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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES USED ON STUDENTS' STRIKE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CENTRAL KENYA.

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Key Words

management strategies, strike, performance

Abstract

Strikes have been a problem in many schools in Kenya where by students go on rampage resulting to property destruction, loss of life which is detrimental to academic performance. As such this study seeks to assess management strategies on students' strikes in secondary schools in Central Kenya. The objectives of this study were to: determine strategies used by secondary schools principals in managing students' strikes, assess the functions of schools' administrators in managing students' strikes, establish the role of students' councils on strike management and determine whether there is a relationship between strikes management strategies and academic performance. The study was guided by Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Target population consisted of 847 secondary schools, 847 principals, 847 guidance and counseling teachers and 847 presidents of the students' councils in Central Kenya totaling to 2541. The researcher sampled 85 schools using Gay's 10% formula. The sample size constituted of 85 principals, 85 guidance and counseling teachers and 85 presidents of the students' councils making a total of 255 respondents. The research instruments were students' questionnaires, teachers' questionnaire and principals' interview guides developed by the researcher. A pilot study was carried out to establish the reliability of the instruments where by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated with a level of acceptance of $\alpha \geq 0.7$ and it was found to be $\alpha = 0.93$, thus the instruments were deemed reliable. Data was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. The findings of the study provided information to stakeholders in education on appropriate strategies of strike management in secondary schools necessary for improving academic performance. The study found out that: The key strike management strategies used by secondary schools in Central Kenya to improve academic performance entailed approaches geared towards cohesion, interaction and harmonization of the learning environment. The study recommended that to effectively manage student's strikes, teachers' and administrators' should attend seminars and workshops on leadership, commitment to student affairs in order to promote good discipline.

Introduction

A well-coordinated interaction among different actors participating in a school system is essential for delivery of a positive school climate. According to Pashiardis (2000) management of students' strikes is one of the factors that enhance school success and effectiveness. The UK Report (2014) points that all over the world students have at one time or another displayed unruly behavior; they have protested against political regimes, conditions in schools, school administration or some form of discrimination in the school or the society as a whole. In the Islamic Republic of Iran students protested against the pre-1979 secular monarchy and later against the theocratic republic. In Uganda, secondary school students had gone on strike as a means of seeking attention, sometimes with bizarre consequences such as widespread destruction of property and arson attacks against schools (Fiona 2005). The causes of strikes in Kenya has been attributed to the mass media, lack of learning resources, food, high handedness by school administrators, drugs and substance abuse, peer influence and lack of effective communication channels between the administration and the students (Republic of Kenya, 2001). Amason (1996) states that in order to realize good academic results; coordination between different stakeholders in a school system is essential. There is need to put in place a mechanism that enhances collaboration and proper management of conflicts in the system (Amason, 1996). Strikes are part of the conflicts that occur in schools that needs to be managed. Duncan (1975) argues that conflict is inevitable and

that, depending on how it is managed, it can have both positive and negative consequences on academic performance. Duncan (1975) noted that effective coordination of any system requires knowledge and skills to synchronize the actions of numerous players and channel those actions towards a common institutional goal. Akweteireho, Sidney and Bifubyeka (2001) pointed out that though some of the strikes have resulted in destruction of property and injuries, they were nonetheless an eye opener that there is a problem in school. In Kenya strikes by secondary school student have resulted in violent incidents accompanied by destruction of property and negative effects on academic performance. In an attempt to manage this indiscipline, government has enacted a code of discipline for student in secondary schools (Education Act, 1980). According to this Act school heads and board of governors are mandated to maintain and enforce discipline in schools on behalf of education Ministry of Education (MOE). The education Act and manual for heads of secondary schools, spell out procedures of managing student discipline, which should be used consistently and fairly (Republic of Kenya, 1987). In central Kenya some secondary schools have been involved in strikes and have registered low mean scores in national examinations while others attain high scores despite involvement in strikes. This study sought to determine the relationship between management strategies used on students' strikes and academic performance among secondary schools in Central Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Whatever the underlying causes, whenever students go on strike, there is wastage of teaching/learning time. This is expected to impact negatively on students' academic performance. However although this is reported in most schools involved in students unrests, a few schools have been found to effectively manage the tragedy and bounce back to produce good results. It is important to determine management strategies used on students' strike and the resultant academic performance. Specific causes of strike vary from school to school, but whatever the cause students are sent home and they waste a lot of time which would be used on academic work. The reasons for poor performance cannot be easily discerned without focused investigations. Therefore, this study sought to determine the relationship between management strategies on students' strikes and academic performance in secondary schools in Central Kenya.

