Influence of Stakeholders' Participation Practices on Institutional Performance in Selected National Polytechnics in Kenya

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Abstract: Globally, academicians are aware of the necessity of well-organized management of educational institutions. This research sought to look at the influence of stakeholders' participation practices on institutional performance in selected 6 national polytechnics. It was guided by the Strategic Choice Theory and the Theory of Performance. Mixed method approach and the concurrent triangulation model with descriptive correlational designs were used. The total target population for this study was 42,284 participants. The Sample was 642 participants which consisted of 252 lecturers, 384 students and 6 principals. Interview schedules were conducted among the principals. The researcher requested the specialists from the university to examine tools face to face and content validity tools. In terms of reliability, test-retest technique was utilized with the Cronbach's Alpha to establish the reliability. A rate of 0.700 was attained and the instruments were termed dependable. Concurrent triangulation was utilized to guarantee credibility. An in-depth interview was done to establish dependability of qualitative tools. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in tabular forms, frequencies and percentages. The linear regression method for inferential statistics was adopted. Qualitative information was analyzed through thematic analysis and presented in narrative format and verbatim citations. The study's findings indicated that there was need to enhance stakeholders' participation for better institutional performance. It was recommended that both the National and County Governments involve stakeholders in management of the national polytechnics, provide adequate funds and lecturers to enable better outcomes. Further study was recommended on the issue using various approaches.

Keywords: *Influence, Institutional, Participation, Performance, Practices, Stakeholders*

1. Introduction

Strategic management practices have origins from the military whereas contemporary ideas came from the business activities at the beginning of the 20th Century (Sheridan, 2020). Gradually, it was treasured as a

standard business supervision instrument after World War II. The strategic practices continued typically to be a private sectors' responsibility till the 1970s according to Candy and Gordon (2018). The notion of strategic management could be traced back from the military field as early as the Greek city states in the 5th Century B.C.

Through the Harvard Policy Model, a management method for private business was formed in the early 1920s. Current use of strategic arrangement did not occur on a huge measure till the 1950s when the SWOT analysis was a subject in business management. In the periods between the 1960s and the 1970s, American corporations were engrossed with strategic management.

Nations such as Brazil, Italy, China, Australia, Sweden and Japan have given more appreciation to TVET through suitable subsidy and centralized administration. For instance, in Australia, every TVET training is controlled by the National Skills Framework (NSF), an organization that sets out the national training necessities to guarantee excellence and national steadiness in terms of qualifications and the delivery of trainings (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). In the USA, vocational and academic education are combined and the education arrangement leads to both academic and occupational capabilities (US Department of Education, 2020). And early in 2020 the US President projected new expenditure on education with a large quantity to advance vocational and technical schooling (Simon, 2020). USA embraced strategic management around 1993 promoting excellence and equity in education. It followed four steps which involved conducting inclusive needs assessment, managing enquiry process, designing wide programme and assessing it. This brought commendable improvement in education departments (Cook, 2017).

However, in many nations, effective institutionalisation is rather slow. Accordingly, poor fiscal outcomes continue to offset some of the positive effects that might accrue from increases in public funding on public education quality. In England, the National Audit Office (2016) indicated the proportion of education with budget overruns have increased steadily with uncertainties over amount and timing of government grants being major issues. In Chile, management of fiscal resources in the public education is centralized and strategic management practices were introduced to link expenditure allocations to national education priorities. However, integration was poor at the institutional levels and inefficiencies in public education remained prevalent (Santiago *et al.*, 2017).

The Republic of Singapore shaped innovative education visualization, *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation*. This key landmark was recognized by the then Prime Minister Tong's trust that "A country's treasure in twenty first century would rely on the capability of its citizens to learn" (Goh, 1979). The visualization included a huge variety of initiatives over many years that were calculated to steer education to the capabilities and benefits of learners, to offer more freedom and choices for learners and to change the structuring of education.

Though faced with pedagogical challenges, strategic management in Europe has made major strides in school development (Deal, 2020). In Malaysia, after independence in 1957, the Federation gave a huge, great and continuing concentration on building and improved its countrywide schooling procedure and structure. This is evidently verified in noteworthy monetary investing in schooling, all-inclusive schooling planning, and subsequent strategy changes to align with the nation's ambitions to grow in tandem with the international demands. Indeed, Malaysia schooling structure could be viewed as a sample model established to assist countrywide growth and monetary advancement. So as to attain a fruitful education excellence, the in-charge of education should be attentive on the crucial aspects like in the field of human resources (Okwukweka & Obiageli, 2015).

