

Original Research Article

Evaluation of How Principals Address Students' Complaints in Boarding Public Secondary School in Nyanza, Kenya

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Abstract

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The study evaluated how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza Province and it was conducted among public boarding secondary school students in Nyanza province. The ongoing study is geared towards investigating how Principals Address Students' Complaints in Boarding Public Secondary Schools in Nyanza province. The population of the study was 102 teachers, 300 students and 50 school principals. A sample size of 150 of the following respondents was suitable for the study that is 25 deputy principals, 100 students and 25 school principals. Data was collected through questionnaire and interviews. Validity and reliability of the instrument were established through expert opinion and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.80 reliability test respectively. Data was analyzed using Coefficient of Determination, Analysis of Variance, frequency counts and percentages. The study established that evaluations of how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary schools were signified as good 36.3%. This study is significant in that it reveals the factors leading to unruly behavior and burning of school premises among boarding public secondary school students in Nyanza. The findings of this study would be useful to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology and the achievement of Kenya Vision 2030 in education.

Keywords: Boarding school, Student complaints, Unruly behavior

INTRODUCTION

Extent of stress whether high or low, varies considerably. Fiedler and Garcia (2017) pointed out that when stress level was low and the principal was directive (that is, when the principal was willing to tell people what to do) intelligence was more important than experience to the principal's leadership effectiveness. Coincidentally, when in high stress situations, intelligence was of little help because the principal was experienced, too cognitive as a leader, yet stress remains a challenge. According to studies done by Dunham (2016), the extent to which individuals experience stress in any situation depends on

the manner in which they assess both the demands and their competence in dealing with them, and their preparedness of the skills necessary for them to handle these demands with a greater sense of competence. In this study, the competency in dealing with some pertinent administrative matters is what is referred to as experience in school. Polakoff (2014) in his research confirmed that at least one research team has found that incidence of heart attack is greater among persons in high stress jobs than it is among workers in low stress occupations. Studies done by Robbins et al. (2010) and

Hopkins (2010) observed that for many employees, organizational change creates stress of varied levels. Due to the uncertain and unpredictable environment characterized by time pressures, increasing workloads, An Assessment of the Extent at Which. www.ijhssi.org 28 | Page mergers and restructuring, a large number of employees are overworked and stressed. They contend that depending on which survey one looks at, the number of employees experiencing job stress in the USA ranges anywhere from 40- 80 percent. Global research indicated that some 50 percent of workers surveyed in 16 European countries reported that stress and job responsibility have risen significantly over a five-year period. The ongoing study is geared towards filling in how Principals Address Students' Complaints in Boarding Public Secondary Schools in Nyanza province. The study will be conducted to do an evaluation of how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza.

Statement of the Problem

The study was conducted among public boarding secondary school students in Nyanza. The ongoing study is geared towards investigating how Principals Address Students' Complaints in Boarding Public Secondary Schools in Nyanza province. According to Collinwood Fire, 1908 erupted on March 4, 1908, killing 172 students, two teachers and one rescuer in one of the deadliest school disasters in United States history. The origin of the fire remains uncertain, though explanations proliferated. Newspapers circulated many possibilities, sometimes blaming the building's janitor, Fritz Hirter, for inattentiveness and running the boiler too hot. The ongoing study is geared towards investigating how Principals Address Students' Complaints in Boarding Public Secondary Schools in Nyanza province so as to curb unruly behavior among learners. The study will be conducted to do an evaluation of how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza, the main reason for the study underway.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Evaluate how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza.

Research Questions

The research questions were as follows:

How do principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary schools in Nyanza?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that it reveals the factors leading to unruly behavior and burning of school premises among boarding public secondary school students in Nyanza. The findings of this study would be useful to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology and the achievement of Kenya Vision 2030 in education.

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Assumptions of the Study

In this study the researcher made the following assumptions:

Principals do address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza

Scope of the Study

The study focused on factors leading to unruly behavior and burning of school premises among boarding public secondary school students in Nyanza. The unruly behavior of students relates to how school management handle students which may lead students showing disrespect to teachers resulting in destruction of school property. The researcher collected data from schools that were affected by arsonists during the time of study.

