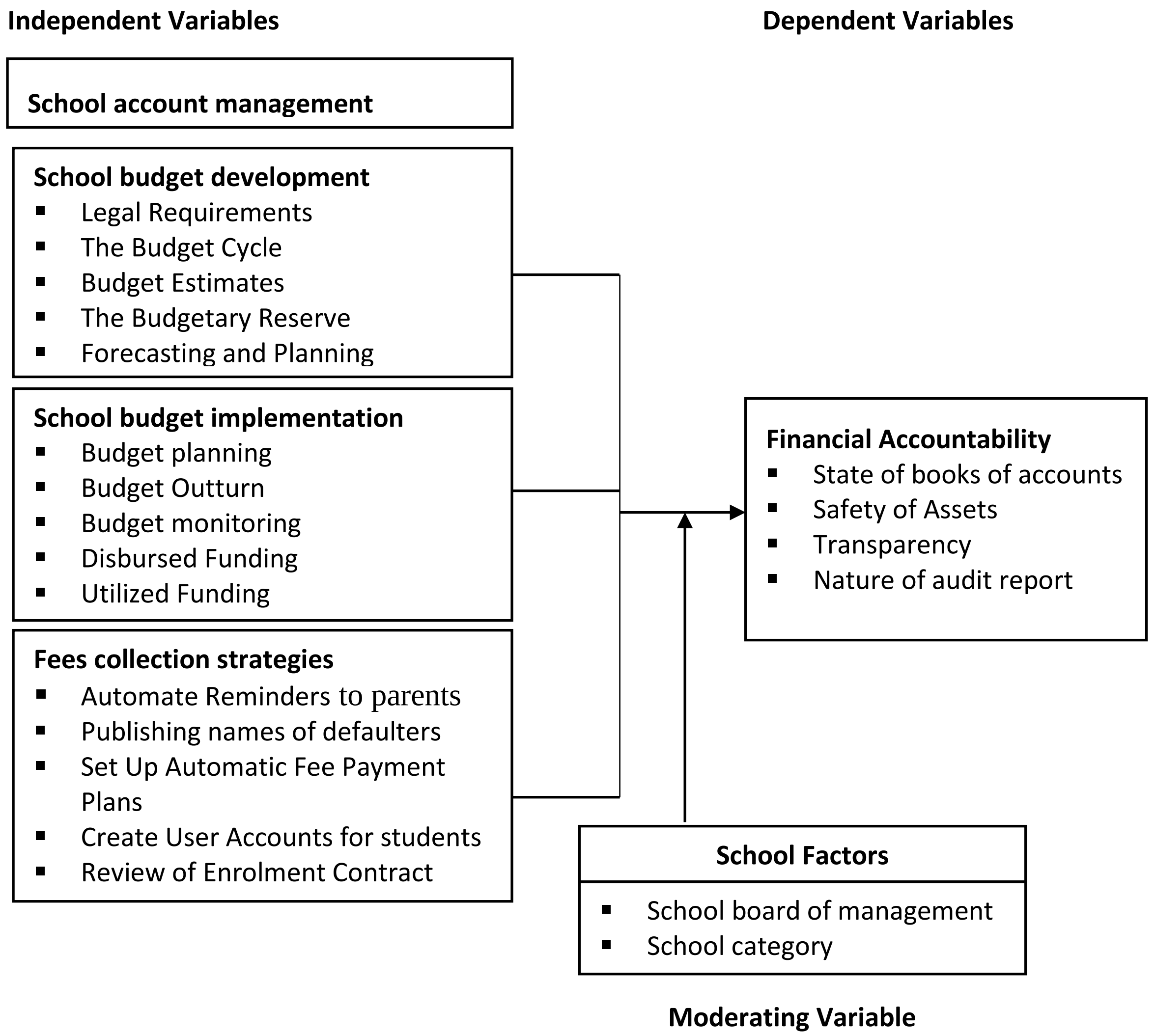

Figure 1: Conceptualizing the Relationship between School Account Management and Financial Accountability of Public Secondary Schools

Source: Self conceptualization (2022)

In figure 1 the independent variable is school account management while the dependent variable is school financial management. Also a moderating variable is introduced in the conceptual framework which is school factors. The figure conceptualizes the relationship between school account management and financial accountability of public secondary schools. The relationship is moderated by a host of school factors such as school board of management and school category

