

Effects of corporate governance practices on resource management among public secondary schools in Zambia

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of corporate governance practices on resource management among public secondary schools in Zambia, aiming to identify how specialization, accountability, and transparency influenced operational efficiency. The specific objectives included examining the effect of specialization on resource management among public secondary schools; assessing the effect of accountability on resource management among public secondary schools; establishing the effect of transparency on resource management among public secondary schools; and exploring the influence of specialization, accountability, and transparency on resource management among public secondary schools. A mixed-method research design was employed, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews with school administrators and teachers in selected public secondary schools. The study findings revealed a significant lack of qualified personnel in critical administrative roles, particularly in Accounts and Procurement, which hampered effective resource management. Additionally, while schools demonstrated strong accountability in reporting academic performance; financial oversight remained inadequate, with low rates of income and inventory reporting. Transparency issues were also identified, particularly regarding the communication of job vacancies and audited financial reports. In conclusion, the study emphasized the need for systemic reforms to enhance educational governance and operational effectiveness. Key recommendations included recruiting specialized staff, implementing robust accountability measures, strengthening transparency in communication, fostering stakeholder involvement, and adopting holistic governance frameworks.

Keywords: Corporate Governance; Resource Management; Public Secondary Schools; Zambia; Specialization; Accountability; Transparency

1. Introduction

The management of resources in an organization entirely depends the proper application of corporate governance practices. Scholars like Adam Smith, pioneers of specialization, believe that resources can only be managed properly if there is specialization in the governance of an institution. Specialization provides skilled labour to accurately, efficiently and effectively perform specific tasks on the management of resources (Narayanan and Nath, 2020). Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management (2022) strongly emphasizes on the need to have specialized staff in the management of an organization. Specialized staff contribute to proper accountability and transparency in the management of resources (Zambia Institute of Human Resource Management Act, 2022). Accountability enables individuals and organizations to exhibit responsibility in the management of resources following the laid down terms and conditions (Brynjolfsson and McElheran, 2016), while transparency creates an opportunity for members of the organization to become open, clear, accurate and straightforward in the management of resources (Huseynov and Klapper, 2019). Most institutions that thrived in the management of resources it was because of upholding high standards of corporate governance practices (Institute of Directors of Zambia, 2023).

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1.1. Corporate governance

Corporate governance practices have been known as the basis of sanity and orderliness in the governance and management of organizations (OECD, 2023). All countries across the global village especially those member countries of the United Nations have the mandate to rule themselves based on the practices of corporate governance especially those under Democratic dispensation like Zambia. Zambia is a signatory to the United Nations, its agencies and fora such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development involved in developing policy standards on corporate governance for sustainable economic, social and political growth (OECD, 2023), as such, Zambia in all its sectors, is not an exception to the practices of corporate governance. This means that all stakeholders involved in the governance of organizations including schools, agents of economic growth, must attune themselves to the practices of corporate governance such as specialization, accountability and transparency.

1.2. Specialization

Specialization, as a practice of corporate governance, has been known for its impact on the management of resources. World economic statistics on labour and employment rise because of trained experts and specialists in various fields (Holten et al, 2019). International Labour Organization (ILO, 2023) advocates for specialized labour to enable sectors of the economy utilize, manage resources and produce more but in an effective and efficient manner. Zambia, as a member country of ILO, remains a strong advocate of specialization, therefore it becomes a contradiction when certain organizations decide not to follow the route of specialized labour in the management of resource what could be the cause?

Therefore, through primary and quantitative research study on specialization, probably this study can become part of the academic community that could offer answers on the lack of specialization in the management of resources in secondary schools.

1.3. Accountability

Accountability has been a practice in corporate organizations with significant effect on resource management in terms of enhancing accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness and performance (Agyemang and Broadbent, 2015). Organizations like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an official United Nations Observer, with its headquarters in France (OECD, 2023), has time and again, emphasized on the need for the adoption of accountability processes in the management of resources in order to help citizens of nations feel motivated and dignified as they pay for taxes such as income tax among other forms of tax. Organizations like schools are not an exception in the management of resources including collected taxes in a country like Zambia. Therefore, through primary and quantitative research study on accountability, probably this study can become part of the academic community that could offer answers on the lack of accountability in the management of resources in secondary schools.

1.4. Transparency

The influence of transparency in corporate organization has been known to be one of the fundamental basis for fighting corruption especially in as far as upholding corporate governance on management of resources (Huseynov and Klapper, 2019). Organizations like Transparency International (2024), with headquarters in Berlin, Germany, have been a strong advocate of transparency as one way of fighting corruption to bring about effective and efficient management of public resources. Zambia is a full time member of Transparency International and an advocate of transparency in its governance systems including education and other sectors of the economy especially in as far as effective management of resources is concerned. Recently, Zambia, in its quest to show commitment on corporate governance practices such as transparency came up with an act on National Values, Principles and Economic Policies in which it emphasized on good governance and integrity values as one way of promoting transparency in all sectors of the economy so that transparency, becomes part of the "DNA" (belief system of Zambians), becomes part and parcel of the cultural practices of Zambians and becomes the attitude and the moral behaviour especially in the management of public resources (ACT No.2 of 2016 of the Constitution of Zambia). Therefore, through qualitative research study on transparency, this study intends to become part and parcel of the academic community that could offer solutions on transparency problems in secondary schools especially in the management and utilization of resources.

1.5. Study objectives

The research questions that guided this study were as follows:

- Examine the effect of specialization on resource management among public secondary schools.
- Assess the effect of accountability on resource management among public secondary schools
- Establish the effect of transparency on resource management among public secondary schools.

1.6. Theoretical Framework (Social-Ecological Systems (SES) framework)

In order to properly address how corporate governance practices specifically specialization accountability and transparency affect resource management this study relied on the agency theory of corporate governance. According to Jensen and Mecklings (1976) agency theory managers (agents) were given the duty of managing the organizations resources to accomplish predetermined objectives. Therefore this theory concentrated on procedures that made sure managers behaved in the best interests of shareholders like employing knowledgeable and skilled staff to effectively manage resources (OECD 2023). Furthermore the focus was broadened beyond shareholders to include all stakeholders by Freemans (1984) introduction of stakeholder theory which emphasized that corporate governance should be set up to balance the interests of suppliers customers employees and the community. According to Donaldson and Preston (1995) this inclusivity improved resource management's accountability and transparency. Comparably the resource-based view (RBV) which was promoted by Barney (1991) emphasized that an organizations internal resources including the specialization of its human capital were the key to its competitive advantage. This further supported the necessity of well-structured governance practices to maximize resource utilization.

1.7. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The framework reveals the concept of corporate governance practices: specialization, accountability and transparency as independent variables and resource management is conceptualized as a dependent variable in this study. Efficient and effective management of resources can only be realized if corporate governance practices namely; responsibility, accountability and transparency are applied to bring about orderliness, sanity and ethics.

