

Influence of Student Councils' Decision Making Roles on Curbing Frequency of Student Unrests in Public Boys Boarding Secondary Schools in Elgon Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in Public Boys Boarding Secondary Schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya. The study was based on Social Systems Theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Stratified sampling technique was used to sample respondents from the categories of students and members of student councils. The target population for students was 750 while that of members of student councils was 78. The study used Likert type Students' Questionnaire and Questionnaire for Members of Student Councils as research instruments. Descriptive statistics namely, means, frequencies and percentages were computed. Inferential statistics derived from ANOVA were used to test hypotheses. The study revealed that there exists a negative, strong and statistically significant relationship between decision making roles played by student councils and the frequency of student unrest ($r = -0.809^{**}$; $p < 0.01$). Based on the findings of this research study, it can be concluded that if student councils participate in decision making roles played by student councils to school management on other students, frequency of student unrests will be curbed in Public Boys Boarding Secondary Schools in Elgon Sub-county. The study recommends that student councils be thoroughly prepared in their roles through seminars, workshops and regular meetings with the principals.

Keywords: Student Councils, Student Unrests, roles played by student councils.

INTRODUCTION

The government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Education, established Student Councils in Secondary Schools in 2009 to assist schools to manage student affairs. Yet, student unrests which are manifested in strikes, go-slows, rioting, burning of school property and violent behaviors still continue unabated. During the last eight years, some schools in Bungoma County, Kenya, witnessed the unprecedented rise in incidences of student unrests leading to destruction of property and loss of life. Student Councils are representative bodies for students and elected students to voice their grievances to school management authorities [1].

In Jamaica, Student Councils are responsible for student welfare, leading and guiding to create a good learning atmosphere in schools. They act as facilitators to an end or mediators to effectively manage student unrest [2]. Student councils began as a policy by the government of Jamaica in 1973. In 1975, student councils were participating in the decision making processes.

According to Chemutai & Chumba [3], participation of student councils in decision making in the United Kingdom was moving towards a democratization of leadership. These student councils have authority and power to effectively run and manage students in classrooms and outside the class with duties, responsibilities, and special rights to punish students. The research studies mentioned did not consider the influence of roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in schools. The Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association and United Nations Children Education Fund in 2008 came up with an initiative to enable Student Councils to participate in school management activities such as decision making, disciplining students, representing and communicating issues concerning student's welfare in schools. This was as a result of student unrests of 2007 and 2008 [4]. In the KSSHA/UNICEF [5] report, school principals were blamed for not incorporating student's in decision making. School Principals concur that student bodies were used by school management teams to suppress students' opinions and that whenever students' opinions are not shared or addressed, unrest served as the

preferred avenue of venting their frustrations and anger [6].

The Ministry of Education, United Nations Children Education Fund and the Secondary Schools Heads Association in the year 2008 formed the Kenya Secondary Schools Student Councils [7]. Its main aim was to find a long-lasting solution to unceasing student unrests in schools. Article 1 section 11 part (4) of the

KSSSC constitution stipulated that students' councils should be committed to the constructive management of indiscipline by reducing student unrests [8].

In 2016, more than 126 schools were involved in student unrests resulting in the destruction of properties worth millions of Kenya shillings [9]. Table-1 shows the case of public boys' secondary schools in Bungoma County, Kenya.

Table-1: Frequency of Student Unrests in Schools in Bungoma County, 2014-2017

Schools	Frequency of student unrests
Bungoma high school.	6
Teremi high school.	4
Kimungui secondary	5
Milo secondary	7
Kabula boys high	10
Kaptama boys	6
Kapsokwony high school	7
Cheptais boys high school	8
Kimang'eti boys	5
Khasoko boys high school	8
Chebosi secondary school	5

This problem is widespread Bungoma County, Kenya as shown in Table-1. Despite schools having functional student councils, many schools in Elgon Sub-county were particularly affected by the wave of student unrests which led to the loss of property during the period 2014- 2017. In 2016, three public schools from Elgon Sub-county went on strike, burnt dormitories and boycotted joint exams leading to closure of schools County Education Office, 2016. In particular, students of public boys' boarding schools in Elgon Sub-county burnt down their dormitories in 2016. Elsewhere in Kenya, the problem of student unrests was reported by research studies conducted by Mukiti [10], Nzioki [11], and Kinyua [12]. Over 800 secondary schools in Kenya experienced student unrests between 2007 and 2010 [13]. Boys' schools in Elgon Sub-county, still grapple with the problem of student unrests even though they have put in place student councils.