Definition of Operational Terms

Unruly: uncontrollable, wild, unmanageable, disorderly

Public school: A secondary school supported by public funds through ministry of Education Science and Technology and allocates teachers appointed by TSC.

School Premises: The premises of a property consist of the land and buildings on it

School administrators: Those who are in charge of running the schools i.e. head teachers and their deputies.

Literature Review

This chapter reviews publications related to factors leading to unruly behavior and burning of school building

How Principals Address Students' Complaints in Boarding Public Secondary Schools

Daily Nation 8th July, 2018 reports that new principals may have brought new changes in administration which may not have gone down well with "those they work with." TSC also changes were positive and shall act appropriately depending on those liable for the unrest," Mr Chepkawai said. Kuppet Executive Secretary Akello Misori warned that it is not the responsibility of students to identify who to teach them. "It is the responsibility of the ministry and TSC to identify the leadership of schools and not students or parents. Where students are selecting who to teach them, I think this is a subject for investigation," said Mr Misiiri. Mr. Awange said "as Kuppet Kisumu we also demand the Education Act 2010 which gave students much freedom be reviewed because it was the genesis of numerous strikes, fires and lies by students."

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology which was used to study factors leading to unruly behavior and burning of school building among boarding public secondary school students in Nyanza. The research design and procedure, sample population, sampling procedure and sample size, validity and reliability of the tools, instrumentation and data collection methods as well as data analysis procedure are described.

Research Design

Descriptive research method was used due to its flexibility in terms of the approach it gives, by means of an in-depth and holistic investigation. It has the aim of collecting rich level descriptions from those participating in the study by permitting them to describe what they experience and feel in their own term. Cohen, Manion and Morrission (2017) poised that this type of research design is normally useful in investigating a variety of issues and problems. For example, in this study the researcher looks for what is expected of students when their behavior is satisfactory or not. They argue that descriptive research design has an advantage of measuring current practices; it provides required information within a short time and the design is descriptive in its features and can help in describing the nature of what is to be correlated; it can also validate theoretical assumption concerning what is being investigated.

Research Location

The research was done in Nyanza region. The region is comprised of the following Counties: Homa-Bay, Migori, Siaya, Kisumu, Kisii and Nyamira. The region was chosen for the study because of the notable unruly behavior among learners in almost every midyear leading to burning of school buildings.

Study Population

According to the statistical records from office of the Director of Education, Nyanza Region, the total number of deputy principals in affected public secondary schools

at the time of the study was 50, 300 students and 50 school principals.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

According to Kothari (2004), Best and Khan (2006) a sample size of 30% with reference to the entire population is considered statistically significant for a descriptive research. 150 of the following respondents, was suitable for the study that is 25 deputy principals, 100 students and 25 school principals. Table 1 shows the sample frame of the respondents.

Data Collection Instrument

The researcher used a teacher questionnaire and interview schedule for the school principal. According to Trophim (2016), a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. The instrument is the tool the researcher used to collect data from the secondary school teachers, principals and students in Nyanza and later tested to investigate their opinion and recommendations made on the findings from the analysis of the study.

Student's Questionnaire on Burning of Schools (SQBS)

The students' questionnaire also included a section on their bio data touching on their age, gender and class. Other questions asked had the same view of checking the student responses as pertains to the research questions. In this research (SQBS) was a questionnaire meant to measure students' behavior when they feel aggrieved by the school administration and to analyze factors leading to burning of school building. The questionnaire was structured with closed ended items.

Principal and Deputy Principal Questionnaire on Unruly behavior of Students (TQUBS)

Principal and deputy principal's questionnaire was used to determine ways of controlling unruly students so as to curb destruction of school building in boarding public secondary schools in Nyanza and also to evaluate their role during, before and after students' mayhem in Nyanza region.

Principals' Questionnaire and Interview Schedule (PQIS)

The principals filled a data set of questionnaire and were

later interviewed on the details about the challenges faced by school administration in containing unruly students in boarding secondary schools and how they address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza province. The instrument was used during in-depth interview with the principals and the deputies of the sampled schools. The structured interview consisted of already determined content and sequence of questions to make the analysis easier. The open ended questions at the end evoke rich qualitative responses (Orodho, 2004) (Appendix 4).