To bear with changes, high school managers are compelled to adjust and learn to advance themselves for better knowledge, skills and desired qualifications, particularly in the characteristic of strategic management in order to boost the strength of their schools to meet the necessities of current and prospective students. Nwosu (2017) reported that teachers, often referred to as "national builders" in South Korea are perhaps the most significant set of experts for the country's future; without the teaching force, the education structure could be disabled. Teachers, being chief participants in schooling, could help learners with knowledge, monitor their advancement and offer guiding facilities under the guiding and supervising responsibility of the head (Onuma, 2016). Price as well as Moolenaur (2015) reported that heads significantly relied on their teaching force to attain institutional aims because teachers formed the connection from management to the classroom.

The notion of institutional performance could be regarded as expressing components on two scopes: effectiveness, which is about the correspondence between outputs and aims or other criteria, and efficiency, which links results to inputs. The effectiveness dimension, which has been comparatively abandoned in efforts to assess performance in institutions, is defined, and its association with the economic ideas of efficiency and productivity is scrutinized. The practical difficulties in assessing relate to the conceptualization and measurement of inputs and outputs in a way reflecting an educational institution's purposes and processes, and in a form, which can be used as managing information.

In the Sub-Saharan Africa, financial mismanagement compromises the education quality in many countries (World Bank, 2007). In South Africa, Rangongo, Mohlakwana and Beckmann (2016) established non-

compliance with public financial management regulations, poor capacity, poor monitoring and control, lack of school financial policies, leniency on culprits, and lack of transparency and accountability as causes of poor fiscal outcomes. South Africa Schools Act ranks the responsibility of the school head as an academic manager. In accordance with the Act, the part played by school heads is part of the procedure of strategic management and strategic thinking. The drive of strategic management for institutions is to guarantee that they have the ability to confront the tasks of a changing inside and outside atmosphere. Education generally and schools specifically, have been and shall continue to be impacted by the continuous changes.

In Nigeria, the extent of the implementing of the countrywide strategy on schooling seems to be comparatively lower due to the quality issues in institutions, instructional delivery and management. These are partially due to the absence of government's solid obligation to strategic management in education which caused insufficient workable structures, insufficient education resources, small capacity growth and insufficient inspiration making teachers disheartened in the delivering of the curriculum. The work by Achor (2013) in Benue and Kogi in Nigeria exposed that meagre resources, large classes, lack of technological support and failure in training teachers were the highest amongst the issues touching the implementing of Basic Education. Okebukola (2020) stated that many community institutions in the country were substandard considering the excellence of infrastructure, fittings, scenery and overall school atmosphere when compared with worldwide standards and when likened with the situations in similar institutions in Europe, N. America, Asia, S. Africa and Egypt. These inequalities could be partially ascribed to inadequate consideration offered to the strategic management in the schools.

Post-secondary schooling in Ghana includes universities, institutions, the polytechnics, religious and tutorial institutions. According to the Republic of Ghana (2002) this schooling plays a key part in the societal and monetary growth of the state, counting the creating, disseminating and applying of knowledge and the adaptation of knowledge to enable countrywide growth requirements and ambitions. After their promotion in 1972 to middle level college status, the polytechnics in the country were faced with the challenges of handling the transformation of the current polytechnics, from the country's Education Service 2nd cycle institutes to trustworthy diploma middle level colleges, in an environment of ambiguity and unpredictability. Handling this alteration to attain the strategic aims of the polytechnics has been a key bother for every stakeholder,

predominantly the councils and administration of the polytechnics. Polytechnics were promoted to tertiary position in 1933 after the declaration of Polytechnic Law, PNDC Law 321, 1992. Polytechnics were likewise supposed to inspire the learning of technical topics at this level and offer chance for researching and publishing study conclusions (Polytechnic Law, 1992). Polytechnics began in many instances with officers from the Education Service, who after some scrutiny, chose to remain. The responsibility the polytechnics were anticipated to attain wasn't clear nor were the required buildings erected prior to their promotion. The polytechnics were consequently, challenged initially with issues of deficiency of competent staff, insufficient classes and housing for staff, equipment for workshops and labs, poor terms of service for workers, inability to entice and keep skilled workers due to the unfortunate circumstances of servicing and the mostly little inspiration linked with serving in the polytechnics (NCTE, 2001). The polytechnic atmosphere in the first ten years of their existence was faced with unpredictability in both retaining apprentices and workers. Apprentices on numerous occasions rejected taking up lessons and engaged themselves in supporting their petition for work assignment, academic advancement, sharing costs with government and disagreement to the new grade structure for the polytechnics (NCTE, 2001).

