ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STRIKES IN KENYA.

Dr. Domeniter Naomi Kathula.

Education Expert

Email of Corresponding Author: naomikathula@gmail.com ;
domeniter.naomi@yahoo.com

Abstract

Purpose of the Study: This paper assessed the role of school principals and board of management on school strikes in Kenyan Secondary Schools. Specifically, to determine the causes of strikes among Secondary Schools in Kenya, to examine the role of School Principals in causing and preventing strikes in Secondary Schools as well as to establish the oversight role of school boards regarding payment of damage fees during strikes as well as other factors in the running of the school.

Methodology: The research was anchored on the conflict theory as well as the expectancy theory. The descriptive research design and the explanatory research design were used in the paper. The targeted population consisted of 18 teachers, 60 students and 60 parents. The study applied a census method and as such all 138 respondents would form the sample.

Results: The study found that student unrest and strikes are mainly as a result of student grievances that have been left unaddressed over a period of time leading to frustrations that manifests in the form of violence, bullying, boycotts and disobedience by students. Such grievances include poor food, poor boarding facilities such as beddings, congestions in the dormitories, strict rules that sometimes does not include room for entertainment and co-curricular activities.

Conclusions: The study concluded that schools do not have well defined and functional communication systems between the students and the administration. The study further concluded that school boards are not as actively involved in school affairs as they perhaps should be as seen by the complaints of stakeholders such as students and parents.

Recommendations: The study recommends that schools engage students in making choices that affect the running of the school and hence the day to day activities of the students. Additionally, the study recommends that the school board of management becomes more active in the affairs of the school regarding communication between students and the administration. Finally, the study recommends that school boards be more proactive to represent the interest of all stakeholders in the school ecosystem.

Keywords: *School, Principals, Board of Management, Strike, Student Unrest*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Across the world, education is a key part of society. The main objective of education is to improve productivity and provide citizens who can coexist peacefully and productively in a progressive society. However, student unrest is a common occurrence all over the world (Eliot, 2020). In the Philippines for example, students of Leyte High School went on strike over the reinstatement of the principal (Rosas, 2019). In America, there were at least of 149 school shootings in 2020 alone and while this may be triggered by a number of factors, it highlights the safety or lack thereof of students while in school. In Ethiopia, in the mid-2000s student unrest was triggered by government campaigns against the Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party and as such had political causes (Raitanen, Sandberg & Oksanen, 2019).

Student unrest is also frequent in Nigeria especially in Nigerian Universities mainly as a result of poor relationship between administration and students, poor resources and poor conditions within these learning institution among other reasons (Okolie & Etaneki, 2020). In Kenya, waves of student unrest are a common theme in the Education sector and this has been a frequent occurrence in the history of Kenyan education (Manasi & Andiema, 2021). These strikes were characterized by violence that has led to destruction of property and in extreme cases to the loss of life. The most devastating acts of violence in Kenyan schools include the 1991 incident in St Kizito Mixed Secondary School where female students were raped and 19 of them lost their lives. In a separate incident in Nyeri High School in 1999, 4 prefects were locked in their cubicles and set on fire. More recently in Moi Girls High School Nairobi in 2017, a fire led to the death of ten girls (Chemutai, Onkware & Iteyo, 2020).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Student unrest has previously been blamed on a wide range of factors including devil worship, homosexuality and drug abuse. Other reasons include political interference, differences between members of the community, differences among the board members, media influence, harsh rules and conditions in schools, teacher misconduct as well as failure by parents to guide their children (Oburu, Coetzee & Swartz, 2020).

The 2001 presidential committee formed to establish the causes and remedies to frequent school strikes recommended that teachers were supposed to act as role models, the roles and powers of prefects were to be minimized and more recreational clubs and movements were to be formed. However, more than two decades later, student unrest persists and authorities are seemingly unable to contain and control them. In the last term of 2021, more than 200 secondary schools went on strike across the country. Most school heads pointed out lack of discipline and the unprecedented times caused by Covid-19 that made it difficult for students to concentrate when they eventually got back to school after staying home for large periods of time. The unrest was so extensive that some quarters have called for the reintroduction of corporal punishment that had previously been outlawed by the ministry of education (Opere, Kamere & Wawire, 2019).

