

ESTABLISHING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TACTICS FOR SCHOOL
LEADERS IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH WEST
REGION OF CAMEROON

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by
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ESTABLISHING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TACTICS FOR SCHOOL
LEADERS IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH WEST
REGION OF CAMEROON.

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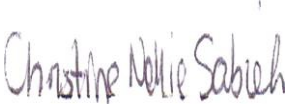
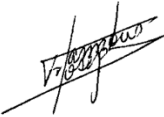

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Dedication

I dedicate this piece of work to my adorable parents Mr. & Mrs Tumla William and, the wonderful Marist Brothers of the Schools for their prayers, support and encouragement throughout this level of my education.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BEPS	Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle du Second Degree
ENS	École Normale Supérieure (Teacher Training College)
FM	FM Financial management
GCE	Government Certificate of Education
HOD	Head of Department
HTTC	Higher Teacher Training College
KEMI	Kenya Education Management Institute
MINERA	Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SGBs	School Governing Body
MINESEC	The Ministry of Secondary Education in Cameroon
TSC	Teacher's Service Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization
PSS	Private Secondary Schools

Abstract

The study sought to examine and establish financial management tactics, for school leaders, in private secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. It examined the background to the existing challenges from a global, Africa, regional and Cameroon perspective. A convenient sampling technique was used to select the schools.

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data for the study. Three participants from each of the twenty private secondary schools were selected to obtain relevant information for the study. The population of 60 participants included: 20 principals, 20 vice-principals and 20 school bursars, from the twenty purposively sampled private secondary schools

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the responses obtained from the participants. The findings of the study revealed that there exists financial planning framework with flaws with regards to execution, the study also revealed a lack of a procurement board that is mandated to make sure that the procurement of goods and services. The study further found that the budgets of respective schools represent the main financial planning framework around which incomes and expenditures are managed, besides auditing and reporting.

The findings, however, revealed the major challenges confronting the effective financial management of the private schools including; lack of financial management skill by school leaders to effectively manage the schools' finances, poor budgeting, irregular auditing/follow up and late disbursement of subvention by the central government. The study recommended among others that, school

leaders be equipped with basic financial skills and monitoring of school finances to enhance school leader's ability to effectively manage the finances of the schools they manage.

Keywords: Financial management, School leaders, Private secondary Schools and Cameroon

Table of Contents

Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	vi
Abstract	vii
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	1
Background to the study	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Research objectives.....	7
Research questions.....	8
Significance of the study.....	8
Scope of the study.....	9
Delimitation of the study	9
Definition of terms.....	10
Organization of the study.....	11
Summary of Chapter One	11
CHAPTER TWO: Introduction	12
Budgetary estimates and administrative issues	15
Delay in the disbursement of Free Secondary Education funds.....	16
Auditing issues faced by school leaders.....	17

School leaders Procurement Skills in Secondary School.....	21
The Educational System of Cameroon.....	25
Cameroon - Private enrolment in secondary education	27
Resources of a private school establishment acquired from the succeeding sources:.....	29
Challenges of financial management peculiar to Cameroon.....	30
Financial management set-up of Schools in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.	31
Financial procedures and guidelines for school principals and bursars	32
Theoretical framework	35
Conceptual framework	36
Research Gap/Knowledge	36
Summary of Chapter Two.....	38
CHAPTER THREE: Methodology	40
Population.....	40
Sampling technique and size	41
Participants	41
Research design	41
Research Instruments.....	42
Interviews	43
Interview guide	43

Questionnaires	44
Pilot study	46
Examination of Documents	47
Procedure	48
Summary of Chapter Three	49
CHAPTER FOUR: Introduction.....	50
Research Question One.....	51
Research Question Two	60
Research Question 3	66
Research Question 4	72
Research Question Five	87
Summary of Chapter Four	98
CHAPTER FIVE: Introduction.....	100
Summary of the study	100
The implications of the study	103
Recommendations for policy, practical action, tips or tactics.....	106
Limitations of the Study.....	112
Suggested areas for further research	113
Conclusion:.....	114
References	116

APPENDICES.....	120
Appendix A: Interview Guide Outline for Principals	120
Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire.....	122
Appendix C: Content analysis checklist of FM in PSS.....	127
Appendix D: Observation checklist of FM in PSS	128

List of Tables

Table 1: Budget and Expenditure guiding the FPF of the selected PSS.....	53
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of internal audit financial planning framework ...	56
Table 3: Checks and balances guiding the FPF of the selected PSS	63
Table 4: Procurement chain and disbursement process of the selected PSS	68
Table 5: Challenges associated with FM in the selected PSS.....	73
Table 6: participants' recommendations for effective FM in PSS.....	88

List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual framework	36
Figure 2: Measures taken by schools in the last three years to improve FM.....	61

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and background of the study

Introduction

The chapter presented the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives and research questions of the study. Also, it dealt with the research framework, significance of the study, the scope of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, definitions of operational terms, organization of the study and conclusion of the chapter.

Background to the study

In any economic structure, it is essential to have individuals or group of people accountable for the authorization of use and management of finances throughout the entity. The success or failure of an entity that runs on funds largely depends on how vigorous or feeble its financial management tools are. Because of this, the Cameroon government law laid down the procedures governing the set-up and running of private education in the country, by Law No. 98/4 of 14 April 1998 to lay down processes and guidelines of education. In the same vein, schools and for that matter, private secondary schools in Cameroon need to adopt proper financial management practices to run the daily financial activities of their institutions effectively.

According to Brigham and Houston (2021), financial management activity is concerned with the planning and controlling of the finances of an organization

or institution. Management Study Guide (2011) also defined management as planning, organizing, directing and controlling the financial activities such as procurement and utilization of funds of the enterprise. Therefore, financial management involves the procurement, utilization and accounting for funds made accessible to an organization or institutions for its programs. Niemann (1997), on his part, explained that a school's financial management is when an individual in authority executes those management actions (regulated tasks) associated with the financial aspects of schools with the only purpose of attaining effective education. In the same vein, Joubert and Bray (2007) described school financial management as the performance of management actions associated with the financial aspects of the school for the attainment of effective education.

Financial management (FM) is an indispensable element in the effective running of an institution. numerous resources are involved in managing an institution and, to get value from these investments require a lot of accountability and transparency from the people in charge, (Carril, Aguilar and Jorge, 2020). The education milieu in several countries consumes the lion's share of budgetary allocation and, hence sound financial management is of paramount importance. Manners (1988) well-defined financial management as the "study of the acquisition of and enhancing wealth and values". He further elucidated that financial management deals with the proper acquisition of cash and the effective allocation of that cash within an organization. Unfortunately, various sectors of both public and private service are still battling with the management of funds in some schools in Cameroon.

The Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC) in Cameroon controls the funds of public secondary schools through school principals, even though it is the principals' responsibility with other things, to make a request for instructional resources, deliver funds for the purchase of other resources (Tanah 2018). on the same note, the financial managers of school institutions, in the name of principals, were expected to sit up to the task at hand. Spillane and Coldre (2015) thus described principals as "Officer Controlling Vote" and, Tanah (2018) stated the principal, amongst other things, must make sure the administrative, pedagogic and, financial management of the school function well. He/she has to manage all funds granted to the school and implements the school budget and the only person authorized to incur expenditure.

Mito and Simatwa (2012), in a study conducted in Kenya, revealed that poor budgeting made it difficult for school principals to effectively run schools, as some were overspending on some rubric heads and under-spending on some leading them into other anomalies such as misappropriation and mismanagement of school funds, a fault punishable by interdiction and, demotion as per the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) code of regulations. It is important to note, whatever decision school leaders executed in the budget section of their school application made the difference between success and failure.

The delay in disbursement of Free Secondary Education Funds was a big problem in school management as the settlement time of most transactions were not met. Late payment of fee and fee defaulting, as a result of the high rate of poverty, posed a challenge to school management, as financial objectives of the

school were rarely achieved on time. The findings concurred with that of Leu and Byren (2005), who conducted a study in six Sub Saharan countries namely: Guinea, Ghana, Tanzania, Madagascar, Ethiopia and Uganda and found out that parents were reluctant to pay fees and again it was the duty of the school principal to ensure that school fees are paid.

In 2016/2017, during the annual financial report meeting of principals, bursars, the educational and financial secretaries of the diocese, auxiliary and arch-bishop of the archdiocese of Bamenda in Mezam, the researcher participated as a school bursar of one of the schools observed the following remarks from respective schools: some famous and populous schools ended the academic year in a deficit, some schools were spending outside the armpit of the school budget, irregular auditing, non-submission of the monthly account by some schools, poor communication among school leaders and in the same light, the financial secretary of the diocese reported that some schools were not respecting the school financial policies of the diocese, for example, some schools continued to receive fees in school contrary to fee payment in the bank.

Mobegi, Ondigi and Simatwa (2012), in their study, noted that a majority of the school leaders had no financial management and accounting skills and that some took the accounts books to pseudo accountants to update them to fit their selfish interests. They further stated, some school principals were able to identify the wrong entries and anomalies on financial records made by school bursars.

There are occasions where finances are entrusted into the care of school leaders who have little or no knowledge in financial accounting leading to

mismanagement of funds. Most of the financial administration of some institutions are conducted haphazardly causing heavy financial losses to the schools. To ensure there is efficient utilization of funds allocated to the institutions through school fees, government subventions, donations and internally generated funds. There is the need for the proprietors to ensure a proper financial management system for their schools, cash management system as a component of the financial management system, for instance, will collect information on all cash receipts and disbursement within the educational set-up on a real-time basis.

The financial management system owes the duty of due care and diligence in the disbursement and utilization of financial resources to the institutions. This system should also be concerned with controlling and managing school funds to accomplish the objectives for which it was allocated most effectively and economically to evade financial distress. Hence, the school leaders entrusted with the administration of the schools have the responsibility of instituting the best accounting and other financial management practices that will work in the best interest of their schools and give the stakeholders and financiers value for their money.

It is the realization of financial management challenges faced by school leaders in private secondary schools that necessitated a study to establish financial management tactics for school leaders and to explore the current challenges faced by school leaders in financial management. More so, the above-stated experiences and observations motivated the researcher to embark on this research investigation, to examine how school leaders in private secondary school manage

their finances and investigate the issue of ineffectiveness and challenges of financial management in private secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

The success or failures of an organization depends on how are funds generated and managed effectively and efficiently. However, in the case of public schools or organizations, they aim to offer a service to the general public without making a profit, unlike profit-seeking institutions whose motive is to maximize profit, minimize cost and add value to the owner's equity (private schools). For instance, the private school sectors are battling with the generation and management of funds.

Even though private secondary schools receive government subvention and grants, school fees from students, there has been a persistent problem of insufficient resources in some private institutions to the extent that schools have continued to upsurge other levies which are contrary to the ministry of education guidelines to take care of the supposed shortfall, that is Law No 2004/022 of 22 July 2004 section 20. In some areas, prominent schools have been fortunate to receive more funds successfully, however, the challenge has been linked with financial mismanagement and school leaders lacking basic financial knowledge and skills. A review of related literature indicated financial mismanagement was due to a lack of skills and proper financial management.

Suleman and Pakhtunkhwa (2015) revealed in their study that the mismanagement of funds in public secondary schools has lots of problems, which contributed to schools not achieving their desired objectives and goals in the

education sector. The result of their study can be related to private schools where school leaders lay blame on the church, proprietors and government for low funds for their respective institutions, the supply of minor institutional materials, capital equipment and others. The situation of private secondary schools has worsened so much that these activities have received little or no attention, despite the financial contributions made by the church, donors, parents, government and others.

Sometimes the management of funds allotted for a specific project was deviated and used for different projects. In the archdiocese of Bamenda in Cameroon, between 2017 to 2019 some school leaders were demoted or transferred, all these are evidence of improper management of funds in the private educational sector. Indications also show that most private secondary schools experienced weak financial management controls as well as misappropriation of funds. The study, therefore, took a closer look at the financial management practices in private secondary schools in the Mezam Division in the North West Region of Cameroon to ascertain the manner funds were managed in the private sector at this educational level.

Research objectives

1. To explore find out if there were financial planning frameworks in private secondary schools.
2. To examine possible internal/external audit schemes in private secondary schools.
3. To find out if there existed the procurement chain and the process of disbursement of funds in PSS.

4. To identify challenges faced by school leaders in the financial management of PSS.
5. To recommend effective financial management tactics for school leaders.

Research questions

1. What were the components of the current financial planning framework used in PSS?
2. Were the current components of the financial planning framework similar to the needed components of an effective financial planning framework the literature recommends?
3. What was the procurement chain and the process of disbursement of funds found in PSS?
4. What were the challenges school leaders faced in financial management in PSS?
5. What recommendations were made, to promote effective financial management in PSS?

Significance of the study

This study would be significant as it is destined to establish tactics or guidelines in managing school finances economically, effectively, and efficiently. It is expected to certify school management practices: transparency, and accountability practiced by school leaders and SGBs in the financial management of the school, Factors leading to mismanagement of school was identified and practical solutions derived from the findings. Findings were made available to the Department of Education and the skills and knowledge acquired is expected to

help schools that encounter challenges in managing school finances in the North West Region, likewise, the entire country in Cameroon.

The study also helped private schools to determine if the roles of school leaders and SGBs involved in the financial management at schools were clarified or not and what their respective schools needed to accomplish the required standard, the study equally helped private secondary schools, to rate themselves as far as the subject of managing school finances is concerned

Scope of the study

As the study aimed at establishing financial management tactics for school leaders in private secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. The challenges experienced by school leaders in managing school finances was the criteria for targeting the twenty private schools.

Delimitation of the study

The study took place in the Mezam division Centre of the North West Region, made up of neighboring administrative divisions such as; Mezam, Momo, Bui, Menchum and Donga. Mezam is the administrative headquarter of the North West Region and has a unique academic potential, connectivity by tarmac roads to other divisions. The study targeted school leaders of private secondary schools, and so it was not easy to compare the financial management practices and challenges with those of public schools.

Definition of terms**School financial management**

Too and Weaver (2014) described financial management as the performance of management actions of the school (controlling tasks) associated with the financial aspects of the schools to attain effective education, carried out by those in a leadership position or a person in a position of authority. The financial manager makes sure that the school management team plan and School Governing Body, delegate, organize, and control the school funds in such a way that they accomplish their goals.

School Leaders:

Designates a principal, vice-principal, school bursar or other individuals who are employees or officers of a secondary school and are responsible for the day-to-day managerial operations and leadership of the school

Financial efficiency

Financial efficiency refers to the allocation of financial resources to the school in such a manner that the allotted resources, once deployed, will match the financial needs of the school (Cascio and Boudreau, 2010)

Financial planning (budgeting)

Financial planning is usually done, for the period known as the financial planning year. A budget is a document displaying the expected income for a particular financial year and everything that would be financed with that income (Solomon, Nhete and Sithole, 2018).

Organization of the study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one covered the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, assumptions of the study, definition of terms, study organization and the conclusion.

Chapter two covered the review of related literature. It was divided into drawbacks in accounting into schools, budgeting estimates and administration issues. The auditing challenges faced by school leaders, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. In chapter three, the study covered: research design, target population, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques. Chapter four then covered data analysis and discussion of findings. Chapter five centered on the research findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research

Summary of Chapter One

A piece of background information on the factors that lead to the research was provided. The problem to be studied was stated, the purpose or objectives, as well as the research questions derived from the issue, significance, scope of the study, delimitation, definition of terms in the study, were spelt out. The next chapter focused on an extensive literature review on financial management in schools.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

Introduction

The literature review was organized, under the following themes; accounting setbacks in secondary schools, budgetary issues and administrative issues in schools, auditing drawbacks faced by school leaders, professional competence, challenges facing school leaders, set-up of finance of a diocesan school, issues peculiar to Cameroon, theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The chapter also aimed to acknowledge and appreciate the work done by other researchers related to this topic. Hence the section ended with a recap of identified gaps.

Accounting problems in schools

Inadequate experience of principals

The government of Cameroon established the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC) and École Normale Supérieure, Teacher Training College (ENS), in 2010 by a presidential decree to provide in-service training for teachers and school leaders of educational institutions, including principals of secondary schools. It is worth noting that the rapid and fast expansion of secondary schools has further led to the appointment of principals and bursars that have little or no experience to fit them completely into the duty they are required to do and this is the main cause of ineffective leadership in both public and private secondary schools.

Weak accounting control mechanisms

The study research was done by Patrick and Patrick, (2019) in Huma-bay county revealed that weak accounting control techniques were the main factors leading to financial misappropriation and mismanagement in schools. Bursars and accountants were mostly unqualified, thus unable to prepare cashbooks. School leaders were not professional enough in identifying wrong anomalies and entries in financial records done by their bursars.

They went further to reveal that due to the incompetence of the principals and bursars, principals took cashbooks to pseudo-accountants to aid, update them to fit their selfish interests, Wasiche, Mwebi and Ajowi, (2018) on the other hand, noted that late payment of fees and fee defaulting affects financial management in schools. principals were unable to plan effectively, for example, fee drive has always been a stumbling block to learning.

