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ABSTRACT

The stated goal of this research was to determine the effects of board independence on organisational performance. The study was conducted at the NCPB headquarters in Nairobi. The target population was senior management and directors of NCPB where census method was used since only 64 respondents were targeted. For both qualitative and quantitative descriptive research, a semi-structured questionnaire was the research instrument utilised. Ten percent of the respondents were selected by simple random sampling and participated in a pilot study. Face validity, content validity, and construct validity were all tested. Reliability testing of research tools involved, error testing such as checking ambiguity, typo and grammatical errors. Data were displayed using tables, graphs, and charts. The study found out that board independence influenced organizational performance of NCPB to a great extent in a Likert scale of (1-5). ANOVA had a P value greater than 0.05 which was the case with coefficient of regression indicating a significant influence of board independence on the organisational performance of NCPB. Based on the findings, the study concluded that NCPB should allow board committees and the directors to implement programmes with minimal direction from outside the organisation.

Keywords: Corporate-Governance, NCPB, Board-Independence, Organisational Performance

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Organisational performance in the context of business is commonly understood to refer to a company's capacity to meet its goals. As stated by H. J. Ondigo (2019).Analysing organisational performance is a critical component of strategic management. Sen, N., Coles, J. W., and McWilliams, V. B. (2011). States that if you subtract the actual output from the intended output, the result you get is the organizational performance. Basing an argument from the definitions by this scholars, organizational performance is a huge space since it encompasses what an organization does, what it achieves and how it relates to its many stakeholders.

On August 8, 1985, Chapter 38 of an Act of Parliament created the NCPB. The minister of agriculture represents the board in the cabinet and is also in charge of the board's overall policy and strategic direction. The headquarters of NCPB are at Nairobi, and it has 46 depots across the 47 counties. The board's primary functions include trading in agricultural products such as maize, wheat, rice, beans, millet, green grams, and sorghum, maintaining Kenya's strategic grain reserve and providing famine relief on behalf of the government, providing grain storage and fumigation services for third parties, and importing and selling farm inputs. The board's corporate headquarters is Nyumba ya Nafaka, Machakos road, Nairobi. According to human resource data of year 2022, NCPB has ten directors and one co-opted director and twenty senior managers led by a managing director. The board secretary is in charge of monitoring and coordinating the board's agenda and papers. The role of the board is to set policy guidelines as well as ensuring that NCPB operates in adherence to the set laws, has internal controls that are effective and operates transparently by publishing accurate statements of financial positions and other disclosures. Like many public organizations in Kenya, NCPB has consistently posted poor performance by experiencing financial constraints and other attendant corporate

malpractices. (Alonso, P. A., and Gonzalez, V. E. 2022

Statement of the Problem

Kenya continues to be a food insecure country. Every year people die of lack of food in Kenya. The government uses a substantial resource to import food commodities from across the world. According to a report by SOFI (2023) an organization researching on food security, the reliance on food from current large producers in Europe and America is not sustainable given that the population is aging in those countries that register very low birth rates. Africa has a high birth rate and population growth hence demand for more food is projected to keep increasing every year. NCPB Act gives NCPB the strategic role of ensuring Kenya is a food secure country. The fact that Kenya is still food insecure points to a failure by NCPB. (Wanyama, F. O.2019). Through an examination of corporate governance practices and their impact on organisational performance, the study aimed to address food insecurity in Kenya. The study's recommendations are intended to assist NCPB in overcoming its current situation and achieving its main goals, which include keeping a strategic food reserve. . From the recommendations of the study NCPB would be in a position to further enhance the continued growth of the economy through better corporate governance practices. Board members of different organizations could therefore be able to refer to the study in their various processes of determining and designing governance structures and appropriate practices that are instrumental in impacting increased financial performance and adaptation to the environment.