After students went on strike and damaged school property, most parents were forced to pay damage fees in order for their children to be accepted back in school. However, the expensive figures witnessed in some schools led to the raising of eyebrows concerning the high figures involved, who benefits from them and whether there could be an ulterior motive to these strikes (Nyabisi & Mwelu, 2018).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

i. To establish the causes of strikes among Secondary Schools in Kenya.
ii. To examine the role of School Principals in causing and preventing strikes in Secondary Schools.
iii. To establish the oversight role of school boards regarding payment of damage fees during strikes as well as other factors in the running of the school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part reviews previous studies related to principals causing strikes in Kenyan schools to get easy money from parents and the role of board members in them doing so. This includes the theoretical literature. A conceptual framework is also presented to show the research variables figuratively. The knowledge gaps are identified by conducting a critical empirical review.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Conflict Theory

The conflict theory was first developed by Karl Max and Max Weber in the 19th Century. Karl Max saw the rich exploiting the poor and denying them access to resources therefore leading to conflict. This led to the foundations of the conflict theory where it views society as made up of different groups each with their own views and expectations. When these needs are not fulfilled and their expectations are not met, it results in disagreement and consequently leads to conflict. In a school scenario, this is true because if the needs and expectations of students are not met, it leads to conflict that may escalate to student unrest in the form of strikes (Moshiri, 2019).

The disadvantage of this theory is that it does not provide solutions for all conflicts and at the same time cannot control how individuals choose to see things from their points of view. This theory is applicable to this study since it addresses conflicts in schools and the cases of indiscipline. The theory is beneficial since it adds knowledge regarding institutional conflict since schools expect students to toe the line and obey rules and regulations while students may be inclined to breaking these rules especially if they feel that their needs are not being adequately addressed.

Expectancy Theory

The study will also make use of the expectancy theory. It was first formulated in 1964 by Victor Vroom and it details the process that a person goes through when making choices. The theory proposes that an individual makes an action that leads to either a positive or a negative outcome. Edward Lawler and Layman Porter advanced the theory and posited that the relationship between the behaviour of people and their objectives is influenced by reward systems as well as the working conditions. The theory is therefore relevant to the current study because it deals with the relationships between performance and outcome. When the students are morally brought up, a positive effect is expected. Conversely, if they are not well instructed, negative forms of expression such as drug abuse, stealing, fighting as well as student unrest are exhibited (Galla, Amemiya & Wang, 2018).

The limitation of this theory is that it assumes that behaviours are as a result of conscious choices seeking to maximize pleasure and minimize pain when in reality what an individual chooses to do may be wrong because of its consequences to the society as a whole. The implications of this

theory to the study is that if all the stakeholders change their approach towards discipline and enhancing cooperation between the students, parents and teachers then cases of unrest in schools will reduce and mature and responsible relationships will be formed.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

This section reviews previous studies related to the current study and their findings.

Causes of Strikes in Secondary Schools

According to Chemutai, Onkware and Iteyo (2020), cases of student conflicts are not isolated to Kenya alone but are common everywhere across the modern world. The study was focused on Kericho County and found that student conflict has led to widespread material loss as well as negative social impact. The study was underpinned by participative leadership theory and the functionalism theory. It used the evaluation research design and established that the causes of student unrest in the county included change in government policies, inadequate and poor quality of food, social media, political differences as well as poor administrative practices. Student unrest is exhibited in form of theft and destruction of school property, bullying, refusing punishment and strikes against the administration of the school.

Onivehu (2021) investigated the causes, consequences and control of student protests, especially the EndSARS (Special Anti-Robbery Squad) protest in Nigeria. A descriptive survey was adopted for the study. The findings showed that the protest was caused by extra-judicial killings, assaults, harassment, extortion, bad governance, and youth unemployment. Additionally, the findings indicated that the consequences of the protest include destruction of lives and property, hacking of the websites of public ministries, departments, agencies and corporate organizations, destruction of public infrastructural facilities, and disruption of academic activities in schools. This provides a contextual gap since it was conducted in Nigerian institutions of higher learning as opposed to Kenyan high schools.