In Kenya. the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Act of 2013 transferred the Technical Training function from the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to the Ministry of Education, State Department for Vocational and Technical Training in 2018. Consequently, National Polytechnics were transferred to the State Department for TVET and charged with mandate of producing skilled workforce for both local and international labour market. A capable staff is an elementary prerequisite for propelling the idea of industrial and economy growth. TVET embraces the significance to structuring the technical and commercial workers. It is consequently, one of the significant primaries of the Government's growth plan in Kenya. From the year 2000, renewed consciousness of the serious responsibility that TVET can take in economy growing and nationwide growth began. Significant element of TVET is positioning to the arena of employment and the attainment of pertinent skills. TVET delivering mechanisms are, consequently, in good position to coach the skilled and entrepreneurial staff that this country desires to generate wealth and achieve Vision 2030.

Training for high excellence skills, nevertheless, needs standards on the suitable training apparatus and tools, appropriate training resources, operational handbooks, Competence Based Education and training, curriculum

and instructors. This has posed a great challenge to both public and private TVET providers and therefore, one of the crucial causes for regulating the TVET system.

The National Polytechnics in Kenya include: The Eldoret National Polytechnic, The Sigalagala National Polytechnic, The Kisumu National Polytechnic, The Kisii National Polytechnic, The Kenya Coast National Polytechnic, The North Eastern National Polytechnic, The Kabete National Polytechnic, The Nyeri National Polytechnic, The Meru National Polytechnic, The Nyandarua National Polytechnic, and The Kitale National Polytechnic. The National polytechnics admit the students' category with C-, C and C+ to pursue Diploma and Higher Diploma. They are also permitted under their respective Legal Orders (TVET Act 2013) to offer degrees programmes in collaboration with Technical Universities. Interestingly, there have been reported cases of students who opted for TVET programmes despite them scoring C+ and above that qualifies them for university degree programmes. According to the Basic Education statistics report of 2014 and 2019, about 70% of the candidates have consistently scored between C to D+ which qualifies them for admission to middle-level colleges including national polytechnics, as corroborated by the Kenya National Examination Council Report of 2017, 2018, and 2019. This qualifies the national polytechnics as a good catchment area for this study.

The entire admission in national polytechnics increased tremendously from 20,338 in 2014 to 65,289 in 2018 over the 5-year period, representing a percentage increase of 68.8 %. The highest enrolment was recorded in 2017 to 2018 with the exception of the Northern Eastern National Polytechnic which showed no significant increase (Kenya Basic Education Statistical Booklet, 2019). This could be attributed to the intensified initiative put in place by the government over the same period to improve access to training. Some of these measures included the introduction of government capitation and provision of HELB loans to TVET trainees. Additionally, the construction of new institutions and equipping of both the new and surging institutions with the state of art equipment led to improved interest from various trainees to enroll in the TVET institutions.

The right to access relevant education and training for the youth is articulated in Article 55 (2) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Kenya has also ratified both the SDGs and Africa Agenda 2063 which lays emphasis on education and training for the youth. Indeed, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG) on equitable, quality education requires that by 2030, Kenya like other countries should achieve equal access and quality technical, vocational education and training for all women and men. Similarly, the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 has ratified the continental strategy for technical, vocational and education training to foster youth employment and entrepreneurship.

The Kenya Kwanza Manifesto- Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) has prioritized skills development and training through Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as an enabler to achieving Vision 2030, a catalyst for industrialization and a key strategy to addressing youth employment. TVET is viewed as a critical driver of national development and economic transformation as it equips learners with skills that help them in self-development and engagement in productive activities. The Government has, therefore, increased investment in TVET institutions with a focus of providing the youth with relevant and marketable skills that respond to the manpower demands for the nation.

The TVET sector has been undergoing reforms which are guided by a number of policy documents including: Kenya's Economic Blueprint (Kenya Vision 2030); the Kenya Kwanza Manifesto - Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA); the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on Reforming Education and Training in Kenya; National Education Sector Strategic Plan (NESSP) 2018-2022; the TVET Act No. 29 of 2013; and The Presidential Working Party on Education Reforms 2023 among others.