Validity of Research Instruments

Validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment (Gall and Meredith, 2013).

As such, the researcher sought assistance of research experts, experienced graduates, lecturers and experienced supervisors in order to help improve content validity of the instruments. In designing an instrument that would yield content valid data, the researcher also identified the domain of indicators which were relevant to factors leading to unruly behavior and burning of school buildings, to ensure that they contained all possible items that would be used in measuring the variables. This process was used to establish the content validity of the instruments.

Reliability of Research Instruments

To enhance reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted in two schools in the target population which was excluded in the final study. The reason behind pretesting was to improve reliability of the instruments. The researcher assessed the clarity of the questionnaire items such that the items found to be inadequate or vague were either discarded or modified to improve the quality of the research instrument thus increasing its reliability. Split-half technique of reliability testing was employed, whereby the pilot questionnaires were divided into two equivalent halves and then a correlation coefficient for the two halves computed. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.80 confirmed the reliability of the instruments.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher sought permission from the office of Director of Education, Nyanza region to carry out the research and was issued with a letter introducing him to all sampled schools. He further sought permission from the school principals prior to commencement of data collection. The researcher and two research assistants visited the schools, interviewed the principals and

Table 1. Sample Frame

Category of Respondents	Target Population (N)	Accessible Population (N)	Sample Size F	Sample Size %
School principals	50	50	25	50
Deputy school principals	50	50	25	50
Students in affected schools	300	300	100	10

Source: field

distributed the questionnaire to the teachers and students. The researcher wrote down responses from the interviewees himself, with their consent. Instructions on how to fill the questionnaire was also done and later collected them from the respondents for analysis and discussion.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data was analyzed using, percentages and frequencies. The researcher presented results in tables and employed content analysis in analyzing qualitative data from interview schedules and open ended sections of questionnaires. The researcher wrote down the results in summary form and presented according to emerging sub-themes (Kerlinger, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought informed consent from the respondents, after explaining to them the purpose of the research. Before the questionnaires were administered, the respondents were assured of confidentiality in the treatment of their information and that the responses collected would be used only for the purpose of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings on the factors leading to unruly behaviour and burning of school buildings among boarding public secondary schools in Nyanza, Kenya. The results of data analysis on Analysis of Factors Leading to Unruly Behaviour and Burning of School building among Boarding Public Secondary School Students in Nyanza, Kenya. Was analysed using SPSS system version 23 software. The results of the analysis which were carried out using descriptive statistic are represented in this chapter according to research objectives.

Evaluate how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary school in Nyanza

This study was guided by the following question: How do principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary schools in Nyanza? In the attempt to understand how public boarding secondary schools address students' complaints. The school administration gave the following responses in tables 2 to table 3 below

Poor nutrition contributes to strikes

On the discussion of poor nutrition contributing to strike by students the following responses given by respondents as shown in table 2 below

From table 2 it can be observed that 70 (68.6%) agreed with idea that poor nutrition contribute to students' strike, 15 (14.7%) disagree while 16 (15.7%) were neutral. From the discussion above it can be concluded that majority agreed that public boarding secondary schools do not give good foods to the learners hence causing them to be unruly resulting in strikes and burning of school buildings. According to Mbiti (2014) the concept of discipline should not be associated with pain or fear, but rather it should be viewed as a system of guiding the students to make reasonable decisions. He argues that discipline in school and at home should be that which will produce young people who will be responsible when they become adults. They should be able to make their own decisions and accept the consequences of their decisions.

Fear of exams leads to strikes

On the discussion of fear of exams leads to strike, responses of the respondents are as shown in table 3 below

From table 3 it can be observed that 51 (50%) agree with the idea that fear examinations usually leads to strike among students in public boarding secondary schools in Nyanza province, 35 (34.7%) disagree while 15 (14.7%) are neutral about the matter. It can be observed that the majority of the respondents are for the idea that exam

Table 2. Poor nutrition contributes to strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	70	68.6	69.3	69.3
	Disagree	15	14.7	14.9	84.2
	Neutral	16	15.7	15.8	100.0
	Total	101	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.0		
Total		102	100.0		

Table 3. Fear of exams leads to strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	51	50.0	50.5	50.5
	Disagree	35	34.3	34.7	85.1
	Neutral	15	14.7	14.9	100.0
	Total	101	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.0		
Total		102	100.0		

phobia is the cause of many strikes in public schools. According to Okumbe (2008) argues that discipline is the action by management to enforce organizational standards not anything to do with examination. In order to successfully achieve the objectives of a school, all members are required to adhere to various behavior patterns for maximum performance.