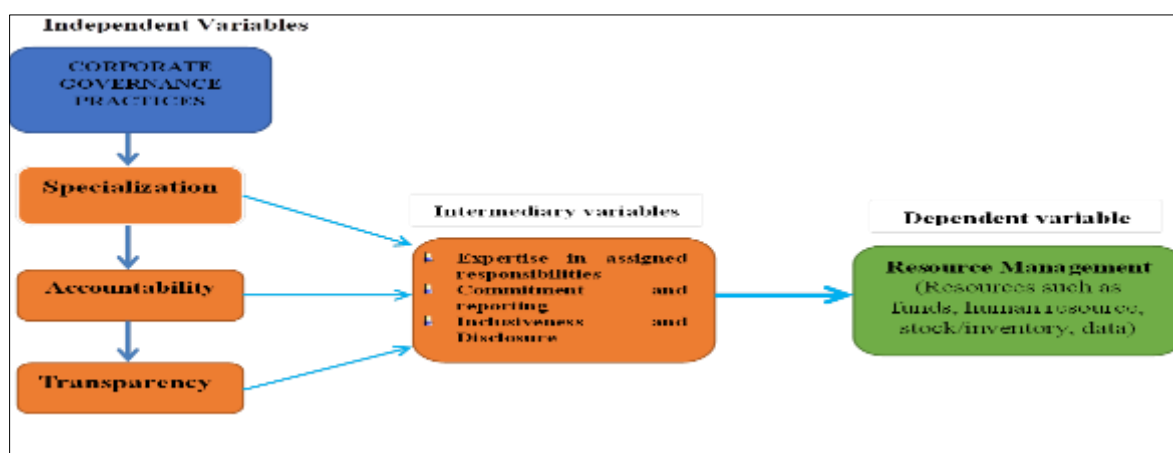


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

2. Literature Review

2.1. Effect of Specialization on Resource Management

Specialization within organizational theory pertains to dividing tasks according to individual expertise, which boosts both efficiency and effectiveness (Mintzberg, 1979; Taylor, 1911). In terms of public secondary schools, specialization impacts how resources are managed by designating particular responsibilities for budgeting, purchasing, and administrative tasks. While specialization can improve accountability and bolster financial supervision, it may also result in inflexible structures and a decrease in collaboration (Fayol, 1949).

Globally, Smith and Tilley (2020) examined specialization in public organizations in the United States, employing a mixed method strategy that included both surveys and interviews. They discovered that having specialized roles resulted in better cost management and efficient use of resources. However, the research also pointed out the dangers of isolated communication, as too much specialization hampered interdepartmental teamwork. Likewise, in Zambia, Chanda and Kunda (2023) investigated how specialization in public secondary schools influenced resource distribution, focusing on the impact of specialized staff. Their qualitative analysis showed that financial officers with accounting knowledge greatly enhanced budget management and reduced resource waste.

Although these studies highlight the benefits of specialization, there are still gaps, especially regarding its effects on rural schools. Rural institutions struggle with implementing specialized roles in contrast to urban schools that can hire

trained staff. Furthermore, most findings are based on qualitative research and fall short in providing quantitative proof of specialization's impact on measurable factors, such as cost savings, resource allocation, and operational efficiency.

Various researchers have looked into specialization across different organizational scenarios. Henry Mintzberg (1979) noted that differentiating tasks is essential for organizational efficiency, suggesting that specialization fosters organized workflows and better performance. Fayol (1949) similarly supported the idea of balanced specialization, arguing that while it enhances skill, an overdivided workforce may lead to bureaucratic issues.

In Zambia, Chanda and Kunda (2023) conducted a qualitative case study regarding specialization in managing resources within public schools. Their investigation included interviews with school administrators and department leaders in Lusaka Province. Results indicated that schools with specialized finance and procurement staff exhibited improved budget control and more effective fund distribution. Financial officers trained in accounting played a key role in ensuring proper use of school resources and adherence to procurement procedures. However, the study indicated that some schools lacked specialized staff, which resulted in poor resource utilization and financial mismanagement.

Smith and Tilley (2020) performed a comparable study in the United States, utilizing a mixed method framework combining surveys and structured interviews. Their analysis showed that specialization enhanced financial oversight and effective time management but also created rigid frameworks that restricted cross-functional collaboration. They suggested a more adaptable approach to specialization, recommending regular role rotations to avoid knowledge silos. Research surrounding specialization in resource management has mainly utilized qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method techniques. Chanda and Kunda (2023) executed a qualitative case study, carrying out semi-structured interviews with school officials. This approach yielded comprehensive insights into the effects specialization had on budgeting and resource distribution. Nevertheless, relying solely on qualitative data, limited their capacity to apply findings broadly across various schools.

On another note, Smith and Tilley (2020) employed a combination of methods, merging interviews with surveys. Their survey tool gathered numerical data related to financial effectiveness, while interviews offered deeper understanding of operational difficulties. This approach enabled them to assess how specialization affected cost savings and provided views from administrators. Their technique delivered a broader analysis compared to research using only qualitative methods. Chanda and Kunda (2023) gathered information through interviews and reviewing documents. They spoke with school administrators and analyzed financial documents to evaluate specialization's influence. The data underwent thematic analysis, revealing common trends in the replies. Although this method yielded detailed insights, it did not provide statistical confirmation.

Smith and Tilley (2020) utilized surveys, interviews, and financial documentation to gather data. They used descriptive statistics to measure cost efficiency and resource usage. Moreover, regression analysis helped them investigate the connection between specialization and financial outcomes. This comprehensive approach enabled them to present solid numerical support for their qualitative findings. The results from Chanda and Kunda (2023) suggested that specialization within Zambian schools improved financial oversight and reduced the misallocation of resources. Schools that had specific financial officers were more likely to follow budget plans closely, leading to efficient buying of educational materials. However, the study highlighted issues in rural schools, where staff specialized were limited, causing difficulties in financial management.

Similarly, Smith and Tilley (2020) discovered comparable outcomes in the United States. Their research indicated that schools with specialized finance departments had reduced operational costs and better time management. Nonetheless, too much specialization resulted in communication barriers, hindering collaboration between administrative divisions.

Despite the valuable insights from earlier studies, there are still notable gaps: limited research focused on rural schools, as most studies, including Chanda and Kunda (2023), primarily look at urban environments where specialized personnel are found. Rural schools encounter unique challenges, including a shortage of trained financial officers, which influences resource management in varied ways. Zambian studies tend to lack quantitative data; while international studies like Smith and Tilley (2020) provide statistical proof, Zambian research is often qualitatively based. An investigation that includes quantitative analysis could enhance the understanding of how specialization affects school efficiency. Also, the relationship between specialization and accountability, along with transparency, should be explored to create a thorough framework for better efficiency in schools.

Current research indicates that specialization enhances resource management by ensuring trained personnel handle roles such as finance and procurement. However, its success relies on having specialized staff, particularly in rural settings. Chanda and Kunda (2023) proposed specific training initiatives to enhance financial management skills in

under resourced schools. Likewise, Smith and Tilley (2020) advised flexible role distribution to avoid excessive departmental divisions. By addressing these deficiencies, future research could aid in developing more effective governance strategies to improve resource allocation and operational efficiency in public secondary institutions. This study extends previous research by adopting a mixed method approach and focusing on rural school environments, intending to offer practical recommendations for strengthening specialization in resource management..