Objectives of the Study

This study assessed how the National Cereals and Produce Board's operational efficacy is affected by board independence. The research Inquiry was;

- How does board independence affect the National Cereals and Produce Board's organizational performance?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Independence of the Board and Organization's Performance

While researching how boards in Indian companies have become more independent, Stanwick, S. D., & Stanwick, P. A. (2000), used document analysis as the research tool. Companies in the United States, United Kingdom, and India were compared using a correlational research approach. The conclusion of the study was as follows; although independence has increased prominence in corporate discussions, there is more to learn about the concept. Of note, its evolution and application differ across economies and legal systems. In their study, they discovered that the notion must be implemented differently in nations like India where ownership is concentrated compared to nations like the US and the UK where ownership is distributed (and from which systems the concept first originated).

How corporations perform financially came into examination in a finding to establish the characteristics of boards and how those characteristics affect the overall economy of Nigeria. Indicators of these characteristics included the board's size, independence, composition of committees, meetings, and shareholdings; financial performance was measured using return on assets. Five listed companies were chosen as a sample between 2011 and 2020. The ex-post facto research design employed the annual reports of the selected conglomerates as the primary source of secondary data. Panel data regression was the chosen regression technique. The size, independence, and stock holdings of the board and audit committee influenced heavily the success of conglomerates in Nigeria, according to Augustine (2018). However, it did not appear that how regularly boards met eminently effected how well Nigerian conglomerates performed financially. In order to maintain board independence as a tool or effect on conglomerates' financial success, the study made recommendations for maintaining a suitable board size, accountability, transparency, and teamwork

Obanda, W. P. (2010). , significantly aided this investigation in Kenya. The study sought to investigate how board independence impacted Kenyan commercial banks' performance. Internal control provided the theoretical foundation for the study. A descriptive design was chosen. The commercial banks served as the unit of analysis, while the directors and managers served as the unit of observation. As a result, there were a total of 44 chairpersons and 44 managers of the commercial banks. A well-designed questionnaire was employed to collect primary data for the research. Secondary data, however, were acquired from published papers to supplement the primary data. A pilot study was conducted in order to pretest the validity and reliability of the tools. The data was quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed using Excel and SPSS version 24. The presentation of data using tables and graphs was a component of quantitative approaches. The study also used regression analysis to determine the relationships between the variables at a 5% level of significance. The study's findings showed that Kenyan commercial banks' performance is significantly improved by board independence. Finding out how board independence affects organisational effectiveness was the study's main goal. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data, and document analysis was used to gather secondary data to support the former. A correlational design was employed to conduct both statistical and qualitative analysis of the data. The foundation of the study was formed by the theories of agency and resource dependence.

Theoretical Review

Agency Theory (Financial performance Theory)

Agency theory centres on the relationship between a principal and an agent. In the public sector, the shareholders or the government may be the principal. The principal gave the agents control over the company. There are two things that can influence the acceptance of agency theory. According to the theory, a company's stakeholders and managers make up the only two parties

involved. This was proposed by Beasley, M. S., Carcello, J. V., Hermanson, D. R., & Neal, T. L. (2014). In addition, agency theory contends that agents might be self-seekers. The Agency theory was initially examined by Alchian and Demsetz in 1972, despite the fact that Jensen and Meckling (1976) are largely credited for advancing its development. This theory states that even when management of an organization strives to maximize investment returns, they only do so to the extent that appropriate structures are in place Tewari, M., & Ramanlal, P. (2022). In order to promote shared goals, management and investors "relate in a shared cohesive engagement," according to Jensen and Meckling. (1976, P.157) In the context of corporate governance, investors designate people to act as their agents and make sure that daily operations go without a hitch and that the business is ultimately viable. The theory essentially explains the circumstance in which an organization's decisions are heavily dependent on the hired agents. Debt holders and stockholders are additionally involved in these relationships, in addition to management and shareholders. It does, however, raise the possibility that the agents could be opportunistic and self-interested, advancing their own interests over the specified and general interests of the business. Principal-agent conflict causes an organization to incur "agency costs," which spurs executives and equity holders to share similar goals in an effort to stop the abuse of their respective power. Agency theorists have sought to determine the success rates of executives who choose to put the goals of their organization before their own. Studies show that the Agency theory significantly informs the design of corporate governance reforms. (McGuire, J. B., Sundgren, A., & Schneeweis, T. 2012). For instance, it has made a sizable contribution to increasing the integrity and transparency of financial disclosure, particularly in the way the stock market is run under market governance. The research specifically identified two important market mechanisms: the "managerial labour market" and the "market for corporate control". The former advocates for replacing the

