Difference in Student Management by Principal Before and After Principal Delocalization in Public Secondary Schools in Counties in Eastern Region, Kenya.

Lydia Njeri Kamau[*], Dr. Peter Kimanthi Mbaka, PhD

Department of Education, Chuka University. Kenya
Corresponding author

Abstract: **The objective of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in student management by principals before and after principals' delocalization in public secondary schools in counties in Eastern region, Kenya. The research adopted causal comparative and descriptive survey design. Chi-square was used to test the statistical hypothesis at significance level of α = 0.05. The target population of this study was 6,834 respondents comprising of 4,055 secondary school teachers employed by TSC, 2,772 form IV student leaders, one TSC RQASO and six CQASO. Multiple- stages sampling was employed to obtain a sample size of 273 respondents. Different questionnaires were employed for teachers and students. An interview schedule was used to gather data for TSC RQASO and CQASO. Analysis of quantitative data obtained was aided by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme Version 26.0. The findings of the study established that there was is a statistically significant difference between principals' student management before and after delocalization in public secondary schools in counties in eastern region, Kenya. The study recommended that better means of dealing with student discipline are devised.**

Keywords: **delocalization, Eastern Region, Kenya. Principals, Public secondary school, Student Management.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The goals of post primary education are to equip learners with necessary skill to be able to participate constructively to the development of country, to impress upon them positive attributes of flexibility, patriotism, adaptability, critical thinking, teamwork, patient, loyalty, hard work and commitment to purpose. All nations in all continents aim at upgrading their education system to nurture the abilities of the youths and develop competencies in varies fields that will position them to add value to the growth and development of a society economically, morally and socially (Qehaja & Aliu, 2018). The ability of a principal to coordinate all elements of a school to achieve an identified goal is a key determinant of an effective principal (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013). According to Crawford (2017), principals are in charge of the general management of a school including financial management, maintenance of infrastructure, students scheduling, human resource management, public relations, implementing school policy regarding discipline, coordination of the instructional programs and other school related matters. This means that principals are in charge of day to day running of schools, responsible for both administrative, curriculum and instruction supervision. The results of a study done by Olureni (2013) on principals' organization management and student academic results in Ekitistate Nigeri, concluded that the effectiveness' of a principals' in performing his/her duty had an effect on learners' overall performance. In concurrence with this view, Bell (2017) notes that the leader in a school is the principals who acts as a pivot on which all dimension of a school balance on and is responsible for academic and managerial details of a school. Efficient and effective duty performance by the principal is key for the success of any secondary school.

In the United States of America (USA) many states are spearheading reforms aimed at holding principals accountable for school performance (Heck, 2012). This was necessitated by the realization that principal's duty affects school academic performance. Similarly, Australia has over the last 30 years pursued educational reforms with the intention of improving the achievement standards of students (Cruickshank, 2017). England has over the couple of years witnessed a remarkably consistent effort in education reforms that are aimed at holding school principals accountable for improving student performance on both national and state tests (Leithwood & Day, 2013). Interest on school management demonstrates the seriousness with which it is considered to be influencing student academic outcome.

In Kenya, principals are employees of the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and are mandated to manage secondary schools on behalf of the Ministry of Education. TSC in 2018 implemented the policy of delocalization of schools heads of educational institution in Kenya which resulted in the transfer of administrative heads of educational institutions to schools away from their home regions. The objectives of delocalization were to streamline school management and minimize incidents of indiscipline among students.

