

Institutional Factors Influencing Churches to Sponsor Public Schools in Turbo Division, Uasin Gishu County

Philip Kipkorir Matutu¹ & Joseph K. Lelan² (PhD)

¹Education, Faculty of Education, Kisii University

²School of Education, Moi University

Email: philipkmatutu@gmail.com; lalankip@gmail.com.

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate institutional factors influencing churches to sponsor public schools in Turbo Division, Uasin Gishu County. The specific objective of the study was to establish institutional roles influencing churches to sponsor public schools. In the study, the literature review was guided by the objective of the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 97 public schools. The study involved 41 church sponsored schools that comprised 23 primary schools and 18 public secondary schools. The respondents were drawn from school management committee members, Head Teachers and Board of Management members. Data was collected using questionnaires, oral interviews and observations schedules. The data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques and presented using tables and figures. The results indicated that the institutional factors that influence churches to sponsor public schools include the religion of the teachers employed in their schools, the politics of the area, the school management representations and workshop career choices. On the hand, the church sponsors fail to admit students from different faith equally. The findings indicated that gaining influence of the school management raises faith of the sponsors and hence increase in sponsorship. It was recommended that the school sponsor should come up with neutral professional service scheme in the areas like guidance and counseling, teaching of religious syllabus and chaplaincy so as to help raise their level of influence. It was also recommended that the sponsors should also keep off politics within the schools they sponsor if their level of influence has to rise.

Keywords: influence, institutional, sponsor

Introduction

According to Kimengi and Lumallas (2009), after Berlin conference of 1884 to 1885, the colonial powers occupied Africa and had great influence and impact on development of education through establishment and sponsorship of mission schools. The first Africans who went to the sponsored mission schools became administrators and office clerks in Africa. Most missionaries were very much interested in opening up more mission schools as they believed that education went hand in hand with evangelization. Hence they too set up schools and sponsored them so as to develop specific personnel with aim of spreading religion and getting more converts.

During the eighteenth century, the clergy mostly managed education in Kenya. They built new schools, financed them, recruited and trained teachers, oversaw the implementation of the curriculum and, taught catechism and approved new teaching materials (Republic of Kenya, 1992). By 1920; the missionaries were very much committed to education not only to meet the demands of converts but also to counter check the government not to monopolize education (Sheffield, 2004). Overtime, the government set up their own schools so as to promote the colonial color bar policy separating the Europeans, Asians and Africans as per the Fraser Commission of 1909. During this time, churches used schools they had set up as an evangelizing

medium, while the government initiated schools that run on secular basis (Sheffield, 2004).

At independence in 1963, the Kenyan government recognized the role played by church missionaries in establishing more schools. The new Kenyan Government realized that there was need of support from the Christian churches to share the cost of running the education department. The schools that were established by the church remained under the sponsorship of those churches but registered as public schools. The Education Act also allows the sponsor to prepare the learning resources for religious education in the sponsored schools (Regulation, 5) but they were to be recommended and approved by Ministry.

In 1890 to late 1960's different sponsors did their expectations in sponsoring of schools they established. They played roles such as providing funds to run the school affairs, they employed teachers, prepared teaching learning materials, provided facilities and equipment among others (Thungu, 2008). Today churches compete to sponsor public schools but once they acquire them, there seems to be no or very little input which further tend to compromise the overall institution performance. It is therefore on this basis of the above background that the study seeks to investigate what are the institutional factors that influence churches to sponsor public schools.

Sponsors have been accused of interfering with the school's core business to the extent of even closing down schools, some have ejected and even evicted principals posted to some school by the Ministry of Education. It has been noted with lots of concern that some sponsors meddle with the core functions of schools to the extent of causing destabilization and disruption of activities in schools. In other areas churches are struggling to ensure that several public schools are registered under their name as

sponsors. In the year 2009 in Turbo Division, Uasin Gishu County, there was a struggle in registration of schools between African Inland Church (A.I.C) and the Catholic Church and finally the school was registered under AIC sponsorship. Likewise in 2013, there existed a struggle between AIC and Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK). These kind of struggles and conflicts seem to recur every other time with no signs of ending in the near future. The question that the researcher seeks to address is why churches compete for school sponsorship during registration and in particular a focus on institutional factors influencing churches to sponsor public schools.