Wanjohi, Kinyanjui and Gitumu (2019) established that the education ministry encouraged public secondary schools to create councils to represent students so as to provide the students with a platform that allows their involvement in the management of schools. However, the study found that despite the formation of such forums, school strikes continue to happen with alarming regularity. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was guided by Maslow's

theory of hierarchy of needs. Findings revealed that the student council presidents were largely unaware of their functions relating to strike management strategies and that they felt left out in the strategies employed by their schools. As such, the study recommended that there is need to strengthen students' councils and sensitize the presidents on their roles in strike management strategies in secondary schools. This implies the need to enforce adherence to the implementation of the student council policy with a view to compel schools to actualize the democratization of management practices in secondary schools in order to incorporate students concerns in decision making processes.

Marete, Mugwe, Ochieng and Reche (2020) assessed the schools communication practices and its influence on students' unrest management in public secondary school in Meru county of Kenya. The study used mixed method of research and found that schools had ineffective communication practices of top down communication practices, poor listening skills, poor language skills, lack of timely feedback on student issues and lack of suggestion systems lead to development of conflict leading to student unrest. In addition, the student councils handled many responsibilities in punishing student's resulting in conflicts and students unrest.

Role of School Principals in causing and preventing strikes in Secondary Schools.

Dinah, Onyango and Kyalo (2019) sought to investigate the participation in decision making of students in the management of secondary schools in Tharaka-Nithi and Nairobi Counties. Stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, purposive and convenience sampling were used in drawing the samples. Content validity was determined by seeking expert judgement from educational management. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and organized into themes and presented using descriptions and quotations. Data collection instruments included questionnaires, interview guides and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide. The findings showed that majority of the schools had established Student Council form of student leadership, although the councils were not represented in BOM, PA and staff meetings. The study therefore recommends that secondary school managements should actively involve students in all areas of decision-making in school with particular emphasis on decisions relating to the foregoing decision-making areas.

Kamaku, Mberia and Ngula (2019) sought to investigate the detrimental effects of television on the wellbeing of children mentally, physically and emotionally. The study explains that the

growth of the media industry leaves them spoilt for choice on the content. Without, parental guidance, teenagers tend to drift towards violent content. As such, the students tend to be predisposed to violence when solving their problems. The study used parallel mixed research design: quantitative data was collected using self- administered questionnaires through stratified random sampling procedures and qualitative design where data was collected through an interview guide administered to school administrators of the schools picked out for the study. The study findings indicated that television viewing had an impact on students' unrest in secondary schools in Kenya. The findings would benefit various stakeholders: parents, teachers, Ministry of Education and media regulators in monitoring violent television content exposed to teenagers affecting their morals as well as compromising school work culminating in schools' unrest.

Nzioka (2020) found that student violence in secondary schools in Kenya occurs due to three main causes namely alienation of students from their process of self-determination, experience of conditions as harsh and an affront to the students' values, rights and freedoms. In order to address student violence in secondary schools in Kenya, this study worked towards a philosophical solution and concluded that the solution to this dehumanization lies in the liberation not only of the students who feel oppressed and the school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders, as the oppressors in an effort that consists of humanization. The study recommended that student strikes are addressed before they start and students feel like their issues are addressed.

Isalano Sr, Omwenga, Dimba and Shibwabo (2021) analyzed the relationship between church appointed school administrative leadership and the management of the students' unrest in Siaya County. The study was based on the structural functioning theory. The study adopted a pragmatic approach method therefore employing concurrent triangulation mixed method design. Questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used as data collection methods. The outcome of the study was evidence of disparities between numbers of student unrest among the church appointed school administrator institutions in comparison to the government appointed school administrator institutions. The findings indicated a positive and significant correlation between church appointed administrative leadership and sponsorship of development projects with the management of student unrest. The study concludes that student involvement and

inclusion in planning of development projects of church sponsors and students would contribute to the reduction of student unrest cases.

Kenei (2021) investigated the unrests witnessed in Kenyan schools in 2018 and the role of school politics in management of unrests in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study was guided by conflict theory and theory of symbolic interactionism, and a descriptive survey design with a target population of the 57 public secondary schools in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. Stratified random sampling was used to select respondents. The study used a questionnaire and interviews to collect data. The study found that school politics including teachers' incitement has a significant role in management of unrests in public secondary schools in Taita Taveta County.