This study sought to establish the influence of decision making roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in Public Boys Boarding Secondary Schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya. The null hypothesis was "There is no statistically significant influence of decision making roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in Public Boys Boarding Secondary Schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Student Councils in Addressing Student Unrests

The elected student councils help to modify behavior, character and improve students discipline in school by adhering to set rules and regulations [14].

According to Mutua [15], most school administrations appoint student councils with or without student participation. Time has come for students to participate actively in electing their leaders to air their grievances to school management. This could assist in managing the frequency of student unrests in schools. School principals give Ministry directives, laws and school policies to student councils. These provide the student councils with the information required to manage the frequency of student unrests in schools [16]. This implies that student councils are oriented on how to conduct their roles to manage the frequency of student unrests in schools.

Mutiki [10], found out that student councils are always involved in disciplinary roles such as punishing minor indiscipline cases like making noise, using mother tongue to communicate in school, slow response to bells, failure to queue for meals, use of abusive languages to fellow students and student councils, petty theft and sneaking out of school. This shows clearly the need for student councils in ensuring high discipline is maintained in the school and that minor offense does not go unpunished, this go all the way to curb the frequency of student unrests in schools.

Chemutai & Chumba [3], found out in their study that student councils play a good role in solving student unrests in terms of interclass unrests and dormitory unrests, monitoring and supervision of school programmes like preps, cleaning, reporting on teachers as wells as students lessons attendance and reporting on indiscipline students to the management for further action to be taken against students. This chapter presents a review of literature related to the

influence of roles played by Student Councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in Public Boys Boarding Secondary Schools. This chapter contains the following sub-topics.

Role of Student Councils in Africa

Student councils in Nigeria are trained through courses and seminars on leadership to be to manage students [17]. They are trained on effective maintenance of school discipline to curb student unrests. Sabitu [17] avers that constant leadership seminars for student leaders should be inbuilt in programs which make their administrative skills to be further sharpened. This happens when school principals and student councils meet in an open forum to discuss the roles of student councils in the school. This was corroborated by Kinyua [12] where it was revealed that common patterns across Scotland schools showed that student councils meet once a month for training on their roles. This study however does not show the influence of roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in schools.

Student councils in Tanzania are charged with advisory and supervisory roles. For example, the chairperson of the student council is supposed to advise Heads of schools on matters concerning students' affairs and maintenance of discipline. In classes, student leaders control noise and maintain the general hygiene. Outside the class, they control activities such as games, clubs and societies, supervise communal work within the compound, oversee the organization and life of students in dormitories and ensure that meals are served well and on time [12]. Nzioki [11] found out in her research that student council assists in the maintenance of school hygiene and sanitation. School administrators stipulate clearly that student councils have an influence on school management as far as maintenance of hygiene and sanitation is concerned in the school.

Role of Student Councils in Kenya

According to UNICEF and Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association, a student Council refers to a student body appointed or elected in a school educational institution to be able to present students' interests and welfare to the school management [19]. Therefore participation of students in issues that affect them like decision making roles played by student councils should be clearly defined to be able to manage indiscipline in schools [6]. The idea of student council was born in 2008 when the Ministry of Education, United Nations Children Education Fund and Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association established Student Councils in schools. The aim was to involve students in decision making on matters that affected them Cabinet Secretary Education, 2016. The Cabinet Secretary go's further to state that the Ministry will allocate a budget fund for the student councils as they play a critical role in schools. The Ministry of Education developed the Sessional paper no. 14 2012

and the Basic Education Act 2013 which stipulated the role of student councils in the management of their institutions. They voice students' grievances, participate in decision- making process, guide and counsel students under drug abuse, and represent students. All these efforts were geared towards managing student unrests in schools.

Decision Making Roles Played by Student Councils in Relation to Student Unrests

Student participation in decision making refers to the effort of student representative bodies such as school council, student parliament and prefectural body. It encompass all aspects of student life like decision-making, communication and where students have a say, informally through personal negotiation as well as formally through purposely created structures and mechanisms [20].

In the United Kingdom, student councils link school administration with students as they have authority over learners in decision-making [21]. This view is corroborated by Wambulwa [22] who states that the involvement of student councils in school management, through decision making results in an improved school environment. They participate in decision making by giving views, negotiation and collective dialogue between students and administration [11]. The link between learners and school administration leads to good decision making and upholding of discipline because learners give opinions about how they should be disciplined.