Empirical Studies

School Budget Development and Financial Accountability

Kpedor (2019) described a budget as a qualitative statement that captures the projected revenues, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and cash-flows of an organization or institution for a certain time period. As a roadmap for the coming year, the budget forecast should be adhered to religiously by all organizations. But sometimes it's fairly tough to follow or reach the goals in the budget due to inadequate planning and variables outside the company. According to the research, a budget serves multiple functions, including providing a focal point for the company, aiding in the coordination of activities, and making it easier to exercise control over the organization. Macharia (2019) argues that allocating funds in accordance with the budget requires competent budgeting administration. It is the duty of the school's administration and governing board to approve all expenditures. Macharia (2019) observed that there have been numerous issues at schools involving parents who were kept in the dark regarding how much money was spent and who complained of financial mismanagement. Therefore, it is imperative that school administrators perform accurate financial accounting, complete with supporting documentation of all purchases and expenditures. Accounting for school finances is crucial to managing the allotted funds.

Chukwu, Ezepue, Igba, and Ngozi (2019) conducted a study on the effect of budget preparation and implementation on secondary school administration in Nigeria's South-East States. The study used a descriptive survey as its research method. This research utilized a sample population of 7074 educators from 1,098 secondary institutions in South East Nigeria. The results of the study showed that both the technique and implementation of budgeting for secondary schools benefit the administration of those schools, and that the gender of the school's principals had no bearing on the positive effect. The study by Munge, Kimani, and Ngugi (2016) on the factors impacting financial management in public secondary schools in the Kenyan county of Nakuru included information on school fund accounts. In particular, it looked at how budget management and financial controls affect financial management. A cross-sectional survey approach was used for the investigation. Participants in the study were principals and treasury secretaries at secondary schools funded by the Kenyan government. All 172 principals and 172 bursars from Nakuru County, Kenya's public secondary schools were included in the sample size. A total of 78 people were chosen at random from the pooled population after a stratified random selection strategy was used. Managing one's finances effectively is influenced favorably and considerably by budgeting and financial controls, as found by the study.

School Budget Implementation and Financial Accountability

Onduso (2018) investigated the impact of budgets on the financial accountability of manufacturing firms in Nairobi County. All eighteen manufacturing companies traded on the Nairobi Securities Exchange were included in this cross-sectional analysis. According to the results, NSE manufacturers hire a consultant to help with budgeting, and the resulting budgets are effective. Furthermore, the study found that top management is responsible for evaluating the budget variance report, and that budgets have a positive, statistically significant relationship with manufacturers' financial accountability, as measured by return on assets (ROA). Maronga, Weda, and Kengere (2018) lamented that the Kenyan education system is burdened with financial management risks that compromise the quality of education, despite the fact that large budgetary allocation necessitates the institution of accountable measures to ensure integrity and responsive service delivery in the sector. It's likely that public secondary schools would suffer from embezzlement and misappropriation of finances. In addition, Nyanyuki et al. (2020) reported that parents and students at some schools had begun to

The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management. **ISSN** 2312-9492 (Online) 2414-8970 (Print). www.strategicjournals.com

voice their dissatisfaction with the MOE's disbursement of funds to secondary schools through programs like the bursary scheme, the free secondary education (FSE), and other infrastructural funding programs.

Junge, Bosire, and Kamau (2021) investigated the impact of financial policies on the accountability of public secondary schools in the municipality of Nakuru. All 22 of the city's public high schools were attacked. The research found that fiscal policies, including budget control and allocation, had a constructive effect on school accountability. Allocating funds and preparing for the coming year's spending were both cited as key components of successful public sector financial management in the study. Manei (2019) and Omagwa (2019) contribute to the body of knowledge on the topic of school fund account management with their investigation of the accounting practices and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya. Budgeting, internal controls, and record keeping were the three areas of accounting that were probed. According to the results, public secondary schools in Makueni benefited significantly and favorably from adopting record-keeping, internal control, and budgeting practices. The research indicated that public secondary schools in Makueni County had a good and substantial association between record keeping, internal control, budgeting, and financial accountability based on the findings.