The Presidential Working Party on Education Reforms (PWPER) concludes that TVET is important for national development and, more so, the transformation of Kenya. Additionally, PWPER identified that multiple public and private institutions are involved in TVET without a coherent and effective coordination mechanism. The current endeavor towards the improvement of TVET has embraced implementation of Competency Based Education and Training (CBET). To this end the government has established through various legal orders National Polytechnics that will be Qualification Awarding Institutions (QAI). These institutions will develop curriculum, implement, assess, and certify in collaboration with relevant statutory bodies and industry.

In a summary, the National Polytechnics under TVET programmes in Kenya continue to experience various legal, performance and managerial challenges despite the government effort whose aims was to ensure the National Polytechnics are strategically supported to empower youth and persons through enhanced skills, competences, knowledge and countrywide and worldwide recognized credentials. As mentioned earlier and in accordance with the Basic Education Statistics Report 2014, 2017 and

2019, about 70% of the candidates who have consistently scored between D+ and C qualifies for admission into the middle level colleges with high percentage of them between C- and C+ qualifying for national polytechnics justifying the need to conduct this study under the purview of National Polytechnics. The government of Kenya introduced capitation for students joining TVET institutions and this policy has seen students' enrolment increase tremendously.

Equally important, seven out of twelve of the national polytechnics had an average performance over a four-year period of under 50 % and below in its programmes and other challenges in terms of trainer/students' ratio imbalance providing a good basis for selection for this study. As shown earlier the strategic management adopted at national level was to be domesticated in all the TVET institutions including the national polytechnics therefore, posing the need to investigate on the influence of stakeholders' participation practices on the institutional performance in national polytechnics in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

Laine and Vaara (2015) found participation received only slight attention in literature despite its implications for strategic management. Different perspectives of participation existed. The rational perspective considered participation a hindrance to effectiveness. The process and practice perspectives considered it indispensable while the critical perspective frames participation as either engagement or non-engagement. Hautz, Seid and Whittington (2016) established the nature and extent of participation depended on contextual factors and it produced diverse outcomes. Similarly, participation enhanced decision-making, motivation, commitment, collaboration, compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks, and empowered stakeholders. However, it reduced decision-making speed, flexibility and control, increased costs, conflict, and ambiguity, decreased commitment and trust, and led to escalated demands for involvement.

Wolf and Floyd (2017) found participation was either quantitative or qualitative. The quantitative aspect refers to the level of stakeholder involvement while the qualitative aspect refers to the level of stakeholder influence. However, participation can be structured to give a false sense of involvement, so situations involving open communication are beneficial. Sheridan (2020) found high levels of engagement of internal stakeholders but limited involvement of external stakeholders. Meetings were the primary technique for seeking stakeholder input. Stakeholders' participation occurred

through consultation, active involvement, and/or in approval of the institutional strategic plan. In New Zealand, Wylie and King (2004) found that public schools that demonstrated high levels of effectiveness and efficiency in management of fiscal resources engaged a wide array of stakeholders in collaborative strategic management. Shared understanding of the tasks to be accomplished, strategies for accomplishment, costs to be incurred and benefits that accrued ensured these institutions remained highly effective and efficient.

In Kenya, Wanyama (2018) established that participation was limited due to time and resource limitations. Similarly, Mulwa (2015) established those teachers perceived their participation as minimal, but these perceptions were related to experience. Notably, the studies relied on questionnaires administered on teachers and opinions of principals were not sought.

2.1 Theoretical Review

This outline was grounded on theories discussed in the literature review in the endeavour to marry the theories with the study. The Strategic Choice Theory and the Theory of Performance highlighted the link between the study themes and the theories. These theories covered the independent and dependent variables of the study. The section also linked the theoretical framework to the conceptual framework.

2.1.1 Strategic Choice Theory

This theory is necessary for this study since it is a good approach to strategic management practices. It deals with the analytical techniques useful for formulating strategies. It designs control systems so that implementation and evaluation are supported fully. It gives necessary choices of strategy for practitioners to understand the outcomes of the organization. The usefulness of the theory is that it makes management urgency and making of decisions straighter into the equation. For Child (1997) it denotes to the procedure whereby authority holders in establishments make decision on courses of strategic action. Whereas an appreciation of the role of managing has a historical heritage the notion of strategic choice in its present-day guise came to the force at the work of Kochan and Partiners (1984). Here, management via strategic choice was emphasized as a main dimension to explain disparity in the diffusion and operation of industrial relationship mechanisms and Human Resource Management (HRM) and institutional practices. Furthermore, the responsibility of managing was not essentially objective or rational but

rather was informed by underlying values and beliefs. The logic that management had urgency in determining the type of HRM and institutions that best served their organizational objectives finally gave a conceptual underpinning to early models of HRM. The investigator in turn scrutinized inner factors connected to strategic choice, counting managing styles and the strategic effect of the HR functioning, whereas similarly exploring exterior factors framing the degree to strategic choice such as institutional contexts and, more lately, the work of networking. Strategic management practices in institutions may benefit from this theory if applied properly to the national polytechnics.