The involuntary transfer of secondary principals has been a subject of investigation. A study by Wijayatunga (2018) on impact of school management and performance in public secondary schools in Sri Lanka where a survey was conducted in Colombo Sri Lanka 5 public schools with a sample of 100 respondents made up of 5 principals and 95 teachers. In collection of data, interviews and questionnaires were employed. The observation made was that transfers especially involuntary may be a cause of stress for a teacher which may interfere with performance of duty of the transferee in a new school. The current study sought to investigate whether there is a similar situation in Kenya with principals' delocalization as it is in Sri Lanka. The study in Sri Lanka also observed that despite the good intentions of transferring teachers to new working stations, complaints have arisen that they significantly affect the academic performance of the two schools involved, receiving and transferring.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching has been observed to be a profession with many dissatisfied teachers. Lerman, Jung and Elva (2018), estimates that job dissatisfaction affected as many as 200,000 teachers in the United States (USA) and through them 5,000,000 pupils. Hence students are directly or indirectly affected by the disgruntled teachers and administrations. Another study by Shane, Pill & Bell (2017) found out that principals have a big challenge of dealing with student discipline, underperforming teachers and managing un-cooperative parents. Wise (2015) conducted a study on emerging challenges facing principals capitalizing on US public schools with the input of 10,000 principals. The study revealed that principals encounter many problems including increasing demands on students' academic achievement, family break ups, overwhelming poverty effects and lack of financial resources among many others challenges.

Students are the pillars of any education system. In the absence of student's educational institutions are mare buildings. Students are the lifeline in any school. Mortimore (2013) investigated behavior problems among students in London public secondary schools. Questionnaires were employed for data collection. The study established that unsettled family problems had an influence on the behavior of students. The study established that parental stresses are picked out by children resulting in difficulties in students' participation in schools thus affecting their behavior. There is a need for students to be involved in the administration of the school. Raby (2012) in study on School rules: Obedience, Discipline and Elusive Democracy in Toronto, advocated for genuine student involvement and democratic participation in schools. The study contended that students should not be subjected to rules but they should be provided with avenues for peaceful expression of their opinions. Student management is therefore better performed by principals who have a high degree of sobriety and also who are more present in a school. This could be a challenge for delocalized principals who spend a lot time on transition between work station and their homes.

School unrest is a global issue of concern. A report done in Washington D.C on indicators of school crime and safety, noted that improving student discipline regulations and policies and maintaining a positive environment are key issues in improving academic success of learners (Robers, Kemp & Truman, 2014. The consequence of breaking school rules should be applied fairly and firmly. Gaustad (2015) on a study on schools respond to Gangs and violence carried conducted in 600 secondary schools in Oregon USA concluded that rules that are perceived as unfair and which are enforced inconsistently are linked to poor student discipline in school. The study further observed that educational goals can fail due to serious learner's misconduct such as students' unrest or student violence.

The issue of learner indiscipline has been a serious and pervasive and most often affect the student learning negatively. This problem manifests itself in cases of arson, vandalism, drugs and substance abuse, truancy, disobedience, theft, riots and other unacceptable tendencies (Marais & Meier, 2015). Myrick (2017) opines that disciplinary challenges are described as unacceptable attitudes or behaviors that are in contravention of the established school policies and regulations. In Sweden, Durrant (2017) asserts that students' indiscipline manifests itself in theft, delinquency, murder, assault, truancy, fighting, bullying, fighting, stealing, loitering, unpunctuality, absenteeism, drug abuse, examination malpractices, insubordination and cult activities among others. In Australia, student discipline situation is not any better as Brister (2016) observed that lack of discipline among students in schools is on the increase.

In management of schools' communication is essential. Lazega (2015) carried out a study in the Netherlands where it noted that notices, letters, announcement, manuals, school policies are all means of communication that can effectively put to use in management of secondary schools. The study reiterates that for effective communication between school administration and learners' various channels of communication should be used. These channels include: school assemblies, suggestion boxes, class meetings, open discussions in a lesser formal setting (commonly referred to as 'barazas' in Kenya), notice board, newsletter, emails and other social media channels. There are three types of communication which are; verbal where one listens to another and gets the message, written communication which entails reading to understand the message and non-verbal communication where one observes another and infers meaning. Lazega (2015) noted that schools which have adopted various forms of communication effectively have observed an improvement in managerial efficiencies and reduced students' unrest. The current study sought to assess whether there was a difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization in Kenya.

School headship is perceived to have significant influence on learner performance. Cyprus, Kyriakides, Kythreotis, and Pashiardis (2012) investigated through a longitudinal study

the effects of school heads' leadership on learner academic achievement in Pakistan. The study findings inferred that the leadership style of school principals plays a prominent role in learners' academic outcome. Creating healthy environment for teachers and a conducive atmosphere for students is the responsibility of the principal and other education stakeholders (Mitgang, 2012). Conducive environment makes teachers feel happy to perform their obligation and allows students to focus on learning by being well-disciplined. Student management is one of the duties of the principal in this study.