Inadequate training of principals.

Principals were disposed to numerous issues in association with financial management as the current preparation support measures for principals in financial management were feeble and do not adequately prepare potential principals for the post of responsibility in financial management in a survey conducted in South Africa by (Khumalo, 2018). Some of these problems that principals of secondary schools' faced were therefore brought about by how principals were identified by their proprietors, appointed and trained, which do not adequately prepare them to become effective school managers.

Patrick and Patrick, (2019) revealed in a study, conducted in Homa Bay County that the leading tradition for identification and appointment of secondary school principals was based on active participation in co-curriculum activities, good classroom teaching and, teaching experience, which has ended in ineffective leadership and consequently numerous challenges in the management of secondary schools.

Etomes and Molua, (2019) in a study conducted in the South West Region of Cameroon remarked that the ill-preparedness for managerial responsibilities before their appointments have made secondary school principals vulnerable to making blunders which proprietors, government and sponsors capitalize on the demand for their demotion.

Unqualified bursars and accountants

Kilaku, (2019 cited Mobegi, Ondigi and Simatwa, 2012), their study, observed that under-performance of principals in financial management resulted from appointing unqualified accounting staff. Many of them have only trained up to Accounts Clerks National Certificate (ACNC), manifesting a shallow level of accounting knowledge. They also observed that there was no proper record keeping and failure to follow accounting procedures. With regards to the fast expansion of private secondary education school in Cameroon, all financial management challenges facing principals of private secondary schools must be established. Research by Mobegi, Ondigi and Simatwa (2012) revealed that the Gucha district experienced forty-seven cases of misappropriation and mismanagement of funds from 2015 to 2016. The placement of excess collection

in a particular rubric head, for instance, tuition amounts to be mismanagement of funds.

Budgetary estimates and administrative issues

Inadequate skills and knowledge in budget preparation

For appropriate management of resources to realize the educational objective in schools, Obulemire, (2019) in his study, revealed that in education managers need to draw a budget to institute priorities of the organization. He further revealed that principals exhibited inadequate performance in financial management. They showed a lack of sufficient skills in budget planning, preparation and administration. Their attitude is that they should provide services irrespective of the costs. Many principals were not competent with accounting procedures.

Poor budgeting

Programme planning and budgeting schemes, where plans were put forward for attaining educational objectives. The study established that principals made no attempts to measure the outcome of expenditure to define whether the budget decisions have accomplished desired results. Poor budgeting has made it difficult for principals in public secondary schools to run the schools effectively (Tamah, 2018). Some principals in Mezam Division where the study was conducted, were under-spending and over-spending on some rubric heads, thus leading them into other financial problems such as mismanagement and misappropriation of school funds; a big mistake punishable by interdiction and consequent demotion as per the Teachers Service Commission code of regulations

and conduct. Tamah (2018) revealed that the support system and preparation measures for principals in public secondary schools were weak and did not adequately train school leaders for their post of responsibility in line with financial management.

Delay in the disbursement of Free Secondary Education funds

According to a study conducted by Omoeva and Gale (2016) in Uganda, they revealed the delay in disbursement of free secondary education funds is a challenge to the budgetary process. In public schools, the budget was approved by the Parent-Teacher Association, Board of Governors and, the District Education Boards towards the end of the academic year which, was late for schools. Expenditure in all vote heads starts at the beginning of each year. However, delay in disbursement means expenditure has to be incurred in some vote heads. Consequently, leading to misappropriation and mismanagement of funds. For instance, the Ministry of Education released funds based on the following guideline; tuition, boarding, repairs, transport, electricity, water, medical activity and personal emolument

It is worthy to note that at the beginning of the new academic school year, especially day schools need to pay salary and wages to their employees. However, such funds must be acquired, from other vote head, for instance, personal emoluments to transport the vote head to as in the example above. Spending in one vote head would inevitably compromise the budget and, hence, mismanagement of funds.

The proprietor of teachers and the Teachers Service Commission punishes such crimes by interdiction of the principal or redeployment. With regards to the financial management of school setbacks precisely, school fees issues, the government expects respective schools to get income from Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF), Constituency Development Fund (CDF), Fund Raising, income-generating projects and Alumni (MOE), 2007). Such finances were not usually programmed for and undoubtedly will interfere with the budgetary process and management

Auditing issues faced by school leaders

Auditing can be defined as the inspection of financial statements, covering the transactions over a specific period and, determining the financial state of an organization on a set date so that the auditors may issue a report on them (Mosweu, (2018). The principal serves as an internal auditor of the school milieu. He/she must occasion the preparation of a cashbook for external audit at the end of each academic school year.

Fakero (2018) in his study, conducted in South African primary schools, revealed auditing as an activity which, evaluates the correctness and completeness of the accounting system applied in an educational institution. According to his findings, educating managers must constitute a proper administrative structure for internal auditing within the school. The central aim of external auditing is to ascertain that the institution has to abide by the stipulated financial control mechanisms, hence, putting forward recommendations concerning inefficiencies and recommending for improvement or specifying loopholes, and offering tactics

of appropriate management of finances in secondary schools was of utmost importance.

Shortage of schools' auditors

Shimelash, (2019). showed in his study that school accounts took many years to be audited and, during the time of auditing Government officials and auditors were enticed with money, bribed and blinded that everything was well. Nonetheless, due to the shortage of auditors, it was impossible to rush the audit exercise. It is therefore vital to determine the difficulties school leaders faced in auditing to determine how these factors affect financial management in schools

Internal Audit

In the same vein, Samuel (2011), in his study, revealed the essence of internal audit as an independent evaluation activity within an institution because of operations as a service of management. The existence of an internal audit task is a form of control in an institution that offers assurance to a management team that the internal accounting controls are operating efficiently and reliable financial information is conducted, it also assures the effectiveness of management controls.

Atieno, Olweny, and Miroga, (2019) conducted a study titled, does monitoring influences financial accountability and transparency? They remarked that there is no proper internal auditing set up in several schools and that the government auditing is irregular, hence, it is likely for school funds to be mismanaged. Fakero (2018) in his study, revealed that more than 58% of BOG chairpersons, Bursars and principals involved in the study, resolved that weak

internal control techniques were the main setback to financial mismanagements. This was evident in the fact that at the time the study was conducted, receipting of school money had a problem because fee registers were misplaced, schools had no professional storekeepers and school property was kept in Vice-principals' offices.

They concluded that all these situations contributed to school financial mismanagement. Therefore, to run an institution effectively, it necessitates a proper accounting record and adequate management control system, thus a need to establish financial management tactics for school leaders.

Auditing challenges faced by public secondary school principals

Auditing can be defined as the examination of financial statements, covering the transactions over a period and ascertaining the financial position of an organization on a specific date so that the auditor might issue a report to school leaders (Messier, Glover and Prawitt, 2008). The principals serve as internal auditor of the school. He must occasion the preparation of books of account for external audit at the end of each year (MOE, 2000). It is the role of the principal to constitute a procurement committee to procure goods and services for the school. He has an oversight role in supervising how the procurement of goods and services are done, according to laid down procedures.

Cascarino (2007) states that auditing is an activity that appraises the accuracy and completeness of the accounting system applied by an educational organization. Education managers must institute proper administrative structures for internal auditing within the school. The main aim of external auditing is to

ascertain that the organization has complied with the stipulated financial control mechanisms, thus helps in recommendations regarding inefficiencies and recommending for improvement or specifying shortfall, and giving suggestions for proper investigations.

Incompetent bursars'/accountants

Incompetent accountants and bursars with low professional qualifications contributed to poor budgeting which, affected school management negatively (Victor, (2017). Auditing the work of such officers is a pointer to challenges in financial management

Lack of financial management staff

In a study by Mobegi, Ondigi and Simatwa (2012), they established that lack of financial management staff made principals double administrative and financial roles. This was because many schools used untrained financial personnel. It was revealed that principals received the money, issued receipts, deposited it in the bank account of the school, withdrew and did the procurement procedure. This barred accountability and transparency of school funds, therefore, exposing the principals to auditing challenges.

Arygyropoulou (2009), in his study, remarked that what seem to annoy principals in Greek state schools is the enormity of the financial management workload and the absenteeism of secretariat staff. Such absence of staff and enormity of workload denoted that books were not ready for the final audit.

Irregular auditing of school funds

This was the key factor that contributed to financial mismanagement (Argyropoulou, 2009). The study agreed with a study by Wasiche, Mwebi and Ajowi (2018), who established that government auditors visited schools but at irregular intervals. The findings from 54.8% of bursars/accountants revealed that auditors were at times bribed by principals, to cover up the anomalies in the records from different schools. They also revealed, the same auditors were used to balance account books before the actual audit.

It was further noted that the whole of the old Gucha district, which at the time of the study has been partition into 5 districts, had 2 auditors only. It was further noted that school books and even account took many years to be audited and even of the time of auditing government auditors and officers were bribed and blinded that everything was well. Due to the shortage of auditors at the district level, few qualified accountants who were used, by schools were also temporarily deployed as auditors. This is a challenge to school leaders as the competence of such auditors may be wanting.

School leaders Procurement Skills in Secondary School

The procurement and Disposal act (2005) necessitates that all goods and services procured in institutions should be tendered, as long as the value of the goods or services exceeds Kshs 4000/=. The tendering process includes the procedure of inviting several suppliers to competitively bid for the provision, of different goods and services. The tendering process is directed by the tender committee, whose composition includes the Vice-principal as the chairman,

followed by the deputy chair in the name of the Accounts clerk, departmental heads and the Storekeeper as the secretary. In this arrangement, the school principal act as the chief executive officer in the school is locked out to ensure no interference with the process.

Furthermore, the principal is expected by law, to offer the tender committee members appointment letters to safeguard the security of tenures. It is the Vice-principal who induct them to their new duties as many if not all could lack legal and technical knowledge of procurement PPAD (2006). In most cases, principals themselves cannot induct the committee for lack of adequate training on his or her part (KESSI (2011) According to PPAD (2006), the tender committee is expected, to approve procurement plans by several departments in the school. They also strive to identify a supplier for goods and services for the school institution in a given financial academic year through competitive bidding (PPOA 2005),

The principals of the school are required to ensure that tendering processes are followed in their respective schools. These processes include; Preparation of procurement plans by departmental heads based on the departmental requirement, approval of procurement plans by the principals in line with the accessibility of funds in the vote heads, receiving the quotations through tender boxes, the invitation of bidders' quotations, shortlisting and finally giving of tenders to competent bidders through the signing of contracts (KESSI 2011). The procurement process, when followed properly in school institutions promotes judicious utilization of resources.

The public officers' ethics Act (2005) agrees with this point strongly, it urges that the procurement process facilitates efficiency as goods and services procured support specification and time. Hence, school leaders will derive value for their money which converts to better performance when the procedure is adhered to.

Professional competence issues school leaders faced in financial management

Incompetent principals in financial management

Ackom-Wilson, (2016) established that in Greek states schools, any state school teacher could be appointed, as principal provided he or she has reached a certain number of years as a classroom teacher. Such principals are the only individuals eligible to carry out bank transactions. The principal is also expected to manage little amounts of cash on current expenses. Duties of the principals also included; repair of premises, school cleaning, maintenance costs, energy costs and office cost. Such untrained principals may not handle huge financial management responsibility.

Muguchu, (2017 cited, Mestry and Grobler, 2006) affirmed that South Africa has a shortage of principals with little or no management skills. The principals could not handle financial issues leading to massive corruption, dishonesty and financial mismanagement. A study by Mutembei (2013) further established that principals had inadequate financial training consequently, challenges in financial management in day schools in the Imenti South district.

Unqualified bursar/accountants

Mobegi, Ondigi and Simatwa (2012) piloted a study which established that 61% of bursars in the Gucha district were typists and holders of short crash courses while those qualified as accounting made just 29%. It further revealed that most of the work of balancing accounts was done by hired accountants, who were paid handsomely. In some instances, secretaries received school fees and write in exercise books and then handed over together with money to the principals at the end of the day if it was the right amount of money collected. Such difficulty that school leaders faced in financial management needed to be established and, appropriate tactics and recommendations made to offer effectiveness and clarity in the use of school finances.

Competence of the Vice-principal

As mentioned before, any public school teacher can be appointed, as a principal or vice provided he or she has done a certain number of years of teaching, (Argyropoulou, 2009). Meaning no previous experience or training is required. In Cameroon, most of the secondary bursars are primary school teachers appointed by the minister of secondary education based on political affiliation. The public procurement and disposal regulations (2006) required that vice-principal be appointed to head tender committees in schools. However, the lack of professional training and knowledge in procurement is a major drawback in accounting for school funds.

The Educational System of Cameroon

Cameroon is a country with a population of over 26.88 million, January (2021). Situated along the Atlantic Ocean, it shares its boundaries with the Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. Two of its boundary regions with Nigeria (Northwest and Northwest) are Anglophones, while the remaining portion of the country is Francophone. Cameroon has been richly endowed with natural and mineral sources such as; Agricultural products like cotton, coffee, beans, maize, cassava and timber of high quality, minerals, oil and gas, (World Bank Group).

The French subsystem and the English subsystem of education in Cameroon were both colonial legacies of France and Britain. Even though the state provides education to the citizens through public or government schools, confessional bodies and lays private help the state in this important responsibility. All these three classifications of schools are answerable to the government since their activities have to be enacted by the five ministries of education in the entire country.

The official education in Cameroon is managed by five distinct ministries of education which consist of: The Ministry of Basic Education for Nursery and Primary Schools, the Ministry of Secondary Education comprising Lower and Upper Secondary Schools, the Ministry of Sports and Physical Education the Ministry of Vocational and Technical and schools, and lastly, the Ministry of Higher Education which takes charge of all tertiary institutions. All these

ministries except non are fully involved in the management of finances in their respective ministries.

With regards to the Francophone subsystem of education in Cameroon, the first cycle continues for four years and ends with students sitting in for BEPS (Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle du Second Degree). Successful candidates then proceed to the second cycle which normally lasts for three years and is finished with the "Baccalaureat" examination. Regardless of their faintly different curricula, all the two sub-systems of education are supposed to manage their finances. The lay or confessional character of the institution brings about slight changes in the curriculum. All this demands extra expenditure on the part of the school.

On the other hand, Secondary education in Cameroon is the subsequent stage of education that learners follow after completion of six years of primary education. In general education, the first five years of the Anglo-Saxon subsystem of education prepare learners for the GCE Ordinary Level examination. Even though there are many subjects in the school curriculum, GCE Ordinary Level candidates can only go in for a maximum of 11 subjects; and the 11th subject should be Religious Studies. For learners to be acknowledged successful, they must pass in at least four subjects.

Successful candidates proceed to continue to upper sixth or secondary school (High school or second cycle) which lasts for two good years. At this stage Learners have a variety of choices to choose from; commercial subjects, arts or sciences, High School studies end with the GCE advanced examination level

where learners go in for official examinations for a minimum of three subjects and a maximum of five subjects. To be professed successful, the learners must be successful in at least two subjects.

A historical background: Languages-in-education in Cameroon

Although with its multilingual nature, the history of languages-in-education in Cameroon is noticeable by an institutional exclusion of Cameroonian languages from the formal and mainstream education system. Unlike in other African countries where teaching and learning in the initial years of primary teaching are conducted, at least in principle, through at least one or more local languages with a transition to a national or international language at a later stage, Cameroon decided for a full immersion into either English or French medium education right from the first year of basic education. The historical connection between Cameroon and their two former colonial powers, Britain and France and the resultant adoption of French and English as ‘neutral’ languages and therefore the languages of official education and business has been well documented (Fonlon 1969; Nana 2013; Wolf 2001).

Cameroon - Private enrolment in secondary education

By 2015, the enrolment of private secondary education in Cameroon was 28 %. However, in Cameroon, the enrolment of private secondary schools fluctuates substantially, enrolment declined through the 2000-2015 period ending at 28% in 2015. Recently there has been a sharp increase in enrolment and the number of private schools, especially around towns and cities. Populated schools

will likely end the academic year with an encouraging turnover. However, with the poor financial management skills of school leaders, the reverse is true.

According to Law No 2004/022 of 22 July 2004 laying down the guidelines, governing the functioning and organization of private education in Cameroon, there are two essential categories of schools; private schools and public schools. The private schools can either be confessional (faith-based) or lay private. Many of the faith-based schools belong to the Catholic, Baptist, Protestant and Muslim faith. Ever since confessional schools were created, to become a garden centre for the transmission of faith, Religious Studies and the spiritual life of the college are given pride of place.

Meanwhile, Cameroon being a lay state, public schools hold on citizenship as the basis of rigour and moralization. Following the Anglophone sub-system of education, many public and private secondary schools follow the same curriculum since they all sit for the same nationwide end-of-year examination.

Private secondary schools in Cameroon are renowned for offering quality education to learners. The key behind such success lies partially in the availability of better infrastructure in their establishments. However, school fees in private schools are very high, especially in boarding schools.