The purpose of the study was to examine institutional roles that influence churches to sponsor public schools in Turbo division, Uasin Gishu County. The researcher assumed that some of the sampled schools have experienced the challenges associated with church sponsorship.

During the research study, the researcher encountered the following challenges that limit the findings pertaining institutional factors that influence churches in sponsoring of schools. The challenge was that, the respondents of some sampled schools were very busy with institutional duties hence, were not available during data collection. The researcher rescheduled another date to these schools to collect the information.

The findings of this study will be useful to the government, parents as well as other stakeholders in one way or another. It will reveal the contributions of sponsors in public schools and give way forward to giving policy directions that minimize conflicts of sponsorship. This will enable the change of perceptions that all sponsors have the capacity to fully meet the demands of the schools they sponsor and hence inform the government to allocate schools more funds and also to change sponsorship policy as in line with today's Kenyan educational changes.

The literature reviewed was guided by the objective of the study that is the concept of institutional roles that influence churches to sponsor public schools. The involvement of religious sponsors can be traced back to the colonial days. Eshiwani (1993) notes that formal education was introduced to the people of Kenya by the missionaries as a strategy for winning more converts. Some of the centers they established grew into large institutions and today are among the national secondary schools in the country. According to Shidende (2010) the principal motive of most of the missionary groups especially the protestant ones was to reform the social sector of the African life and this was to be motivated through bringing the Africans into membership of their churches with Christian education as the major tool of evangelism in different institutions.

According to the Catholic Code of Canon Law, Can 795, as quoted by Koech (1999) states that “education must pay regard to the formation of the whole persons so that they may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society. Children and young persons are therefore, to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents develop in a harmonious manner. The school was the focal point of attracting the heathens and a means through which a native leadership in the church could be trained (Sifuna, 1980). Christianization and civilization of Africans could not best be achieved without the problem of keeping the native students away from the influences of the tribe. However, Kanuku (2007) noted that children are not taught well as the scripture demands.

According to Eshiwani (1993), in self-sponsorship, he gave account on how, most students who want to further their education overseas do so in their own private basis. They make their own arrangement to obtain admission and meet the cost of their study. Likewise in Kenya,

students who want to further their education in short training courses ,middle colleges and universities sponsor themselves under programs like privately sponsored students program in local public and private universities like Moi, Kenyatta, Nairobi and Mount Kenya University among others. Another related form of sponsor is through families and friends within the neighborhood, they organize for harambees to sponsor both primary and secondary education program in different institutions. According to Wainaina (1991) the churches were given the powers to sponsor their schools and also to take part in the preparation of the syllabus for religious education. According to Mosomi (2008) ,carrying out their functions as sponsors, the churches had to be consulted with regard to staffing represented in the school committees and Board of Governors in their sponsored schools and allowed the use of school buildings free of charge.

According to Thung'u (2008), the coming of the missionaries was soon followed by the coming of colonial masters that directly influenced the development of education. This is because they did not want Africans to be given religious instructions only in the schools they established but also the technical and agriculture-oriented education. In Kenya, missionaries laid down the foundation of formal education in various established schools. Apart from religious teachings, Africans were taught 3RS that is writing ,reading and Arithmetic (Datta,1984).3RS was necessary for converting Africans to Christians whereby their main aim was to train more converts so as to help them in Bible translation and thus winning more converts. In their second move, they managed to put up two industrial schools and their main aim was to give former slaves occupation as a means of livelihood. The missionaries went on later to develop interest in African education as the colonial government was looking for clerks and employees who will work for them and

obey their instructions. Missionaries developed the first African curriculum which politics were more emphasized after the Africans demanded for higher education. As the results, boarding schools like Kabaa high school was established. They later established early Africans T.T.C such as Kaimosi and Kigari in Embu. In establishment of technical vocational schools, Africans were trained in some skills like carpentry and agriculture.

The contributions of sponsoring institutions before independence took both positive and negative dimensions, between the early churches and colonial government. In a positive dimension, the good relationship between missionaries and the colonial government was that the missionaries had come to prepare the way for colonization by introducing the western civilization and preparing workers especially clerks for them to work in the Kenya white highland especially after Berlin Conference of 1884 (Kimengi and Lumellas, 2009). On the other hand the colonial government gave land and security to missionaries from their metropolitan country. Following education commission of 1919 that resolved the existing conflict between the two, particularly after recommendation of Frezer commission, they both continued sponsoring education of Africans, although still in racial line (Ministry of Education 2009).