Fee Collection Strategies and Financial Accountability

Radzi, Ghani, Siraj, and Afshari (2017) stressed that a secondary school's vision and mission should guide its tuition collection techniques. Members are motivated to enhance the school's financial plan and allocate school resource utilization when they have a clear picture of the school's vision and mission and how those goals will be achieved (Mosha, 2018). Improved policies for tracking school financial resources are needed to ensure proper, adequate, and accountable utilization of scarce available resources budgeted for education, as suggested by Kaguri, Njati, and Thiane (2021) in their work to address the difficulties in financial management in secondary schools. A precise method of recording financial transactions is essential for school bursars to be able to generate financial reports of collected fees and conduct analysis. Receipt books, bank paperwork, and cash books are all examples of the types of financial records that aid in the efficient management of funds and guarantee sustainable development in secondary education supply (Laurie & Nonoyama, 2016).

Nyanyuki et al. (2020) noted that the majority of public secondary schools in Kisii Central District kept the majority of accounting books that were frequently updated and that financial reports in such schools were generally effective in terms of precision, timeliness, and decision-making. The study also found that the level of financial management in public secondary schools was positively correlated with the extent to which accounting procedures were used. This suggests that incorporating accounting procedures into day-to-day operations at a school leads to better management of the institution's funds. Because of this, the accountability of these institutions' finances has greatly enhanced. Kahavizakiriza, Walela, and Kukubo (2017) conducted a case study of Lurambi Sub-County to examine the state of financial management in Kenya's public secondary schools. Kakamega County shed light on the topic of managing school budgets. The study used a descriptive survey design to identify and characterize the expertise needed by public secondary school principals to effectively implement accountability measures. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the instruments' dependability. Budget planning was handled by principals, H.O.Ds, and bursars; monitoring and control of the school budget was handled by principals and B.O.Gs; and budget approval was mostly handled by B.O.Gs while the government was not contacted on this.

School Factors, School Accounts Management and Financial Accountability

According to Simiyu's (2021) research on the factors influencing cash management in public secondary schools, the competency of the board of management (BOM) has a significant impact on the management of cash in these institutions. The research also found that BOM who have had some sort of training or who have attended school are more likely to be accountable and knowledgeable about their positions in the management of schools. Geteri, Omari, and Nyang'au (2017) conducted a study on the impact of cash management techniques on the accountability of public secondary schools in Kisii County and concluded that school fund account management was essential. According to the results, the school has continuity plans that include cash budget systems and processes. It was also discovered that the Ministry audit staff does not routinely audit the schools' finances, despite the fact that schools have a clear organizational structure, reporting structure, and established policies, processes, and guidelines. Cash budgeting, internal control, and auditing were all found to positively affect the financial Accountability of public secondary schools, as was expected from the study.

Onesmo, Ephrahem, and Mwenge's (2021) research on the subject of the effectiveness of school heads' financial management skills in the management of secondary school funds identified key features of effective school financial management. The majority of principals, bursars, and clerks were found to have inadequate financial management skills, according to the survey. Lack of school money, insufficient monitoring, appraisal, and auditing of school finances also posed difficulties in financial management. Nyangia and Orodho's (2021) research on the effects of cost-saving measures on the school fund account in public secondary schools in the Kisumu West District of Kisumu County was conducted using a descriptive survey research design. It was determined that the latent cost of secondary education was still high and beyond of reach of the poor households despite the implementation of free day secondary education (FDSE). In order to cut costs, schools in the area of study had implemented strategies such as contracting out for necessities like transportation, repurposing classrooms as micro-libraries, pooling resources with nearby schools, launching money-making initiatives, and requiring employees to wear multiple hats.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in the sub-county of Khwisero, Kakamega County, Kenya, which has a total of 25 public secondary schools; each school was taken into account. Kisa East, Kisa West, Kisa North, and Kisa Central are its four wards. The research employed a descriptive cross-sectional design. The 25 public secondary institutions in Khwisero Sub County served as the study population for this test. Each school has a bursar and a principal, making for a total of 2 stakeholders in the management of school funds. The county auditor was also involved. There was just one county-level auditor responsible for all of the schools. Due to their low abundance, all of the variables of interest in this study were collected via a census. The questionnaire was used to obtain primary data. Prior to starting the actual data collection, piloting enables the testing of the questionnaires. In the Validity examination, the researcher selected a pilot group of three public secondary schools, and from each of the three public secondary schools, the researcher picked four respondents. In this examination, the instrument's consistency was evaluated by measuring its dependability. Managing dependability, it included use of "Cronbach's Alpha" done by SPSS Software. Using SPSS version 23.0, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were performed. The results of the investigation were described and presented using frequency tables. The regression model of the study applied is as shown below; Econometric equation.

$$Y= \alpha + \beta_1X_1+\beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+ \varepsilon$$

With school factors as a moderator

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 X_4 + \beta_2 X_2 X_4 + \beta_3 X_3 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where, Y = Financial Accountability

α = Constant

$\beta 1 \ldots \beta 4$ = the slope representing a degree of change in an independent variable by one unit of each independent variable.