2.2. Effect of Accountability on Resource Management

Accountability in managing resources is crucial for promoting responsible use, reducing misuse, and enhancing transparency within public institutions. In public secondary schools, mechanisms for accountability, including financial audits, performance reviews, and reporting processes, are vital for upholding financial integrity. Yet, these important mechanisms often encounter difficulties during implementation because of weak enforcement and inefficiencies within institutions. Researchers suggest that insufficient accountability measures lead to financial mismanagement and wastefulness of resources in educational settings (Ngoma & Zulu, 2023; OECD, 2022).

Various researchers have investigated the significance of accountability in resource management, focusing especially on financial responsibility and efficiency in public sectors. Banda (2022) conducted a notable study exploring the connection between accountability and financial oversight in public secondary schools located in Southern Zambia. By employing a mixed methods strategy, Banda utilized surveys and discussions among teachers, financial staff, and school leaders to evaluate how well the current accountability systems are working.

In a similar vein, Bovens et al. (2008) delved into accountability frameworks within public institutions, pinpointing three major areas: financial, administrative, and social accountability. Their research highlighted that well-functioning accountability systems can diminish corruption and enhance resource distribution. More recently, Anderson and Smith (2021) investigated accountability systems in the UK's education sector through a quantitative lens. They examined information from over 200 schools to assess the link between strong financial accountability practices and effective budget management. Their results highlighted the necessity of a solid institutional culture and adequate enforcement resources for the successful application of accountability systems.

Banda (2022) employed a mixed methods approach that combined surveys with focus group discussions to gather feedback from various stakeholders. Surveys offered quantitative insights into financial accountability systems, while focus groups provided qualitative data, detailing the experiences and issues faced by school administrators. The gathered information was analyzed thematically for qualitative responses and through descriptive statistics for quantitative findings. Conversely, Anderson and Smith (2021) adopted a quantitative methodology, utilizing regression analysis to uncover trends and relationships between accountability systems and budget effectiveness. By scrutinizing financial documents and accountability reports from public schools, they were able to formulate statistically significant insights regarding how accountability influences resource efficiency.

Bovens et al. (2008) made use of comparative case studies to explore accountability frameworks in different public institutions across various nations. Their approach involved document reviews and structured interviews with government representatives and educational leaders to evaluate the success of different accountability models. They processed the data through content analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to accountability practices.

Results from Banda's (2022) research showed that institutions that conduct regular financial audits and adhere to strict reporting protocols experienced a decrease in financial mismanagement cases. Participants noted that monitoring and evaluation strategies were key in enhancing compliance with financial regulations and ensuring effective use of resources. For instance, schools that performed audits every six months reported notably fewer unauthorized expenditures compared to their counterparts with irregular audits. In a similar fashion, Anderson and Smith (2021) discovered a clear link between robust financial accountability systems and better utilization of budgets. Schools that had clear structures for accountability showed enhanced financial discipline, which led to effective use of teaching resources, maintenance of facilities, and payment of staff salaries. Nonetheless, their research also indicated that the cultural environment of the institution and the availability of resources greatly impacted how well accountability systems functioned.

Bovens et al. (2008) pointed out that just having financial accountability was not enough for ensuring the overall efficiency of resources. They emphasized that administrative and social accountability involving clear communication and engagement of stakeholders also played an important role in improving resource management. Their research

proposed that a combined accountability system could result in better resource planning, greater trust among stakeholders, and enhanced financial results.

Despite these valuable insights, there are still several gaps in research. Firstly, Banda's (2022) research mainly concentrated on financial accountability, overlooking other vital elements like the distribution and upkeep of physical resources such as school buildings, teaching aids, and technology. Future investigations should focus on nonfinancial accountability approaches, including how assessing teacher performance and ensuring student access to resources can enhance overall resource management. Another significant gap is the difference between urban and rural areas in applying accountability systems. Banda's research primarily looked at urban schools, missing the specific issues that rural schools face, where financial monitoring might be less effective due to lower administrative capabilities. Upcoming research should explore how accountability systems function in rural settings with limited resources.

On a global scale, Bovens et al. (2008) noted the deficiency of empirical studies that explore the interaction of various accountability aspects in improving overall efficiency. Even though their work focused on financial, administrative, and social accountability, there is a shortage of quantitative data showing how these elements work together to influence resource management results. In the same vein, Anderson and Smith (2021) observed the need for comparative studies between different educational systems. Their findings were rooted in the UK environment, where institutional culture and resource enforcement differ significantly from those found in developing nations like Zambia. There is a need for more cross national studies to evaluate the adaptability of accountability models across various educational systems.

In light of these gaps, future research should utilize a thorough mixed methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gain a complete understanding of the impact of accountability systems on resource efficiency. A blend of statistical and thematic analysis would provide both concrete evidence and contextual understanding of the effectiveness of accountability frameworks. Furthermore, studies should go beyond just financial accountability to explore how schools manage their physical assets, such as buildings, textbooks, and tech resources. By expanding the focus, researchers could offer deeper insights into how schools handle their resources.

Additionally, future studies should recognize the distinctions between urban and rural school environments, pinpointing the structural and administrative obstacles that challenge accountability in areas with fewer resources. Comparative research between developed and developing countries could yield useful lessons on best practices for enhancing accountability in varied educational environments. Lastly, future research should delve into how accountability relates to other principles of resource management, like transparency and specialization. Understanding these connections could help build a more integrated framework for efficient resource governance in public secondary schools.

Accountability is a fundamental pillar of effective resource management, playing a crucial role in minimizing resource misuse and improving financial discipline. While existing studies highlight the benefits of strong accountability frameworks, research gaps remain in non-financial accountability, urban-rural disparities, and the integration of accountability with other governance principles. Addressing these gaps through comprehensive, context-sensitive research will provide practical insights for policymakers and educational administrators, ultimately leading to better resource management practices in public secondary schools.

This study builds upon these findings by adopting a mixed-method approach to analyze accountability in resource management, ensuring a broader scope that includes financial and non-financial aspects. By bridging existing research gaps, this study aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving accountability frameworks in Zambian public secondary schools.

2.3. Effect of Transparency on Resource Management

Transparency is crucial for managing resources effectively, fostering accountability and fair resource distribution. Yet, applying it in practice encounters numerous obstacles, such as insufficient engagement from stakeholders, fragile institutional frameworks, and unclear decision making processes. In public secondary schools, it is vital to have transparency practices like budget sharing, open procurement, and financial meetings to build trust and enhance resource allocation. However, the irregular use of these practices can diminish trust in school administration and lower the effectiveness of resource use (Mulenga & Phiri, 2023; Transparency International, 2022).