Fitzpatrick [23] maintains that the skills in collaboration, participation, initiative, expression, listening to and understanding many voices and many cultures, inherent to the emerging democratic, post-industrial societies often are neglected in schools. Research indicates that students prefer participative decision-making and want to contribute meaningfully to the generation of the school code of conduct, structures and issues concerning school magazines [24]. No study has been conducted to establish the influence of decision making roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in schools.

Huddleston [25], was of the opinion that there is a propensity among teachers and school managers to define issues affecting students narrowly without taking into consideration student concerns. Student's negotiation and decision-making are always limited to aspects of school life that affect students only and which have no immediate impact on them, such as playgrounds, toilets and lockers. This implies that student councils are always left out of decision making process and no study has been conducted to establish the influence of decision making roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in schools.

Theoretical Framework

The research adopted the Social System Theory of Bertalanffy [26]. It is the interdisciplinary study of systems in general, with the objective of elucidating values that can be applied to all categories of systems at all points. Social system theory explains, predicts and describes organizational behavior in an institution which has different units interacting and inter-dependent in carrying out their roles to achieve a common course. Institutions like schools are organizations that have students, teachers and non-teaching staff who form sub-system and managed by supra-system like principal and Board of Management. All these sub-systems perform unique but complementary roles to attain common goals like transforming the input (students) into finished products with skills, knowledge and values. Kinyua [12] noted that sub-systems play unique and complementary roles to attain the goals of the same system.

Mutua [15] notes that schools are essentially living systems and that they can't survive without people. Schools have different departments, committees and student councils who interact and are inter-dependent. The malfunctioning of one system leads to negative effects on another system for instance if

student councils can't effectively play their role on curbing student unrest, it may lead to the destruction of school property, student unrests and loss of life [27]. It can be inferred that school Principals play the roles of coordination, planning, communication, supervision and facilitating of activities of the entire system. Clear roles and goals should be defined to achieve set objectives in schools. Principals have a duty to delegate some of the responsibility to student councils to curb student unrests. Discipline transforms behavior and creates conformity to the rules of a system [26].

RESULTS

General Information and Response Rate

The questionnaire was distributed to 66 student council members and 254 students of forms three and four in all the three schools. Analysis revealed that 318 questionnaires were returned, constituting a response rate of 99.0%. This response rate was sufficient. Creswell [28] observes that a response rate of more than 75% was adequate for analysis.

Creation of Student Councils

An analysis was conducted to determine how student councils were created in schools. Table-5 illustrates the findings.

Table-5: How Student Councils were created in Schools

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Appointed by the principal	34	10.7
Appointed by teachers	148	46.5
Elected by student	136	42.8
Total	318	100.0

Table-5 indicates that 46.5% of the respondents maintained that student councils were appointed by teachers; 42.8% affirmed that Student Councils (SCs) are elected by students; 10.7% reported that they were appointed by the principals. The results revealed that student councils were largely appointed by teachers. Students should be given chance to participate in electing their leaders as the country is governed by democratic and participatory leadership. Elsewhere, Messa [29] notes that student leaders should not be appointed by head teachers. This means that members of student councils should be elected by other students. According to the respondents (56.2%), members of

student councils in Elgon Sub-county are either appointed by teachers or principals. Appointing student leaders is done according to their ability to represent students' interest to the school management. Electing students could curb frequency of student unrests [30].

Frequency of Student Unrests during the Last Three Years in the Schools under Study (2014-2017)

The study sought to get information from respondents regarding frequency of student unrests in the three schools during the period 2014-2017. The results are presented in the Table-6.

Table-6: Frequency of Student Unrest Reported in All Schools

Variable	Frequency	Percent
1-2	42	13.2
3-4	87	27.4
5-6	114	35.8
7-8	49	15.4
9 and above	26	8.2
Total	318	100.0

Table-6 shows that 35.8% of respondents experienced 5-6 student unrests in their schools during

the period 2014-2017. Others unrests were as follows: 3-4 times (27.4%); 7-8 times (15.4%); 1-2 times (13.2%)

while 9 times and above were 8.2% of the respondents. Five to six student unrests reported by 35.8% indicate that unrests are too many in Elgon Sub-county.

Decision Making Roles Played by Student Councils on Curbing the Frequency of Student Unrests

Analyses were conducted to determine students' perceptions of decision making roles played by student councils in their schools. Table-7 presents the findings.