In the same light, the Cameroon government law laid down the procedures governing the set-up and running of private education in the country, by Law No. 98/4 of 14 April 1998 to lay down processes and guidelines for education in Cameroon, in chapter five based on resources and matters of finances, section 20, 21, and 21 respectively.

Resources of a private school establishment acquired from the succeeding sources:

(Section 20)

- ✓ boarding fees or school fees
- ✓ the proprietor's contribution
- ✓ any support from the PTA
- ✓ earnings of various activities of the institution or establishment
- ✓ donations, loans and legacies got by the laws in force
- ✓ possible assistance from the State
- ✓ contributions from local and regional authorities.

Section 21:

- ✓ School fees for self-governing institutions shall be fixed by the proprietor.
- ✓ Tuition fees for private colleges or training institutions under the contract shall be fixed by the Government upon consultation with Private Education Establishments.

Section 22:

Contingent on available resources, the government may award private schools or training establishments beneath contract assistance which may include the following:

- ✓ a financial subsidy or grants
- ✓ secondary teachers.
- ✓ Teaching aids and, educational resources

Challenges of financial management peculiar to Cameroon.

Ndah (2018), in a study conducted at Mezam Division in Cameroon, revealed that the money left in the hands of bursars and principals to manage is that from fees paid by learners. School fees paid by learners has to be spent, in line with the rubric that specifies how the funds have been allocated, even though neglecting some essential aspects. In his study, he noted that even though with the aid of the rubric head, it seems funds allocated to education are being utilized for other issues, not inside the ambit of a rubric.

Moreso, Owona (2011), in her study conducted at Mezam Division in Cameroon, asserted that all funds collected in the schools are to be paid in the government treasuries before it may perhaps, again be withdrawn, for spending and, it seems such an elaborate and cumbersome process that retards the management of school affairs especially those that require finances. Remarking on this, Ndikum (2013), in a divisional coordination meeting, recounted that often when schools' bursars go to either deposit or withdraw money from the treasury, the reply is as follows "come tomorrow, I have much work". All these according, to Onehi (2015), question the fact that all those in charge of funds allocated to education have to husband such meagre resources to maximize the incomes on institutional financial provisions.

Ngatia, Njoka and Ndegwa (2019 cited Mosomi, 2008), in their study, remarked that in Mezam, North West Region of Cameroon, the ill-preparedness of school leaders for managerial positions made school principals and bursars in some schools vulnerable to making blunders leading to their demotion.

Financial management set-up of Schools in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

The key objective of the Financial Guidelines for the management of Archdiocesan schools was Self-Reliance. This was to ensure the Sustainability of the mission for private schools by the principals, bursars and all other persons managing school resources.

Accounting System for mission Schools

The Archdiocese endorsed and supported a unique uniform software accounting system for all the schools in the diocese. Schools were encouraged to have the most current version of the software and a maintenance aid agreement in effect. Schools can use the accrual basis accounting method. However, the Archdiocese highly recommends that parish schools use the accrual basis accounting technique for recognizing tuition, pre-registration and school salary expense, as these income and expense items ought to be reflected in the appropriate academic school year. For disaster retrieval purposes, the software should be backed up regularly. The backup should be stored in a fire-resistant cabinet or safe. An extra copy should be saved off-site or with the online vendor. Schools are instructed to follow the centralized Chart of Accounts numbers.

School Income

All other diocesan school institution income was considered quantifiable income, but not limited to the following: tuition, uniforms, special fund drives, gifts, book Fees, cafeteria income, rental income and donations.

Financial procedures and guidelines for school principals and bursars

The school principal and bursar were appointed by the archbishop. They were responsible for all financial transactions as well as ensuring judicious management of finances in the school. The School principal and bursar were expected to:

- ✓ Prepare the annual school budget while taking into consideration the infrastructural, financial, academic and spiritual needs of the school and present it to the school management squad for endorsement before it is submitted to the Finance Commission. The School Management must be able to defend each item of the budget indicated.
- ✓ School bursar only receives all incomes from the school, present the cash at hand to the school principal for auditing before depositing the incomes taken to the bank. Expenditures must only be made after this procedure has been fulfilled.
- ✓ The bursar takes care of all procurement and purchases in the school. However, the bursar must always inform the principal of all financial transactions and must not spend more than a specified amount devoid of the principal approval.
- ✓ The principals and the bursar offer accurate, reliable, complete, and timely financial information to enable timely and informed decision making.
- ✓ Ensure effective control, efficient utilization and security of all financial and material resources. The school bursar ensures an average monthly expenditure of not more than 10% of the budgeted amount or an average

monthly expenditure of not more than 20% of the budgeted amount considering bulk purchases.

- ✓ Provide financial analysis and monthly reports to the education and financial secretaries of the diocese every month, with the signature of the school principals indicating the bank statement and the cash at hand.
- ✓ Itemize the various businesses taking place in School specifying the annual Balance (Annual income – Annual expenditure = profit/Loss) of each business. These must also be analyzed once a month about the budget.
- ✓ Progressively file all receipts of all monthly expenses in case there is no accountant.
- ✓ The school bursar must not lend school money. However, in some extreme cases, the principle should apply for written permission from the financial secretary of the diocese.
- ✓ The Bursar should not borrow money without due permission from the financial secretary of the Diocese.
- ✓ The principal and bursar ensure all workers taxes, bills, taxes and social security, suppliers and all other charges are paid and on time.
- ✓ Budget for the retirement benefits of all workers who are due for retirement in the school budget.
- ✓ List the school workers and indicate how much money each paid in each month and how much is paid to the workers' taxes and Social Security in each case.

- ✓ Principals and bursars must ensure that workers are paid respecting the Government's basic minimum wage policy.
- ✓ Ensure that the school should deposit money to the diocesan account by way of turnover and depreciation. Schools are one of the main sources of income; therefore, no school should expect money from the Archdiocese to operate.
- ✓ Ensure that all monies collected in school are deposited in the bank.
- ✓ Principals and bursars must prepare the end of year financial reports and presents them to the School Management Team of the dioceses during the end of year evaluation. photocopies duly signed by the participants should be sent to the Education and Financial secretaries before the end of May.

From the aforementioned financial policies of the diocese, during the annual meeting of principals, bursars, education and financial secretaries of the diocese and the bishops of the archdiocese, the researcher who participated as a school bursar by then observed the following remarks from respective schools; a good number of famous and populous institution ended the financial year in deficit, Principals appeared to be spending on issues not within the budget for example visits to schools by administrators, some bursars and principals did not respect one of the financial policies of the archdiocese which requires learners to pay their fees in the bank, thus, monies collected by bursars and principals in some school was never accounted, for it.

Officials spent more on extracurricular activities for which no budgetary rubric was made. During this meeting, the coordinator recounted tension that,

exist between the principals and bursars regarding procurements of goods and services of the schools. Likewise, by 2018/2019, some principals and bursars were demoted, from their positions due to financial mismanagement.

Theoretical framework

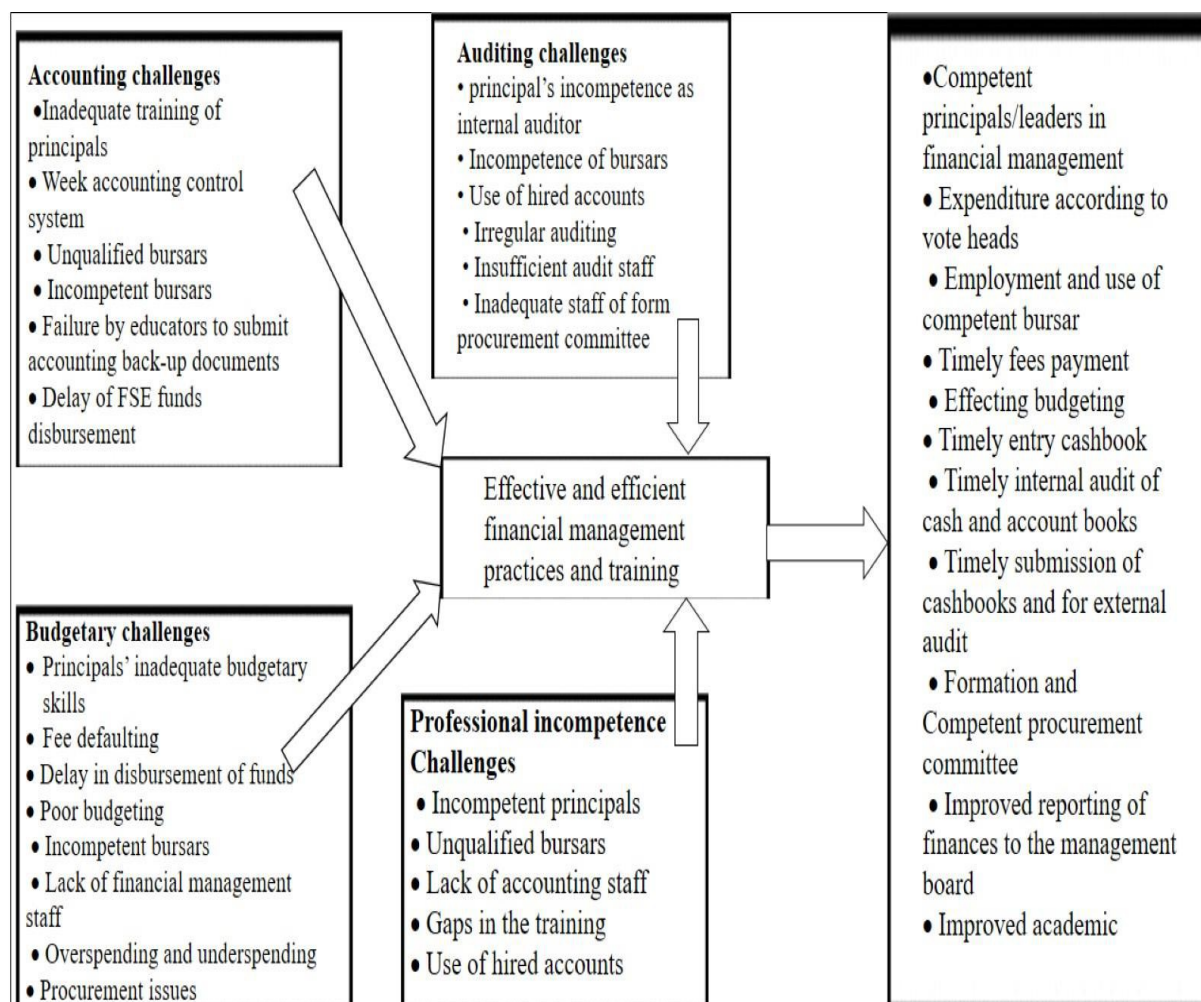
A theory is a rational statement or groups of statements that were sustained by the evidence, meant to elucidate a phenomenon (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). A theoretical framework is an assortment of interrelated thought or ideas based on theories. This study was supported by Emile Durkheim operational functionalism theory (1858-1917). According to this theory, as a result of being interdependent and interrelated, one organ can influence the others and eventually the whole (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

In the study, the incompetence of the school leaders was likely to cause poor book-keeping practices and, as a result, the school leaders failed to adequately prepare account books. The outcome will be poor financial management practices. The theory anchored the interrelationship of poor budgeting, weak auditing systems, weak accounting controls, incompetence in professionalism and feeble financial management practice by the school leaders.

Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework for the financial management drawback experienced by school leaders of secondary schools in the North West Region.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Research Gap/Knowledge.

The empirical evidence on the factors affecting financial management in Cameroon secondary school especially, in private secondary schools have not been fully brought, to light, most studies on financial management have focused on the Public sector and few public schools but not on private learning

institutions. It is, therefore, obvious that the accessible empirical evidence on the factors affecting financial management in private secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon has not been fully exploited.

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Earlier studies did not shed light on financial management practices and challenges facing school leaders of private secondary schools. This, therefore, compelled the need to research in this area to bring to light the drawbacks school leaders faced in financial management in the Mezam Division in the North West Region.

Few studies have been conducted on financial management in public secondary schools, for example, the financing of secondary education in Mezam Division, focusing on the partnership between the state and family in funding education. Little was done to see how funds are being utilized and the difficulties involved. Another study was conducted by Tamukung Joseph on analysis of local support in financing secondary education in the Mezam Division. Furthermore, Tanah (2018) on constraints to financial management in public secondary schools Mezam Division, the northwest region of Cameroon.

The study revealed insufficient provision of funds and spending of funds out of school rubrics. The study recommended that the government should provide sufficient funds to run schools. The study did not shed much light on misappropriation and mismanagement in public schools.

From the literature reviewed, there is a high level of financial mismanagements in secondary schools, hence the need for further research to find out the reason especially in private schools, where there was a strong misconception that funds were adequately managed in private schools. The above studies did not review the strategies adopted by public schools to ensure that funds are well managed hence the need for further research

Summary of Chapter Two

This chapter reviewed the literature regarding school financial management, the account setbacks, budgetary issues and funding received by schools and how school finances should be managed. Under the general management of procurement and disbursement, auditing drawbacks faced by school leaders, professional competence, challenges faced by school leaders, set-up of finance of a diocesan school, issues peculiar to Cameroon, theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Hence the section ended with a recap of identified gaps.

The management of school finances was discussed, as this is still a contentious issue in many schools. Although the researcher laid hands-on research on constraints of school finances in the North West Region of Cameroon, little has been done on this problem, the way out has not yet been reached and, the

finances of many private schools seemed to be in disarray. In the next chapter, the research methodology was employed in the study is discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the literature study on the financial issues or effectiveness of schools, the same as the role of the school leaders in enhancing the effectiveness of financial management in schools. The literature review revealed that there are a series of setbacks, likewise steps to be followed and the tasks to be employed to ensure effective financial management in schools. To establish financial management tactics for school leaders towards ensuring financial management in schools an ethnographical study was conducted in schools in some private secondary schools in the Mezam Division, the North West Region of Cameroon.

The chapter discussed the procedures used in the study. Research design, target population, the sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, pilot study, reliability and, data collection procedure and data analysis will be discussed.

Population

Principally, population denotes to the universe of entities from which the sample was selected (Ofori & Dampson, 2011). The target population for the research consisted of all the key, school leaders of private secondary schools. The population included the principals, vice-principals and, the school bursars.

Sampling technique and size

A research sample according to Ofori & Dampson (2011), was the section of the population that was designated for an investigation. Financial constraints may affect the size and scope of the study and therefore only private secondary schools was selected. The researcher conveniently selected schools that will offer the necessary information for the successful implementation of the project

Participants

All the participants of this investigation were selected, from twenty (20) private secondary schools, using purposive sampling technique all these schools have got the school principal, vice-principal and bursar. The 60 participants for the study will consist of (20) Principals, (20) vice-principals, and (20) bursars. These three categories of respondents were, sampled purposively, purposively sampled because they are all involved with the financial management of the school. These participants were the chief informants, since they were the handlers of the school's finances, they were in a better position of providing the data needed by this study

Research design

The study used a mixed research method. This research design that combined quantitative and qualitative research approaches enabled the researcher to blend both quantitative and qualitative data within a single study. Also, the mixed research design was used because of its ability to incorporate both general and particular data (Christensen, Johnson and Turner, 2011).

The study employed the descriptive survey technique which was useful in the description of the challenges school leaders of private secondary schools face in financial management. Descriptive studies were not only limited to face findings, but possibly offer results in the formulation of significant principles of knowledge and solution of significant problems. Descriptive survey was an approach of collecting information by administering a questionnaire to or interviewing a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003).

This design was selected for this study because the researcher is not in a better position to manipulate the variables of the study like budgeting, accounting, auditing and professional competence challenges facing school leaders in financial management. The resultant survey research data were obviously lead to reliable data for current and future use.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 24) was utilized to code and manage the quantitative data that the questionnaires churned out. Through the SPSS, the researcher generated distribution tables and calculated means to describe interested variables accurately. Similarly, inferential statistical values such as mean and standard deviations were used. Based on such inferences, the results were generalized concerning the larger population of subjects.

Research Instruments

The researcher used survey questionnaires (google form), interview schedule and document analysis guide for data collection. The instruments were adapted from the existing questionnaire to address the issue of financial management in private schools. The questionnaire was used to solicit qualitative

and quantitative data, the interview guide was used to collect data from principal participants and the document analysis cashbook, software program, school and bank receipts while using a checklist to support the data collected from the questionnaire and interview.

Specifically, data were collected through two major sources, primary source and secondary source. Interviews and questionnaires were utilized as a primary source, while the financial report, budget statement, financial reports serve as the secondary source of information. This method was adopted because it helped the researcher to reach a meaningful conclusion.