The role of the church as sponsor in research study done by Mabeya, Ndiku and Njinu (2009), about impact of sponsorship in academic development done in different institutions in Uasin Gishu county, where the researcher, found out that there is very little significant influence on school operations and the relationship between schools and academic development, The researchers then conclude that the church sponsor do very little in school development. They then recommended that the ministry of education needs to carry out

more research on how to review the sponsorship policy. Then it is clear that the competition done before independence between the missionaries and colonial government pertaining sponsorship of different schools was much healthier. Likewise, sponsorship had done by various missionary groups like Victoria yields fruits in sponsorships. If the public schools church sponsors are not competing to benefit the schools they claim to sponsor, then what are these institutional factors that influence them to sponsor public schools? It is on this basis that the researcher was trying to investigate institutional factors influencing churches to sponsor public schools. It is argued that today churches are somehow slow in giving guidance to public sponsored schools which they need it most, but in private sponsorship activities like; Roman Catholic Church mission schools, Seventh Day Adventist schools, Methodist schools among others are still very much active in their sponsorship of mission private schools and colleges. Then what are these institutional factors that tend to influence churches to sponsor public schools.

Research Methodology

This study employed descriptive survey research design as it enables researchers to collect more in-depth information from the sampled population using the shortest time possible. The design was considered appropriate for the study because according to Kothari (2004) survey is concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and reporting conditions that exist or existed. For this study the descriptive survey design enabled the researcher in giving institutional comparisons that influence churches in sponsoring public schools in the study area. The Study was carried out in Turbo Division, Eldoret west Uasin Gishu County, a division that has two zones namely Turbo with 56 public schools and Sugoi with 41 public schools making a total of 97 church sponsored public schools (AEO, 2014). It is important to note that in the past, the Division has experienced rampant competition

between different churches as they focus in the act of sponsoring public schools.

During the study the researcher targeted 97 schools. The respondents were drawn from members of the school management namely the PTA, BOM, sponsor nominated

members, Head teachers of public primary schools and secondary schools principals whose schools are under church sponsorship within Turbo Division in Eldoret West district, Uasin Gishu County. The target population is presented in table below;

Table 1: Target Population and sample size

ZONE	Population		Sample			
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Total	%
Turbo	37	19	17	6	23	30%
Sugoi	25	16	13	5	18	30%
Total	62	35	30	11	41	30%

Eldoret West AEO's Office, 2014.

According to Kothari (2004) the sample size should not be too big or too small. The researcher combined purposive and simple random sampling procedures. The researcher purposively selected church sponsored schools in the study area since they are relevant to the study, then followed by simple random sampling to obtain the schools to be included in the study. During the study the researcher picked 41 church sponsored public schools; that is 23 public primary schools and 18 public secondary schools out of the total 97 schools. The respondents were thus chosen from these selected schools. The respective respondents were sampled, since they had more information concerning church sponsorship activities in their respective schools. The researchers employed the use of questionnaires and triangulate using oral interviews, observations and documentary analysis. This is because triangulation adds more value to data collected than obtained from a single data source (Mwanje, 2008).

Data was collected using questionnaires. According to Borg et al. (1993), questionnaires are used to obtain descriptive information from a larger sample. It also ensures objective replies due to its confidentiality. The researcher used both open ended and structured questionnaires. Structured questionnaires

included use of Likert rating scale method. The questionnaires were administered to the head teachers and Board of Management nominated by the sponsors. An oral interview was used to supplement information obtained through questionnaires. The head teachers were also interviewed orally to capture other details that could not be captured by questionnaires. Observation was done in the schools during visitation hours in order to verify responses given in the questionnaires and interviews. During the study, the researcher visited the selected church sponsored public schools. During the visit of the sampled schools, the researcher presented the questionnaires to the respondents of the sampled schools and collected them after one week.

Content validity was determined by making logical links between questions and objectives of the study. The researcher made sure that the items in the instruments is well balanced so as to capture all the study intents ,that is, should have similar and equal representation of the questions. After doing so, the researcher presented the research instruments to experts in the department for scrutiny and advice thus making the instrument valid, (Orodho, 2004). To ensure that the instruments generate similar data if used by different researchers, as a measure

of reliability, a pilot study of the two church sponsored schools was done in the neighboring Kipkaren Division. The pilot study ensured suitability and clarity of questions on the instruments designed, relevance of the information being sought and the language from the responses given. In addition, a measure, internal consistency using, Cronbach's alpha formula was determined as test of reliability. The results for correlation co-efficiency for the pilot study were 0.86%, indicating that the instruments were reliable.