Table-7: Descriptives for Decision Making Roles played by Student Councils

Statement	A	F	S	N	Mean	SD
Student councils participate in decision making against bullying in school.	2.2%	17.6%	2.5%	77.7%	3.56	0.86
Student councils participate in decision making on matters related to too many exams administered in school.	0.6%	0.3%	1.3%	97.8%	3.96	0.23
Student councils participate in decision making on matters related to congestion in the dormitories in school.	0.3%	0.9%	2.8%	95.9%	2.94	0.30
Student councils participate in decision making regarding lateness in provision of meals in school.	1.6%	18.9%	39.0%	40.6%	3.19	0.79
Student councils participate in decision making on matters nonattendance of lessons by teachers.	2.5%	0.3%	39.0%	58.2%	3.53	0.64
Student councils participate in decision making on matters regarding excess punishment meted by teachers in school.	3.5%	0.0%	18.9%	77.7%	3.71	0.64
Student councils participate in decision making on matters regarding lack of sanitation services.	2.2%	0.3%	77.4%	20.1%	3.15	0.52
Student councils participate in decision making on matters regarding lack of water in school.	0.9%	56.9%	19.8%	22.3%	2.64	0.84
Student councils participate in decision making on matters regarding provision of textbooks in school.	0.6%	0.0%	19.5%	79.9%	3.79	0.45
Student councils participate in decision making on matters regarding poor quality of meals in school.	1.6%	0.0%	20.4%	78.0%	3.75	0.53
Decision making roles played by student councils overall index					3.42	0.34
Valid N (listwise)	318					

Key: A=Always; F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never; SD=Standard Deviation

Only 17.6% reported that student councils frequently participate in decision making on matters regarding bullying in school. It was noted that 77.7% of respondents maintained that student councils never participated in decision making regarding bullying in schools (mean of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 0.86). This implies that student councils have minimal participation in decision making on matters regarding bullying in schools. This could have an influence on student unrests.

Additionally, 97.8% asserted that student councils never participate in decision making regarding the number of exams administered in school with only 1.3% reporting that student councils sometimes participate in decision making on numbers of exams administered (mean of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 0.28). According to Education Act 2013 only school teachers and Quality Assurance Officers (QASO) is charged with the specific roles of conducting assessment in schools, oversees examination (both internal and external), syllabus coverage, curriculum development and implementation.

Similarly, 95.9% of respondents averred that student councils never participate in decision making regarding easing of congestion in dormitories in school. Only 2.8% reporting that student councils sometimes participated in decision making on matters related to congestion in dormitories (mean of 3.94 and standard deviation of 0.30). It can therefore be concluded that members of student councils rarely participate in decision making on matters related to congestion in dormitories leading to the high number of student unrests in Elgon Sub-county. Kamau [31] states that student participation in management of their affairs in school enables them to have a good experience to find a long-term solution to challenging situation in schools to be able to prosper in academics. It's important that students are involved in the decision-making process to curb the frequency of student unrests in schools.

Furthermore, only 39.0% of respondents noted that student councils sometimes participated in decision making on the matter of time of provision of meals in school. 40.6% reported that student councils never make decisions on time of provision of meals in school (mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.79). This

could cause high frequency of student unrests in schools.

Up to 58.2% reported that student councils never participated in decision making on matters regarding nonattendance of lessons by teachers. Only 39.0% of respondents reported that student councils sometimes participated in decision making on the same matters (mean of 3.53 and standard deviation of 0.64). Lack of chance to participate on such decisions could lead to student unrests in Elgon Sub-county. Aggrawal [32] in another research study also found out that student councils did not participate in matters related to the conduct of examinations, evaluation of students performance, the appointment of teachers and teacher lesson attendance, which made students to resort to unrests. This could prompt students to resort to unrests in schools.

Table-7 further shows that student councils sometimes participate in decision making on matters regarding lack of sanitation services (77.4%). Up to 20.1% of the respondents were of the opinion that student councils never participated on decision making on matters related to provision of sanitation (means of 3.15 and standard deviation of 0.52). In this schools, students feel that they are part of the solution to the problem of poor sanitation. To that extent, Nzioki [11] recommends that student councils should assist in maintenance of school hygiene and sanitation.