2.1.2 Theory of Performance

The theory of performance is beneficial for this study as it values results. It describes the six components of learning: knowledge, skills, identity, context, personal factors and fixed factors which help assess the performance of an institution. It deals with the learning domains which are measurable. These domains help assess the outcomes of institutional performance. It advocates cooperative learning, collaborating learning, learning based on project, among others, which back to measurability of the indicators and hence measure learning outcomes.

It advances and recounts six foundational notions to formulate a framework that can be utilized to describe performance and performance improvement. To perform is to produce valued results. A performer can be a person or a team of people engaging in a collective effort. Making performing is a trip, and level of performing defines location in the trip. The present extent of performance depended on the six mechanisms. Three axioms are projected for operative performing enhancements. These include a doer's mentality, engagement in an inspiring atmosphere, and engagement in thoughtful practices.

People have the capability of astonishing accomplishments. The results characteristic denotes the outcome of the person's behaviour. Behaviours end in results like numbers of engines assembled, learners' reading ability, sales figures, or number of fruitful heart operations. In various circumstances, the behavioural and outcome features are connected empirically, but they do not overlap totally. Result features of performance depend likewise on factors other than the person's behaviour. For instance, visualize a teacher who facilitates a good reading lesson which is behavioural feature of performance, but some of his learners, however, do not progress their reading skills due to their intellectual

shortfalls which is outcome aspect of performance. Another example is a sales worker in telecommunication profession who demonstrates only mediocre performance in the direct interaction with probable customers (behavioural aspect of performance), but nonetheless, attains mega sales number for phones (outcome aspect of performance) due to an overall high demand for phone equipment (Shephered, 2018).

3. Methodology

The study adopted mixed methodology approach. A mixed study is where investigators put quantitative and qualitative approaches concurrently in one study as per Johnson *et al*. (2018). This entails using qualitative and quantitative views in gathering, analysis and interpretation procedures. Mixed methods study needs a decisive mixture of methods in data collection, analysis and understanding of the proof. The important term is mixing as a vital stage in the tactic. The mixture allows investigators to look for a more panoramic view of their research scope, looking at phenomena from various angles and through varied investigation lenses (Johnson *et al*., 2018). This methodology was chosen due to its strength in that, there could be insufficient arguments, meaning that neither quantitative nor qualitative can bring about enough evidence on their own, but mixed methodology allowed the methods to supplement each other. Secondly, the more the evidence, the better the results and thus, by combining quantitative and qualitative methods brought about more reliable results. This methodology also gave the researcher varied responses on the study which required high degree of confidentiality due to its nature (Schreiber & Asner-Self, 2011, Creswell, 2014).

The research adopted the concurrent triangulation model with descriptive correlational design. The descriptive research for qualitative perspective and correlational design for quantitative perspective. The designs were favoured owing to their elasticity in serving both numerical and non-numerical facts and concurrently allowing mixture of both types of facts. The participants were offered both instruments at the same time for quantitative and qualitative. This involved concurrent data collection, nevertheless, separate gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data was done so that the investigator could comprehend the problem better.

The total target population was 42,284. The sample was 642. The sample consisted of 252 TVET lecturers and 384 students both randomly sampled as well as 6 principals purposively sampled. There were questionnaires for lecturers and students. Interview schedules were

conducted among the principals. Quantitative data was analyzed in descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in tables, frequencies, percentages. Linear regression in inferential statistics was adopted. Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic analysis and presented in narratives and verbatim citations.

4. Results and Discussion

There were three levels of analyses that were utilized namely: descriptive, inferential (linear regression) statistics and thematic analysis. Then, there was the mixing and clarification of the statistics gathered and investigated from all the levels for a better understanding of the issue under investigation.