A study by Mwale and Phiri (2021) evaluated how transparency affects budget distribution and resource use in public secondary schools. Using a quantitative method, they sent structured surveys to school management teams and

ParentTeacher Association (PTA) members from various schools. The main goal of the research was to see if financial transparency improved resource management efficiency.

Results from Mwale and Phiri's (2021) research indicated a strong link between transparency and satisfaction among stakeholders. Schools that communicated openly with PTAs and frequently provided financial updates saw higher trust and collaboration levels. For instance, schools that conducted public meetings to explain budget decisions had fewer disagreements about financial management since stakeholders were informed about resource usage.

On an international level, Ramachandran and Davis (2020) investigated how transparency affects public resource management in the education sector in various developing nations. Their research utilized a mixed methods approach, combining statistical analysis with qualitative interviews to assess the effects of financial transparency on resource efficiency. Their findings showed that transparency notably decreased inefficiencies in procurement by reducing corruption and encouraging competitive bids. Furthermore, transparent financial practices resulted in increased community engagement, leading to improved monitoring of resource distribution.

Despite the useful insights from these studies, there are still gaps in the existing literature. Mwale and Phiri's (2021) research mainly focused on the link between transparency and stakeholder satisfaction without addressing its direct effects on specific performance measures like cost effectiveness, budget compliance, or resource wastage. While they established that transparency builds trust, the study did not investigate how this trust leads to quantifiable enhancements in financial management. Likewise, Ramachandran and Davis (2020) presented strong evidence that transparency helps minimize corruption and inefficiencies in procurement. Nonetheless, their study did not consider the long term implications for sustainable resource management. Additionally, it did not provide a thorough analysis of contextual differences, such as how transparency mechanisms function in various educational settings.

Another significant shortcoming is that most transparency research is urban focused. Many existing studies concentrate on urban schools, where institutional frameworks are generally stronger, and access to information is greater. Transparency International (2022) pointed out that rural schools frequently lack the necessary technology and administrative systems to implement transparency practices effectively. As a result, findings from urban-centric studies may not directly apply to rural areas, where challenges like limited oversight, weaker governance, and resource limitations impede the adoption of transparency measures.

From a methodological standpoint, Mwale and Phiri (2021) primarily used a quantitative survey approach. This method was effective for gathering perceptions from stakeholders, but it did not provide the qualitative insights needed to identify subtle institutional obstacles to transparency. On the other hand, Ramachandran and Davis (2020) employed a mixed methods approach that combined quantitative data with qualitative findings. This combination allowed for a broader grasp of the relationship between transparency and its effects on trust and efficiency. Nonetheless, their research did not consider differences across regions, which is essential for creating focused interventions. For future studies, a thorough, multidimensional approach is recommended to examine transparency in managing resources. By merging quantitative tools like financial performance evaluations and surveys with qualitative methods such as interviews and case analyses, researchers could gain richer insights into the significance of transparency in using resources efficiently.

Moreover, investigations should explore the lasting impacts of transparency on important financial and operational results like procurement efficiency, cost reductions, and sustainability of resources. Studying how transparency interacts with other resource management principles, including accountability and specialization, might allow for a more cohesive framework that improves financial governance in public secondary educational institutions. It is also vital to focus research on rural educational settings. Comparing transparency practices in urban versus rural schools could reveal unique challenges tied to each context and suggest specific solutions. At an international level, research that crosses national boundaries could reveal effective practices and shine a light on strategies to overcome common obstacles to financial transparency, such as reluctance to adopt transparent measures, weak enforcement of regulations, and limited involvement from stakeholders.

In summary, transparency plays a crucial role in effective resource management by fostering trust and ensuring fair distribution of resources. Yet, despite existing evidence that supports its advantages, the literature still has important gaps. Many studies do not connect practices of transparency directly with observable financial gains, neglect the difficulties rural schools encounter, and lack a thorough methodological framework. Closing these research gaps through a more integrated and context-aware exploration can provide important insights for both policymakers and educators, ultimately enhancing transparency efforts in public secondary schools.

3. Study methodology

This study employed an embedded mixed-methods design to investigate corporate governance practices affecting resource management in public secondary schools in Zambia. The research comprised three quantitative objectives, focusing on the effects of specialization, accountability, and transparency through surveys, and qualitative insights gathered from key informant interviews. Data were collected from a sample of 180 teachers selected via stratified random sampling, yielding an effective sample size of 124 based on a calculated margin of error, while qualitative data came from 12 management personnel chosen through purposive sampling. Quantitative analysis utilized descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including regression analysis and ANOVA, with data analyzed using SPSS, while qualitative data underwent transcription and thematic analysis to identify key themes related to governance practices. The research targeted three schools in Kabwe District, selected for their relevant governance structures and accessibility.

4. Data presentation and analysis

4.1. The effect of specialization on resource management among public secondary schools

4.1.1. Qualified and specialized personnel in the offices

Table 1 Qualified and specialized personnel

	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Accounts office	63	50.8	61	49.2
Stores office	6	4.8	118	95.2
Procurement office	8	6.5	116	93.5
Guidance and counselling office	12	9.7	112	90.3
Statisticians office	10	8.1	114	91.9

The findings in the table above indicate a varied perception of the presence of qualified and specialized personnel across different offices in the school. In the Accounts office, a slight majority (50.8%) of respondents affirmed that qualified personnel are available, suggesting a balanced presence of expertise in financial matters. However, the Stores office displayed a significant lack of qualified personnel, with only 4.8% affirming their presence, while a staggering 95.2% reported no qualified staff. Similarly, the Procurement and Guidance and Counseling offices also faced substantial gaps, with just 6.5% and 9.7% acknowledging the presence of qualified personnel, respectively. The Statisticians office reported a slightly better scenario, with 8.1% confirming the presence of qualified staff. These results highlight considerable deficiencies in specialized personnel across most offices, particularly in Stores and Procurement, which could impact operational effectiveness and service delivery within the school. Addressing these gaps may be essential for improving the quality of services offered in these departments.

4.1.2. Teachers who have been assigned classes to teach but they have also been assigned with the responsibility to manage offices

Table 2 Having assigned classes

	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Accounts office	101	81.5	23	18.5
Stores office	101	81.5	23	18.5
Procurement office	79	63.7	45	36.3
Guidance and counseling office	100	80.6	24	19.4
Statisticians office	104	83.9	20	16.1

According to the findings in the table above, the findings reveal that a significant number of teachers in the school hold dual responsibilities, managing both classroom instruction and office management. In the Accounts and Stores offices, 81.5% of respondents indicated that teachers are tasked with managing these offices while also teaching, reflecting a heavy reliance on teaching staff for administrative functions. The Statisticians office shows a similar trend, with 83.9% of teachers assigned to manage that office as well. The Guidance and Counseling office also has a high percentage (80.6%), suggesting that teachers play a crucial role in providing support beyond their teaching duties. Conversely, the Procurement office has a lower percentage, with 63.7% of teachers managing responsibilities there, indicating a slightly better separation of roles. Therefore, the findings highlight a reliance on teachers for multi-faceted roles within the school, which may impact their effectiveness in both teaching and management functions and raise concerns about workload distribution and job satisfaction among staff.