In table-7, 22.3% of the respondents noted that student councils never participated in decision making on matters related to lack of water. Similarly, 19.8% of the respondents were of the view that student councils sometimes makes decisions on matters related to lack of water in the schools. Respondents stated that student councils never participated in decision making on matters regarding excessive punishment meted by teachers on students (77.7%). Only 18.9% of the respondent agreed that student councils sometimes participated in decision making on matters regarding excessive punishment meted by teachers (means of 3.71 and standard deviation of 0.64). Contrarily, Mukiti [10] noted that student councils should control punishment meted out to students by teachers

Ominde [33] found out that punishing students lead to withdrawing mechanisms, frustration, anxiety, discipline and fear of school subjects especially when the same punitive teacher teaches subjects to the same person. This could sometimes lead to student unrests in schools. Simatwa [34], further notes that punishing students led to poor lesson attendance, school dropout and conflicts between teachers and students. Muli [35] further cautions that student unrests do not just happen due to a single issue which has not been solved, but because of several long-standing issues which the school authorities have either ignored or given unsatisfactory response. This implies that inclusion of

student leaders in addressing issues affecting students could be a better way of addressing the frequency of unrests in schools.

Nzioki [11] concurs by observing that factors that lead to student unrests include autocratic styles of leadership and lack of adequate facilities and resources in the schools. School management should take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies, which directly affect program, activities, privileges and other areas of students concern. Student councils are on duty at all times during their stay in school as they interact more with students [20]. This could help in curbing the frequency of student unrests experienced in most schools.

This study further revealed that student councils never participated in decision making on matters regarding poor quality of meals in schools (78%). Only 20.4% of respondents agreed that student councils sometimes participate in decision making regarding poor quality of meals (means of 3.75 and standard deviation of 0.53). When students are not involved in the decision-making process in the school, they could resort to unrests. They feel that their concerns are not been taken care of by the school management. The findings of this study suggest that this could be the situation in schools in Elgon Sub-county where student leaders reported that they are largely not involved in decision making.

Majority of the respondents were of the view that student councils never participated in decision making on matters regarding provision of textbooks in school (79.9%, Mean of 3.79 and standard deviation of 0.45). When students do not participate in decision making on matters which affect them, they may resort to student unrests. These findings are corroborated by Fitzpatrick [23] who maintains that the skills in collaboration, participation, initiative, expression, listening to and understanding many voices and many cultures, inherent to the emerging democratic, post-industrial societies often are neglected in schools, therefore students resort to unrests when they are not engaged in formulation of policies that affect them in schools.

Chemutai and Chumba [3], in another study found out that student councils were excluded from key decision-making areas of the school, such as curriculum issues and administrative tasks of the school rules, discipline of students and deciding on the nature of punishment. It implies that when students have no say on matters related to the number of exams and grading system they resort to unrests.

Differences in the Means of Decision Making Roles Played by Student Councils across Schools A, B and C

An ANOVA test was conducted to investigate whether decision making roles played by student

councils across the three sampled schools differed significantly. Table 8 shows the findings.

The results of the ANOVA test show that the differences in the means of decision making roles played by student councils across school A, B and C was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, $F(2, 315) = 0.355$, $p > 0.05$. This implies that students'

perception of decision-making roles played by student councils did not vary significantly across the selected schools A, B and C. Therefore, the decision making roles played by student council in curbing the frequency of student unrests in the three schools were similar. That explains why we had high frequency of unrests in all the three schools.

Table-8: Decision Making Roles Played By Student Councils across Schools A, B and C

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.082	2	0.041	0.355	.701
Within Groups	36.421	315	0.116		
Total	36.503	317			

Influence of Decision Making Roles Played by Student Councils and the Frequency of Student Unrests

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the influence of decision making roles played

by student councils on frequency of student unrests. Influence of decision-making roles played by student councils on frequency of student unrest was analyzed and presented in Table 9.

Table-9: Correlation between Decision Making Roles Played By Student Councils and the Frequency of Student Unrests

		Frequency of Student Unrest
Decision Making Roles by Student Councils	Pearson Correlation	-.809**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	318

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table-9 shows that there exists a negative, strong and statistically significant relationship between decision making roles played by student councils and the frequency of student unrest ($r = -0.809^{**}$; $p < 0.01$). It implies that high prevalence of negative factors leads to higher frequency of unrests. Put otherwise, when student councils decision-making roles are enhanced in schools, the frequency of student unrests may decline. Okonji [16] in a research study, noted that 75% of schools agreed that student councils ensure that rules are followed. Therefore, student councils should participate in formulating rules and regulation. All these

efforts are geared towards curbing the frequency of student unrests. Also, research shows that students prefer participative decision-making and want to contribute meaningfully to the generation of the school code of conduct, structures and issues concerning school [24].

Influence of Decision Making Roles on Frequency of Student Unrests

Table-10 shows how decision making roles were used to predict the frequency of student unrests. To do that a regression analysis was carried out.