Interviews

By face to face communication with a cross-section of the target population, the researcher obtained data from the target population specifically, from the school principals who were considered, as the financial officers of their respective schools

Interview guide

The study made use of an interview. According to Ogula (2005), an interview was a tête-à-tête in which one person; the interviewer seeks responses for a specific purpose from another person, the interviewee. This study used a semi-formal interview in collecting information, from the principal participants who are considered the financial officer, who takes full accountability for all transactions and is responsible for the income and expenditures of the school. Interviews were used to investigate the components of the current financial planning framework used in private secondary schools and whether the current

components, of the financial planning framework similar to the needed components for an effective financial planning framework the literature recommends including tactics, challenges the participants faced and recommendation to improve the financial management situation of their respective schools.

The items in the interview guide were designed, in such a way that they provided the participants with the autonomy to answer the research questions as professionally as possible, with a high degree of flexibility. The interview schedule comprised of 11 patterning items. Section A: consisted of 1-5 items Procurement procedure and Disbursement of Fund, Section B: included 6-7 items Financial Management Framework, Section C: Challenges and remedies associated with Financial management within the school: 8-10, and Section D the 11 items: the recommendations. Content analysis was used to discuss the interviews conducted. The analysis brought together, the emerging themes that were given, by other participants like the vice-principal participants and bursars. The results of the interviews were used, to support the information generated from the questionnaires. (See Appendix A).

Questionnaires

The questionnaire was titled, *Establishing Financial Management Tactics for School Leaders in Private Secondary Schools in the North West Region of Cameroon*. The questionnaire was administered to seek the opinions of the schools' administrators' financial management practices of their schools. The survey questionnaire consisted of Sections A, B, C, D, E, F and G, with open-

ended and closed items. As a measure of data collection procedures, structured questionnaires was administered, by an assistant researcher to ensure that authentic information was acquired. Also, open questions were required for an in-depth justification from the participants, while closed question were required for a specific response to the participants as well, hence, the study used both opened and closed questions, Section A: Major sources of income received, 1-3 items. Section b: financial planning framework, 1-3. Section c: checks and balances, 1-13. Section d: account auditing, Open-ended: 1-3 and closed questions: 1-12. Section E: budget and expenditure, Section F: Challenges associated with financial management in the selected private schools, 1-5 items and Section: G recommendations, (**See Appendix B**).

The questionnaire sections C and D were made of the Likert Scale. All statements favoring the subject under consideration were scored as follows: Strongly agree=5 Agree =4 Neutral =3 Disagree =2 Strongly Disagree=1 for statements, opposing the point of view, the items will be scored in the opposed order as follows: Strongly agree=1 Agree =2 Neutral =3 Disagree =4 Strongly Disagree=5. Selecting a suitable Likert Scale for this research was crucial to the results the researcher hoped to get hold off. The aim for choosing Likert Scale was to permit participants to make a choice and ponder about what they believe. Section F, the points from one to five represented major, moderate, minor, neutral and not a problem, respectively. Section G was options that required participants to recommend the way forward in financial management practices of their respective schools.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted before the main study on 20 participants of some schools while only 18 participants actively participated. The questionnaire, structured interview and observation instruments was used. Piloting was carried out to 7 principals, three 7 Vic- principal and 7 bursars. Piloting helped to remove any ambiguous items on the instruments. Blank spaces, inaccurate responses or inconsistencies, indicate flaws which were reviewed after piloting the instruments. The piloting also helped in the inclusion of more items that were deemed necessary, for instance;

- ✓ Addition of the procurement chain and disbursement of funds as one of the objectives. Why? with the aid of an open-ended interview, some participants raised concern about procurement disbursement of funds.
- ✓ During piloting, a crucial question was not piloted. Therefore, a question assessing the financial skills of the school leaders was included for data collection.
- ✓ In section B of the survey questionnaire, participants were requested to outline the financial framework in their respective schools. Some participants had little or little knowledge of the proper terminologies to use. To facilitate the process, for those who were not familiar with the financial framework, to facilitate data collection, options were made available for participants to select those applicable in their school institution
- ✓ Three former bursars participated in the piloting, but did not form part of the data collection.

Examination of Documents

To acquire the authentic information concerning financial management, some vital documents containing; school financial policies and guidelines, financial reports, budget statement, receipts and other important account books were consulted. The review of these essential documents enabled the researcher to record vital information associated to financial management practices and the challenges school leaders faced and the suggested tactics put in place to curb mismanagement and misappropriation of school funds in private secondary schools. There may be numerous reasons for the review of documents, however, some of the of document reviewed are seen in the subsequent paragraphs:

- ✓ The school financial policies were reviewed to better comprehend what was expected from school leaders, that is, participants during and after the execution process and to determine whether the financial policies or guidelines are followed as stipulated.
- ✓ The financial guideline document was used to correlate the participants (school leaders) job description and what is actually taking place in the financial sector of the school
- ✓ The financial policy document was used as measure of data collection technique to have a complementary perspective from which to view the research phenomenon and to appraise the existing policies from the five schools related to effective financial management.

- ✓ In a nutshell, the financial policy document analyses helped to validate the information collected from the questionnaire and interviews as a result improving the credibility of the findings.

In the same vein, the checklist and observation list included 15 items of financial policies and check list. The checklist of 16 items is to explore whether the financial policies of the school are effective. The content and observation checklist were used respectively to authenticate whether financial policies of the school were effective or not with regards to the first research question. **(Appendix C and D)**

Procedure

After following the formal application explaining the purpose and advantages of the study, the Catholic Education Secretary and the twenty principals from the selected schools granted permission for the research to be carried out in the two selected schools. The permission was equally granted on the condition that all information solicited from respective participants will be handled with the utmost confidentiality.

The research was conducted as follows.

Principals, Vice-principals and school bursar's participants from all the selected schools under study answered or filled the soft copy of the Survey Questionnaire within three weeks (Google through WhatsApp, Facebook and e-mail). The assistance research followed the process by constantly remaining participants to complete the survey online.

Furthermore, during semi-structured interviews of 20-30 minutes, Principals participants provided information on the current financial planning

framework (budgeting, auditing and reporting), checks and balances, sources of income received. For each of the three themes mentioned, the Principals participants were guided by a content analysis checklist.

Then, in the second face of the interview that lasted 25-30 minutes, the Principals participants provided information on challenges they faced in managing school finances and the recommendations or the way forward.

Finally, a walk-through discussion on the school property and land procurement and school facilities

Summary of Chapter Three

The research methodology and design in the study has been discussed in detail in the current chapter. The methods, as well as procedures that were followed, as part of designing this study, was deliberated on to prove a detailed account of those methods and processes, Qualitative and quantitative researches, as well as its disadvantages and advantages, were highlighted. The population of the study and the target sample were stated. The chapter outlined the research instruments chosen for the study and incorporated the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires. Finally, the methods to determine trustworthiness were described. The subsequent chapter provided the data reporting of the study, discussion and analysis of the research findings was presented in the next Chapter, chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to establish financial management tactics for school leaders in private secondary schools. The preceding chapter outlined the research design and methodology. The recent chapter presented the results and discussion of the data that originated from the questionnaires, interview guide and documents analyses about the school management practices in private secondary schools. The analysis, interpretation and discussion of the data were organized according to the research questions that guided the study.

It should be noted that although all the 60 Survey Questionnaires that were given out to principal participants, vice-principal participants and school bursars participants were all returned accounting for 100% response rate, although 18% of one or two research question of some questionnaires were not filled, especially the open-ended survey questionnaire. However, a note should be taken that none of the questionnaires was discarded because vital information was filled by the participants.

The subsequent research questions were used throughout the study:

- What were the components of the current financial planning framework used in PSS?
- Were the current components of the financial planning framework similar to the needed components for an effective financial planning framework the literature recommends?

- What were the procurement chain and the procedure of disbursement of funds in PSS?
- What were the challenges faced by school leaders in the financial management of PSS?
- What recommendation was made to effectively promote financial management PSS?

Research Question One

What were the components of the current financial planning framework used in PSS?

According to the responses from the participants, it was found that there exists the current financial planning framework in private secondary schools, categorized under budgeting, auditing and reporting. Although these financial planning frameworks were marred with loopholes, as seen in the subsequent paragraphs.

In this question, the researcher explored the current financial planning framework of the selected private secondary schools. This objective was attained, by soliciting the views of school principals, vice-principals and school bursars of the selected institutions. The researcher first sought to find out whether there was a current financial planning framework that directed the financial administration of the institutions. Participants were requested in an open-ended questionnaire to state the essential financial planning framework of their respective institutions. The long list of 60 participants was categorized under the following headings or

financial planning framework of the selected schools: budgeting, auditing, reporting.

However, the interviews revealed that the financial planning framework did not differ significantly from one school to another. Based on these similarities, the researcher presented the general framework common to all the schools selected.

The Financial Planning Framework of the selected school institutions

Budgeting

Although the current financial frameworks consist of numerous policies, the budget besides auditing and reporting was the crucial framework around which the schools operate based on their financial policies. The budget displayed the income and expenditure for the school within a specific period.

The financial planning framework of the private schools concerning principal participants through interviews is anchored on the budget prepared by the schools at the commencement of each school academic year. To prepare the school budget it was essential to forecast the various sources of school revenue. The principal participants, vice-principal participants and, school bursars' participants specified through a survey questionnaire by listing the main sources of generating funds for private schools comes from school fees, government subventions, parent-teacher association, sales from the school canteen, supply of books, sportswear, uniforms and pullovers, produce from the school farm, bus service, loans from banks and other micro finances, mission allowance, GCE allowance and projects. Fortunately, some schools also receive external aid from

parents, ex-students associations and charitable institutions. According to the study, 56.3% of the participants expressed their concern about benefiting from Government grants or subvention.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics; Budget and Expenditure guiding the financial planning framework of the selected PSS

VARIABLES	Min	Max	Mean	S.D
The school has effective budget committee	1	5	3.02	1.29
The budget officer/committee is independent enough	1	5	2.98	1.13
The school has enough funds to support the budget	1	5	3.19	1.26
There are other means to internally generate funds	1	5	3.44	1.19
Projects outside the budget are sometimes considered	1	5	3.37	1.11
Spending outside budget affects other projects	1	5	4.03	0.85

Source: Data Analysis from the Field, April 26, 2021

The results presented in Table 1 clearly showed participants agreed that spending outside budget affects other projects (mean=4.03; SD=0.85) in the same vein participants also agreed with the statement there were other means of internally generating funds (mean=3.44; SD=1.19). Participants further agreed with the statement projects outside the budget were sometimes executed (mean=3.37; SD=1.11). Although the budget was one of the essential financial planning frameworks of the selected schools, its effectiveness was questionable as seen in

table 1 above. The table stipulated that schools still consider projects outside the budget, which is considered a serious drawback to financial management.

However, on a positive note, table 1 also revealed that there were other avenues through school could generate funds, as stated earlier: through the school canteen, school farm, supply of uniforms, pullovers, sportswear and donations, which is an essential factor to take into consideration when drafting the school budget.

The results obtained from principal participants through interviews indicated that the school bursar was expected to prepare the school budget and present it to the school principal, implying school leaders do not come together for the compilation of this significant document of the school. The interviews further revealed school bursar just asks the head of departments to provide their budget estimates, financial and other pertinent information for the compilation of the major budget estimates for the school. However, the interviews revealed that the budget is prepared based on the following

- The projected expenditure was not estimated to exceed the forecasted revenue (income) for that same period.
- The school budget constituted approximations of revenue and expenditure for educational commitments.
- Preferences were often directed to expenditures that are linked directly to the provision of education of learners. Specifically, expenditure on activities such as recreation: culture and sports are considered only after

other important expenditures are taken care of according to one of the interviewee.

The financial planning framework concurred with White (2015), who stated that the budget serves various purposes, comprising: monitoring the income and expenses for a year, determine if amendments need to be made in goals and programs, predicting income and expenditures for school projects, as well as the timing and the availability of revenue providing a base for transparency and accountability. However, through the interview, one of the principals revealed that they did not know the vital areas to consider when drafting the school budget. According to his institution, they just copy and paste, based on the previous budget, which explains why some school leaders often find it difficult defending the school budget. This confirmed the statement of one of the interviewees who reported that he has never defended the school budget.

Auditing:

In line with the interview and open-ended survey questionnaire, auditing equally stood out on the list of participants. Through the interviews, participants stated that schools had an internal auditing scheme to audit the financial records. Internal auditing was supposed to be conducted by the spending officer of the institution, the principal, the evaluation process is embedded in the financial planning framework in line with content analysis. According to the participants, the objective of the internal audit scheme was to help school leaders to execute financial responsibility effectively.

To fully affirm the internal audit system of private secondary schools, 12 statements were employed to examine how the internal audit system is faring in the respective private schools selected. Participants were requested to rank the statements using a five-point Likert scale. Strong agreement to the statement is labeled by 5, while strong disagreement to the statements were labeled by 1. Like in the first table, the mean and standard deviation of these responses are computed and summarized as seen in the table.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of internal audit financial planning framework

Statement	Min	Max	Mean	S.Dev
Auditors normally check for documents	1	5	3.67	1.14
Auditors always check for physical verification	1	5	3.41	1.22
Auditors always cross check with major suppliers	1	5	4.03	0.85
Staff payments/remunerations are always audited	1	5	3.56	1.28
Auditors work is in-depth enough	1	5	3.16	1.17
Auditors recommendations are implemented	1	5	3.42	1.05
Auditors make follow up checks	1	5	4.02	0.85
Auditors are normally motivated/influenced by account section	1	5	3.16	1.18
Auditors' motivation influences their independency	1	5	3.06	1.19
Auditors are easily influenced by money	1	5	2.50	1.34
I will prefer independent/private audit firms to governments	1	5	4.05	1.11
Auditing must be done by two or more firms for checks	1	5	3.84	1.20

Source: Data Analysis from the Field, April 26, 2021

The result presented in Table 2 clearly showed participants disagreed that auditors always cross-check with the suppliers (mean= 4.03; SD=0.85). On the other hand, participants preferred independent/private audit firms to governments, with a mean of 4.05 and a corresponding standard deviation of 1.11. However,

participants disagreed with the statement that auditors do make follow-up checks (4.02; SD=0.85). Therefore, in-depth auditing in private schools as auditors did not have the time to follow up with school leaders and school suppliers.

Auditing is one of the main tools employed to ensure an effective and efficient financial management system in an organization, McKinney (2015), auditing also ensures that financial administrators work within the confines of financial rules and regulations according to the financial policies of the diocese of Bamenda in Cameroon. Given this, the third objective of this study was to examine the internal/external audit system in the selected private secondary schools. The researcher sought to find out how often were the accounts of the schools audited. The majority of the participants (65%) revealed the accounts are audited yearly, while the remaining 35% of participants stated accounts are audited semi-annually. It was further revealed that auditing is conducted by the district and internal auditors occasionally.

According to the results found in table 3 above, there is a call for concern concerning auditing as one of the financial planning framework. The table revealed the mean value of 4.03 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.85, hence, a concern in line with effective auditing of school accounts. Auditors are required to do some follow up with the major suppliers of respective schools. These values confirmed the disagreement of participants on the statement that auditors do practice proper follow-up checks with the mean of 4.02 and standard deviation of 0.85 respectively. On the other hand, participants preferred private audit firms to governments with a mean of 4.05 and resultant standard deviation of 1.11.

Furthermore, the principal participants revealed through the interview that government auditors show up occasionally.

Auditing challenges in financial management facing the school leaders of public secondary schools

The school principals in private schools serve as internal auditors of their respective schools. They must occasion the preparation of accounts for an external audit to the end of the year according to the financial policies of the schools (Bamenda Archdiocese) auditing is an activity that assesses the accuracy and completeness of the accounting scheme applied by an educational institution. Argyropoylou (2009), in his study of Greek, suggested that schools established that two styles of audit take place in schools, internal and external auditing. This study confirms that internal audit is undertaken in private schools while external being more formal is undertaken by state audit is occasionally. When the financial academic year is over the school principal is expected to hold an internal (in-school) audit, mainly checking all financial actions taken throughout the year, then he formulated a detailed annual report to be submitted to the financial controller, education and financial secretary.

In private schools' take the case of the archdioceses of Bamenda, the financial controller of the diocese is expected to follow up cash books, vote books, ledgers, counterfoil of receipt books, schools bank account balances, monthly balances and final accounts for audit to the diocesan schools.

The study established through the interview that the Archdiocese of Bamenda had only one auditor or financial controller who managed 54 nursery

schools, 153 primary schools and 17 Secondary schools. The audit office further revealed that due to the skeleton staff and huge work, they are only visiting schools occasionally. It was also established through the interview of another principal participant, who confirmed that the office has a backlog of 2 years of audit of books of accounts, Results obtained from the observation in another schedule in lay private confirmed that 42% of schools did not have voucher books and ledgers. Some lay private schools invited pseudo- accountants to write books of account after a fortnight. Some schools collected additional revenue using unauthorized receipts to support remedial teaching and thus making it difficult for such monies to be audited. The study, therefore, observed some loopholes in auditing in the financial management of lay private secondary schools

The study agreed with Wasiche, Mwebi and Ajowi (2018), who revealed that government auditors visited schools but at irregular intervals. From their findings from 54.8% of school, bursars stated that auditors were at times bribed by principals, to cover up the anomalies in the records from different schools. In the same light, as seen in the literature review the same auditors were used to balance account books before the actual audit. Due to the shortage of auditors at the diocesan level and in some lay private schools few qualified accountants were used. This is a challenge to school principals as some of them are not competent enough to conduct internal auditing.