X_1= School budget development

X_2= School budget implementation

X_3= Fee collection strategies

X_4= School factors

ε = error term

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

The part handled the dependent variable thus Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya. The dimensions measured were: state of books of accounts, safety of assets, transparency and nature of audit report. The statements were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale. The respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed with the statements. The findings of Financial Accountability are presented in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the response across the Financial Accountability

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
The school creditors level is affected by the proportion of fees collection	50	1.00	4.00	1.6800	.11227	.79385
The school fees arrears is affected by fees collection strategies instituted by the school management	50	1.00	5.00	2.2600	.18252	1.29063
The budget variance in some cases may be attributed to poor school budget development	50	1.00	5.00	2.8400	.17228	1.21823
Project completion rate in my school is affected by the way funds are disbursed	50	1.00	5.00	1.9600	.14835	1.04900
The total support staff cost is determined by the financial framework of my school due to lack of guided statutory salary payment	50	1.00	5.00	2.0800	.18259	1.29110
The nature of audit opinion expressed on the schools financial accountability	50	1.00	5.00	1.9600	.12765	.90260
The creditors level in my school is an indicator of liquidity position of my school	50	1.00	5.00	2.0600	.15756	1.11410
Valid N (listwise)	50					

Source (Field Data, 2022)

The findings in Table 1 revealed that Financial Accountability functionality in public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County Kakamega County, Kenya was fairly good. In addition, the results of all the 50 stakeholders surveyed showed that the school creditors level is affected by the proportion of fees collection (mean score=1.68, SE=0.11); The school fees arrears is affected by fees collection strategies instituted by the school management (mean score=2.26, SE=.18), The budget variance in some cases may be attributed to poor school budget development (mean score=2.84, SE=.17),

The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management. ISSN 2312-9492 (Online) 2414-8970 (Print). www.strategicjournals.com

Project completion rate in my school is affected by the way funds are disbursed (mean score=1.96, SE=0.15), the total support staff cost is determined by the financial framework of my school due to lack of guided statutory salary payment (mean score=2.08, SE=.18). The nature of audit opinion expressed on the school's financial accountability (mean score=1.96, SE=.13). The creditors level in my school is an indicator of liquidity position of my school (mean score=2.06, SE=.16). The study discovered that the average score of the financial accountability was negative as constructs were note close to zero. A cross examination showed that the size of budget determined the number of subordinate staffs, furthermore school fees arrears collection impacted negatively on staff remuneration and project completion drags as funds are limited. Alternative means of fee collection negatively affect financial accountability as it leads to higher budget variance.

Table 2: A cross matrix analysis of Variables

Elements	Implication	Implication support
School budget development	School board compliance to rules, constraint budget	This means schools are unable to facilitate infrastructural development, this is further seen on implementation showing untimely funding from government
School budget implementation	Budget monitoring, timely and full remittance of funds from government	Inefficiencies in variance detection and remittance of funds on portions makes budget implementation a problem, meaning schools are straining financially.
Fees collection strategies	Restrained circular on fees, Payments in kind for fee Delaid support NG-CDF, county bursaries and alumni funding	Restrained fee circular means lack of expansion on budgets, well wishers funding is not easy to push.
School factors	School board budget monitoring and oversight	The board determines financial accountability and poor oversight and monitoring affects performance

Source (Field Data, 2022)

A cross matrix analysis on school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies and school factors was realized. School budget development based on school board compliance to rules and constraint budget, School budget implementation was on budget monitoring, timely and full remittance of funds from government, school fees collection on restrained circular on fees, payments in kind for fee as school factors was on delaid support NG-CDF, county bursaries and alumni funding.

Multiple Linear Regression

The data set met all the assumptions necessary for multiple linear regressions in previous tests, and the multiple regression analysis for School Accounts Management and Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya.