Table-10: Influence of Decision Making Roles on the Frequency of Student Unrests

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.218	.182		39.678	.000
Decision making roles played by student councils	-.439	.092	-.261	-4.754	.000

Dependent Variable: Frequency of Student Unrest

Table-10 indicates that decision making roles played by student councils influences 43.9 % of negative variation on the frequency of student unrests. This implies that student councils play a very important role in curbing the frequency of student unrests. If student councils are not involved in decision making roles, students participate in unrests to show their frustration and anger in the school. A study entitled

Children's Right Awareness among Teachers and Students in Secondary Schools in Nairobi Province also revealed that violation of students' rights leads to student unrest [36].

Testing the Hypothesis of no Statistically Significant Influence of Decision Making Roles Played by Student Councils on Curbing the Frequency of Student Unrest

Table-10, shows that Decision making roles had beta coefficient of corresponding p-value less than 0.05 alpha. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and a conclusion made that decision making roles played by student councils have a significantly influenced on curbing the frequency of student unrests in public boys boarding secondary schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya ($p=0.000$). This concurs with Mukiti [10], avers that student councils have always been involved in educational administration due to the fact that student councils are close to their colleagues in school, they give directions to students, they set the pace for other students in order to attain the set

objectives, and that they also motivate and inspire other students to ensure good performance in all school activities.

Regression Analysis of dependent and Independent Variables

The purpose of regression analysis was to predict the dependent variable using the independent variable.

Regression analysis

The model shows summative action exerted by all independent variable combined on the dependent variable. It is the extent of influence by the summary of all independent variable on the dependent variable. Table-11 shows the results of the model summary for the regression.

Table-11: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	1.873 ^a	.762	.759	.27943
Predictor: (Constant), Decision making roles played by student councils				

Table-11, shows that the Adjusted R square value is 0.759. This implies that up to 75.9% variation in frequency of student unrests is due to the variation in the independent variables of the study. The independent variable decision making roles played by student councils with a standard error of the estimate of 0.27943. It implies that 75.9 of frequency of student unrests can be explained by the decision making roles played by student councils.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The first objective was to establish the influence of decision making roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in public boys boarding secondary schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya. The role of student councils had a mean of 3.52 and standard deviation of 0.34. Student councils were not involved in decision making as follows: sanitation (77.4% confirmed); lateness in provision of meals (39.0% confirmed); bullying (77.7% confirmed); number of exams (97.8% confirmed); excess punishment meted by teachers (77.7% confirmed); provision of textbooks (79.9% confirmed); and quality of meals students (78.0% confirmed). This could have led to the high incidences of unrests. Exclusion of the student council in the decision-making process is characterized by a high level of student unrest compared to schools that involved student councils in the decision-making process. Decision making roles had a beta coefficient corresponding p-value less than 0.05 alpha. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and a conclusion made that decision making roles played by student councils have a significant influence on curbing the frequency of student unrests in public boys boarding secondary schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya ($p=0.000$). This implies that when student

councils are involved in decision making roles, the number of student unrests in schools could reduce.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it can be observed that all public boarding secondary schools in Elgon Sub-county experienced numerous indiscipline problems, such as the burning of school property, public demonstration, boycott attending lessons, boycott eating meals, refuse to do manual duties and boycott joint exams as forms of student unrests. Basing on the findings, it can be concluded that student councils largely did not play decision making roles on matters related to lack of water, lack of sanitation services and lateness in the provision of meals. The study also shows that student councils do not make decisions on matters related to the number of exams administered in school, provision of textbooks for learning, quality of meals in school, congestions in the dormitories in school and bullying in school. It is herein concluded that involving student leaders in decision making could have an influence on curbing the frequency of student unrests in schools. Principals should therefore, encourage the democratic form of school organization in which students elect their own leaders, provision of a suggestion box within the for students to give independent views about the school administration and even allowing students to have a say in their welfare in school. The researcher assessed the influence of roles played by student councils on curbing the frequency of student unrests in public boys boarding secondary schools in Elgon Sub-county, Kenya. The researchers recommend that student councils need to be thoroughly prepared to play decision making roles effectively. This could be done through seminars, workshops, and regular meetings with principals, deputies. They should also be allowed

to attend sub-county and national conferences. They also recommend that the schools under study should carry out continuous benchmarking with schools of excellence who have managed to handle the problem of students' unrests. This will enable them to adopt new and better ways of handling the problem of student unrests.

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