Summary

What were the current financial planning framework? The findings identified components like budgeting, auditing and reporting with some loopholes.

The budget seemed to be the main framework around which the school institutions operated based on their financial guidelines. Selected private schools under study revealed there existed current financial planning framework, but the execution of this essential document of the school was a call for concern. Two reasons for the poor implementation of the current financial planning framework were: inadequate skills and knowledge in budget preparation and shortage of schools' auditors. Budgeting, auditing and reporting are interwoven and, one cannot operate without the aid of the other. For private schools to ensure full implementation of their current financial planning framework, there must be continuous monitoring to ensure that schools are not spending outside the budget as seen in the study, reporting or submission of monthly accounts can help the school to track their financial situation at a given point in time with regards to budgeting, auditing and reporting execution

Research Question Two

Were the current components of the financial planning framework similar to the needed components for an effective financial planning framework the literature recommends?

Based on the participants' responses, the current components of financial planning framework were similar to the needed elements the literature recommended, for an effectual financial planning framework, to an extent. However, some challenges were highlighted with regards to checks and balances.

The purpose of the research question was to find out whether the financial framework is related to the mechanisms of effective financial planning framework

recommended by the literature in line with the financial policies of private secondary schools.

It was found out that the financial planning framework is similar and implemented to an extent. The school principal and bursar participants influenced the execution of the financial planning framework as stipulated in the literature.

To further analyze the level of effectiveness, the following questions were asked:

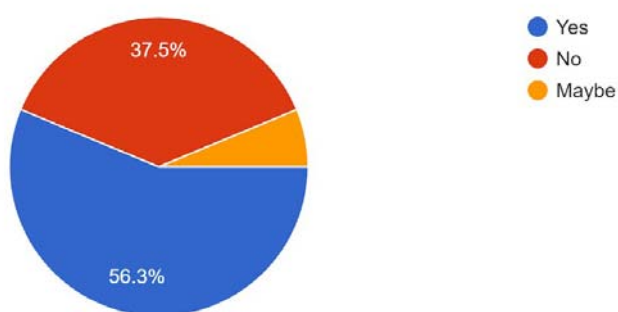
Were there some measures taken by schools in the last three years to improve the school's financial management? No () or Yes ()

The purpose of this question was to find out, if schools leaders were aware of the financial policies of the schools, as well as implementing this significant document of the school.

Figure 2: measures taken by schools in the last three years to improve financial management

Were there some measures taken by schools in the last three years to improve the school's financial management? No () or Yes ()

64 responses



In line with a survey on some measures taken by selected schools in the last three years to improve the financial management of their schools, participants responded as follows. 56.3% agreed that some measures have been taken in the

last three years, 37.5% disagreed, while 6.2% were undecided. Therefore, slightly more than 50% of the schools were striving to be current regarding the current financial planning framework, while 43.7% of schools were still in slumber.

To an extent, the results of figure 1 above correlate with the study of Mistry (2004), who revealed that the functions of the school governing body and the school leaders was to determine to what extent various parties were accountable for the financial school management. Guidelines have been established to ensure some schools were managing their funds effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, with regards to figure 1, 37.5% of the participants revealed no evaluation of policies in their institutions and 6.2% undecided, thus exhibiting the attitude of leaders who could go at any length to execute unplanned projects. This was in agreement with the study conducted in Kenya by Maronga, Weda, and Kengere (2013), their study indicated that the major problems arising from the governing of financial regulations include lack of monitoring and evaluation unit on financial usage which tied down with the current financial planning framework as depicted by the participants.

Accountability within the financial Planning Framework

In addition to budgeting, auditing and reporting which serves as a blueprint for the financial planning of school institutions as stipulated by the participants, other checks and balances have been built into the financial planning framework of the schools in line with the financial policies found in the literature. The researcher however sought to examine the extent to which these checks and balances were effectively executed. The statements were put on a five-point

Likert scale, with 5 demonstrating strong agreement and 1, designating strong disagreement. The mean and standard deviation of the participants are computed and summarized in Table 4

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of the checks and balances guiding the financial planning framework of the selected PSS

Statement	Min	Max	Mean	S.Dev
Records on all disbursements	1	5	3.77	1.05
Regular deposit of cash received	1	5	4.03	0.85
Proper accounting records on cash received	1	5	4.05	0.79
Periodic account reconciliation with student records	2	5	4.02	0.85
Daily statement from bank on students payments	1	5	3.27	1.19
Periodic account reconciliation with the bank statement	1	5	3.63	1.06
There is an effective and efficient finance committee	1	5	3.23	1.24
Accounts department is in charge of all monetary transactions	1	5	3.56	1.27
All department budgets are properly scrutinized	1	5	3.29	1.31
There is proper technology (ICT) for processing all records	1	5	3.32	1.29
Government grants are well channeled	1	5	2.79	1.26

Source: Data Analysis from the Field, April 26, 2021

Table 3 provided a recap of the checks and balances governing the financial management of the selected private secondary institutions. Since the current financial management framework, deals with record-keeping, one of the statements sought to examine whether there were proper accounting records of cash received from learners, government subvention and other sources within the institution. The mean value of 4.05 and a corresponding standard deviation of 0.79 showed that the majority of participants agreed that there was a proper accounting record of cash received from learners, government subvention and other sources. Furthermore, the result presented in Table 2 showed that the

majority of participants agreed periodic account reconciliation is well recorded with a mean value of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 0.85. Therefore, the majority of participants agreed that there exists a proper accounting record of cash received from learners as well as periodic accounting reconciliation by the school bursars,

The findings in the previous paragraph are in line with the study which was conducted in Kenya by Manie and Omagwa (2019). The study revealed a positive relationship between record-keeping, internal control as well as budgeting and financial performance of public secondary schools in Makueni county.

Furthermore, the findings from the interviews with Principal participants and the content analysis of the financial policy indicated that there were lapses with regards to deposits and withdrawals from the banks. 65% of the principal participants expressed concern in line with transactions conducted by school bursars without their knowledge. To remedy the situation, some principals turned to purchase some school items as well. Therefore, pointing to the fact that some school leaders do not follow their job description. According to the financial policies of the diocese, the principal is the spending officer who visas all the deposits and withdrawals from the school account, although the school bursars are in charge of the bursary work of the school. They are required to follow the financial policies of the school with regards to deposits and withdrawals. For example, the case of private schools in Nezam.

To shed light on checks and balances other measures were also put in place to improve the accountability situation within the financial planning framework of private institutions following the financial policies as specified in the literature. One, signatories to the school account must include two individuals, the principal and the school bursar -in charge. Two, no account opened in the school name must be overdrawn for whatever so ever reason. Any drawings made by the school at the bank must be approved and authorized by the administrator. Three, all accounts must be opened in the name of the school, with approval from the principal and the school bursar. The school administrator should advise the bankers in writing of any changes in the school accounts required by the financial regulations of the school board of governors. All these processes were to ensure the financial planning framework was robust enough to deal with any form of financial irregularities. However, the findings from principals' participants through interview presented a different scenario in some schools. The findings agreed with Okai (1996), who remarked that one person's work will be a check of another's, no single task must be executed by one person from the commencement to the end, as well as an individual engaged on a duty subjected to an autonomous check in the case of another person's task.

Summary

Were the current components of the financial planning framework similar to the required elements recommended by the literature for an effectual financial planning framework? Participants agreed there existed a similarity, however, to an extent due to challenges faced in the execution process. In identifying if the

current components of the financial planning framework were similar to effective financial planning as recommended by the literature, it was revealed that, 56.3% of the selected private schools reviewed their current financial planning framework. However, the principal's participants' interview revealed the loopholes in checks and balances. Thus, the current financial framework was similar to the needed components for an effectual financial planning framework the literature recommended, but there were challenges in the execution process.

Research Question 3

What was the procurement chain and the procedure of disbursement of funds in PSS?

It was found that there was no procurement board in the majority of selected private secondary schools, apart from the 26.2% of the participants, who indicated the existence of the procurement board in their schools. On the other hand, there existed the disbursement process, though with shortcomings. The following paragraphs will further analyze the degree of the procurement chain and disbursement process.

The purpose of the research question was to find out if there existed procurement chain and the process of disbursement in private secondary schools. The objective was achieved through an interview with some principals' participants, a survey questionnaire and a content analysis of the financial policies of schools under study.

Procurement Chain

It was revealed through the interview process that the majority of the private secondary schools selected do not have a procurement board responsible for the procurement within the schools. 73.8% of the principal's participants categorically stated procurement board did not exist in their institution. Whereas, few principal participants comprising 26.2% indicated the existence of a procurement board in their schools. One of the principal participants advanced the reason why procurement board is not applicable in his institution. "being a small institution with little in terms of procurement, there is no long procedure besides the communication between the Principal and the Bursar who deals directly with suppliers or business people to get supplies delivered". However, the interviews further revealed in line with the content analysis of the school financial policies that schools had laid down procurement procedures as per the nature of the school and the financial management prescriptions in the literature, however procurement board was not part of the schools financial planning framework.

Moreover, a survey questionnaire was employed to explore the procurement chain and the disbursement process of private secondary schools. The statements were presented on a five-point Likert scale, with the values; 5 displaying strong agreement and 1 showing strong disagreement. The mean and standard deviation of the participants calculated and presented in Table 5 below

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics; Procurement chain and disbursement process of the selected PSS

VARIABLES	Min	Max	Mean	S.D
Purchase follows the right procurement procedure	1	5	2.91	1.22
There is an effective procurement committee	1	5	4.02	0.85
There is a high independency of procurement committee	1	5	3.06	1.25
The procurement officer/committee influences bidding process.	1	5	4.05	0.79

Source: Data Analysis from the Field, April 26, 2021

Table 4 provided the summary of the procurement chain and disbursement process of the selected schools. Since an effective financial management framework also deals with procurement and disbursement, one of the statements sought to examine whether there was an effective procurement committee within the institution. The mean value of 4.02 and a corresponding standard deviation of 0.85 showed that the majority of the participants did not agree that there is an effective procurement committee to facilitate the procurement of good and services in the school setting. In the same vein, the result showed that there was no bidding process by the schools (mean=4.05; SD=0.79), thus contrary to the statement in the table that purchase followed the proper procurement procedure.

The findings of the study were in disagreement with the procurement and Disposal act (2005) which necessitates that all goods and services procured in institutions should be tendered, as long as the value of the goods or services exceeds Kshs 4000/=. The tendering process includes the procedure of inviting

several suppliers to competitively bid for the provision, of different goods and services. The tendering process is directed by the tender committee, whose composition includes the Vice-principal as the chairman, followed by the deputy chair in the name of the accounts clerk, departmental heads and the Storekeeper as the secretary. With this arrangement, the school principal act as the chief executive officer in the school is locked out to ensure no interference with the process.

The public officers' ethics Act (2005) agreed with this point strongly, it urged that the procurement process facilitated efficiency as goods and services procured support specification and time. Hence, school leaders could derive value for their money which converts to better performance when the procedure is adhered to.

Process of Disbursement of Funds

The study through interviews discovered that two main sources of funds were available for disbursement by the schools. These were revenue from school fees collected from students at the commencement of every first and second term, government subventions that were supposed to be released annually. In addition to these main sources of funds, other sources such as financial support from PTA, Ex-students association and others. These funds were recorded and deposited into the accounts of the schools and are utilized when the need arises.

The disbursement of the funds, according to the principal participant's interviews, is supposed to do based on the laid down procedure as stipulated by the financial policies of the school and content analysis. Interestingly, it was

discovered that catholic schools follow a similar procedure for the disbursement of the funds according to the archdiocesan financial policies for schools, unlike lay private schools. In line with the interviews, the school principal and bursar were to make a request and then forward it to the financial secretary of the diocese, who needed to approve the disbursement of funds for specific purposes. Once the approval was done, the school principal and bursar of the school, who were signatories to the account must sign for the withdrawal of funds. The interview further revealed that this procedure has been instituted to ensure that neither the school principal nor the school bursar can withdraw money without the consent of the other.

During the interviews with principal participants, it was discovered that some schools had difficulty with the above disbursement process. For example, the approval and disbursement process seems to be slow and cumbersome as revealed by some principal participants. To find a way out of the cumbersome process, some school leaders preferred to collect fees and spend directly from the source in school, which was contrary to the financial norms of the diocese as all fees was expected to be paid in the bank. Furthermore, school principals who regarded themselves as bosses found it difficult to request money from school bursars, thus they ended up collecting fees from students. Meaning the purpose of the current financial planning framework concerning the content analysis, of this essential document of the school was defeated since some school leaders did not respect it.

The study concurred with the conducted by Ndambuki (2016) established that disbursement of funds and availability of funds influenced the execution of free secondary education in public secondary schools. According to a study conducted in Ghana by Ackom-Wilson (2016), The key function of the procurement committee is to undertake, among other things was to streamline the scheme of procurement for goods, works and services within the schools especially big institutions. He further explained in line with the procurement law of Ghana which seeks to harmonize local and international laws regarding procurement is to; foster competition, make efficient use of national resources, ensure transparency and accountability and provide value for money (Ministry of Finance, 2009). The procurement panel ensures that the procurement techniques adopted lend themselves for competition to obtain the best tenders to the benefit of the school.

Summary

What were the procurement chain and the procedure of disbursement of funds in PSS? As stated earlier, the majority of participants comprising 73.8% indicated a lack of procurement board in their institutions, against 26.2% who agreed that there existed a procurement board in their schools. In identifying components of the procurement chain and disbursement, it was found that several big schools under study have been operating in ignorance concerning the benefits schools can reap from the existence of a procurement committee in a school setting. On the other hand, all the participants agreed there existed the disbursement process in their schools. However, 25% revealed that the complex

and cumbersome disbursement process had influenced some school leaders to embark on unhealthy methods of receiving fees in school instead of fee payment in the bank, thus implementing financial policies became difficult for school leaders.

Research Question 4

What are the challenges school leaders experience in financial management in private secondary schools?

Participants revealed several challenges: lack of financial skills by school leaders, late receipt of government subvention, issues with collection of school fees from students, lack of autonomy by school leaders, lack of regular auditing and reporting, non-implementation of the budget, lack of procurement, and poor communication among the key player in the school administration.

Research question four assessed the challenges faced by the selected schools in executing the current financial planning framework in private secondary schools. Findings from the questionnaire and interview guide established that private secondary schools faced various challenges in the implementation of the financial planning framework as stated above will be discussed in the succeeding paragraphs

The many points presented in the above paragraph were classified into ten main points selected from principal participants through an interview regarding challenges experienced in managing and executing the financial policies of their respective schools. The responses were classified as seen in the table below indicating the participants' choices: Major, Moderate and Minor

Table 5: Challenges Associated with financial management in the selected PSS

Challenges	Classification in %		
	Major	Moderate	Minor
lack of financial skills of by school leaders	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Late Receipt of Government subvention	90%	10%	0.0%
Issues with collection of school fees from students	80%	10%	10%
Lack of independence in implement financial planning framework	90%	10%	0.0%
Irregular auditing and reporting	80%	10%	10%
Non-Implementation of the Budget	50%	40%	10%
Lack of procurement board	90%	10%	0.0%
Poor communication among key players in school administration	80%	10%	10%

Source: Data Analysis from the Field, April 26, 2021

lack of financial skills by school leaders

According to table 5, the interview revealed a 100% lack of financial skills by school leaders. One of the major challenges working against the financial management of the selected private secondary schools is the lack of financial skills of the school leaders, their position alone is an increased responsibility on the shoulders of principals, bursars and individuals who have little or no skills in financial management. The majority of the participants cited this as one of the main challenges influencing the financial management of private secondary schools. This supports the assertion in a study conducted by Etomes and Molua (2019), in the South West Region of Cameroon. They remarked that the ill-preparedness for managerial responsibilities before their appointments made

secondary school principals vulnerable to making blunders which proprietors, government and sponsors capitalize on to demand for their demotion.

Furthermore, Patrick and Patrick (2019), revealed in a study conducted in Homa Bay County that the leading tradition for identification and appointment of secondary school principals was based on active participation in co-curriculum activities, good classroom teaching and, teaching experience and not on their financial capabilities, which has contributed to the ineffective financial management, thus confirming the findings of the study.

Late Receipt of Government subvention

Late receipt of government subvention was another major area raising concern for many private secondary schools in Cameroon. It was observed from the data collected that late receipt of government subvention was a challenge stated by the majority of the participants. The study revealed that 90% of the participants agreed that government subvention was a call for concern for their schools and 10% settled for moderate. One principal participant recounted that late disbursement of the government subvention, made it difficult for his institution to stick to the budget, he further revealed that there were periods the school did not receive subvention from the state. According to the participants, the delay affected the effective execution of the schools' financial management plan.