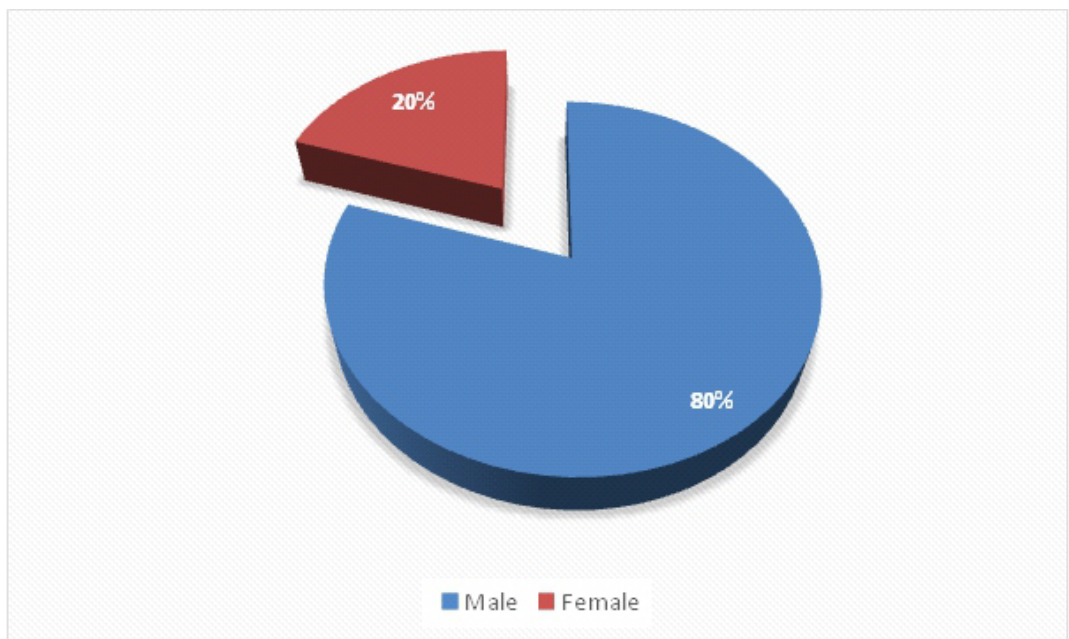
After collecting data from sampled schools, the researcher analyzed data qualitatively by first classifying data into different components. Then the units were fixed together so as to develop concepts of social sponsorship activities relationships. This helped the researcher to identify social connectors that influence churches to sponsor public schools. The data was represented using themes. The data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive

statistics using frequencies and percentages with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17 then the researcher presented data using tables and figures.

Results and Discussions

The respondents in this study were drawn from primary and secondary section. In the primary section, the respondents were: Head Teachers and two nominated sponsor members in the school management committee (SMC). The gender of the respondents composed of 72(80%) male and 18(20%) females. in the secondary school section, the respondents were: Principals and the two Board of Management (B.O.M) sponsor members. The gender was 26(78.8%) male and 7(21.2%) females. From the study, it clearly indicates that males dominate education sector compered to females within Turbo Division. The information is summarized in the figure below