Objective of the Study

To determine whether there is a relationship between management strategies used on students' strikes and academic performance in secondary schools in Central Kenya.

Research Question

- i. Is there any relationship between management strategies used on students' strikes and academic performance in secondary schools in Central Kenya?

Research Hypotheses

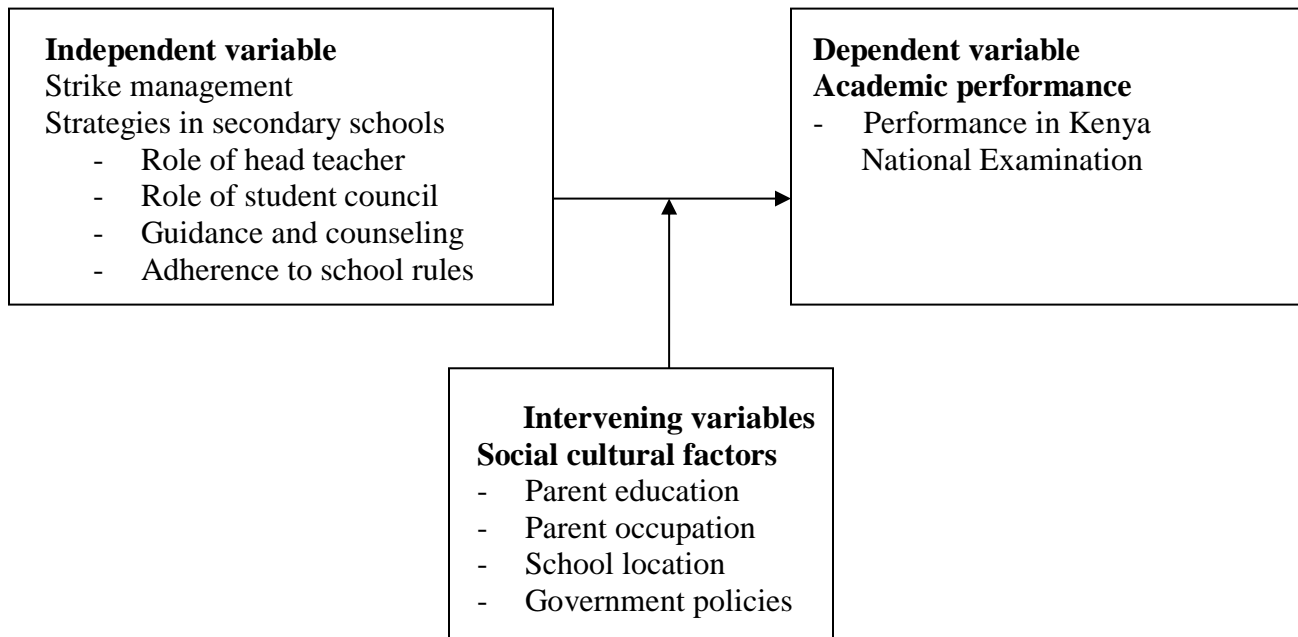
H₀: There is no significant relationship between management strategies used on students' strikes and academic performance.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Abraham Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs (1968). Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory accounts for both Biological and Physiological needs. This is based on the belief that all individuals have numerous needs. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs with the basic physiological needs at the bottom and self-actualization at the top. This theory guides this study since most of the strikes in schools are caused by failure to manage and satisfy needs such as water, food, shelter, security, feelings of inferiority which makes the students lack focus and become dissatisfied and cause chaos in schools. When a need has been minimally fulfilled. It then ceases to be a motivator of behavior. Needs that have gone unsatisfied for a long time serve to cause behavioral response as frustration, conflict and stress. In conclusion when institution stakeholders satisfy the needs academic performance will be realized.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework entails the use of a diagram to explain the interrelationship between variables (Orodho, 2004). The independent variable is the management strategies used on students' strikes while the dependent variable is academic performance. Intervening variables would include parents involvement, parents level of education, parents occupation, school location and many others. The variables interaction is such that when management strategies on students' strikes are improved, strengthened and followed consistently academic performance improves and vice versa.

Figure 1.2 Conceptual Frameworks

Source: Adopted from Koontz and Weihrich (1998)

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) descriptive survey allows a researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret the data without manipulating the variables. This design was appropriate for the study because it enabled description of management strategies used on students' strikes as applied by schools and related it to academic performance in Central Kenya.