The findings of this study confirmed the study conducted by Omoeva and Gale, (2016) in Uganda, who revealed the delay in disbursement of free secondary education funds as a challenge to the budgetary process. He further stated that

delay of subvention means expenditure has to be incurred in some vote heads. Consequently, leading to misappropriation and mismanagement of funds. For instance, the Ministry of Education released funds based on the following guideline; tuition, boarding, repairs, transport, electricity, water, medical activity and personal emolument. When subvention is not channeled on time, other budget or rubric heads are affected.

It is worthy to note that at the beginning of the new academic school year, especially day schools need to pay salary and wages to their employees. However, such funds must be acquired, from other vote head, for instance, personal emoluments to transport the vote head to as in the example above. Spending in one vote head would inevitably compromise the budget and, hence, mismanagement of funds.

Issues with a collection of school fees from students

In addition, table 5 revealed 80% of participants considered a delay of fee payment as one of the major issues, 10% of participants considered issues with fee payment as moderate while, 10% do experience only minor challenges in receiving school fees from their students. One of the principal participants through an interview in a lay private school revealed that delay in fee payment negatively affected the educational programs and school projects, Document analysis also indicated that some private schools and catholic schools had arrears of unpaid levies by parents across the four years 2017-2021. However, it may be due to the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon. It was therefore concluded that late payment of fees, non-pay fees and other school levies was seen as a critical threat

to school programs and school projects, with the findings, the Ministry of Secondary Education and other sponsors of private secondary schools should enforce schools' fees payment regulations.

The findings of the study according to another principal participant interview highlighted that the late payment of fees and no payment of fees especially during the period of crisis in the country has affected the payment of teachers. This study concurred with the conducted in Tanzania by Lyimo (2014) on the effects of non-payment of fees on teachers and learning. The study revealed delays in payment of teachers allowances and the insufficient teacher's salary lead to teachers being accorded a low status. In the North West Region of Cameroon, many teachers in the private sector are now engaged in other economic activities during class hours to earn extra revenue recounted one of the participants. More so, many teachers have dropped from the teaching profession and opted for other good-paying professions. All these stem from the issue of late payment of fees and non-payment of fees that has got a far-reaching effect on the entire school system.

Lack of independence in implement financial planning framework

Moreover, lack of independence in the implementation of the financial planning framework was listed as a challenge among participants. 90% of the total principal participants reported this as a challenge. Lack of freedom by school leaders to effectively implement financial management programs. One participant reported during the interview that "the financial planning framework is not yielding the desired results because some recommendations ignored the actual

circumstances of the school as understood by the principal and the bursar who are highly versed with the day to day running of the school affairs". Also, some budgeted expenses to be approved again by the proprietor's representatives end up stalling the effective implementation of the budget another reported. The interview with the principal participants discovered that the Catholic Education Agency and proprietors of some lay private schools have a great influence on the way the schools collect and manage their revenues. For instance, attempts by the school to enforce prompt payment of school fees by students are sometimes influenced by the school proprietor and the educational authority.

Mestry, R. (2004) conducted a study in South Africa which revealed that school principals are held responsible and accountable for the implementation of the financial planning framework of the school. This decision in the situation has far-reaching implications for the different key players in the school financial management. The study further explored the functions of principals and determines the extent they were accountable for the financial management of the school. However, the proprietor keeps on supplying items in the school and as well interfering with sensitive financial issues of the school. The best scenario is when an animal is untied but the rope is held to prevent the movement or circulation of the animal.

Irregular auditing and reporting

Table 5 above also revealed irregular auditing and reporting as one of the major challenges. The interview results presented 80% of principal participants who considered irregular auditing and reporting as a major concern, 10% settled for

moderate and the remaining 10% claimed irregular auditing and reporting was a minor issue in their institution. Going by the findings of the study, 80% of the participants agreed that irregular auditing and reporting is a call for concern for school leaders in financial management. According to one of the interviews, the district and government auditors were not consistent in auditing and follow up of the financial report of respective schools, this was confirmed by findings of the survey regarding how often were, the accounts audited? 37.5% stated occasionally, 25% yearly, 21.9% quarterly and 12.5% were undecided. There is a call for concern in line with these statistics, irregular auditing and monitoring issues that could be identified and rectified beforehand.

The above findings of irregular auditing and reporting were backed by a study conducted by Atieno, Olweny and Miroga (2019), titled, does monitoring influences financial accountability and transparency? They remarked that when there is no proper internal auditing set up in several schools and that the government auditing is irregular, then, it is likely for school funds to be mismanaged. Fakero, (2018) in his study, also revealed that more than 58% of BOG chairpersons, Bursars and principals involved in the study, resolved that weak internal control techniques were the main setback to financial mismanagements. This was evident in the fact that at the time the study was conducted, receipting of school funds had a problem because fee registers were misplaced, schools had no professional storekeepers and school property was kept in Vice-principals' offices in one of the lay private schools.

Non-Implementation of the Budget

The findings in table 5 above found that 50% of participants considered non-implementation of the budget as a major concern, and 40% regarded non-implementation of the budget as a moderate issue while 10% viewed it as a minor problem. Findings from the principal participants' interview, the researcher concluded that school budgets were mainly on paper to an extent as some principals expressed their institution inability to executed the budget effectively due to other factors discussed in the previous paragraphs like late receipt of government subvention and late or no payment of school fees by learners. One of the interviewees revealed that the budget of his school has never been scrutinized. In responding to the researcher's question during the interviews one principal's participants also expressed his ignorance with regards to budget preparation, His institution simply relied on the previous budgets to prepare budgets for the upcoming financial academic year. Copy, paste and edit was the technique, because they were not well informed on the key areas to consider when preparing the school budget. This explains why some school leaders find it difficult to execute the school budget.

The previous findings on non-implementation of the school budget can be associated with the study of Obulemire (2019), on appropriate management of resources to realize the educational objective in schools, in his study, revealed that in education managers need to draw a budget to institute priorities of the organization. He further stated that principals exhibit inadequate performance in financial management. They showed a lack of sufficient skills in budget planning,

preparation and administration. Their attitude is that they should provide services irrespective of what the budget stipulates nor the cost. Tamah (2018), equally established that principals made no attempts to measure the outcome of expenditure to define whether the budget decisions have accomplished desired results. Poor budgeting has made it difficult for principals in public secondary schools to run the schools effectively (Tamah, 2018).

Lack of procurement board

The results from table 5 presented the lack of a procurement board as a severe challenge to the financial management of private secondary schools. Going by the findings in line with interviews, 90% of participants clearly stated lack of procurement committee in their respective institutions as a major problem, while 10% regarded lack of procurement board as a moderate issue. Therefore, the majority of selected schools for the study have not yet formed the procurement board responsible for the procurement with the school milieu. According to one of the interviews, the participant revealed that there is no procurement board in his institution due to the small nature of the school, the participant went further to reveal that the small nature of the institution with little in terms of procurement, operates based on the communication between the Principal and the Bursar who deals directly with suppliers or business people to get supplies delivered

The findings on lack of procurement board goes against the procurement and Disposal act (2005) that requires that all goods and services procured in school institutions should be tendered, as long as the value of the goods or services exceeds Kshs 4000/=. The tendering process includes inviting several

suppliers to competitively bid for the provision of different goods and services. The tendering process is directed by the tender committee, whose composition includes the Vice-principal as the chairman, followed by the deputy chair in the name of the accounts clerk, departmental heads and the Storekeeper as the secretary. In this arrangement, the school principal who is the chief executive officer in the school is locked out to ensure no interference with the process although it is his/her duty to follow up the activities of the procurement board.

The public officers' ethics Act (2005) agreed strongly that the procurement process facilitates efficiency as goods and services procured support specification and time. Hence, school leaders will derive value for their money which converts to better performance when the procedure is adhered to. Unfortunately, the findings revealed that private institutions that our profit-seeking institutions are not patronizing this essential aspect of financial management at their disposal.

Poor communication among key players in school administration

According to the results in table 5 above, through interviews with principals' participants, it was found out that 80% of participants regarded poor communication as a major challenge to the financial management of schools, 10% went for moderate while the remaining 10% considered poor communication as a minor issue. Some principal participants believed poor communication was the cause of the administrative bottlenecks and inefficient communication among different school stakeholders, for example, no flow of information among the proprietor, school principal, vice-principal, school bursar, procurement officer and

auditing team, thus mismanagement is inevitable there are loopholes in communication.

Some of the issues raised in line with poor communication were supported by a study conducted in Swaziland by Tshabalala (2016), to explore the understanding of financial management roles school leaders have, skills and competencies required by school leaders in implementing their duties and challenges faced, the Findings revealed several skills that principals needed to effectively execute their duties such as budgeting, reporting accounting, record keeping and most importantly effective communication among the key players of the school administration. Therefore, going by the findings of this study, poor communication among key players in the school administration is a challenge to transparency, openness and trust in financial management procedures of schools.

Financial mismanagement of funds

The findings revealed that most private schools in the study experienced financial mismanagement of funds. During the interviews, some principal participants from various schools raised a concern about financial mismanagement of funds. One recounted instances where funds raised in different fund-raising activities were hardly disclosed in some schools especially in lay private schools. In some lay-private schools, the school governing body members were left in the dark about school finances. Revenue received by some school leaders were not disclosed to the staff and PTA; they have no idea how much the school has in its bank account. Yet the Cameroon government law laid down the procedures governing the set-up and running of private education in the country,

by Law No. 98/4 of 14 April 1998 to lay down processes and guidelines for education in Cameroon, in chapter five based on resources and matters of finances, section 20, 21, and 21 respectively, especially in issues of transparency.

In addition to the previous findings on financial mismanagement, one of the principal participants revealed that there were instances when school leaders do not follow their job description. For instance, the school principal purchasing good and services without the knowledge of the school bursar, School proprietors plan without involving the school administration, school leaders spending outside the armpit of the rubrics, inability to keep a record (issues of check and balances), summing the cases of school mismanagement by school leaders.

The findings with regards to financial mismanagement were supported by the study conducted in Kenya Mobegi (2015), The study established that financial mismanagement had affected students' performance and the quality of workers. Based on the findings of the study, the need later emerged for the school proprietor and the government to appoint a financial committee at the school level comprising members from other stakeholders to assist school leaders in the financial management of schools. This was aimed at limiting the principals' powers of managing finances by themselves and improving the level of accountability and transparency as a way of fighting against financial mismanagement.

Poor handing over of school leaders.

A perspective resulting under the guiding outline and content analysis of handing over in the diocesan schools which is worth considering is that some school leaders in the study do not practice proper handing over according to the principal participant's interviews, especially in some Catholic schools. In one of the interviews, the participant revealed that school leaders who are demoted or transferred due to financial mismanagement hardly conduct a proper handing over, he went further to sight instances where vital information was deleted from the system and no presentation of handing over notes. It's interesting to note that, some school leaders simply hand the office keys at times not in the office reported one of the participants. Concerning the content analysis and in line with the financial policies of the archdiocese of Bamenda, there was a guideline for handing over that ends the handing over with a ceremony, However, it is worthy to note that cases of poor handing over by some schools still exist at the diocesan level.

One of the principal participants share his positive experience on handing over, He stated that "when school leaders decided to resign and leave like the recent case he recounted, they remain calm in their role to ensure a smooth handing over to the next successor" He continued, handovers, even in trying conditions, are certainly not unheard of, even though they are by all accounts certainly not standard issue. "In my experience", reported another participant in a lay private school, it's not something that occurs very much," "If in some cases if school principals were fired, there's no handover notes or handing over at all –

they leave pretty without delay. For some, if they have a better job, they'll usually serve their notice period, and often the next school leader coming in will have a notice period, as well. The Cameroun Labor code. Law no. 92/007 of 14 august 1992. States that replacing the previous incumbent takes the best part of three months, so they often don't cross paths. Generally, handovers take place when someone is retiring as there's less urgency to leave" another interview reported but in a case when one is fired there was not proper handing over.

School leaders overwhelmed with work and responsibilities.

Findings from the field revealed through interviews with regards to one of the principal participants, reciting the case of his school bursars who shuffled between a series of actives at the same time. Some school bursars especially in the private sector strive to maximize profit by embarking on various activities that can generate income. According to the finding, he further revealed that the school's bursar takes care of the school canteen, the school farm, supply of books, uniforms, pullovers and sweaters, office work and payment of taxes and social insurance of the teachers not to talk of the feeding of the students and school maintenance. He summed up by declaring that school bursars were overwhelmed with work. Another participant during the interview reported his experience as a school leader in a boarding school, where school leaders remained on their toes for twenty-four hours on seven every especially when some students were sick needed medical attention. The results can be linked to Arygyropoulou (2009) who noted that what seem to annoy school leaders in Greek state schools was the enormity of the financial management workload and the lack of secretariat staff.

Such lack of staff and enormity of workload suggested cashbooks were not adequately prepared for final auditing.

The findings above confirm a study conducted in Greece by Mobegi, Ondigi and Simatwa (2012), who revealed that lack of financial management staff made school leaders double administrative and financial roles. This was because a majority of the school use untrained financial personnel, as in the case of some private school understudy. It was noted during interviews that one of the principals of the schools under study receives the money, receipts it, deposits it in the bank account, withdraws it and did the procurement process. This barred accountability and transparency of school funds hence exposing the school leaders to auditing challenges.

Conclusion of question four

What were the financial management challenges faced by school leaders in the field? Lack of financial skills by school leaders, late receipt of government subvention, issues with collection of school fees from students, lack of autonomy by school leaders and lack of auditing and reporting were some challenges advanced by the participants. Though, it was revealed that some measures have been put in place by some school to remedy the situation. However, immediate corrective and severe actions need to be advanced to combat these challenges. In the subsequent segment, the recommendations for effective financial management practices concerning these challenges.

Research Question Five

What recommendations were brought forward to promote effective financial management in private secondary schools?

Recommendations highlighted by participants were: training of school leaders, immediate corrective measures, prompt disbursement of government subvention, effective commutation among key players of the administration, continuous monitoring and auditing, formation of the procurement board, regular fee drive and buying a current software accounting system.

Research question five requested participants to suggest various recommendations to resolve the challenges faced by school leaders in the effective financial management in their respective schools, as well as effective implementation of financial policies of their schools.

Dealing with difficulties encountered is one of the best techniques to be done to solve issues. Given the problems associated with effective financial management in the private secondary schools setting, it was of greater significance to investigate how these problems were being exhibited and addressed in the real world of teaching and learning and to create the extent to which they appeared amenable.

Therefore, giving the possible solutions to a problem would lead to a successful program and could provide a positive viewpoint towards effective financial management of schools. As a result, recommendations to augment effective financial management was appropriate to this study. This was crucial to attaining the objectives that were stated in chapter one. Figure 7 presents the

various recommendations from the participants on how to effectively manage finances, as well as implementing the current financial planning framework of respective private secondary schools

Table 6: participants' recommendations for effective financial management in PSS

#	Recommendation	Frequency	Percent
1	Trained school leaders	41	68%
2	Immediate corrective measures on financial mismanagement	39	65%
3	Prompt disbursement of Government subvention and grants	38	63%
4	Effective communication by key players of the administration	34	56%
5	Regular auditing, reporting and monitoring	31	51%
6	Review of the current financial planning frame periodically	20	33%
7	Regular finance committee meetings	15	25%
8	Develop other alternative means of raising additional revenue	10	16%
9	Buy the current software accounting system	4	6%
10	Formation of the procurement board or committee	37	61%
11	Regular fee drive	38	63%

Source: Data Analysis from the Field, April 26, 2021

The first recommendation on lack of financial skills by school leaders

The data in table 6 revealed that the majority of the participants comprising 68% stated that School leaders should be trained to comprehend the effective financial management practices in their respective schools. This is a follow up to the previous question on challenges, where principal participants revealed 100% through interviews that lack of financial skills and knowledge on

financial management is a call for concern for school leaders with increasing responsibility on the shoulders of school leaders with little or no skills in financial management.

The findings further confirmed the study of Muguch, (2017 cited Mesty and Grobler, 2010) stating that South Africa had a shortage of principals with little or no financial management skills, as well as, Mutembei (2013), who established that principals had inadequate financial training consequently, challenges in financial management in day schools in the Imenti South District as stipulated in the literature.

The study, therefore, recommended that School leaders should be trained to comprehend financial management practices in their respective schools. Also, the study further suggested that the school principal should seek possible ways to improve their financial management skills through online programs. That teacher training colleges and universities in Cameroon, for instance, the Higher Teacher Training College and École Normale Supérieure, should restructure their curriculum to include in-depth coverage of financial accounting, budgeting and auditing as a way of preparing school leaders for financial management roles.

The view of the participants is related to the view held by Magak (2013), who conducted a study in Kisumu East District of Kenya, his study recommended that the ministry of education through the Kenya Education Management Institute put in place a comprehensive curriculum in financial management to ensure serving school principals, vice-principals, school bursars and accountants and storekeepers should be effectively and adequately trained to effectively manage

finances in schools. It ought not to be done in a haste and by use of trainers who are not knowledgeable.