management team with more capable individuals in order to impose drastic measures to instill discipline, while the latter maintains that an individual's performance is preserved as a hope for future increases in job worth, reputation, and other career-enhancing effects.

Resource Dependence Theory

This theory concentrates on the part directors play in making sure an organisation has all the resources needed for a smooth operation. Thanks to their ties to the outside world, the directors are able to accomplish this. To avoid having to pay for outside legal counsel, the board could, for instance, get legal advice from the board's lawyers. This theory contends that managing staff also encompasses non-executive workers who are essential to the organization's resource allocation. Resources can take many different forms and have significant value to an organization, according to Kajola, O. S. (2019). Viewing the board of directors as a key resource fosters a high-performing culture and perspective towards directors. According to Bhagat, S., & Black, B. S. (2012). Such a relational resource enables both literal and symbolic association between an organization and the executive, potentially enhancing the reputation or legitimacy of both the business and managing personnel. According to the theory, executives can play a variety of roles depending on the stage of the organization's life cycle. Non-executive directors in start-up companies may serve as networks of both emerging and established markets, as well as sources of knowledge and skills. Therefore, those who serve in non-executive capacities in well-established organizations must possess leadership skills in addition to being prepared to adapt to changing needs and the business environment by foreseeing risks and opportunities

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In a bid to draw a relationship between the variables, the researcher used a correlational design for the study. Since there is no manipulation

involved, this type of design can demonstrate the degree to which each independent variable in the study affects the dependent variable (Ondigo, H. J.2019).The research study design was successful because it involves a large number of people and describe a population's characteristics using a variety of objective samples. Adusei, M. (2015). Additionally, the design is adaptable enough to permit comparison of various aspects of the current issue. Walker, D. (2020). Premised that descriptive research establishes information on various research study variables that may be of particular interest to a researcher Curtis, E. A., Comiskey, C., & Dempsey, O. (2016). Predicated on this.

Research Variables

Two variables—-independent and dependent variables—were used most frequently in the study. The independent variable was board independence and the dependent variable was the organizational performance which can be determined by working out the Return on Investment (ROI) and Return on Assets (ROA).

Table 1: Population Distribution

Level	Number
Senior Managers (CEO and Board of directors)	8
Senior level management	16
Lower cadre employees	40
Total	64

(SOURCE: Human Resource: NCPB 2021)

Sample Size

A Sample was determined using the statistical formula by Yamane (1967). Taking into account a 95% level of confidence and

P = 0.5 are assumed in this formula.

N= Population size

e = Level of precision

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Site of Study

The NCPB Nairobi was the locale of the study. NCPB is domiciled in the Ministry of Agriculture. It has the mandate of purchasing, managing, distributing, and selling Strategic Food Reserves (SFR) stocks. This is according to the NCPB Act. The Board also buys and distributes fertilizer. Post-harvest losses contribute to the country's food insecurity. After their crop is harvested, grain farmers face a variety of difficulties, including a lack of storage for their harvest.

Target Population

A. Tan, J. D. Yin, L. W. Tan, R. M. van Dam, Y. Y. Cheung, & C. H. Lee (2017) state that the population consists of all the participants who meet the inclusion criteria for any given study. The study's target audience included the NCPB directors and executives. The census method was employed in the study to gather data because of the small number of respondents.