Studies have been done to investigate school leadership and its influence on student performance. Alhosani, Singh, and Al Nahyan (2017) identify educational leadership as a variable that plays a significant role in aiding enhanced academic attainment of the learners in United Arab Emirates (UAE). Khaki and Safdar (2012) refer to educational leadership as the guiding process in which energies of parents, students and teachers are directed towards the achievement of common educational goals. Educational leadership is thus aimed at creating synergy among teachers, students and parents in order to realize the school objective and work towards its attainment. According to the Centre for Economic Performance (CEP), good management of school has been associated with improved learner academic achievement in both the developed and the developing countries (Lemos, 2014). Lemos (2014) posits that school management practices in comparison to other factors such as teaching quality, teacher qualification, class competition and class size, has been found to have a superior impact on students' academic results.

In an educational research on how can we improve school discipline, it was observed that students' indiscipline with normal learning, diverts administrative time and contributes to teacher demotivation and burnout (Osher, Bear, Sprague & Doyle, 2013). Another study that concurs with this view is a study on management of disciplinary problems in secondary school where it was observed that learner lack of discipline in classroom could be a precursor to school dropout and interferes with the teaching and learning process (Temitayo, Nanaya & Lukman, 2013). Student discipline is one of the indicators of student management in this study.

Ndeto (2013) undertook a study on effectiveness of school rules and regulations in enhancing discipline in public secondary schools in Kagundo division, Machakos County. The study noted that students were intensively involved in the implementation of school rules even though they were not necessarily active participant in the formulation of the school rules and regulations. The study findings included that students had a positive perception of school regulations and had no major challenge understanding them. Students were aware of the intrinsic value brought by enhancement of discipline in school. The foundation of good academic success is discipline was shown in a study conducted by Karanja and Bowen (2012) who noted that students unrest had a negative influence on academic performance. The study found out that there was a strong negative correlation between academic success and student unrest. In addition, the study discovered that there was a higher mean grade variation in schools that often went on strike compared to those school that did not. In the absence of students' contribution to formulation of school discipline policies, the principal has a big problem in implementing the rules. In schools there have been reports of protests, riots and violence and sometimes the police have to come in to intervene to protect school property. Ohsako (2017) in a research on violence at school in Guyana South America, argued that violence is a sensitive issue that provokes anxiety, arouses emotions and has negative impact on school performance. These acts of violence can be reduced if students are able to communicate their grievances in a better way.

Mugambi (2015) in a study on the role of principals in promoting student academic performance in secondary schools in Tigania West Sub – County, Meru County, revealed that there was a relationship between student management practices and school performance. Kosgei et al. (2017) conducted a study to assess the level of students' involvement in decision making and organizational effectiveness of secondary schools in Chepalungu sub-county, Bomet. Using a descriptive survey research design, the study gathered information from the school principals and student leaders. The study found that school organizational effectiveness had improved as a result of involvement of student council in decision making.

Discipline in the school is the principals' responsibility though it can be delegated to the deputy principal (Gichuiri, 2013). Discipline is critical at school for purposes of producing harmony, orderly behavior and self-controlled conduct. A study on the relationship between principals' managerial approaches and students discipline in secondary schools in Kenya noted that schools which are headed by collaborative, integrative and inspirational principals who involve the parents in managing schools and delegates responsibility effectives tends to have high disciplined students (Mestry, 2017). According to Kalu-Uche (2020) discipline is continuous activity of controlling institution and individual behavior. It is regarded as the foundation of running a school where its absence no progress can be achieved without it. Taveres (2015) further observed that discipline trains students to be responsible for themselves and their actions and accept the consequences of these actions.