Immediate corrective measures on financial mismanagement

Findings in Table 6 according to the data stated that 65% of the participants proposed immediate corrective and severe measure should be employed to deal with cases of financial mismanagement in private secondary schools. The findings revealed by interviews stated that funds raised during fund-raising activities were hardly disclosed to the staff and PTA in some lay private schools. This challenge is associated with the study conducted on transparency and accountability by Ntsele (2014) in South African primary schools. He revealed that in some schools the school government members were left in the dark concerning school finances. According to his study funds received by some private schools were never disclosed. Yet Section 37 of the Schools Act specifies that the SGB must establish a school fund and administer it in agreement with the directions issued by the head of departments.

Therefore, in line with the findings of the study, the participants recommended that educative and corrective measures be taken immediately in any case of fraud and mismanagement. According to one of the interviewee, his school have put some measures in place to deal with such acts, but more still needs to be done. He further stated that “Cases of financial mismanagement have been reported in various schools but not dealt with in a severe and corrective manner. Forensic auditing has been carried out in some schools and recommendations made. However, nothing tangible had ever materialized.

Perpetrators usually get away with it and continue where they have left off”. It is recommended that the school review its policies dealing with mismanagement of funds which involved facing strict disciplinary measures. This can drive a strong message home, as well as minimized cases of financial mismanagement.

Through the interview one of the participants suggested that, to stamped out mismanagement “all funds that schools receive: donations, as school fees, subvention, PTA fees, as well as other generated funds, be accounted for and accordingly reported to staff and parents for transparency purposes”. The participant further suggested that “fund-raising be done for a particular purpose and feedback be given to staff and parents.

Recommendation on prompt disbursement of Government subvention and fee payment by parents

Table 6 further revealed that 63% of the participants advocating for prompt disbursement of government subvention, as well as 63% of participants who suggested fee drive should be taken seriously in schools. From the findings with regards to the views of the participants, 90% revealed late receipt of government subvention as a major concern, likewise issues with fee collection from students at the rate of 80% according to the data gathered from the selected schools. This concurred with the literature according to Henttu-Aho, (2018) in his study, who highlighted that the delay in disbursement of grants and subvention to secondary schools was a challenge in school management. Nonpayment of fees and late payment of fees, due to the high poverty index, posed a challenge to

management as educational objectives are seldom attained on time, these findings agreed with that of Leu and Byren (2005)

Therefore, in respect to the above point, the participants recommended that the government should disburse subventions to respective schools devoid of delays, this may go a long way to ensure the financial plan of the various schools is well-executed, to improve teaching and learning. On the other hand, the school are encouraged to planned fee drive with parents at the commencement of the first two terms. The delay of these two major sources of income, if not well managed sometimes tosses the entire budget out of gear.

Recommendation on effective communication by key players of the administration

According to the findings in table 6, 56% of the participants proposed that effective communication among the key players is crucial with regards to the effective financial management of a school institution. The research questioned four dealt with challenges of financial management in schools, where 80% according to the interviews with the principal participants viewed poor communication among key players of the administration as one of the major issues to effective financial management.

The recommendation of the participants in the study is well established in a study conducted by Ntsele, (2014 cited, Mestry 2004) which revealed that good communication structures ought to be put in place with feedback from the SGB to the various stakeholders. However, most private secondary schools have faced difficulties in this area. According to the researcher's personal experience as a

school bursar, some school leaders have an erroneous perception that since the school proprietor has delegated a financial function to them, nobody has the right to know what is happening and they regard the participation of other stakeholders as an intrusion, everything for them is confidential even at the detriment of the school. It boils down to poor training received by some school leaders and a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities as well as non-compliance with the financial school policies, which has been discussed previously concerning poor handing over.

Hence, the findings through recommendations of the participants recommended for transparency, openness, trust and communication in financial management procedures in schools. A good and close relationship between the school leaders and the proprietors is of the utmost importance to guarantee proper financial management at the school. To mitigate administrative bottle-necks and inefficient communication among different stakeholders as per the recommendation of the participants, effective communication should be encouraged among the proprietor, principal, vice-principal, bursar, procurement officer and auditing team.

Recommendation on regular auditing, reporting and monitoring.

The findings of table 6 in line with regular auditing, reporting and monitoring stipulated that 51% of the participants were encouraging regular auditing, reporting and monitoring as a means to enforced effective financial management of private secondary schools. In the previous research question, question four on challenges, the data stated that 80% of participants through

interviews cited irregular auditing which is a call for concern for profit-seeking institutions. More so, according to the survey regarding how often accounts audited: 37.5% stated occasionally, 25% yearly, 21.9% quarterly and 12.5% were undecided. Therefore, there is a call for concern in line with these statistics, in line with irregular auditing and monitoring for financial issues to be identified and rectified beforehand.

In regards to the recommendation of the participants, the study conducted by Mpolokeng (2011), confirmed regular auditing of school accounts as crucial in financial management, hence, the study further revealed that private secondary schools are encouraged to form a partnership with outstanding audit firms or financial companies with good financial and moral standing to assist them with their financial records. It may be a community project for such firms and companies. In addition, the school proprietors should employ more auditors to ensure a timely and appropriate audit of school accounts. Such auditors may train the principals, vice-principals, and school bursar's in financial management. The increased number will make sure that the advisory audit is enhanced, therefore achieving prudent financial management.

Furthermore, according to the interviews it was recommended that the financial controller of the diocese conducts continuous monitoring of school finances to ensure that the school leaders are on the right track. In another study conducted by Ntsele (2014), It was proposed that financial controllers and auditors should visit schools quarterly to monitor the functionality of school leaders regarding financial management. This according to Ntsele, auditing can

help to keep school leaders and their governing bodies on their toes, effectively implementing the financial planning framework and managing their finances effectively.

In line with the findings revealed in this chapter, one can deduce that school leaders become comfortable knowing that their progress will not be continuously monitored. As a result, some school leaders take advantage of the situation, by infringing the financial policies as per content analysis, overlapping responsibilities and consequently, conflict and tension arose. With continuous monitoring, things cannot go out of control, or problems could not have escalated as they have been left unattended for a long time in some cases.

Recommendation on review of the current financial planning framework periodically

One of the survey questionnaires asked participants whether some measures have been taken in the last three years to improve the financial management situation of the school. 53.3% agreed with the statement that measures have been taken, 40% indicated that no positive step has been taken with regards to improving the financial management situation of the school, while 6.7% were undecided. Going by these statistics 40% is significant enough to call the attention of private schools to embark on periodic review of the financial planning framework of schools.

Furthermore, the findings revealed in table 6 stated that 33% of the participants see a review of the current financial planning framework as the way out of financial challenges school leaders were undergoing. According to

Mpolokeng (2011), educational associated policies change often. Continual review of the current financial planning framework is essential to keep school leaders on par with the changes that affect the current financial planning framework of the school.

Recommendation on regular finance committee meetings

The findings of the study comprising 25% of the participants proposed regular committee meetings as a remedy to challenges experienced by school leaders in financial management. For example, during the interviews, 80% of participants expressed their concern for poor communication, while 50% highlighted the non-execution of the budget as a major concern. It is through occasions of regular finance committee meetings that pertinent issues of this magnitude can be addressed according to the participants.

The findings of this study coincided with the recommendations of Ntsele, (2014) he noted in his findings that schools were aware of the procedures to be followed in financial reporting. He further revealed that finance committee meetings and Annual General Meetings should be held regularly to give feedback on the school's financial position. On such occasions budget is then defended and approved for the school to receive funding, thus sorting out the concern of the participants who have never defended the school budget as stated earlier in the study. These meetings can provide an opportunity for school leaders to account to staff and parents about school funds, however, the former becomes more important to schools than the latter.

Recommendation on the formation of the procurement board or committee

The findings in table 6 stipulated that 61% of the participants are recommending that a procurement board should be formed in schools. One of the survey questionnaires on whether schools have procurement board in their respective schools revealed that the majority of the schools do not have a procurement board with 73.8%, while only 19.7% confirmed the existence of the procurement board in their institution.

According to the literature review, the procurement and Disposal act (2005) necessitates that all goods and services procured in school institutions should be tendered, as long as the value of the goods or services exceeds Kshs 4000/=. The tendering process includes the procedure of inviting several suppliers to competitively bid for the provision, of different goods and services.

More so, the public officers' ethics Act (2005) agreed with this point strongly, it urged that the procurement process facilitates efficiency as goods and services procured support specification and time. Hence, school leaders can derive value for their money which converts to better performance when the procedure is adhered to. Therefore, the findings of this study recommended that the majority of the schools that have not been patronizing this area of financial management should form a procurement board for their respective schools.

Recommendation on buying the current software accounting system

6% of the participants recommended that schools should purchase the current software accounting system. As stated earlier, cases of financial mismanagement experienced in one way or another in private schools. On the

same note, a study conducted by Patrick and Patrick, (2019) in Huma-bay county revealed that weak accounting control techniques were the main factors leading to financial misappropriation and mismanagement in schools. He further revealed that School leaders were not professional enough in identifying wrong anomalies and entries in financial records done by their bursars. It is therefore recommended that the school should buy the software accounting program.

The finding of this study was in line with the findings of Mpolokeng (2011), who stated that it was essential that schools have robust control mechanisms for accurate and safe administration of funds. He further recommended that the accounting system be electronic and that electronic receipts could be issued for all monies collected. In this light, the archaic system of using receipt books when collecting fees should be discontinued as it increases the chance of fraud and mismanagement of funds and all fees paid in the bank. This study suggests that schools should put this as an amendment in their financial management circulars.

Summary of Chapter Four

The chapter presented the qualitative findings for the study, organized using broad themes such as availability of the current financial planning framework, budgeting, auditing, accountability, auditing challenges by school leaders, the procurement chain, disbursement of funds, challenges and recommendations for private secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. The succeeding chapter summarized the study and conclude the research questions, based on data collected. The chapter similarly concluded by

making recommendations centered on the findings of the study. Areas for further research were also discussed

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Introduction

The previous four chapters dealt with numerous aspects of the research issue. This current chapter presented a recap of the findings of the study, conclusions made from findings, implications, limitations, recommendations and lastly, suggestions for further research studies

Summary of the study

The study established Financial Management Tactics for School Leaders in Private Secondary Schools in the North West Region of Cameroon as case study institutions. The study had four specific objectives. To explore a financial planning framework in private secondary schools, to explore possible internal/external audit schemes in private secondary schools, to examine the main challenges confronting the financial management of the selected schools and the recommendations.

First and foremost, participants listed several current financial planning frameworks which were summarized into three main categories: budgeting, auditing and reporting. According to the interviews with principal participants, the budget seemed to be the main framework around which most school institutions operated to the detriment of other financial planning frameworks, like auditing and reporting. However, some loopholes were revealed through the interviews in line with budgeting. Some principal participants stated that they had little or no idea on areas to consider when drafting the school budget apart from relying on

the previous budgets, others expressed concern with regards to budget execution. On the other hand, in the survey, participants agreed with one of the statements that projects outside the budget were sometimes preferred, with the values: (mean=3.37; SD=1.11).

Furthermore, the majority of the selected private schools have a current financial planning framework that was not well executed. For instance, the survey regarding how often were the accounts audited showed that 37.5% occasionally, 25% yearly, 21.9% quarterly and 12.5% were undecided. The financial controller during the interview complained that many schools hardly submitted their monthly account. We can therefore deduce without any iota of contradiction that, even though private schools have financial planning framework some school leaders have failed to implement this significant document

The second objective was exploring possible internal/external audit schemes in private secondary schools. As a follow up to the preceding paragraphs, much needs to be done in this area for the selected schools under study. The study established through the interview that the Archdiocese of Bamenda had only one auditor or financial controller who managed 54 nursery schools, 153 primary schools and 17 Secondary schools. The audit office noted that due to the skeleton staff and huge work, they were able to visit schools occasionally. It was further recounted by another participant that his institution once had a backlog of 2 years of audit of books of accounts. Therefore, there is a shortage of auditors. All the principal participants interviewed confessed that they did not receive any financial

management training nor course. That explained the reason for the weak accounting systems of some schools in line with internal auditing.

Another objective was to identify challenges in the financial management of private secondary schools. The findings revealed that there were several challenges faced by school leaders. Some of the main challenges identified by participants affecting financial management in learning institutions were: lack of financial skills by school leaders, late payment of government subvention, late payment of school fees by students, lack of independence in the implementation of the financial planning framework, irregular auditing and reporting, non-implementation of the budget, lack of the procurement board, poor communication among key players in the school administration, external influence from the proprietor, lack of financial accounting staff, inadequate audit staff, inability to keep records of financial transactions, irregular schools audit, late submission of account books.

The fifth object aimed to explore ways in which these challenges faced by school leaders could be overcome. The participants gave their suggestions on the way forward on what they felt could address the current financial situation of the schools. From the findings, participants came up with solid tactics or solutions for financial management in the school setting. Some of them were: training of school leaders on financial matters, taking immediate corrective and reverse measures on finance mismanagement, effective communication, regular auditing, reporting and monitoring, review of the current financial policies and regular financial meetings.

Another objective was to find out the procurement chain and the process of disbursement of funds in private secondary schools. According to the survey questionnaire, 73.8% of the participants indicated that the procurement board do not exist in their institution, 19.7% confirmed the existence of the procurement board in their school, and the remaining 6.5% were undecided. Therefore, the majority of private schools do not have a procurement board.

The implications of the study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the current financial planning framework of private secondary schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. The researcher explored the current financial planning framework, approaches and challenges encountered by school leaders and recommendations to implementing the current financial planning framework. The study revealed that all selected private schools understudy had a current financial planning framework, summarized into three major categories: budgeting, auditing and reporting, however this financial planning framework lack effectiveness to an extent. Prove of this was the numerous challenges brought forth by the participants who were the key architects in the execution of these financial policies. According to the findings, the current financial planning framework put in place have not been fully executed by the key players of the school administration to boost the effective financial management of the schools, leading to poor budgeting, irregular auditing, poor communication among the school leaders, lack of reporting or submission of monthly accounts and many others.

However, based on the findings of the study, few implications can be made from the challenges of effective financial management in private secondary schools.

First and foremost, the study found that private secondary schools have got the current financial planning framework, however, the study revealed that the majority of the school leaders were not making good use of these significant documents. This implies that the study will create awareness to all the various key players of the school administration like the school proprietor, the education and financial secretary, school principal, vice-principal, school bursar, auditors, financial controllers, procurement committee and other stakeholders. Hence, if the findings of this study are well received in good faith by the various stakeholders, they will be aware of the importance of executing the current financial policies in line with the effective financial management of schools and the benefits this can bring to the school not only the area turnover but performance of students as well.

Secondly, only a few studies related to financial management with regards to private secondary schools have carried out in the North West Region of Cameroon. According to this research, no study has been carried on establishing financial management tactics for schools' leaders in private secondary schools. A lot has been done in the public domain and little in public schools but little or nothing to show for in the private sector or schools, perhaps due to the wrong perception that funds are well managed in private institutions, since they are profits seeking institutions even though confessionals schools are out for evangelization.

The main implication of the current study is that it is the first to private secondary schools that will provided findings from the designed research questionnaire concerning participant's opinions and views on the financial management of schools. The implication of this study might as well be an effort to possibly help private schools to determine if the roles of school leaders and SGBs involved in the financial management at schools were clarified or not and what their respective schools need to accomplish the required standard, this may equally help private secondary schools, to rate themselves as far as the subject of managing school finances is concerned

Thirdly, the results intended to provide the key players of the school administration dealing with the school finances to comprehend the challenges other administrators deal with and perhaps learn from other peoples' challenges and the skills and knowledge acquired will help school leaders that encounter challenges in managing school finances in the North West Region, likewise, the entire country in Cameroon.

Lastly, the implication of the study was the Ministry of Secondary Education and policy planners. It was revealed through the study that the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC) has provided guidelines for Private Secondary Schools. According to Law No 2004/022 of 22 July 2004 laying down the guidelines governing the functioning and organization of private education in Cameroon. The MINESEC in Cameroon and her policy planners will have the opportunity to understand the recent challenges private secondary school undergo

concerning finances which may influence them to provide specific structures that will guide school leaders on how to better deal with financial management.

The results will be an avenue for respective schools to review their current financial policies.

Recommendations for policy, practical action, tips or tactics

The purpose of this study was to Establishing Financial Management Tactics for School Leaders in Private Secondary Schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. Based on the conclusion of the findings of the study, the subsequent recommendations were made:

One of the crucial part of managing a school is managing the school funds. Whether you are paying suppliers or salaries, creating budgets, internal auditing, reporting or calculating cash flow, school leaders deal with finances daily. Unfortunately, the work is too demanding, complex and time-consuming for school leaders with little or no financial skills and knowledge. Therefore, even with financial management skills, school leaders still need to be smart about the manner they handle finances, think, and make vital decisions. To make the process easy, less confusing and more efficient, the following paragraphs present some effective tactics to ameliorate the financial management tactics or skills of school leaders in a school setting.