Based on the findings regarding resource management and the presence of qualified personnel in public secondary schools, several qualitative themes emerged. The key themes that emerged include the ones below;

Theme 1: Presence of Qualified Personnel

On this theme, the findings show a mixed presence of qualified personnel across various offices, with a notable lack in critical areas such as Stores and Procurement. An interviewee remarked, *"I often feel overwhelmed trying to manage the store without the necessary expertise. It impacts our ability to maintain inventory efficiently."* This highlights the operational challenges faced due to a shortage of specialized staff in key administrative areas.

Another respondent noted, *"In the Accounts office, we are quite fortunate; the presence of qualified personnel has helped streamline our financial processes. Without them, we would struggle to keep track of funds."* This juxtaposition underscores that while some departments benefit from expertise, others suffer from significant gaps.

Furthermore, a staff member added, *"We need trained people in the Procurement office to enhance efficiency; otherwise, it's hit or miss with our orders. The quality of supplies is often questionable."* This statement further emphasizes the detrimental impact of lacking qualified personnel in essential functions.

Theme 2: Dual Responsibilities among Teachers

Interpretation: A significant dependency on teachers to juggle both teaching and administrative responsibilities emerges from the findings, indicating a potential strain on their effectiveness and job satisfaction.

One respondent shared, *"Managing the Guidance and Counseling office while teaching is exhausting. There's just not enough time in the day. Sometimes I feel like I'm failing both roles."* This sentiment reflects concerns about workload and the feasibility of performing both roles effectively.

It argued by another respondent that, *"I love teaching, but supervising the Accounts office takes a lot of my focus away from my students. It's a constant balancing act, and I often go home feeling stressed."* This highlights the tension teachers' face between fulfilling their instructional role and handling administrative duties, potentially leading to burnout and decreased effectiveness.

Theme 3: Impact of Staffing on Service Delivery

The lack of qualified personnel in key offices appears to directly impact service delivery and operational effectiveness within the schools. Some respondents noted the following;

"Without qualified staff in the Procurement office, we often miss opportunities for better deals on supplies. We end up paying more than necessary, which affects our budget."

"The work done in the Stores is often delayed because we don't have trained personnel to manage processes properly. We consequently face shortages, and this affects classroom resources."

"When we lack efficient systems due to unqualified staff, it creates a trickle-down effect that negatively impacts teachers and students alike."

Theme 4: Concerns about Workload Distribution

According to the study findings, the findings suggest a potential imbalance in workload distribution, with teachers often overburdened by administrative roles in addition to their teaching responsibilities. One of the respondents noted that,

“When teachers are stretched too thin, both their teaching quality and the management of these offices can suffer, affecting students directly. It’s a recipe for burnout.” This statement raises concerns about how multitasking may compromise educational outcomes.

Another teacher said, *“I feel like I can’t do my best job in the classroom when I’m also worried about office management tasks. Sometimes I have to stay late just to catch up. It’s exhausting.”* This highlights a critical issue regarding the sustainability of the current staffing model and its effects on educational quality.

A further comment from an interviewee emphasized, *“The school should seriously look into how these roles are distributed. We need clarity to ensure that quality education is not sacrificed due to overwhelming administrative tasks.”* This points to the importance of role clarity and equitable workload distribution.

The findings indicate an urgent need for schools to reassess their staffing models and resource management strategies. The significant lack of qualified personnel in critical offices could lead to inefficiencies that adversely affect the overall functioning of the school. This deficiency highlights an area where investment in training and hiring could yield substantial benefits, particularly in the Stores and Procurement offices, which are crucial for maintaining resources. Furthermore, the reliance on teachers to juggle teaching and administrative responsibilities suggests a need for clearer delineation of roles and responsibilities. Overburdened teachers may lead to decreased job satisfaction, reduced educational quality, and higher turnover rates, ultimately affecting student performance and school stability. Reforming these structures could enhance both teacher effectiveness and student outcomes, creating a more supportive environment for both educators and learners alike.

4.2. The effect of accountability on resource management among public secondary schools

4.2.1. Preparation and presentation of reports

Table 3 Preparation and presentation of reports

	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
School activities done for the year	97	78.2	27	21.8
Income received	54	43.5	70	56.5
Expenditure and Expenses	90	72.6	34	27.4
Pupil enrollment	107	86.3	17	13.7
Pupil examination results	114	91.9	10	8.1
Pupil dropouts	2	1.6	122	98.4
Number of staff	99	79.8	25	20.2
Number of pupils	67	54	57	46
Evaluated school inventory (assets)	68	54.8	56	45.2

The findings in the table, indicate a varied commitment to the preparation and presentation of reports within the school, reflecting strengths and weaknesses in transparency and communication. A significant majority report on school activities done for the year (78.2%) and pupil enrollment (86.3%), along with excellent reporting on pupil examination results (91.9%), suggesting a strong emphasis on academic performance and community engagement. However, income received (43.5%) and evaluated school inventory (54.8%) show lower reporting rates, highlighting potential gaps in financial transparency and asset management. The alarming figure regarding pupil dropouts (only 1.6% reporting) indicates a significant oversight in addressing retention issues. Furthermore, while the number of staff submissions is relatively high (79.8%), the overall mixed results suggest that while key areas are prioritized, others, particularly related to financial and enrollment data, may require improved reporting practices to ensure comprehensive oversight and accountability within the school.