Target Population

Target population included; 847 principals, 847 guidance and counselling teachers and 847 presidents of the students' council in Central Kenya. Teachers were selected because they were well informed since they

interact with many students and they would therefore provide important information. The students were selected because they are the ones who are directly affected by strikes.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The researcher sampled 85 schools using Gay's 10% formula. The sample size constituted of 85 principals, 85 guidance and counselling teachers and 85 presidents of the students' councils, giving a total of 255 respondents.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion are presented in accordance with the stated objectives and hypothesis that guided the study. The study sought to determine the relationship between

management strategies used on students' strikes and academic performance.

The study sought the school student councils' president opinion on management strategies used on students' strikes by their respective principals. The results revealed that a majority (51.5%) of the students indicated that there were no management strategies adopted. The remainder (48.5%) indicated that there were indeed management strategies adopted by their respective schools' principals (see Figure 1).

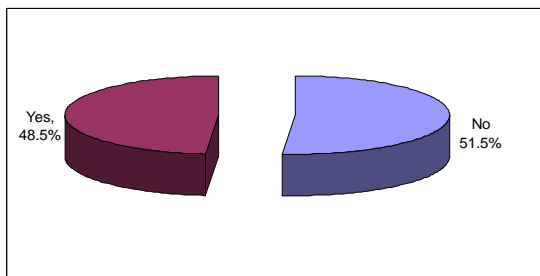


Figure 1. Strike-Management Strategies in Schools

The students who indicated that their principals had adopted strike management strategies were further asked whether these strategies contributed towards improvement of academic performance. Majority (63.8%) of the students respondent were of the view that the strike management strategies contributed towards improvement of academic performance, while 36.2% indicated that the strategies did not contribute towards improvement of academic performance (Figure 2).

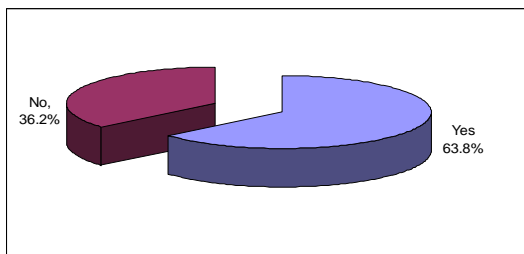


Figure 2. Management Strategies and Improvement of Academic Performance

The students were then provided with six items on a likert scale to find out the extent to which management strategies used on students' strike were applied by their respective schools. Data analysis revealed that with regard to whether their parents were able to communicate with students on key issues affecting them, a majority (94.2%) of the students indicated that it was applied to a greater extent, whereas 5.8% pointed out that it was applied to some extent. Pertaining to listening to students' grievances, majority (91.9%) of the students pointed out that it was applied to a greater extent while 8.1% pointed out that it was applied to some extent. Concerning appreciating students' input and participation, a majority (75.6%) of the students were of the view that it was applied to a greater extent, 18.6% observed that it was applied to some extent, while 5.8% indicated that it was not applied at all. Regarding interactive question and answer sessions between students and administration, majority (72.1%) of the students indicated that it was applied to a greater extent, 19.7% indicated that it was applied to some extent whereas 8.2% pointed that it was not applied at all. With regard to well-structured guidance and counseling, 65.1% of the students indicated that it was applied to a greater extent, 15.1% pointed out that it was applied to some extent, while 8.2% indicated that it was not applied at all. Pertaining to maintaining close links with parents, 46.5% of the students were of the opinion that it was

applied to a greater extent, 29.1% were of the view that it was applied to some extent,

whereas 24.4% observed that it was not applied at all.