Firstly, get into an end-of-month routine: the findings revealed through an interview on late or no submission of monthly account, partly due to the weak accounting technique. Instead of school bursars leaving it to the end of the academic year to look closely at the school finances, it pays to tidy up checks and

balances or financial records at the end of every month. While this might appear like extra work for the sake of it if school leaders get into a monthly accounting routine with the aid of school principals who are considered spending officers this will allow the entire finance committee to work more effectively and efficiently. If school leader embarks on balancing records and assessing school's financial position regularly, they can:

- Collect statement of account from the bank or receipts more quickly to reconcile students statement of account in school
- Spot any under or overspending thus sticking to the budget unlike spending outside the budget as indicated in the findings
- Deal with potential problems before they go out of proportion or out of hand
- Offer accurate forecasts to facilitate better decision making
- Save time when preparing school year-end accounts and reduce tension

In short, if school leaders go by monthly routine this will give school bursars and school principals the power to act more proactive and well informed when it comes to budgeting contrary to the incident recounted by one participant during the interview with regards difficulties in drafting the school budget.

Secondly, use software program specifically for the key players of the administration dealing with the school finances. The Current accounting software for schools would simplify school account for school leaders with little or no accounting skills, allowing them to view their school's financial position in real-time, report on it promptly as opposed to late or not the submission of monthly

account as reported by one of the financial controllers of the diocese and control it effortlessly. With the software program school leaders will have automated reports at their fingertips, from income and expenditure accounts to balance sheets to trial balances.

Despite the software system for the diocese and other lay private schools, some schools are still analogue, while other school leaders are reluctant to embrace this new way of life. School leaders and various schools must embrace software and online accounting system exclusively for the education sector. This can help auditors, financial controllers to monitor and step in where and when necessary. The software accounting program is good for school leaders as any key player of the school administration gain access to the school account easily and, from anywhere and anytime as well as seek help

Private institutions are profit-seeking institutions, although some confessionnal school schools are profit-seeking institutions that also strive to evangelize. To minimized financial mismanagement in private secondary schools with regards to one of the challenges highlighted by the participants, schools need to develop concrete control mechanisms for the safe and accurate management of funds. In this case, it is recommended that private schools should resort to the use of electronic receipts for all monies issued and collected. The traditional, cumbersome and archaic manner of using receipt books when collecting fees from students must be discouraged as it increases the chances of mismanagement of funds and fraud.

Most importantly, fee payment must be to the bank to reduce the temptation of spending money from the source. The financial department ought to put this as an amendment in financial management circulars. Furthermore, all the money that the schools receive, as school fees, donations, and other generated funds, must be accounted for and accordingly reported to staff and parents for transparency purposes. It is further recommended that fund-raising be organized for a particular purpose and feedback offered to staff and parents especially in lay private schools.

In-depth checking and follow-up, the study revealed auditing as one of the major challenges to financial management. 63.3% of the participants disagreed with the statement that auditors do practice follow-up checks, while 62.3% disagreed that auditors work is in-depth enough, as well as 60.6% agreed that auditors do not cross-check with the major suppliers. However, the majority of the participants prefer independent and private audit firms to the government. Hence, the study encourages auditors to cross-check with the major suppliers, do in-depth checks, and follow up checks. The financial controller revealed in the interview disparity in the total number of students on records with the headcount he conducted in one of the schools. Follow up checks, in-depth checks and checks with suppliers can improve accountability and transparency in respective schools will help to keep school leaders on their toes.

Besides, it is recommended that a squad of officials or the auditing team of respective schools should design some effective monitoring tools to be utilized when visiting schools. The guidelines of these tools should be in line with the

Cameroon Schools Act, Law No 2004/022 of 22 July 2004, which prescribes how private schools should acquire their funds, covering the following: roles and responsibilities of persons entrusted with the management of finances in school, a delegation of diverse financial functions to the finance committee, school financial schemes and control, development and execution of the school's financial planning framework, and accountability and transparency in managing the school finances.

Smooth handing over of financial management tools: One of the disturbing concern raised during the interview was poor handing over in some diocesan schools and as well as lay private schools. However, the content analysis of diocesan schools has guidelines for a handing over ceremony, unlike some lay private schools. It is, therefore, recommended that schools without guidelines for handing over notes should come up handover checklist for school administrators dealing with financial matters of the school.

It is therefore recommended that before any of the school leader when leaves his/her post of responsibility, there must be a formal verification and handover of all the crucial information and financial accounts and assets of the school. This sample designed below may facilitate a handover procedure. Both the incoming and outgoing principal, vice-principal and school bursar has the opportunity to ensure that all parties involved are satisfied that all essential information is in good order at the point of handover for the benefit of the school.

The recommended procedures for handing over

The outgoing school principal or bursar needs to ensure that all elements of the booklet are completed with the support of school-based staff. The financial document then needs to be discussed with the incoming school bursar or principal during a meeting at a mutually convenient time before the end of term or notice, if possible in the office

The incoming school principal or bursar needs to ensure that all items with regards to finances are checked and verified and where necessary appropriate action taken. The location of all financial documents, data and keys also needs to be clarified at this meeting.

Should the incoming bursars or principals not be known, or is not available, then the outgoing bursar or principal should arrange to complete the handover procedure with the school proprietor, vice-principal, education or financial secretary for confessional schools, on the other vice-principal, Delegate of secondary education in the region, governor, who is remaining at the school and who has been assigned the task by the governing body.

It is important to be noted that it is the outgoing bursar or principal's responsibility to discharge his or her financial responsibilities before leaving the school.

A copy of this booklet needs to be retained in the school. A completed copy needs also to be shown to the education and financial secretaries of the archdiocese and the delegate of secondary education of the region.

Signed..... The outgoing school principal, vice-principal and bursar

Signed..... The incoming school principal, vice-principal and bursar

Signed.....Education and financial secretaries and DSE

The school bursar should not go to bed without balancing the day's account.

The school bursar should never receive or give money outside the office and without the receipt except in critical situations.

The school leaders should avoid spending money at the source. When school fees are received in school, the tendency of spending outside the budget and at the source is high.

The school bursar should never ever lend out school money

Limitations of the Study

Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) defines the limitation of research as some facets of the study that the researcher sees may negatively affect the results or generalizability of outcomes, but over which he/she probably has no control. This study was limited in terms of the number of schools. Due to financial and time constraints, this study only sampled twenty schools from some private schools in the northwest region of Cameroon.

The fact that finance is a sensitive issue to talk about made the school leaders doubtful and apprehensive in revealing essential information. It tough to access vital information from the audit section of the schools.

Furthermore, the findings of this study are from twenty urban private secondary schools that were sampled purposively because of the proximity and

accessibility, thus, the results of the study cannot be generalized entirely to all private secondary schools in the North West Region nor to all private secondary schools in Cameroon as some private secondary schools do not have financial management challenges.

Moreover, data was not collected by the researcher in person considering the high travelling expenses to Cameroon and the pandemic (Covid,19). In this light, the assistant researcher ignored details in the field which, the researcher could have picked up if the researcher carried out the data collection process by himself. For example, he did not verify if the financial software program the schools were using. In the same vein, data collection took longer than expected as the researcher and the assistant researcher kept reminding participants to fill the online survey.

Suggested areas for further research

Due to the numerous challenges facing school leaders in financial management, it is essential to further explore the accounting challenges since the schools' auditors are few and many schools are always late in submitting their final accounts for auditing, it is necessary to find out the auditing challenges facing secondary schools.

To examine the systems, the Ministry of Secondary Education has put in place to deal with mismanagement of funds in private or public secondary schools

To assess the functionality of the finance committee in private or public schools as recommended by Section 20 of the Schools Law No 2004/022 of 22 July 2004.

Conclusion

In the current study, the chief barriers to effective financial management revealed ineffective financial management practices and poor execution of the financial planning framework. (irregular auditing, reporting and poor budgeting). I firmly believe that Continuous Auditing and Continuous Monitoring in this context is essential to properly guide the effective execution of the current financial planning framework process in private secondary schools. Monitoring or auditing is not a one-time affair, but an exercise involving the various financial planning framework scope and **in-depth monitoring and auditing** carried out at several intervals during the academic school year to assess its effects on school leaders.

Continuous monitoring with immediate corrective financial measures and feedback to school leaders in this context can provide insights and knowledge that can help school leaders effectively implement the current financial planning framework by addressing potential challenges emanating from weak accounting techniques. The immediate value of continuous auditing and continuous monitoring may not be entirely evident to the school proprietors in the early stages of implementation but, Continuous auditing and monitoring presents new ways of doing things, sustain existing financial policies, a greater focus on results made and challenging weak existing practices of the financial planning framework. I firmly believe that without continuous auditing and continuous monitoring to ensure effective execution of the current financial planning framework, the purpose of school financial policies is defeated

I can therefore, conclude without any iota of contradiction that, a robust continuous auditing shows its presence both at the beginning and end of continual improvement in the school milieu. From the onset, internal and external audits identify opportunities for improvement, at the end, internal audits offer a mechanism for monitoring the implemented process to sustain its benefits for the long run.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Notre dame university

Department of psychology, education and physical education

Interview guide for the principal

Dear Respondent,

An academic research is being conducted on “*Establishing Financial Management Tactics for School Leaders in Private Secondary Schools*”. Your school has been selected as one of the case study institutions. You can contribute to make this study a success by providing responses to the questions in this instrument. All information you provide will be treated confidentially and shall be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you.

Interview guide

Please indicate your current Position

Section A. Procurement procedure and Disbursement of Funds

1. Who is responsible for the procurement of goods and services within the school?

.....

2. How is the procurement activities undertaken within the school?

.....

3. In your opinion, does it follow laid down procedure?

4. In your answer to question 3 is no, why do you think so?

.....

5. Who is responsible for the disbursement of funds for school activities?

.....

Section B: Financial management Framework

6. Please describe the financial planning framework of the school

.....

...

7. Do you believe the current financial planning framework is yielding the desired result?

Please explain your answer

.....

Section C: Challenges Associated with Financial management within the school

8. Please indicate the major challenges confronting the financial management system

of the school

.....

9. In what ways are these challenges affecting the smooth management of the school's finances?

.....

10. Please describe the measures being taken by the school to deal with the challenges

enumerated above

.....

11. In your opinion, what will you recommend regarding financial challenges faced in your school

.....

APPENDIX B

Notre Dame University

Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education

Questionnaire for the Principals, Vice-principals and School Bursars.

This questionnaire is intended to solicit information on the Topic “*Establishing Financial Management Tactics for School Leaders in Private Secondary Schools in the North West Region of Cameroon.*”

The research is purely meant for academic purpose and it is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Masters in Education: School Management and Educational leadership. The researcher assures all respondents that the answers provided would be treated as confidential and anonymous.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please tick where applicable and supply details where required.

SECTION A: Major sources of income received

1. Could you please outline the major sources of funds available to the school?

.....

2. Do you receive these funds, grants, subvention in time?

Yes () No ()

3. (A) Does the school have any problem in the collection of school fees from students, parents and guardians?

Yes () No ()

(B) If yes, what measures has the school put in place to reduce the possibility of evasions in the payment of school fees in your institution?

.....

SECTION B: financial planning framework

1. What are the main financial planning frameworks in your school?

Review policy, Budget preparation, Resource allocation, Accounting and monitoring, Auditing and reporting, procurement and disbursement.

2. (a) Are there some measures taken by your school in the last three years to improve the financial management of the school? No () or Yes ()

(b) If yes, please can you state them?

SECTION C: Checks and Balances

The subsequent are financial forms of financial checks and balances; please kindly rate by circling according to their effectiveness in your school.

1 – Not at all Effective (NAE) 2 – Not Effective (NE) 3. Neutral (N) 4. Effective (E) 5 – Very Effective (VE)

	VARIABLES	NAE	NE	N	E	VE
1	Records on all disbursements					
2	Regular deposit of cash received					
3	Proper accounting records on cash received					
4	Periodic account reconciliation with student records					
5	Daily statement from bank on students payments					
6	Periodic account reconciliation with the bank statement					
7	There is an effective and efficient finance committee					
8	Accounts department is in charge of all monetary transactions					
9	All department budgets are properly scrutinized					
10	There is proper technology (ICT) for processing all records					
11	The school opens all contracts for bidding					
12	All purchases are done by the procurement unit and documented					
13	Government grants are well channeled					

SECTION D: ACCOUNT AUDITING

1. How often are the accounts audited?

a. Quarterly () b. Six months () c. Yearly () d. Occasionally e. Other ()

.....

2. Who audits the accounts?

a. Internal auditors () b. District auditors () c. Regional Auditors () d. National auditors () e. Other ()

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following by circling

1 – Strongly disagree (SD) 2 – Disagree (D) 3 – Neutral (N) 4 – Agree (A) 5 – Strongly agree (SA)

	VARIABLES	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Auditors normally check for documents					
2	Auditors always check for physical verification					
3	Auditors always cross check with major suppliers					
4	Staff payments/remunerations are always audited					
5	Auditors work is in-depth enough					
6	Auditors recommendations are implemented					
7	Auditors make follow up checks					
8	Auditors are normally motivated/influenced by account section					
9	Auditors' motivation influences their independency					
10	Auditors are easily influenced by money					
11	I will prefer independent/private audit firms to governments					
12	Auditing must be done by two or more firms for checks					

SECTION E: budget and expenditure and competency of school leaders

1. – Strongly disagree (SD) 2 – Disagree (D) 3 – Neutral (N) 4 – Agree (A)

5 – Strongly agree (SA).

	VARIABLES	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The school has effective budget committee					
2	The budget officer/committee is independent enough					
3	The school has enough funds to support the budget					
4	There are other means to internally generate funds					
5	Projects outside the budget are sometimes considered					
6	Spending outside budget affects other projects					
7	Purchase follows the right procurement procedure					
8	There is an effective procurement committee					
9	There is a high independency of procurement committee					
10	The procurement officer/committee influences bidding process					

2. How often are budgets prepared?

- b. Monthly () b. Quarterly () c. Yearly () d. When necessary () e.
Other ()

.....

3. (a) Is the school principal competent in supervising financial management in schools (yes) or (No)?

(b) If no, what can be done?

.....

4. (a) Is the school bursars able to prepare account books (Yes) or (No)

SECTION F: Procurement and challenges of financial management in private schools

(a) Do you have a procurement board Yes () No ()

(b) If “Yes” what are its functions.

.....

1. How does the procurement chain in the school work?

.....

2. How are the funds disbursed for procurement purposes?

.....

ii.

SECTION G: Any additional information (recommendations)

Thank you for your time

APPENDICES C

Content analysis on financial management.

	Financial fund-raising and revenue generation			
1	Does the school raise sufficient funds to finance its budget requirements ?			
2	Are receipt records of fund-raising activities maintained and reported to the board			
	Disbursement and procurement			
3	Is access to the blank check stock limited?			
4	Are checks signed by two authorized signatures for example, the principal and the bursar			
5	Are bills/invoices canceled by the use of a handwritten notation or stamp, including the check number and date paid ,to prevent reuse and possible duplicate payment?			
6	Does the school have sufficient controls over the petty cash or change fund(e.g. disbursement support ,Surprise cash counts?			
7	Are reconciliations dated and signed by reconcilers and reviewers?			
8	Are transfers between school accounts or between bank account properly authorized?			
	Financial resources-budgets			
10	Is the budget and any revisions of the school approved by the board of directors and documented in the board minutes of the school?			
11	Does the board follow-up or investigate and take action concerning significant variances between the budget and actual income and expenditures			
12	Is this action taken documented in the board minutes?			
	Financial resources – financial reporting			
13	Are regular (monthly) financial reports prepared?			
14	Are school financial reports reviewed monthly or board meeting or at each finance committee?			
15	Do the school financial reports comprise both balance sheet (position of financial statement) and income statement (that is, the statement of activities information for the reporting period, a comparison to the budget and year-to-date figures ?			

APPENDICES D

Observation checklist for the study

1. Does the school institution have the following?
 - ✓ School work ticket ()
 - ✓ Legal bus insurance ()
2. Cash book ()
 - ✓ Fees register ()
 - ✓ Receipt book ()
 - ✓ Supplies or store ledgers ()
3. B.O.M budget endorsement minutes ()
 - ✓ The B.O.M audit discussion minutes. ()
 - ✓ The PTA budget approval minutes ()
 - ✓ The school fees structure ()
4. Receipt booklet or register ()
 - ✓ Virement approval letter ()
 - ✓ Textbook supply register ()
5. Consumable stores record (laager) ()
 - ✓ Non consumable stores ledger ()
 - ✓ The school inventory register ()
 - ✓ The furniture and equipment register ()
 - ✓ The permanent stores register ()
6. Public procurement and disposal act ()
 - ✓ Tender committee minutes ()
 - ✓ Evaluation committee minutes ()
 - ✓ Disbursement committee minutes ()
 - ✓ Quality committee minutes ()