Sampling Techniques

Sampling involves selecting specific objects or people from a larger population who share similar traits. (Ljungquist, U. 2017).All of the respondents to this study were senior level managers and NCPB board members. Every senior official in the company who was targeted in the study received a questionnaire in order to gather information on how governance affects the institution's performance over time.

Research Tools

The researcher employed semi-structured questionnaires to gather raw data from the target population. Walker, D. (2020).have written a

detailed procedure for validating a questionnaire and has also highlighted the suitability of a questionnaire as a research tool for gathering data in descriptive research.

Pilot Study

Pretesting of research instruments is crucial because it establishes practice for error identification and is also very helpful for mastering the instruments that will be used appropriately during the actual study (Bell, E., & Bryman, A. 2015). According to Adusei, M. (2015). The pilot testing also offers insights into the best ways to allocate various resources during the systematic investigations and aids in determining the viability of the research process. As a result, information from the pilot test aids in the formulation of the research question and can also be used as a baseline survey. Ten percent of respondents chosen from the company's staff were given the questionnaires so as to test them. To choose the 10% of workers, the researcher used simple random sampling.

Data Collection

A license from the NACOSTI was obtained by the researcher through the Kenyatta University Department of Public Policy. Additionally, the NCPB headquarters gave the researcher the go-ahead to carry out the study. As soon as the respondents had given their consent, the researcher requested for their participation in the study. They received the questionnaires and a letter that contained all the necessary details about the research study. Due to the nature of their work and given that not all directors are full time, the researcher administered the questionnaires to the directors through the company secretary since the company secretary is the officer in charge of correspondence with the directors. The managers were given the questionnaire through their secretaries. The respondents were then allowed some amount of time to complete the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Bell, E., & Bryman, A. (2015) define data analysis as the process of closely inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data in order to find important information that will support conclusions and serve as a basis for decision-making. After completing the questionnaires and verifying their accuracy and consistency, they were reviewed. After that, an analysis using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was conducted on the gathered quantitative data. After tabulating and classifying the data, it was arranged using descriptive statistics like mean values, frequency counts, simple percentages, and standard deviation. Appropriate tables were then used to present the data for simple understanding and analysis. A multiple regression model was applied to the data from a subset of the questionnaire in order to perform regression analysis and correlation. This was done in order to quickly ascertain the overall impact of each factor's independent investigation. their connection to the desired dependent variable. The following is the equation's expression:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \epsilon,$$

Where;

Y= Organization performance; (Dependent Variable)

β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept),

X= Board independence

ϵ = error term;

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_2$ = Regression coefficient of two variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

Located in Nafaka House on Machakos Road, the NCPB headquarters was the focus of the study. Board members and senior level managers were the study's main subjects. Of the 64 individuals who were specifically targeted for feedback, 50 completed the questionnaire and returned it to the researcher for examination. A reply rate of 78.125% was obtained as a result. The table that follows displays this.

Table 2: Response Rate

Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Response	50	78.125
Non- Response	14	21.875
Total	64	100

Source: field data 2025

The response rate for this study was adequate, as shown in the above table. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), a study is statistically satisfied when the sample size is 70% or greater.

Descriptive Findings

The research did an analysis of the extent to which board independence was practiced by NCPB as key corporate governance practice. This was done using descriptive statistics. The following were the findings.

Board Independence

A response was requested regarding the respondents' perception of the impact of board independence on NCPB's organisational

performance. The results showed that 10% of respondents thought the impact of board independence was very great, 61% thought it was great, 16% thought it was moderate, 7% thought it had a low influence on organisational performance, and 6% thought it had a very low impact on NCPB's performance.

The research further sought to find out from the respondents how the following aspects of board independence affected the organizational performance of NCPB. This was put on a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1 (very low extent) 2(low extent), 3 (moderate extent), 4(great extent), 5 (very great extent). The findings are tabulated in the table below.