Board Members oversight role and strikes in Secondary Schools

M'itiiri (2011) conducted a study to assess the causes of strikes in secondary schools in Meru North District. The study employed descriptive research methodology to investigate why students in secondary schools engaged in school unrests. The research survey was based on the opinion of the research and the respondent interviewed helped to gather information needed to form the primary data. The research employed primary data, observation, interview schedule and questionnaire guide. The study found that poor public relations, poor school nutrition, peer pressure, drugs and abuse of substance, bad leadership in management of the schools and in the community, including external and political interference, prevalent monotonous method of instructions, and examination phobia among the students were the reasons for student strikes. The study recommended good preparation for examinations, more involvement by the board and senior school administration as well as an improvement in service delivery by the school.

Kindiki (2009) investigated the effectiveness of the BOG in curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Kenya. The study was carried out in Keiyo district in Kenya. The study adopted a survey design and used interviews, questionnaires and documents to collect data. Data collected was coded and analyzed descriptively. Findings indicated that training of the members of BOG was directly related to the implementation of the curriculum. The BOG supported schools to acquire physical resources and enhanced curriculum development. The study recommended that schools should strive to provide pre-requisite training to the members of BOG and more involvement in the daily running of the schools.

Ndambuki (2016) sought to ascertain the influence of board of management members 'conflict management styles on student's discipline in public secondary schools in Machakos Sub- county, Machakos County-Kenya. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study adopted Thomas-Kilman conflict mode instrument (T.K.I) which provided detailed information on how effectively the five different conflict management styles could be applied. Questionnaires were used to collect data from both the students and board members. The study established that the prevalence of indiscipline cases in schools was rated high at 95 percent. Compromising and accommodation styles were partially used. The study established that a majority of the students took desirable actions to control conflicts between themselves and their colleagues. This meant that the cases of indiscipline in schools were largely due to conflicts between the school management and the students due to poor conflict resolution styles used by the school administration. A comparison between the conflict management style used and frequency of indiscipline showed that, indiscipline in schools were mostly pronounced in schools where avoidance, assertiveness and collaboration conflict management styles were practiced. The study therefore concluded that cases of indiscipline in school were linked to the conflict management style used and recommended that school management should adopt styles that generate minimal conflicts when dealing with student indiscipline

Mbii, Magoma and Waweru (2020) analyzed the BOM members' training, skills and competence and performance of their responsibilities. The findings show that, in some of the school boards, there is blatant breach of guidelines. In some cases, some of the BOM members had primary school education as their highest academic qualification against policy. Further, findings indicate that training of the BOM members is not given a priority as required by policy. This may give a pointer as to why some boards of management members in schools are unable to cope with the operations that entail running a school and come up with policies that enable peaceful conflict resolution between the students and the administration. It is recommended that composition of the board must strictly adhere to government policies. It is also recommended that there is a need to train BOM members on policy interpretation, strategy formulation and financial management for them to ably manage schools. This review is important to education theorists and practitioners, and other stakeholders in the field of education.
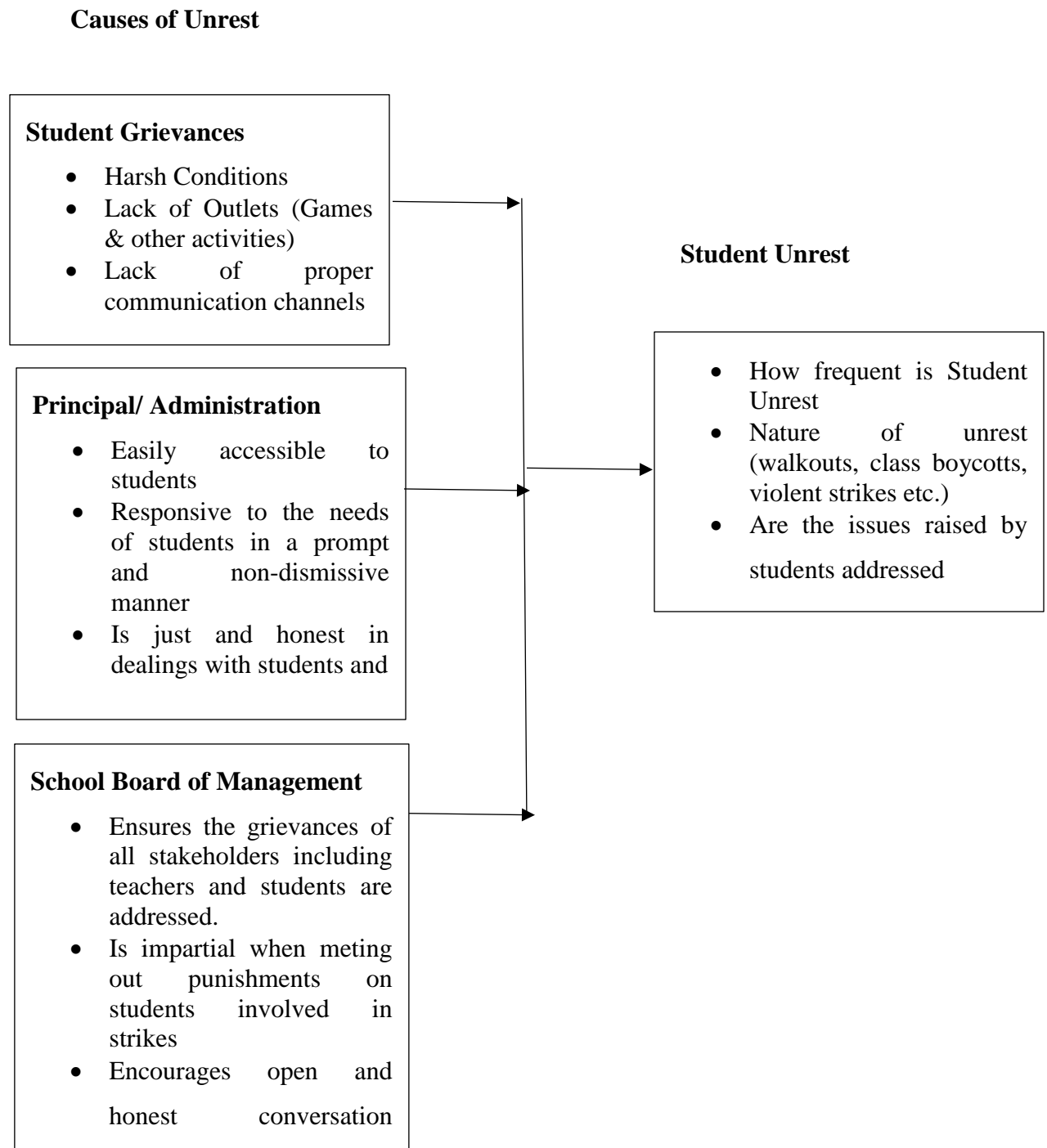
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Causes of Unrest