4.1 TVET Trainers' Responses in Stakeholders' Participation Practices on Institutional Performance

The investigator asked the TVET Trainers to fill in part C of the questionnaire. The data captured the indicators for both independent and dependent variables. The results were computed and presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Trainers' responses in stakeholders' participation practices on institutional performance

Statements	A (1)	SA (2)	U (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
Being a trainer here, it is true that stakeholders' consultation forums are regularly used to enhance infrastructural growth and development	120 49.59%	41 16.94%	46 19.00%	25 10.33%	10 4.13%
As a trainer here, there is stakeholders' consultation forums to enable infrastructural growth and development	115 47.52%	60 24.79%	42 17.36%	15 6.20%	10 4.13%
You have witnessed stakeholder communication frequency as a trainer which enables infrastructural growth and development	107 44.21%	45 18.60%	47 19.42%	34 14.05%	09 3.72%
In your experience here as a trainer, stakeholders' communication frequency has always been enabling infrastructural growth and development	116 47.93%	48 19.83%	44 18.18%	24 9.92%	10 4.13%
Being a trainer here, you agree that stakeholders' analysis input has always been practised in your college to catapult infrastructural growth and development	109 45.04%	48 19.83%	55 22.72%	15 6.20%	15 6.20%
Your experience here as a trainer is that stakeholders' analysis input is encouraged to enhance infrastructural growth and development	92 38.02%	67 27.69%	53 21.90%	15 6.20%	15 6.20%
The time you have been here as a trainer you have witnessed stakeholders' involvement meetings to enhance infrastructural growth and development	103 42.56 %	60 24.79 %	43 17.77 %	25 10.33 %	11 4.55 %
Your experience as a trainer here has it that stakeholders' involvement meetings have been encouraged in your college to enhance infrastructural growth and development	119 49.17 %	55 22.73 %	35 14.46 %	20 8.26 %	13 5.37 %

Source: The researcher, 2023

From the table, there are stakeholders' consultation forums regularly used as the agreement side totaled to 161 (66.53 %) as the disagreement attracted 35 (14.46 %) and the undecideds recorded 46 (19.00 %). When the disagreeing side is combined with the undeciding side, it totals to 81 (33.47 %) which is significant hence weakened the agreement. Though the majority falls on the agreeing side, there is a question mark on the 81 participants whose responses were not agreeing. On the other hand, there were stakeholders' consultation forums existing as seen in 175 (72.31 %) who were on the agreeing side. The disagreeing side had 25 (10.33 %) while the undecideds recorded 42 (17.36 %). If a combination of disagreeing and undecided participants is examined, it totals to 67 (27.69 %) being more than a quarter of the participants. This percentage may not be ignored due to its significance, hence raising questions on the acceptance of this indicator.

The stakeholders' communication frequency had been witnessed by the participants. They recorded 152 (62.81 %) on the agreement side. Those disagreeing were 43 (17.77 %) and another 47 (19.42 %) did not make any decision. The combination of decided and undecided was

90 (37.19 %) a figure which indicated that there was a problem with the indicator being accepted exclusively. Thus, doubts could have been raised as to if there was meaningful communication frequency among the stakeholders. There was agreement that stakeholders' communication frequency had been enabling growth in the institutions. This was indicated by 164 (67.77 %) who agreed as 34 (14.05 %) could not agree. The undecided participants were 44 (18.18 %). The disagreeing side and undecided side totaled to 78 (32.23 %) which outshined the acceptance side of the indicator. It may be concluded that although the majority were on the acceptance side, their significance was washed away by the 78 tutors who were either disagreeing or undecided.

There was agreement that stakeholders' input had been practised as 157 (64.88 %) agreed. Whereas those who disagreed were pegged at 30 (12.40 %) as 55 (22.72 %) could not make any decision. There was a high percentage of those that disagreed and the undecided put together as they were 85 (35.12 %). This figure weakened the acceptance side since this was a high number which did not positively contribute to the indicator. The stakeholders' analysis input was encouraged as seen through the eyes of 159 (65.70 %) of the participants. Those who disagreed attracted 30 (12.40 %) as 53 (21.90 %) did not decide either way. A significant 83 (34.30 %) being a combination of disagreeing and undecided could not be ignored. Much as there was agreement, it was weakened by this number of participants who made a negative contribution towards the indicator.
Stakeholders' involvement meetings were witnessed as agreed by a total of 163 (67.36 %) and 36 (14.88 %) on the disagreement side. There were 43 (17.77 %) who made no decision at all. A combination of those disagreeing and undecided totaled to 79 (32.64 %) which significantly affected the agreement side. Thus, there was a weak acceptance of the indicator. The fact that stakeholders' involvement meetings had been encouraged was acceptable according to 174 (71.90 %) who were on the agreement side. However, 33 (13.64 %) did not agree at all. There were others 35 (14.46 %) who did not make any contribution as they were undecided. Then, a combination of disagreements and undeciding totaled to 68 (28.10 %) which meant that though the agreement recorded over 70 %, it was outshined by this percentage being more than a quarter of the total number of the participants.