A study done by Wanzala (2019) noted that students cause mayhem in schools because of many unresolved, underlying grievances and problems in schools like poor living conditions, being subjected to mock exams, poor management, bullying, high-handedness by principals, influence from other schools, arbitrary transfer of school administrators, poor facilities and drug abuse Teacher transfer has emerged as a significant problem affecting school performance, administration weaknesses and student

achievement. One of the goals of delocalization was to curb the rising cases of student unrest in schools however cases of students strikes continued to be witnessed in the country. Some of the issues raised for the unrest included the delocalization of school heads. The teacher unions have blamed TSC for adding fuel to the already difficulty student management issue. The study sought to investigate the influence of principals' delocalization on student management in public secondary schools in selected counties in eastern region, Kenya.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research adopted causal comparative and descriptive survey design. Causal comparative design was used to check the influence of principals' delocalization on student management. The study was carried out in public secondary schools' in counties in eastern region, Kenya. A total of 924 secondary schools out of a total number of 1,754 secondary schools have been affected by delocalization. The target population of this study was 6,834 respondents comprising of 4,055 secondary school teachers employed by TSC, 2,772 form IV student leaders, one TSC RQASO and six CQASO. Multiple- stages sampling was employed to obtain a sample

size of 273 respondents. Different questionnaires were employed for teachers and students. An interview schedule was used to gather data for TSC RQASO and CQASO. The study used Cronbach's Alpha method of reliability testing. The study instrument Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.797. The research instruments were qualified for data collection. The study hypothesis was tested using Chi square at significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Data analysis was done using computer spread sheet and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.0. The findings of the study were represented by use tables and prose narrations while qualitative data was discussed thematically.

IV. RESULTS

The research collected data from teachers, students, BOM members, one Teacher Service Commission Regional Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (TSC RQASO) and 3 County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer CQASO on the student management. The findings are depicted in Table 1 and 2.

Teachers View on Student Management Before and After Principals Delocalization

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers on Student Management

	n	Before			After		
		Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation	Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation
Principals' ensure that the classrooms are safe and well organized	158	3.49	1.180	Agree	3.36	1.331	Undecided
Principals hold students open forum for students to express their grievances	158	3.32	1.208	Undecided	3.23	1.439	Undecided
Principals ensure students strictly adhere to school rules and regulations	158	2.92	1.270	Undecided	2.82	1.396	Undecided
Examinations are done and results analyzed regularly	158	3.01	1.284	Undecided	3.00	1.442	Undecided
Learners participate in co-curricular activities in order to nurture their talents and skills	158	2.54	1.432	Disagree	2.59	1.557	Disagree

V. DISCUSSION

The findings on Table 1, show that; teachers agreed that principals ensure that the classrooms are safe and well organized before delocalization (Mean=3.49, SD=1.180). They were undecided with the same after principal delocalization (Mean=3.36, SD=1.331). In addition, before principal delocalization, teachers were undecided on whether principals hold students' open forum for students to express their grievances (Mean=3.32, SD=1.208) they were also undecided on the same after delocalization (Mean=3.23, SD=1.439). The teachers were both undecided before (Mean=2.92, SD=1.270) and after (Mean=2.82, SD=1.396) delocalization on principals ensure students strictly adhere to school rules and regulations.

Furthermore, teachers were also both undecided before (Mean=3.01, SD=1.284) and after (Mean=3.00, SD=1.442) delocalization the statement examinations are done and result analyzed regularly. This could be an effect of the global Covid 19 pandemic that resulted in school terms being reduced. The schools in an effort to allocate more time to cover the syllabus reduced the number of examinations being conducted in schools. The teachers disagreed both before (Mean=2.54, SD=1.432) and after (Mean=2.59, SD=1.557) delocalization with the statement that learners participate in co-curricular activities in order to nurture their talents.