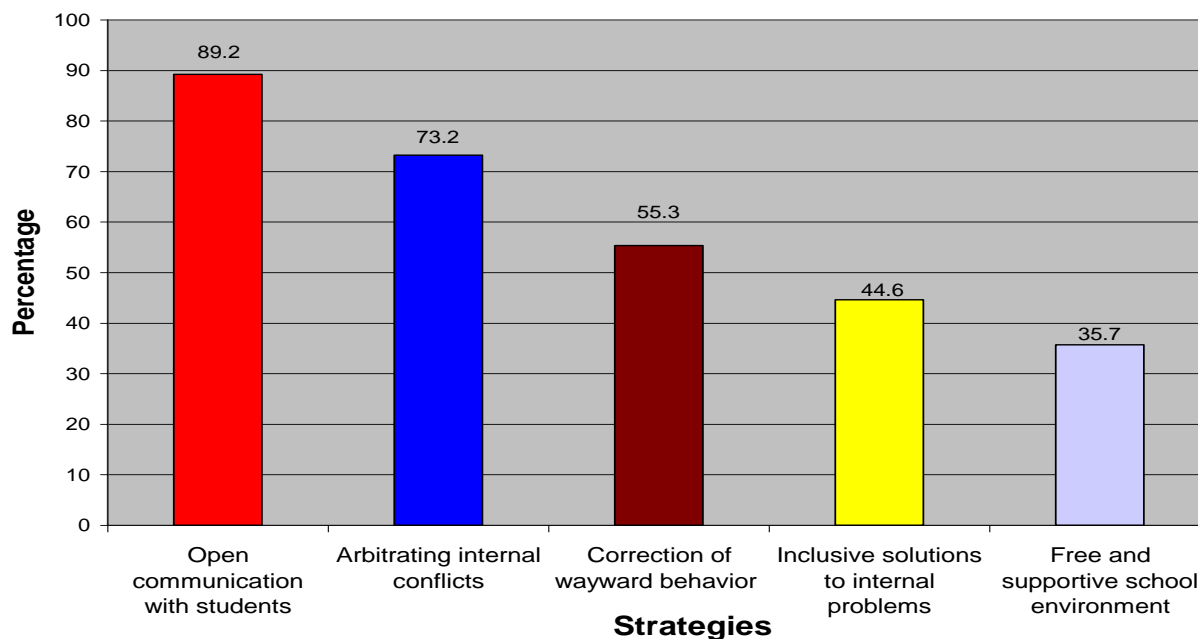
Table 1. Strike Management Strategies used by Secondary School Principals

Strategies	F		%		F		%	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Communication with students on key issues affecting them	81	94.2	5	5.8	-	-	-	-
Listening to students' grievances	79	91.9	7	8.1	-	-	-	-
Appreciating students' input and participation	65	75.6	16	18.6	5	5.8	5	5.8
Interactive question and answer sessions between students and administration	62	72.1	17	19.7	7	8.2	7	8.2
Well-structured guidance and counseling	56	65.1	13	15.1	7	8.2	7	8.2
Maintaining close links with parents	40	46.5	25	29.1	21	24.4	21	24.4

(i) The guidance and counseling teachers were asked to indicate whether strategies adopted by their respective schools' principals helped in improving academic performance. All the 85 (100%) teachers indicated that they did. The teachers were then asked to point out the strategies adopted by their schools (see Figure 3). The teachers' response on strike management strategies adopted by the schools indicate that majority (89.2%) of the teachers pointed out facilitating open communication with students, 73.2% observed arbitrating internal conflicts, 55.3% indicated correction of any form of wayward behavior, 44.6% pointed out

encouraging all inclusive solutions to internal problems, and 35.7% indicated creation of a free and supportive school environment.

(ii) The principals in the study reported the following as the strike management strategies they used to improve academic performance: involving students in decision making; counseling parents on good parenting; democratic election of student council and strong prefect body; enhanced student-teacher relationship; provision of pastoral programmes and suggestion boxes; preventing idleness and drug and substance abuse.



Hypothesis testing: It was hypothesized that there was no statistically significant relationship between management strategies used on students' strikes and academic performance in secondary schools in Central Kenya. To test the hypothesis, regression was computed. The computed coefficient of management strategies was 0.994. The t statics is for this coefficient is 45.41 with a p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This p value confirms the significance of the coefficient of management strategies ($\alpha = .05$). The null hypothesis was thus rejected and we can thus conclude that management strategies used on students' strikes significantly influence academic performance and therefore has a significant positive relationship with strike management in secondary schools. These findings indicate though most students in the study were not aware of strike management strategies in their schools, strategies geared towards cohesion, interaction and harmonization of the learning environment do exist in their

schools. These strategies are structured with the aim of optimizing academic performance. According to Odera and Muthiora, (2008) communication and interaction with students is key. If the administration opened channels of communication things would change. Students should hold interactive sessions with the administration to ensure harmony and cohesion. Communication and interaction is the bottom line to a good relationship between teachers and students and eventually improved academic performance.

Conclusion

The findings of the study indicate that management strategies used on students' strikes in central Kenya were efficiently and consistently employed and impacted positively on students' academic performance. In addition, the relationship between management strategies used on students strikes and academic performance

was statistically significant in secondary schools in central Kenya.

Recommendation

From the findings of the study, it was recommended that there was need to strengthen and reinforce management strategies in order to improve students' academic performance in secondary schools

in central Kenya. The government through the ministry of education should draw up policies governing guidance and counseling school administrators function in managing students' strikes. Family background has great influence on the growth and development of a child. Parents should pass right values to their children which influences positive behavior in students.

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