Bad examples from leaders leads to strikes

On the discussion of bad examples from leaders' leads to strikes, the responses of the respondents were as shown in table 4 below

From table 4 it can be observed that 70 (68.6%) do agree with the statement, 19 (18.6%) disagree while 9 (8.8%) are neutral. The above discussion is a clear indication that bad examples from leaders have a bearing on the lives of our children in the public boarding secondary schools in Kenya. This is in line with Okinda (1995) who asserts that indiscipline in schools can be caused by politicians who may want heads whom they can control and manipulate thus admitting failures to keep the M.P. popular. This interference has a bearing on the head teachers' performance which also includes management of indiscipline in their schools. Some parents are known for issuing threats to head teachers who take out some disciplinary actions against their children. As a result of some of the parents being influential, they have used their positions to intimidate the head teachers therefore preventing them from taking appropriate disciplinary measures against their children.

Drug abuse can lead to strikes

On the discussion of drug abuse leading to strikes in public boarding secondary schools, the responses of the respondents were as shown in the table 5 below.

From table 5 it can be observed that 80 (78.4%) agreed, 16 (15.7%) disagreed, while 5 (4.9%) neutral. From the observation above a whopping 80 respondents agreed that there is drug prevalence at boarding secondary schools in Kenya this is likely the recipe for strikes and burning of school buildings. This is in support of Dr. Catherine Mutisya who posits that drug abuse is also one of the causes of student unrest and could contribute to burning of schools. Dr Catherine Mutisya, a psychiatrist and founder of the Nairobi Parenting Clinic, an organization that coaches parents and provides counseling services, says that most parents rarely know that their children are on drugs. "A lot of the patients we treat are usually brought to us by schools," she explains. "They call in and inform us that they have discovered one of their students is using drugs, and we then notify their parents.

Peers can make others participate in strikes

On the discussion of on peers making others participate in strikes, responses of the respondents were as shown in the table 6 below

From table 6 it can be observed that 81 (79.4%) agreed, 15 (14.7%) disagreed while 6 (5.9%) were neutral. Majority of the respondents agreed that peer pressure from fellow students makes innocent students in

Table 4. Bad examples from leaders leads to strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	70	68.6	71.4	71.4
	Disagree	19	18.6	19.4	90.8
	Neutral	9	8.8	9.2	100.0
	Total	98	96.1	100.0	
Missing	System	4	3.9		
Total		102	100.0		

Table 5. Drug abuse can lead to strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	80	78.4	79.2	79.2
	Disagree	16	15.7	15.8	95.0
	Neutral	5	4.9	5.0	100.0
	Total	101	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.0		
Total		102	100.0		

Table 6. Peers can make others participate in strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	81	79.4	79.4	79.4
	Disagree	15	14.7	14.7	94.1
	Neutral	6	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

public boarding secondary schools to participate or organize strikes in their own schools. However, Ian Omondi (2018) reports that according to Jepkemei, research findings show that most principals in Kenya do not have the capacity to lead in complex situations and are unprepared for their roles because Kenya does not have a formal leadership training or mentorship programme for principals

Cult (Satanism) movement leads to strikes

On the discussion of satanic group movement present on school compound leads to strikes, the responses of the respondents were as shown in table 7 below

From table 7 it can be observed that 54 (52.9%) agree with the idea that Satanism movements is the cause of strikes and eventual burning of school buildings, 27 (26.5%) disagree while 15 (14.7%) were neutral. From the discussion above it is clear that there is infiltration of satanic worship or teaching in some of the public boarding secondary schools in Nyanza province is something that needs to be addressed by higher authority. The finding is in line with Board of Governors

(BoG) membership; national culture of violence; the changing society; who say that poor parenting; and the general hopelessness and despair caused by the prevailing economic and social hardships, may make learners seek wrong groups as occultism