The findings in this section agree with Laine and Vaara (2015) who established that partaking received only minor consideration in literature notwithstanding its inferences for strategic organisation. Various viewpoints of participation occurred. The coherent perspective considered participation an interruption to efficiency. The procedure and practice perspectives considered it crucial whereas the serious perspective framed participation as either engaging or non-engaging.

4.2 Students' Responses in Stakeholders' Participation Practices on Institutional Performance

Likewise, the TVET students responded to this objective in their questionnaires. Table 2 has the details.

Table 2: Students' responses in stakeholders' participation practices on institutional performance

Statements	A (1)	SA (2)	U (3)	D (4)	SD (5)
Being a student here, it is true that stakeholders' strategic consultation forums are regularly done to enhance infrastructural growth and development	152 50.67%	62 20.67%	49 16.33%	25 8.33%	12 4.00%
You have witnessed stakeholder communication frequency as a student which enables infrastructural growth and development	144 48.00%	62 20.67%	53 17.67%	31 10.33%	10 3.33%
Being a student here, you agree that stakeholders' analysis input has continually been practised to catapult infrastructural growth and development	156 52.00%	51 17.00%	67 22.33%	17 5.67%	09 3.00%
The time you have been here as a student you have observed stakeholders' involvement meetings to improve infrastructural growth and development	146 48.67%	70 23.33%	66 22.00%	14 4.67%	04 1.33%

Source: The researcher, 2023

From the table, it seemed that stakeholders' strategic consultation forums occurred regularly. Agreeing to this were 214 (71.33 %) of the participants. The disagreeing side had 37 (12.33 %) as the undecideds were 49 (16.33 %). The value of agreement was reduced by 86 (28.67 %) being a combination of the disagreeing team and undecided ones. This was nearly 29 % of the total partakers meaning that, though the acceptance was over 70 %, there was still a significant number that was on the negation.

There was witnessing of stakeholders' communication frequency as 206 (68.67 %) agreed and strongly agreed. The disagreeing and strongly disagreeing were 41 (13.67 %). There was a group of undecided students recording 53 (17.67 %). However, when the disagreement was combined with the undecided, the outcome was 94 (31.33 %) which was a notable negative response and should not be ignored. It has a negative impact on the agreement side as it diminished it in its real sense.

Stakeholders' analysis input was continually practised as agreed and strongly agreed by 207 (69.00 %). The disagreement side recorded an insignificant figure of 26 (8.67 %). Nevertheless, there was a significant number that decided to remain silent. This was 67 (22.33 %) and it could not be discarded just like that. As those that disagreed were combined with the undecided, the record was 93 (31.00 %) which reduced the value of the accepting group.

Finally, stakeholders' involvement in meetings seemed to be observed by the participants. The agreeing side scored 216 (72.00 %) which was a significant number. The disagreement side recorded 18 (6.00 %) being insignificant. There was an alarm with the undecided side which had 66 (22.00 %) being a critical figure that diminished the acceptance percentage. This is why combined disagreement and undecided had 84 (28.00 %) of the students. Something was not adding up as far as the involvement meetings were concerned. Twenty eight percent was still a huge number that was on the negative side. In all indicators, the agreement side was weakened by the combination of disagreement and undecided cases.

The results matched with findings established in similar research. To give an example, Hautz, Seid and Whittington (2016) recognized the nature and degree of participation relied on contextual aspects and it formed varied results. On the one hand, participation improved making of decisions, inspiration, obligation, teamwork, acquiescence with lawful and supervisory agendas, and sanctioned participants. On the other hand, it diminished decision-making velocity, elasticity and control, enlarged costs, skirmish, and vagueness, reduced obligation and trust, and led to intensified demands for involvements.