Table 3: Board Independence

Aspect of Board Independence	Mean	Standard Deviation
Relationship with stakeholders	3.56	0.756
Relationship with past and present staff.	3.77	0.844
Nomination procedures	3.81	0.901
Existence of non-executive directors.	3.64	0.802

Source: Field Data 2025

The organisational performance of NCPB was found to be significantly impacted by its relationships with stakeholders, past and present staff, nomination procedures, and the presence of non-executive directors, as indicated by the means of 3.56, 3.77, 3.81, and 3.64. In addition, the respondents said that board independence encourages objectivity, integrity, and caution when making decisions. This affects the creation of policies, which enhances the effectiveness of organisations.

Inferential Statistics

To determine whether board independence governance and NCPB organisational performance are correlated, inferential statistics were used in the research. Regression coefficient and ANOVA results are shown in the ensuing arrears below.

ANOVA

At the 95% level of significance, an ANOVA was conducted. The following table 4 presents the results of F calculated and F critical

Table 4: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.880	40	1.627	.943	.477 ^b
Residual	10.345	10	1.724		
Total	15.225	50			

a. Dependent Variable: organisational performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), board independence

The results indicate that F (critical) was 5.6631 and F (calculated) was 14.5154. The results demonstrate that F (calculated) and F (critical), or (14.5154, > 5.6631), are signs that the study's overall regression mode was significant. The fact that the P value was greater than 0.05 suggests that board independence had a significant impact on NCPB's organisational performance.

Table 5: Coefficient of Regression

Coefficients ^a		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.794	.744		-.118	.000
	independence	.879	.163	.157	9.331	.000

a. Dependent Variable: organisational performance

Source: Field data 2023

The resulting equation was

$$Y = 5.794 + 0.879X + 0.878X^2$$

Where: X = Board independence

The investigation revealed that NCPB's organisational performance will be 5.794 when all other variables remain constant. If all other factors remained unchanged, a unit increase in board independence would result in organisational performance at 0.879, as shown in X above. The results showed that board independence had P value of 0.00 > 0.05, which is a strong indicator that it had a significant impact on NCPB's organisational performance.

Emodia and Mwanzia (2021) provide support for this assertion, observing a robust correlation between the chosen corporate governance practices and the organisational performance of firms. Specifically, these practices were found to foster independent decision-making, transparency, and decreased wastage and losses.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Using NCPB as a case study, the main goal of this research was to examine how corporate governance practices affect organisational

Coefficient of Regression

To determine each variable's unique impact on organisational performance, the study used the coefficient of regression. Table 5 below presents the results.

performance. The study has three goals and is descriptive in nature. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of board independence on NCPB's organisational performance. The study's coefficient of adjusted determination (R^2), which is 0.848 and rises to 84.8%, indicates a strong positive correlation between the variables, and its correlation coefficient (R) is 0.851.

The study found out that board independence influenced organizational performance of NCPB to a great extent in a Likert scale of (1-5). This interpretation is based on the derived mean of 3.56 on the independence of the board to relate independently and freely with stake holders, mean of 3.77 on the independence of the board to relate independently with past and present staff, mean of 3.81 on independence of the nomination committee of the board to conduct its duties like appointing non-executive directors and filling of vacancies in the board following attrition of existing directors and a mean of 3.64 on the existence of non-executive directors to give expert advice and oversight the executive directors. The total mean is rounded to 4. The respondents further opined that board independence leads to improvement in transparency, accountability,

integrity and objectivity in; decision making, policy formulation and in management which ultimately improves the organizational performance.

Based on the findings the research concluded that the board's relationship with stakeholders influenced the organisational performance. How the board worked with the staff also has a bearing on the operational environment. Board committees once appointed with the appropriate mix of directors that have expertise to perform the committee tasks can influence the performance

positively. NCPB should therefore allow board committees to work freely and relate well with staff.

Firstly, the board should seek to improve on the morale of the workers across the 46 depots through fair remuneration and allow board committees to work freely. The directors in the board should be qualified to handle the assigned roles. Adherence should be given to the guidelines in the Mwongozo the code on governance while nominations to board committees are done.

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