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis for School Accounts Management and Financial Accountability

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.893[a]	.797	.791	.24480

a. Predictors: (Constant), school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies

ANOVA [a]

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	24.020	3	8.007	133.603	.000[b]
Residual	6.113	46	.060		
Total	30.132	47			

a. Dependent Variable: Financial Accountability

b. Predictors: (Constant), school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies

Coefficients [a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (Constant)	.769	.174		4.422	.000
school budget development	.358	.062	.273	5.746	.000
school budget implementation	.484	.076	.454	6.389	.000
Fees collection strategies	.342	.067	.356	5.072	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Financial Accountability

Source: Field data (2022)

The results of coefficients in Table 3 shows that School Accounts Management (school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies) had a statistically significant contribution in the prediction of the Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya (*p-values <0.05*). From the model summary, the value of R = 0.893, which is way above 0.5, thus indicating that the variables are nicely fitted. From the ANOVA values, it can be confirmed that the F-test is significant since the p value is less than 0.05 (F- test =133.603, P=0.000 <0.05). The independent variables (school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies) are significant to explain the dependent variable which was Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya. Since all variables are significant, then the model is acceptable to conclude that the independent variables significantly affect the dependent variable.

From the results, 79.7% of Financial Accountability can be explained by school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies ($R^2 = 0.797$) and the relationship followed a multiple regression model of the following nature:

Y= α + β_1 school budget development + β_2 school budget implementation + β_3 fee collection strategies +e, where Y is the Financial Accountability, α is the constant intercept of which in this case is 0.769, and beta β_1= 0.358, β_2= 0.484 and β_3 = 0.342 which at times is referred to as the slope coefficients, and ε is the standard error term which in this case is 0.24480.

Therefore, the regression model for school fund account management and Financial Accountability has been given as follows:

Y= 0.769 + 0.358 school budget development + 0.484 school budget implementation + 0.342 fee collection strategies +0.24480,
where Y is the Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya.

School budget development had beta coefficient of 0.358, P=0.000, implying that when school budget implementation and fees collection strategies are controlled, a unit increase in school budget development would results to significant increase in financial accountability by 0.358 units. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected. This agreed with Chukwu, Ezepue, Igba and Ngozi (2019) carried out a study on the impact of Budget Preparation and Implementation on Secondary School Administration in South-East States, Nigeria and found that school budget development had a significant positive influence on financial accountability. Similarly Otieno, Nyakundi and Mogwambo (2016) found a significant effect of school budget development while establishing the effects of financial reporting practices on the accountability of public secondary schools in Homa-Bay county, Kenya. This was attributed to similarity of respondents public secondary schools. These findings contradict with Munge, Kimani and Ngugi (2016) who found it insignificant while ascertaining factors influencing financial management in public secondary schools in Nakuru county, Kenya. Kimani et al (2016) focused on budgeting and not school accounts in general giving possibility for such results.

School budget implementation had beta coefficient of 0.484, P=0.000, implying that when school budget development and fees collection strategies are controlled, a unit increase in School budget implementation would results to significant increase in financial accountability by 0.484 units. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was rejected. These findings agree with Otieno, Omollo and Onyango (2016) on effects of financial budget implementation in the management of public secondary schools in Uriri Sub-County, Migori County. It further concurs with Onduso (2018) studied the effect of budgets on financial Accountability of manufacturing companies in Nairobi County and found budget implementation had a significant effect on financial accountability. The studies in Migori and Nairobi were of similar nature to current study giving reason for agreement. However, these findings disagree with Maronga, Weda and Kengere (2018) lamented that budget implementation was insignificant on most public schools in Kenya. Schools under Maronga et al (2018) study were both public and private agitating the difference.

Fees collection strategies had beta coefficient of 0.342, P=0.000, implying that when school budget development and school budget implementation are controlled, a unit increase in fees collection strategies would results to significant increase in financial accountability by 0.342 units. Therefore, the third null hypothesis was rejected. These findings agree with Munge, Kimani and Ngugi (2016) who found fee collection strategies to be of significant influence on financial accountability while assessing factors influencing financial management in Public Secondary schools in Nakuru county, Kenya. Similarly Otieno, Nyakundi and Mogwambo (2016) agreed that fee collection strategies had a significant influence on Accountability of public secondary schools in Homa-Bay county. The Nakuru and Nairobi studies were both on public secondary schools and used same methodological approach supporting the consistency. This disagrees with Onduso (2018) who found fee collection strategies to be of insignificant influence. Onduso (2018) study focused on Seme Division which could be attributed to sampling area as the area was not representative enough.