4.2.2. Oftenness of presentation of reports to stakeholders like members of staff and parents

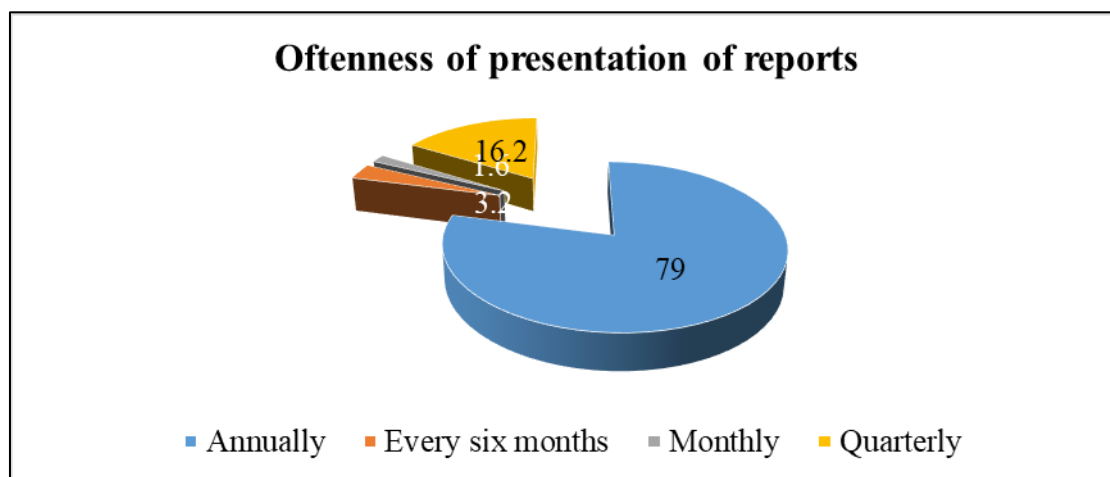


Figure 2 Oftenness of presenting reports

The findings regarding how often reports are presented to stakeholders like members of staff and parents, reveal that a substantial majority (79%) receive reports annually. This suggests a preference for a comprehensive overview of various school activities and data, allowing stakeholders to engage with detailed insights less frequently but in a more consolidated form. However, a smaller segment, representing 16.2%, indicates that reports are presented every six months, highlighting some effort toward semi-annual updates to keep stakeholders informed more regularly. Monthly and quarterly presentations are minimal, with only 3.2% and 1.6% respectively indicating such frequency. This pattern suggests that while annual reporting provides a solid foundation, there may be opportunities to enhance communication and stakeholder engagement through more frequent updates. Improving the frequency of reports could foster a stronger connection with the school community, ensuring ongoing awareness of critical developments and performance metrics.

In tandem with the above quantitative findings, the qualitative themes below emerged during the study;

Theme 1: Commitment to Reporting on Key Areas

The study findings indicate a strong commitment to reporting on essential school activities, pupil examination results, and pupil enrollment, revealing a prioritization of academic performance and stakeholder engagement. One of the school administrators stated that, *"We ensure reports on pupil examination results are accurate and timely because they reflect our educational outcomes."* This emphasizes the importance placed on academic accountability. Another one added that, *"I feel that our reporting on school activities creates transparency and keeps everyone in the loop about what we're doing well."* This sentiment highlights the positive impact of reporting on community engagement. However, on the contrary, one of the respondents stressed that *"While we are good at reporting student performance, we neglect areas like income and expenses, which makes it hard to know our financial health."* This indicates a recognition of gaps in financial reporting, crucial for overall accountability.

Theme 2: Financial Transparency and Oversight

The qualitative findings revealed that there was no proper financial transparency in most schools. The lower reporting rates for income and evaluated school inventory indicate potential deficiencies in financial transparency, which may hinder effective resource management. In support of the above findings some respondents stated the following;

"I wish we had more clarity on our income and expenditures. It feels like we're flying blind sometimes." This indicates a pressing need for improved financial oversight within the school.

"The lack of reports on our assets leads to uncertainty about what we truly have and need. We need that data for better planning." This points to the critical role that inventory evaluation plays in resource allocation.

"Dropouts are not tracked and if we're not tracking dropouts effectively, how can we implement strategies to keep students in school?" This underscores the consequences of inadequate reporting on pupil retention.

Theme 3: Frequency of Reporting to Stakeholders

According to the study findings, the predominant annual reporting practice among staff and parents suggests a structured approach to keeping stakeholders informed, but it also reveals opportunities for enhanced engagement through more frequent updates. One of the respondents expressed that, *"I appreciate getting the annual reports; they provide a comprehensive overview, but I wish we had more frequent updates on critical issues."* This sentiment reflects a desire for ongoing communication. Another respondent explained that, *"As a parent, I think it's vital to have monthly or quarterly reports to stay informed about our children's progress and school decisions."* This emphasizes the community's preference for more regular engagement. Furthermore, another respondent added that, *"While annual reports are useful, they can sometimes feel outdated when we have ongoing issues that need addressing throughout the year."* This highlights the limitation of infrequent reporting in fostering timely dialogue among stakeholders.

The findings underscore the importance of accountability in resource management within public secondary schools. The strong commitment to reporting on academic performance suggests that schools acknowledge the significance of transparency in fostering stakeholder trust. However, the lower rates of financial reporting and the concerning figures on pupil dropouts indicate areas needing improvement. Enhancing financial transparency could lead to better resource allocation and planning, ultimately benefiting the school's operational effectiveness. Additionally, while annual reporting provides a solid foundation, the findings suggest a need for more frequent communication with stakeholders to facilitate engagement and accountability. By adopting a more regular reporting schedule, schools can better connect with their communities, ensuring that stakeholders remain informed about critical issues and developments. This could foster a culture of continuous improvement and proactive management, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes and resource utilization.

4.3. The effect of transparency on resource management among public secondary schools

4.3.1. Involvement of teachers, parents in planning of activities for the year

Table 4 Involvement in planning activities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	79	63.7	63.7	63.7
No	45	36.3	36.3	100.0
Total	124	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that a majority of respondents (63.7%) affirm that the school involves teachers and parents in the planning of annual activities. This engagement suggests a collaborative approach to decision-making, highlighting the school's commitment to inclusivity and stakeholder participation. However, a notable 36.3% of respondents reported that teachers and parents are not involved in this planning process, which may signal potential gaps in communication and collaboration within the school community. This disparity calls for reflection on how the school can enhance participation among all stakeholders, ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered and valued in planning efforts.

4.3.2. School committees for different activities

Table 5 School committees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	114	91.9	91.9	91.9
No	10	8.1	8.1	100.0
Total	124	100.0	100.0	

The results show a strong positive response regarding the presence of committees for various activities within the school, with an impressive 91.9% of respondents indicating that such committees exist. This high level of agreement reflects a well-structured organizational framework that likely supports effective management and execution of diverse school activities. The small minority of 8.1% who reported that committees do not exist suggests a slight area for improvement, as the absence of committees can lead to challenges in coordination and execution of activities. The

findings highlight the schools' proactive approach in utilizing committees to enhance collaboration and organization among staff and stakeholders.

4.3.3. School announcements

Table 6 Announcements

	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job vacancy	37	29	87	70
New projects (e.g., construction)	114	91.9	10	8.1
Availability of school spaces	97	78.2	27	21.8
Supplying business	46	37.1	78	62.9

The findings concerning schools' announcements illustrate a varied approach to communication regarding different categories. A significant majority (91.9%) of respondents indicated that the schools announces new projects, reflecting strong transparency in its development initiatives. Similarly, 78.2% reported announcements about the availability of school spaces, which is crucial for community awareness and engagement. However, the lower percentages for job vacancies (29%) and supplying business announcements (37.1%) suggest gaps in communication regarding employment opportunities and procurement activities. Additionally, a substantial 70% of respondents noted that the school does not announce job vacancies, emphasizing a potential area for improvement in engaging stakeholders about available positions. While the schools excels in informing the community about projects and space availability, enhancing communication around job vacancies and supply opportunities could strengthen stakeholder relations and foster greater trust and involvement.