Student Grievances

- Harsh Conditions
- Lack of Outlets (Games & other activities)
- Lack of proper communication channels

Student Unrest

Principal/ Administration

- Easily accessible to students
- Responsive to the needs of students in a prompt and non-dismissive manner
- Is just and honest in dealings with students and

- How frequent is Student Unrest
- Nature of unrest (walkouts, class boycotts, violent strikes etc.)
- Are the issues raised by students addressed

School Board of Management

- Ensures the grievances of all stakeholders including teachers and students are addressed.
- Is impartial when meting out punishments on students involved in strikes
- Encourages open and honest conversation

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author 2021

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a questionnaire to gather information from the teachers and students. Additionally, the Analytical Bundle for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to code, examine and generate the quantitative report. This research study adopted both the descriptive research design and explanatory research design. The descriptive research study design is made use of when gathering data concerning people's perspectives, points of views and habits (Patten & Newhart, 2017). Besides, the explanatory research design is also deemed appropriate for the study since the researcher aims at explaining the casual relationship of the variables. Hence the explanatory research design was suitable.

The targeted population was 3 teachers and 10 students (5 form 3 and 5 form 4 students) from 6 randomly selected schools that experienced strikes in 2021 in Kenya whose parents complained of unusually high damage fees demanded by the school before readmission. The study also used interview guides to obtain information from the parents of the students involved in the study. As such the target population would consist of 18 teachers, 60 students and 60 parents. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect data from the teachers and students and an interview guide to collect data from the parents. SPSS was used to code, analyze and generate the quantitative and descriptive report. Since the target population of the study was small, census approach was adopted to study all the 138 respondents.