Moderated Hierarchical Regression Analysis
"The data set met all the assumptions necessary for hierarchical regressions, hence was fit for multiple linear regression modeling.

Table 4: Moderated multiple regression model

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics: R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.893[a]	.797	.791	.24480	.797	133.603	3	45	.000
2	.901[b]	.812	.804	.23693	.015	7.893	1	46	.006

a. Predictors: (Constant), school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies

b. Predictors: (Constant), school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies, School factors

c. Dependent Variable: Financial Accountability

ANOVA [a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.020	3	8.007	133.603	.000[b]
	Residual	6.113	45	.060		
	Total	30.132	46			
2	Regression	24.463	4	6.116	108.948	.000[c]
	Residual	5.670	45	.056		
	Total	30.132	46			

a. Dependent Variable: Financial Accountability

b. Predictors: (Constant), school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies

c. Predictors: (Constant), school budget development, school budget implementation, fees collection strategies, School factors

Coefficients [a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.769	.174		4.422	.000
	school budget development	.358	.062	.273	5.746	.000
	school budget implementation	.484	.076	.454	6.389	.000
	Fee collection strategies	.342	.067	.356	5.072	.000
2	(Constant)	.354	.108		3.370	.001
	school budget development	.309	.063	.236	4.929	.000
	school budget implementation	.478	.073	.448	6.515	.000
	Fee collection strategies	.488	.084	.508	5.847	.000
	School factors	.486	.173	.187	2.810	.006
	Interaction	.402	.141	.642	2.856	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Financial Accountability

Source: Field data (2022)

The results of coefficients in Table 4 shows that School Accounts Management had a statistically significant contribution in the prediction of the Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya (*p-values <0.05*).

School factors was included in the models as a moderator variable. The results of Model 2 with the interaction between School Accounts Management and School Factors accounted for significantly more variance than when the interaction was between School Accounts Management and Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya, indicating that there is a potentially significant moderation by School factors on the relationship between School Accounts Management and the Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya.

The moderated Multiple Linear Regression model was therefore given as:

Y = 0.108+ 0.309 school budget development +0.478 school budget implementation +0.488 Fee collection strategies+ 0.486 School factors +0. 402 Interaction

Where, Y = Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya.

The findings showed that the p-value was 0.000 ($p<0.05$). This showed that the fourth null hypothesis was denied and that School factors had a moderating influence on School Accounts Management and Financial Accountability. These findings agree with Simiyu (2021) who found that school factors were of positive and significant effect on cash management in public secondary schools. Furthermore, Geteri, Omari and Nyang'au (2017) carried out a study on the effect of cash management practices on accountability of public secondary schools in Kisii County noted school factors to be of significant influence. The above studies considered school board and school categories giving similarity. However, this finding disagrees with Onesmo, Ephrahem and Mwenge (2021) who found school factors to be insignificant on financial accountability of schools, this study focused on management style as the key element for school factors giving possibility for difference." Finally, an unqualified report from audit reports of secondary schools in Khwisero concludes that the financial statements of public secondary schools are fair and transparent.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the linear multiple regression results, the study concluded that school budget development has significant effect on the Financial Accountability. An increase in school budget development would result to significant decrease in Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya. The study also concluded that school budget implementation has significant effect on Financial Accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya as per the results from the linear and multiple regression. From the linear multiple regression results, the study also concluded that fee collection strategies have significant effect on financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya. Lastly, in summary, school factors have been included as a moderator variable in the model; the results of the interaction between school accounts management and financial accountability were much greater than the interplay between school accounts management and financial accountability of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub County, Kakamega County, Kenya showing that there is a potential moderation by school factors. Finally, an unqualified report from audit reports of secondary schools in Khwisero concludes that the financial statements of secondary schools were fair and transparent.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were arrived at that: School budget development, Public secondary schools should seek an increase in budget allocation from the ministry of education for each child to increase funds generation; School budget implementation, Public secondary schools should also ensure budgets generated are realized and funds should clearly indicate the expenditures realized; Fees collection strategies, Public secondary schools should find means in which fee collection can be enhanced to ensure there is cashflow; Since school factors has significant effect on Financial Accountability, it should also be included into main key elements that public secondary schools should consider when handling school accounts.

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