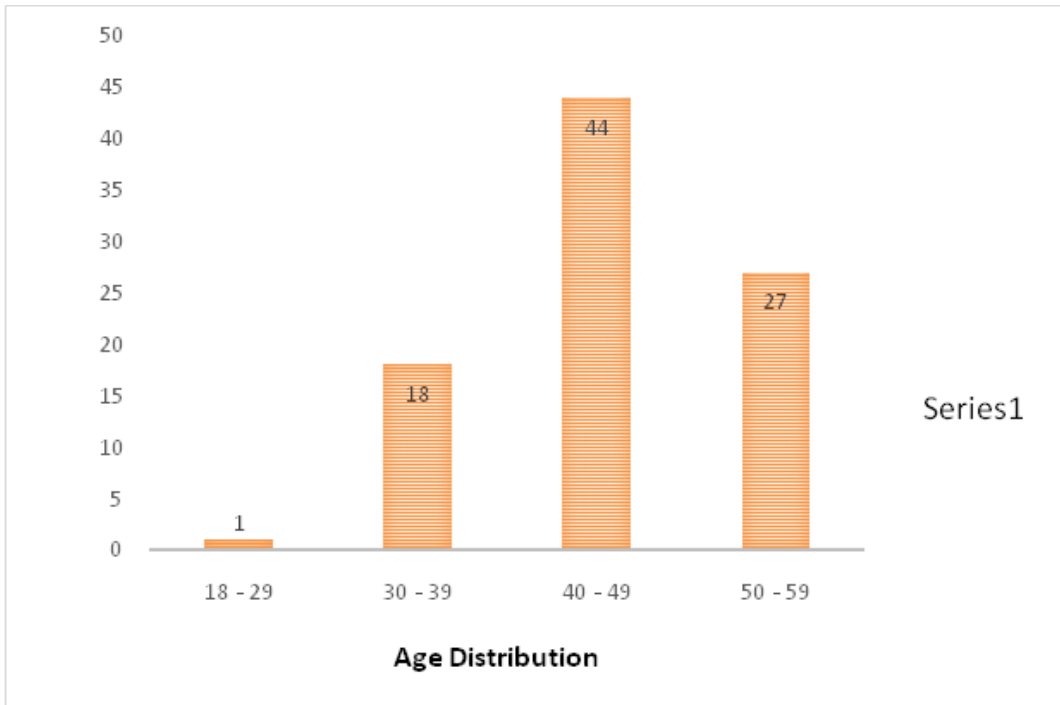
Figure 1: Gender of the respondents



The age distribution of the respondents within Turbo Division were as follows ; from the primary section, they were :between the ages 18-29 years , 1(2.2%),30-39 years,18(20%),40-49 years,44(47.8%), and between 50-59 years or more 27(30%).In the secondary section

,the age distribution of the respondents age between 18-29 were :8(21.2%) aged between 30-39,16(42.5%)aged 40-49, 9(19.3%)aged 50-59 and abave,6(18%) . From the study area, the age bracket between 40 to 49 are very much concern with education matters .The information is summarized in figure bellow.

Figure 2: Age distribution of the respondents.



The researcher also considered sponsorship of public schools by various denominations, the distribution for primary schools were as follows Catholics, 6(20%), ACK, 6(20%),AIC,16(53.4%),and SDA sponsored 2(6.6%) of the primary schools. In the secondary schools the distribution of sponsorship by various denominations was

Catholic, 2 (13.3%), ACK,4(26.7%) and AIC sponsored 9(60%)of the public schools in the study area. From the study area, it clearly indicates that other churches sponsors few schools compared to AIC that sponsors more schools. The information is summarized in figure bellow.

Table 2: Institutional roles influencing church in sponsoring public schools

Statements	SA		A		UD		DA		SDA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Church sponsors influence the religion of teachers employed in their schools	64	52.0	29	23.6	13	10.5	3	0.2	15	12.2
Church sponsors influence politics of the area	67	54.5	29	23.6	12	9.8	7	5.7	8	6.5
Church sponsor gain influence in the school management representation	34	27.7	60	48.8	3	2.4	13	10.6	13	10.6
Church sponsored schools admit students from different faith equally	34	27.7	25	20.3	8	6.5	39	31.7	17	13.8
Organizing workshop for career choice	23	18.7	45	36.6	12	9.8	21	17.1	23	18.7