Transfer of principals leads to strikes

On the discussion of transfer of principals leading to strikes, responses of the respondents were as shown in table 8 below

From table 8 it can be observed that 73 (71.6%) agreed with the statement that transfers of principals could have caused the latest unrest in public boarding secondary schools, 11 (15.7%) disagreed while 16 (15.6%) were neutral. Ian Omondi (2018) reports that according to Jepkemei, research findings show that most principals in Kenya do not have the capacity to lead in complex situations and are unprepared for their roles because Kenya does not have a formal leadership training or mentorship programme for principals. According to Bakhada (2010), quality of management especially at institutional level is and continues to be a

Table 7. Cult (Satanism) movement leads to strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	54	52.9	56.3	56.3
	Disagree	27	26.5	28.1	84.4
	Neutral	15	14.7	15.6	100.0
	Total	96	94.1	100.0	
Missing	System	6	5.9		
Total		102	100.0		

Table 8. Transfer of principals leads to strikes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	73	71.6	73.0	73.0
	Disagree	11	10.8	11.0	84.0
	Neutral	16	15.7	16.0	100.0
	Total	100	98.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.0		
Total		102	100.0		

Table 9. How do principals address students' complaints?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	12	11.8	12.1	12.1
	Good	37	36.3	37.4	49.5
	Excellent	35	34.3	35.4	84.8
	Moderate	13	12.7	13.1	98.0
	None of the above	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	99	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	2.9		
Total		102	100.0		

major concern of the government of Kenya. The BoMs are appointed with the express task of managing schools on behalf of the cabinet minister. It was assumed rightly and sometimes wrongly that the appointed members would be equal to the task, however, this was not always the case as some schools experienced problems while others succeeded.

How principals address students' complaints?

On the discussion of on how school principals address students' complaints, responses of the respondents were as shown in table 9 above.

From table 9, it can be observed that those who say that principal's address to students' complaints is poor are 12 (11.8%), good 37 (36.3%), excellent (34.3%), moderate 13 (12.7%), those who were not either of the above were 2 (2%). From the above discussion it is observed that public boarding secondary school principals have adequate ways of addressing students'

complaints. These findings are against Ian Omondi (2018) reports that according to Jepkemei, research findings show that most principals in Kenya do not have the capacity to lead in complex situations and are unprepared for their roles because Kenya does not have a formal leadership training or mentorship programme for principals.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives an overview of the study and is divided into four sections: the summary of the major findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.

Summary of the Major Findings

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

Evaluation of how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary schools

This study was guided by the following question: How do principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary schools in Nyanza?

The study established that those who say that principal's address to students' complaints is poor are 12 (11.8%), good 37 (36.3%), excellent 35 (34.3%), moderate 13 (12.7%), those who were not either of the above were 2 (2%). From the above discussion it is observed that public boarding secondary school principals have adequate ways of addressing students' complaints. However, it may be hard for principals to contain unruly students if their transfer was the cause of the same. It was discovered that 73 (71.6%) agreed with the statement that transfer of principals could have caused the latest unrest in public boarding secondary schools, 11 (15.7%) disagreed while 16 (15.6%) were neutral. Another calamity that caused the latest student strike was occultism whose results were that 54 (52.9%) agree with the idea that Satanism movements is the cause of strikes and eventual burning of school buildings, 27 (26.5%) disagree while 15 (14.7%) were neutral. From the discussion above it is clear that there infiltration of satanic worship or teaching in some of the public boarding secondary schools in Nyanza province something that needs to be addressed by higher authority.

CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation of how principals address students' complaints in boarding public secondary schools in Nyanza province was good and that secondary school principals have adequate ways of addressing students' complaints. However, the presence of waives of occultism in many schools in Nyanza region is making it hard for boarding public secondary schools to defuse unruly striking students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study which revealed that peer influence, occultism and poor parenting are some of

the causes of indiscipline among students in public boarding secondary schools in Nyanza province, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- i. Linkages should be organized with the communities surrounding the schools to create improved positive relationship with teachers and students for better and improved behavior.
- ii. Most of the principals have shown that they are incapable of handling and controlling unruly students during strike, principals should be retrained on management and better ways of controlling the students so as to curb destruction of school property.

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