Students View on Principals Student Management Before and After Delocalization.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Students

Statement		Before				After		
	n	Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation	Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation	
Principals' ensure that the classrooms are safe and well organized	106	3.63	1.286	Agree	3.80	1.166	Agree	
Principals hold students open forum for students to express their grievances	106	3.45	1.367	Agree	3.58	1.359	Agree	
Principals ensure students strictly adhere to school rules and regulations	106	3.67	1.260	Agree	3.70	1.339	Agree	
Examinations are done and results analyzed regularly	106	3.40	1.370	Undecided	3.40	1.422	Undecided	
Learners participate in co-curricular activities in order to nurture their talents and skills	106	3.05	1.540	Undecided	3.21	1.556	Undecided	

VI. DISCUSSION

The research findings on Table 2, indicate that students were in agreement that principals ensure that the classrooms are safe and well organized before principals' delocalization (Mean=3.63, SD=1.286) and after principals' delocalization (Mean=3.8, SD=1.166). The student also agreed that principals hold student open forum for students to express their grievances before (Mean=3.45, SD=1.367) and after delocalization (Mean=3.58, SD=1.359). The students were undecided as to whether examinations are done and results analyzed regularly both before (Mean=3.4, SD=1.370) and after delocalization (Mean=3.4, SD=1.422). they were also undecided on learners' participation in co-curricular activities both before (Mean=3.05, SD=1.540) and after (Mean=3.21, SD=1.556) principals' delocalization.

Chi square Test Results on Principals Student Management

To find out whether there was a difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization in selected counties in eastern region, Kenya, a chi-square test was computed. The findings of the chi square analysis of the hypothesis testing in teacher responses is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test for Teachers on Student Management

	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	124.618	16	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	129.410	16	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	68.897	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	158		

The findings on in Table 3, reveal that Pearson chi-square was computed as, χ^2 (16, 158) =124.618, p=0.000. Since p is approximately 0.00 it implies that there is sufficient evidence in favour of the alternative hypothesis. The study findings show that; there was a difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test for Students on Student Management

	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	3.363	16	0.067
Likelihood Ratio	3.227	16	0.072
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.332	1	0.068
N of Valid Cases	106		

The findings on in Table 4, show the analysis of a chi-square test was performed to investigate whether there is a difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization in public secondary students. Pearson chi-square was calculated as, χ^2 (16, 106) =3.363, p=0.067. Given that the p<0.05 the null hypothesis, that there is no statistically significant difference between student management by principals before and after delocalization in public secondary schools in selected counties in eastern region, Kenya was accepted since there was statistical evidence to support the null hypothesis. The absence of significant statistical difference in the opinion of students could be brought by the expectations of the students having not been met or the perception of students that the administration does not understand the needs or want of the student and as such principals are not able to respond to them effectively.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test for Both Teachers and Students

	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	132.747	16	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	136.685	16	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	76.834	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	264		

A chi-square test was performed on the responses of both the teachers and students to investigate whether there is a difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization in public secondary schools in selected counties in Eastern Region. The findings are presented in Table 32. The findings of table 5, reveal that Pearson chi-square was computed as, χ^2 (16, 264) =132.747, p=0.000. Since p-value is less than 0.05, there was no statistically significant evidence to support the null hypothesis as a result

the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis.

Interview Schedule Findings on Principal Student Management Duties

The opinions and views of TSC RQASO and CQASO were also sought on performance of principals on student management. The responses to interview questions are presented in excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1

Researcher: In your opinion how has delocalization affected principals' student management duty

Respondent 1: I think the manner in which student are being handled by delocalized principals is different. The difference could be as a result of the difference in experience of the principals and their diverse background from the community they are posted into. Many times changes bring positive impact

Respondent 2: Student management has been improved by delocalization of principals. The principals have come into new station with new momentum to bring change to the school. The students tend to benefit the most when school policies and schools program change. Principals have a record to keep of being good managers hence the do their best to manage students and school programs in order that they uphold their status

Respondent 3: Students are the center of any school which makes them a priority in the school. Delocalized principals are experienced managers and take issues of students seriously in whatever school they serve. Therefore, the duties of principals may not vary with delocalization.

Respondent 4: There has been a decrease in the numbers of cases of students engaging in protest of which ever kind, burning of schools' buildings, match outs or riots which is an indicator that the students are more settled and they have no issues to raise with school management. I would conclude that the management of schools and students in particular has improved with delocalization of principals

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The objective was to establish whether there is a difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization in selected counties in eastern region, Kenya. The study concluded that there was a statistically significant difference in student management by principals before and after delocalization counties in eastern region, Kenya.

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