4.3.4. Sharing of plans

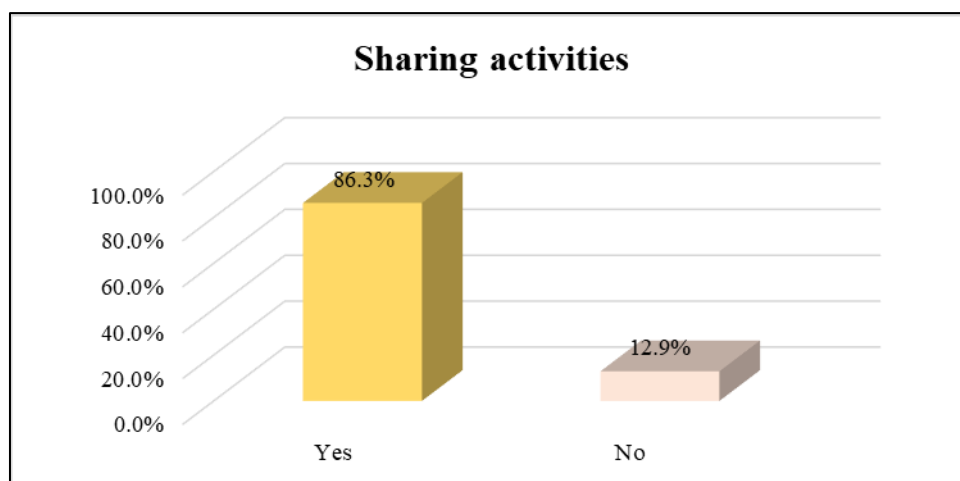


Figure 3 Sharing activities

The findings in figure three reveal that a significant majority of respondents (86.3%) affirm that the schools shares its plans for activities, outlining intentions for the upcoming year or for the next few years. This strong positive response indicates a commitment to transparency and proactive communication with stakeholders, suggesting that the schools values keeping its community informed about future initiatives and objectives. In contrast, only 12.9% of respondents indicated that the school does not share such plans, highlighting a small area of concern regarding inclusivity and stakeholder involvement. Notably, the high percentage of agreement reflects a robust framework for sharing information, which likely enhances stakeholder engagement and fosters a sense of partnership in the school's ongoing development and strategic planning.

Since the study used a mixed research approach, the themes related to the above which were developed from the qualitative findings include the following:

Theme 1: Stakeholder Involvement in Planning

The findings of the study indicate a commitment to including teachers and parents in the planning of annual activities, reflecting a collaborative approach to decision-making. Some of the responses on the said matter included the following:

"I really appreciate being involved in the planning process. It makes us feel like we're part of the school community, and our opinions are valued."

"Involving us in planning helps align our teaching goals with the school's vision. It creates a sense of ownership among staff."

"I sometimes feel left out of the loop. Not all parents and teachers are involved in the planning, which can lead to misunderstandings about what the school is trying to achieve."

The above statements from respondents highlight the positive outcomes of stakeholder engagement in school activities while also emphasizing the benefits of collaborative planning in promoting a unified mission. On the contrary, the findings also suggest that the majority who feel excluded may contribute to gaps in communication and collaboration within the school community.

Theme 2: Structured Organizational Framework

When respondents were asked on the presence of different committee's assisting in other school activities. Majority of the respondents agreed and the high presence of committees for various activities according to the study findings, signifies a well-structured organizational framework that supports effective management. For example, one of the respondents explained that: *"Having committees for different activities allows us to delegate responsibilities and enhances our ability to execute events successfully."* This underscores the vital role committees play in ensuring organized and efficient operations. It was added by another that, *"I enjoy working in committees; it fosters teamwork among staff and allows for diverse ideas to come forward."* This reflects the positive impact that collaboration within committees can have on school culture and innovation. However, one of the respondents noted that, *"There's always room for improvement. Even with committees, ensuring everyone is on the same page can be a challenge."* This acknowledgment of potential inefficiencies indicates a need for ongoing refinement in committee processes.

Theme 3: Transparency in Communication

The varied approach to school announcements reveals strengths and weaknesses in communication transparency across different areas. Consequently, according to the study findings, one respondent indicated, *"We are well-informed about new projects and available school spaces, which keeps the community engaged. I'm glad we're transparent about these initiatives."* This highlights successful transparency in development efforts. Another interviewee added, *"But when it comes to job vacancies, it feels like we're often in the dark. I know people who missed out on opportunities simply because they weren't announced properly."* This reflects the communication gaps, particularly regarding employment opportunities and procurement processes. Additionally to the above, one of the respondents also added that, *"It's crucial for a school to keep everyone informed about jobs and supply contracts. Transparency in these areas would build more trust with the community."* This emphasizes the importance of enhancing communication in these less-favored areas.

Theme 4: Commitment to Transparency and Strategic Planning

According to the findings of the study, it was revealed that a significant majority of schools sharing their plans for future activities indicates a strong commitment to transparency and proactive communication. Some of the responses in relation to the above include the following;

"Knowing the school's plans for the next few years makes me feel secure in my role and aligned with the school's objectives." This underscores the positive impact of clear communication on staff morale and alignment.

"I value receiving updates on what the school is planning. It shows they care about keeping us informed and involved." This reflects the sentiment that engagement fosters a sense of community.

"You should know that, some people are not informed about future plans, therefore, if only a significant aren't being informed about future plans, that's a concern. It might reflect a lack of inclusivity that needs to be addressed." This recognition underscores the need for the school to actively engage all stakeholders in its long-term planning efforts.

From the above, it can be deduced that the findings illuminate the critical role of transparency in resource management within public secondary schools. The strong involvement of teachers and parents in planning activities suggests a collaborative culture, which is essential for fostering a sense of community and shared ownership of school initiatives. However, the noted exclusion of a significant number indicates an opportunity for improvement in engagement practices to ensure that all voices are heard and valued. Moreover, the presence of committees reinforces a structured approach to executing school-related activities, promoting better management and coordination. Nonetheless, feedback about challenges in communication emphasizes the necessity for continuous evaluation and adjustment of these structures to enhance effectiveness. The varying degrees of communication transparency, particularly regarding job vacancies and procurement announcements, highlight areas needing specific attention to build greater trust and engagement among stakeholders. Strengthening communication in these areas can lead to a more informed and involved community, ultimately contributing to the school's mission and goals. The commitment to sharing strategic plans reinforces the importance of proactive engagement, ensuring that stakeholders feel connected to the school's long-term objectives, thus paving the way for collaborative growth and development.

4.4. Inferential statistics

4.4.1. Model Summary

Table 7 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.306 ^a	0.094	0.071	0.483
a. Predictors: (Constant), Transparency, Specialization, Accountability				

The Model Summary table reveals that transparency, specialization, and accountability explain 9.4% of the variance in resource management ($R^2 = 0.094$), with an adjusted R^2 of 0.071 indicating a more conservative estimate when considering the number of predictors; the moderate correlation coefficient ($R = 0.306$) suggests that while these corporate governance practices have some effect on resource management, other factors not included in the model likely play a significant role, limiting the model's predictive power and warranting exploration of additional influences like leadership styles or funding models in future research.