RESULTS AND PRESENTATION

The response rate for the study was established in order to ascertain the representation and the quality of responses for conclusion of the study. This study targeted 3 teachers and 10 students (5 form 3 and 5 form 4 students) from 6 randomly selected schools that experienced strikes in 2021 and as such the target population would consist of 18 teachers, 60 students and 60 parents. The response rate is as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Response Rate

Category	Responded	Did not Respond	Response Rate
Teachers	15	3	83.3
Students	52	8	86.7
Parents	50	10	83.3

From the results in Table 1, it is shown that out of the 18 questionnaires administered to the teachers, 15 of them were dully filled and returned, translating into a response rate of 83.3 percent. Additionally, 52 of the students took part in the study giving a response rate of 86.7% percent. 50 parents responded to the interview questions hence an 83.3% response rate. These response rates were way above the conventionally acceptable rate for surveys. In earlier local doctoral studies, it was stated that the average response rate for empirical studies was 65% of the sample (Baruch, 1999). Similarly, this was in line with Orodho (2009) who observed that a response rate above 50% contributes towards gathering of sufficient data that could be generalized to represent the opinions of respondents about the study problem in the target population. Given the general response rate of 84.4%, the results can therefore be generalized and considered representative of the population.

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis was conducted on Student's opinions and the results were as presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
The conditions in our school are conducive for learning and development as holistic individuals	3.80%	1.90%	30.80%	28.80%	34.60%	3.885	1.041
There are good communication systems between students and the school administration	5.80%	5.80%	25.00%	30.80%	32.70%	3.788	1.143
Students have express themselves in other ways but they do not bear fruit	11.50%	11.50%	28.80%	25.00%	23.10%	3.365	1.284
The school does not respond promptly and actively when we raise our concerns	7.70%	0.00%	30.80%	32.70%	28.80%	3.750	1.118
The school board is partial and unjust in conducting their oversight and disciplinary mandate on students	5.80%	1.90%	21.20%	36.50%	34.60%	3.923	1.082

From the findings in Table 2, the results found that 63.4% of the students agreed that the conditions in their school are conducive for learning and development as holistic individuals. 63.5% of the students also agreed that there are good communication systems between students and the school administration. In addition, 48.1% of the students felt that there are other ways in which they can express themselves but they are not effective. 61.5% of the students felt that the

school does not respond promptly and actively when they raise their concerns. Finally, the study found that 71.1% of the students agreed that the school board was unjust in conducting their oversight role and disciplinary mandate on students involved in school unrest. A mean and SD of 3.742 and 1.134 respectively indicates that most of the students have grievances that they feel are not being addressed by the school administration.

The study also sought the opinions of teachers regarding the frequent students' strikes and the results were as presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Teacher's Descriptive Analysis

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
There may be other reasons for the frequent student strikes	0.00%	6.70%	33.30%	40.00%	20.00%	3.733	0.884
Communication between students and the school administration should be improved	6.70%	0.00%	6.70%	46.70%	40.00%	4.133	1.060
The school administration can do more to prevent these strikes	6.70%	20.00%	6.70%	26.70%	40.00%	3.733	1.387
The damage fees paid by students is more than the cost of damage	6.70%	13.30%	20.00%	40.00%	20.00%	3.533	1.187
The school board can do more to prevent overcharging of damage fees by the school administration	6.70%	13.30%	0.00%	40.00%	40.00%	3.933	1.280

From the findings in Table 3 above, the study revealed that 60% of the teachers involved agreed that there may be other reasons for the frequent student strikes while 86.7% of the teachers felt that communication between students and the school administration should be improved. In addition, 66.7% of the respondents felt that the school administration can do more to prevent these strikes. 60% of the teachers also agreed that the damage fees students were asked to pay were more than the perceived damages. Finally, 80% of the teachers felt that the school board could definitely do more to prevent overcharging of damage fees by the school administration. A mean of 3.813 and SD of 1.160 reveals that most of the teachers from these schools felt that, the school administration as well as the board members could do more to prevent and to deal with student unrest when it arises.

The study also interviewed parents to get their views on whether students were justified in airing out their grievances in this way. Parent 1 said that, "It is wrong for students to destroy property and make us parents pay for these damages given school fees are already very high". Parent 3

said, "*They are just showing their frustrations and should have been heard before it got to this point*". Parent 4 said, "*I am disappointed that our children have reached this level where they put their lives and that of others at risk over issues that can easily be sorted out*". Parent 9 stated that, "*What do you expect when you beat them up and expect them to follow rules as if this is a military camp?*"

The study also sought to establish whether Parents can do more to prevent the violent student unrests and to this Parent 7 responded, "*Of course we can, I think we have failed by expecting teachers to take up the mantle on the discipline of our children while we take a back seat*". Parent 29 said, "*Yes we can, this is not a problem that teachers can solve alone, we should all help when we can so our children can have a proper education*". Parent 42 stated that "*The school is just trying to shift the blame here despite the very high fees they charge. They should take responsibility and stop looking to shift the problem*". Parent 23 stated that, "*I have done all I can, I don't know what else to do*".