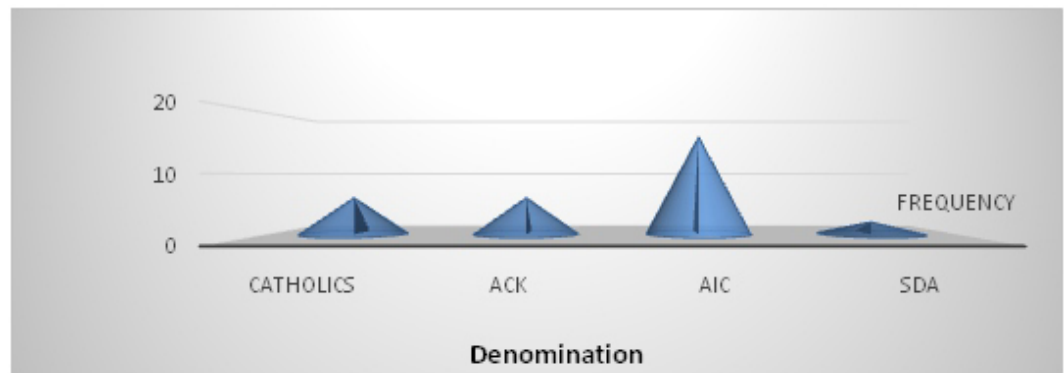


Figure 3: Church sponsorship in the study area

The researcher also sought to understand the institutional roles that influence churches in sponsoring public schools in the study area. The table below shows the reaction from the respondents.

The respondents were asked to rate likert questions relating to institutional factors that are believed to influence churches to sponsor public schools. On the question that church sponsors influence the religion of teachers employed in their schools, 64(52.0%) strongly agreed, 29(23.6%) agreed, 3(0.2%) disagreed and 15(12.2%) strongly agreed. On church sponsor gaining

political influence in the area, 67(54.5%) strongly agreed, 29(23.6%) agreed, 7(5.7%) disagreed and 8(6.5%) strongly disagreed. Majority of the respondents agreed that church sponsor gain influence in the school management representation, 34(27.7%) strongly agreed, 60(48.8%) agreed, 13(10.6%) disagreed and 13(10.6%) strongly disagreed. Whether church sponsored schools admit students from different faith equally, 34(27.7%) strongly agreed, 25(20.3%) agreed, 39(31.7%) disagreed and 17(13.8%) strongly disagreed. Finally on organizing workshop for career choice 23(18.7%), 45(36.6%) agreed,

21(17.1%) disagreed and 23(18.7%) strongly disagreed.

From the open ended response, it was found that church sponsors provide motivation incentives like rewards of trophies to the schools that excel in academics after joint exams. The respondents were asked an open ended on other institutional factor that influence churches to sponsor public schools ,the response were; the church sponsors in school management committee provides the school administration with strategic work plan and technical advice on

use of school finance and other resources ,seeking for recognition especially when the sponsor is associated with schools' academic performance and possessions of schools' title deed under their custody ,to push for church members to be employed in the institutions that they sponsor ,they used schools they sponsor to attract donors with the aim of benefitting from the school projects or tender awards. From observations it indicate that, some construction materials for the schools projects supplied by one of the sponsor member is as shown in figure bellow.



Figure 4: Construction supply awarded to the sponsor member

The above results indicate that the churches sponsor public schools to enjoy the rights accorded to the sponsor by the education act, based on the Education Act, the sponsor has some rights and responsibilities (Mabeya Ndiku and Njinu, 2009) appointment of the principals and teachers to be made in agreement with the sponsor, the sponsor has a right in consultation with head teacher to use the building of the school during out of school hours free of charge. Should any damage occur in that period, the sponsor would be required to undertake the cost of repairs.

The sponsor shall also be responsible for any additional expenses ,religious instruction shall be given at the school in

conformity with a syllabus prepared or approved under regulations made under section 19 after consultation with the sponsor ,the composition of the members of a school committee to include persons to represent the local authority, the community served by the school and a sponsor, school sponsor has a right to nominate four (4) of the thirteen (13) members of the school board of governors and to propose the chairman who should be ratified by Ministry of Education ,the sponsors together with then BOMs have the responsibility to maintain the religious tradition of the school., the sponsor will have the right to enter the school for the purpose of religious instruction and supervision thereof and for pastoral work among teachers and pupils. According to Freeman (2005), school

sponsors have a lot to contribute to the schools' social development. The sponsor is expected to ensure that there is security in the school by reinforcing the employment of enough personnel and fencing the schools they sponsor. The learning and teaching resources should be provided in order to create a good working environment. According to Akala (2009), sponsors might need to revisit their initial role of developing and providing facilities and resources to their schools. Furthermore, they need to respond to the contemporary emerging issues in the society where the school is established.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The researcher sought to understand the institutional roles that influence competition of churches to sponsor public schools in the study area. The findings indicated that gaining influence of the school management as the major factor that influences churches to sponsor several public schools. The outcomes depicts that the sponsors main aim is to benefit from the use of schools facilities for religious functions free of charge. School sponsors should come up with professional service scheme in areas like guidance and counseling, teaching religious syllabus and

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