4.3 Inferential Statistics Analysis in Stakeholders' Participation Practices on Institutional Performance

A linear regression analysis was conducted to assess whether stakeholder participation significantly predicted institutional performance. The results of the linear regression model were significant, $F(1,729) = 546.70$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .43$, indicating that approximately 42.85% of the variance in institutional performance is explainable by stakeholder participation. Stakeholder participation significantly predicted institutional performance, $B = 0.63$, $t(729) = 23.38$, $p < .001$. This indicates that on average, a one-unit increase of stakeholder performance will increase the value of institutional performance by 0.63 units. Table 3 summarizes the results of the regression model.

The regression equation becomes

Institutional performance = 0.53 + 0.63*Stakeholder participation

Table 3: Results for linear regression with stakeholder participation predicting institutional performance

Variable	B	SE	95.00% CI	β	t	p
(Intercept)	0.53	0.06	[0.42, 0.64]	0.00	9.19	$< .001$
Stakeholder participation	0.63	0.03	[0.58, 0.68]	0.65	23.38	$< .001$

Note. Results: $F(1,729) = 546.70$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .43$

Source: The researcher, 2023

These findings correlate with other findings in the world of research on strategic management. In New Zealand, Wylie and King (2017) established that community schools that confirmed high extents of efficiency in administration of monetary resources involved an extensive collection of stakeholders in collective strategic supervision. They shared understanding of the responsibilities to be done, strategies for achievement, expenses to be sustained and benefits that would accumulate and guaranteed these institutions remained highly effective.

4.4 Thematic Analysis in Stakeholders' Participation Practices on Institutional Performance

Thematic analysis was applied in stakeholders' participation practices on institutional performance, the researcher organized data collected from the field interviewing. Interview contributors were the principals of National Polytechnics. The data was organized, revised and explored respectively and codes were formed. The codes were reviewed and put together into thematic forms. The themes were presented in a verbatim narration as seen below.

To do stakeholder participation on institutional performance, consultation forums were conducted among the National Polytechnics but quantitative data did not give full throttle on this. A principal had this to say,

"Yes, there is a lot of consultations from various stakeholders to enable TVET colleges produce better results. Definitely, we work with the government, parents, community among others to receive inputs in our programmes and the general learning atmosphere for example we need to talk with the community on the accommodation of the trainees so that they feel comfortable to be able to produce better results. These forums help us to move better having known how better we can handle situations for better performance. We cannot afford to ignore consultative meetings often times" **PR1**.

Communication frequencies among the stakeholders was done often to enable better understanding among National Polytechnics that were studied. There was a need for constant exchange of communication. Industries were involved before sending trainees for attachment and before introducing new programmes. Infrastructure depended on NEMA and ministry of public works both in the national and county governments. One principal was quick to note,

"Yes, we have frequent meetings with our stakeholders every other time. The best way to improve our performance if to frequently consult. We are not experts

in every area and so we need to join minds with others to do a better job. For example, after results are out, we communicate with the parents and experts to help us analyze them and build a way forward hence causing improvement in our performance" **PR2**.

There was stakeholder input analysis to enable better performance. The data from them was analyzed for application for better performance. Views from stakeholders were welcome and were analyzed and put into consideration. One principal noted the importance of the inputs by the stakeholders and said,

"*Although not every suggestion from the stakeholders is workable and applicable you find in most cases, their contributions help us improve our results. For example, we have been relating well with our immediate community; we invite them for price giving days and we are able to digest their sentiments and create healthy relationships between them and the college*" **PR3**.

As many stakeholders as possible were involved in the running of the National Polytechnics. The industries were involved in shaping the curriculum by informing the colleges the skills they needed most and vacancies for attachment of trainees. One principal gladly said,

"*What matters is how to get the public and the industries embrace TVET activities. Changing mindset could be challenging as we need to talk more with the industries as well as other stakeholders and bring them on board. Actually, this is how we grow and improve our performance*" **PR4**.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

It was determined that enhancing stakeholders' participation is statistically a significant factor in relation to institutional performance. Results of the investigation showed that stakeholders' participation had a significant role on institutional performance. This confirms that stakeholders influenced institutional performance in National Polytechnics in Kenya.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study results, recommendations were made. All the stakeholders in TVET training should ensure that stakeholder consultation forums, stakeholder communications frequency, stakeholder analysis input and stakeholder involvement were put in place. The governing council members, the principals and the regional director should ensure that there was strategy prioritization programme and project design, developing expenditure frameworks and the selection of operational strategy. The ministry in charge of TVET training both in national and county governments should ensure that all the stakeholders are involved in college performance.

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