On whether the school had done enough to prevent future unrest Parent 18 said, "*No, they clearly don't listen to the children's grievances, I wonder what happened to suggestion boxes, we had them in my day*". Parent 21 said that, "*I doubt it, they seem to be using it as a cash cow to milk us dry*". Parent 30 stated, "*They keep saying so, but I want to see stern punishment for the perpetrators, we don't have time to be doing this every term*".

The study also sought to establish whether parents are comfortable with the punishment meted out to the students found to have been behind the student unrest. Parent 17 stated, "Y*es I am, they should be expelled from this great institution*". Parent 13 said, "*Suspensions are not enough, they should be prosecuted so that others who want to do the same in future will think twice*". "Parent 36 said*, "They should be expelled so they can let those who want to learn do so*".

On whether the damage fees each student is required to pay is consistent with the damage that occurred during the recent student's strike Parent 27 stated, "*It's not fair to the parents, this damage fees are too expensive and the same happened last year*". Parent 32 said, "*Absolutely not, I thought only windows were damaged, these charges are enough to build a new dormitory altogether*". Parent 48 stated that, "*Not a chance, I think the government should look into these charges*". When asked what the reason for the discrepancy could be, Parent 15 said, "*They must

be taking advantage of the situation". Parent 21 said, "*I hope the kids are seeing just how much trouble their actions have brought us.*"

On what should be done to address such discrepancies, Parent 23 stated that "*I wonder what the board of members is doing to stop this, it is too much*". Parent 33 said, "*The government should look into this, they cannot keep getting away with this*". Parent 10 stated, "*The board of members and the Parents Teachers Association need to come together and explain to us what is going on here.*" Finally, the interview sought to find out if the parents thought the school board exercises its oversight role satisfactorily in ensuring all the stakeholders in the school are well represented. Parent 11 stated, "*No, all this is clearly happening with their knowledge, we need answers from them*". Parent 41 stated, "*The parents clearly feel shortchanged, the parents on that board are clearly not representing our interests.*"

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study found that most of the students have grievances that the school administration are either unwilling or unable to address. Such issues include harsh conditions such as inadequate or poor food, boarding facilities such as beddings, congestions in the dormitories as well as other functions. The students also feel that the elimination of co-curricular activities from the school calendar has affected their learning activities. In addition, the students felt that the administration did not feel the need to address their concerns and that the existing methods of communication were frustrating since they did not yield any positive changes.

The study also found that principals and school administrations in general have not been creating healthy communication systems that will allow the students to feel involved in the administration of the school. School administrations generally tend to turn a blind eye to concerns raised and only react when it is too late. Finally, the study found that most school board of members did not exercise their role satisfactorily regarding oversight on damage or penalty charges administered by school principals on students after any strikes.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that student unrest and strikes are mainly as a result of student grievances that have been left unaddressed over a period of time leading to frustrations that manifests in the form of violence, bullying, boycotts and disobedience by students. Such grievances include poor

food, poor boarding facilities such as beddings, congestions in the dormitories, strict rules that sometimes does not include room for entertainment and co-curricular activities.

The study also concluded that schools do not have well defined and functional communication systems between the students and the administration. Whether by design or by chance, it leads to an unhealthy situation where students feel unheard and uncared for and when this frustrations fester over time it leads to student unrest that can be in different forms. The study also concluded that school boards are not as actively involved in school affairs as they perhaps should be as seen by the complaints of stakeholders such as students and parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that schools engage students in making choices that affect the running of the school and hence the day to day activities of the students. The study recommends that school administrations should set up ways of communication that enable them to hear and address the grievances of students as well as enable them to effectively communicate with students in a constructive and engaging manner rather than try to impose rules on them.

Additionally, the study recommends that the school board becomes more active in the affairs of the school regarding communication between students and the administration. In addition, the board should try to control the punishments meted on students as well as the damage fees payable by parents to secure readmission after strikes. Finally, the study recommends that school boards be more proactive to represent the interest of all stakeholders in the school ecosystem.

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