4.4.2. ANOVA

Table 8 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.904	3	0.968	4.145	0.008 ^b
	Residual	28.024	120	9.234		
	Total	30.927	123			
a. Dependent Variable: Resource Management						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Transparency, Specialization, Accountability						

The ANOVA table demonstrated that the overall model, incorporating transparency, specialization, and accountability, is a statistically significant predictor of resource management ($F = 4.145$, $p = 0.008$), reinforcing the relevance of corporate governance practices in the context of resource management in Zambian public secondary schools; however, given the low R^2 value from the Model Summary, it's important to acknowledge that while the model is statistically significant, its practical effect size is modest, underscoring the importance of considering the coefficients table for a more detailed analysis.

4.4.3. Regression coefficients

Table 9 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.696	0.185		9.150	0.000
	Specialization	0.267	0.088	0.268	3.038	0.000
	Accountability	0.231	0.125	0.191	1.851	0.000
	Transparency	0.075	0.108	0.072	0.698	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Resource Management						

The Coefficients table reveals that, contrary to some expectations, all three corporate governance practices – specialization, accountability, and transparency – exhibit significant positive relationships with resource management ($p = 0.000$ for all). Specifically, specialization demonstrates a notable positive effect ($B = 0.267$), suggesting that increased specialization is associated with improved resource management, potentially through enhanced efficiency or expertise in specific areas. Accountability also positively impacts resource management ($B = 0.231$), aligning with the understanding that holding individuals or departments responsible enhances resource utilization. Similarly, transparency shows a positive relationship with resource management ($B = 0.075$), though its effect appears less pronounced than the others, possibly because of the need for better communication regarding transparency. The implications of these results for the study suggest that corporate governance practices in Zambian public secondary schools generally contribute to effective resource management. Still, the specific mechanisms and contexts within which these practices operate may vary, requiring further investigation to determine best practices.

4.4.4. Reliability Test

Table 10 Reliability results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.762	4

The table above revealed that the reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.762 for the four items assessed, indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency among the items in the scale. A Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 is generally considered acceptable, suggesting that the items effectively measure the same underlying construct. This level of reliability implies that the responses are likely to be consistent across the items, enhancing the credibility of the findings related to the corporate governance. Therefore, the scale used in this analysis can be deemed reliable for further research and assessment in this area.

5. Discussion

The study revealed significant challenges in resource management within public secondary schools, primarily due to a lack of qualified personnel and the dual responsibilities placed on teachers. Only 50.8% of respondents reported having qualified staff in the Accounts office, while a staggering 95.2% indicated no qualified personnel in the Stores office. This shortage of expertise led to operational inefficiencies, as teachers were often overwhelmed with administrative tasks alongside their teaching duties. Regression analysis indicated that specialization positively impacts resource management, with a coefficient ($B = 0.267$, $p = 0.000$) suggesting that clear delineation of roles could enhance operational efficiency and reduce burnout. The qualitative data further supported these findings, as many teachers expressed feelings of being stretched too thin, which compromised both their teaching effectiveness and their ability to manage administrative responsibilities. This situation highlighted the urgent need for reforms in staffing and resource management practices, particularly in hiring and training specialized personnel, to improve educational outcomes and operational effectiveness in schools.

The findings regarding accountability highlighted both strengths and weaknesses in reporting practices among public secondary schools. While a significant 91.9% of schools reported pupil examination results, indicating a strong emphasis on academic performance, the reporting rates for financial matters were alarmingly low, with only 43.5% reporting income received and 54.8% evaluating school inventory. This lack of financial transparency hindered effective resource management and eroded stakeholder trust. The data revealed that accountability in financial reporting was crucial for informed decision-making and resource allocation. Additionally, the predominance of annual reports limited community engagement, as only 16.2% of schools provided semi-annual updates. Research indicated that schools with more frequent reporting practices experienced increased stakeholder satisfaction and involvement. Therefore, enhancing financial reporting and increasing the frequency of communications could significantly improve stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and overall operational effectiveness, ultimately benefiting the educational environment.

The findings on transparency in resource management underscored its critical role in fostering stakeholder involvement and effective communication within public secondary schools. A notable 63.7% of respondents reported that teachers and parents were involved in planning annual activities, which contributed to a collaborative culture and aligned with contemporary educational theories advocating for shared governance. However, the 36.3% of respondents who reported a lack of involvement indicated potential communication gaps that could undermine the effectiveness of school initiatives. Furthermore, while 91.9% of schools announced new projects, only 29% communicated job vacancies, revealing a significant area for improvement in stakeholder engagement. The commitment to sharing plans for future activities was strong, with 86.3% affirming that they were informed about upcoming initiatives. However, the 12.9% who indicated that plans were not shared highlighted the need for broader engagement strategies. By improving transparency in communication, particularly regarding employment opportunities and strategic planning, schools could strengthen community ties, foster a more informed and involved stakeholder base, and enhance overall resource management, leading to improved educational outcomes.

6. Conclusion

The study conclusions were as follows:

- Specialization is essential for effective resource management in schools, as evidenced by the critical shortage of qualified personnel in key administrative roles. The overwhelming reliance on teachers to manage both educational and administrative tasks has created operational inefficiencies and increased the risk of financial mismanagement. Investing in specialized staff training and recruitment is crucial to enhance efficiency, reduce risks, and foster a better learning environment.
- Accountability significantly influences resource management practices, with schools showing strong commitment to academic performance reporting but lacking in financial transparency. The low rates of financial reporting indicate potential misallocation of resources and diminished trust among stakeholders. Implementing robust accountability frameworks, such as regular audits and transparent communication, is vital for effective resource utilization and stakeholder engagement.
- Transparency plays a critical role in resource management, with schools performing well in announcing new projects but lacking in communication regarding job vacancies and procurement processes. The limited sharing of audited financial reports raises concerns about transparency and accountability, indicating areas for improvement in stakeholder engagement. Adopting transparent communication strategies that involve all stakeholders can enhance trust and foster a sense of community responsibility in achieving school objectives.

Recommendations

Based on the research objectives, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Enhance Staff Specialization: Recruit and train qualified personnel for critical administrative roles, particularly in Accounts, Stores, and Procurement, to improve operational efficiency.
- Implement Robust Accountability Measures: Establish regular financial reporting and auditing processes to ensure transparency in resource allocation and build trust among stakeholders.
- Strengthen Transparency in Communication: Develop clear communication strategies for sharing job vacancies, procurement processes, and audited financial reports with all stakeholders to enhance engagement and trust.
- Foster Stakeholder Involvement: Create platforms for community and stakeholder input in decision-making processes to ensure that policies reflect the needs and expectations of the school community.

- Regular Training and Capacity Building: Provide ongoing professional development for staff in governance practices, financial management, and resource allocation to enhance their capabilities.
- Adopt Holistic Governance Frameworks: Integrate specialization, accountability, and transparency into a comprehensive governance framework that addresses all aspects of resource management effectively.

Recommendations for future research

Future research should investigate the impact of various leadership styles and funding models on resource management in public secondary schools. By examining these additional factors, researchers can enhance the predictive power of existing models and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in educational governance. This exploration could lead to tailored strategies that address specific challenges faced by schools, ultimately improving resource allocation and effectiveness.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

Author that there is no conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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