

## An Epistemic Understanding of Strikes in Selected Secondary Schools Kenya

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### Abstract

*There has been a marked increase in the number of secondary school strikes in Murang'a North District where the research was based. This has led to problems such as students boycotting lessons, walkouts and pelting teachers with stones, which hurt the relationship between teachers and students. Murder threats to the school administrators, teachers and fellow students is also experienced and destruction of learning facilities and resources. According to the District Commissioner of Murang'a North District in a stakeholders meeting at the Agrican Church of Kenya (A.C.K.), Mt. Kenya Central Church hall in September 2008, 28 schools were involved in mass indiscipline last year. In two schools namely Wahundura High School and Mananga Secondary School buildings were burnt down during mass unrest. However despite the magnitude of destruction of properties involving millions of shillings and disruption of smooth running of schools caused by the strikes little has been done to find out the actual causes of students' strike in the district. The repercussion of these strikes have been death of students, students school dropouts, poor performance, destruction of property, parents incurring expenses of rehabilitating the destroyed school properties and the psychological torture to all the stakeholders: - teachers, students and parents. This study sought to provide some insights so as to understand the causes and remedies.*

### 1. Background to the Problem

Education is a holistic process that leads to balanced growth in students. The student is expected to acquire physical, intellectual, moral, psychological and emotional growth after going through the education process. The government of Kenya, in its role pertaining to education in national development recognizes the strategic importance of improving the overall education level of Kenyans within the context of poverty reduction and economic growth (Ministry of Education Science and Technology (M.O.E.S.T) Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005). The Government is able to achieve this through proper implementation of the curriculum as quoted by (Mbiti, 2007).

However, this may be at stake with the increase of riots, strikes and other forms of mass indiscipline in our secondary schools in Kenya. Such indiscipline takes the form of violent attacks by students on other students and even teachers, breaking school rules, chronic misbehaviours in classrooms, time wasting in lessons, challenges to the authority of teachers, disruption of students who are eager to learn, stealing, truancy, untidiness in school work, poor dressing habits, late coming to school and lessons, lying, bullying, gross insubordination, indecency, use of bad language among others (Mumbi, 2002).

During the last decade, many schools in Kenya have experienced some, if not all of the above cited forms of unrest leading to poor performance. A culture of violence that may be extended to adulthood develops in learners who are constantly involved in acts of violence at school, which in turn hinders the development of a country.

Parents whose children are involved in indiscipline lose a lot of time and money as they deal with their children who may be suspended or even expelled from school, depending on the seriousness of the situation. Members of Board of Governors (BOG) and the Ministry of Education officials also spend a lot of time settling cases of indiscipline because most of them are complicated as they arise from diverse factors.

According to Mumbi (2000) the security of the society is negatively affected because indiscipline learners who do not reform by the time they leave school can easily be recruited into criminal activities like car jacking or armed robberies, which have of late become rampant in Kenya. For the sake of the well being of the learners and the society at large, it is important that violence in schools is minimized or stamped out all together. This study aimed at contributing towards the strategies that can be put into place to end this unrest.

According to Siele (2009) principals who attended the Central Province Head Teachers' Conference in Nakuru Town expressed concern over the year 2008 strikes which led to the closure of over 30 schools in the region. They were also concerned about the emerging challenges such as the activities of *Mungiki* sect, which has been on a recruitment drive targeting primary and secondary school boys. They cited the numerous cases of strikes in secondary schools as an indicator of moral decay in learning institutions, with teachers and parents being unable to detect or respond to these cases effectively. In the same conference Cardinal Njue, head of the Catholic Church in Kenya, was cited saying that the moral decay continue to dog the education sector in Central Province as attested by increased incidents of murder meted out by militia groups whose membership comprises of youth.

In the year, 2008 from January to July, about 254 cases of secondary school unrest were reported to the Ministry of Education. The following are the cases as per province: - Nairobi had 19 schools, Nyanza 27, Coast 24, Eastern 53, Rift valley 55, Western 8, Central 68 and North Eastern none (Ngare, 2008, p.4). According to the M.O.E.S.T report (2001) the figure comprises of the known and recorded cases, but perhaps the number of schools that had experienced strikes could be higher as some cases are never reported. Students' unrest is not a recent phenomenon, it has been reported in the past, for instance, Griffin (1996) said that mass unrest has become very rampant he explained that the press reported 202 major incidents from January 1993 to December 1995. Mbiti (2007) concurred with Griffin that increase in mass indiscipline in several secondary schools in Kenya resulted to, not only in great loss of human life and property, but also learning and teaching time due to unwarranted disruption especially when it is in form of violence.

According to Ngare (2008) with the increase of mass indiscipline human life was lost in Upper Hill Secondary School in Nairobi. A lot of learning time is lost when the unrest is in form of a sit-in when the students peacefully refuse to attend classes or to eat school food. At times the learners march peacefully from school to the Ministry of Education headquarters, to government education offices in a bid to communicate their grievances to other people rather than to the school administration (Mumbi, 2002, p.13). A report on causes, effects and remedies of indiscipline in secondary schools in Central Province M.O.E.S.T. (2001) indicates that if the riots/ strike continues, Kenya could be faced with some problems such as poor K.C.S.E performance being manifested due to poor implementation of both curriculum and co-curriculum activities.

While an increase of strikes in Kenya is becoming critical, the Ministry of Education has however taken too long to implement the recommendations of the M.O.E.S.T (1999) and the Presidential Task Force of 2001. In the mean time, a lot of money has been lost through unwarranted repairs done to renovate and to rehabilitate the buildings. New buildings have also been constructed to replace what has been destroyed. This money would have been used for other development projects to improve the education standards in the country, or for buying of textbooks and other academic pursuits. In some incidents, some students have lost their lives. Life lost is not replaceable. This becomes a loss for the family and the country too, as a lot of money had been invested when a student die/gets killed before he or she becomes productive.

According to Mathenge and Mwakera (2008) a lot of mistrust between the parents, students, teachers and the members of Board of Governors is manifested especially when disciplinary measures are taken against the affected students. If he/she escapes due to lack of evidence, they become heroes and the rest of the students emulate them and the vicious cycle of indiscipline continues. Either way they may become deviant, making it difficult for the education system to achieve its goals and objectives.

The M.O.E.S.T has put in place tough measures such as students involved in the destruction of school properties should be made to pay the full cost of such properties, such students should be expelled from school and they should be dealt with seriously by the law (M.O.E.S.T, 2001). In general, school strikes are a hindrance to the efforts of the Kenyan government of attaining education for all (EFA) by 2015.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

This study is guided by expectancy theory. This theory was formulated by Victor Vroom in 1964 and it explains the process of what an individual undergoes to make choices. According to Armstrong (2006), Vroom proposed that the action taken by an individual will lead to an outcome which can be rated as positive or negative. Together with Edward Lawler and Layman Porter, they suggested that the relationship between people's behaviors and their goals are influenced by change in jobs payments systems and working conditions.

The theory is limited in that; it assumed that behaviors result from conscious choices among alternatives whose purpose is to maximize pleasure and to minimize pains. But according to social structures, what the individual wants to do or thinks as right and required to be done may be considered as wrong because of its consequences to the entire society. Expectancy theory is relevant to this study because it deals with relationships that exist between performance and

outcome. When the students are morally trained a positive effect is expected. If they are not trained, negative effects in form of drug abuse, stealing, fighting, homosexuality and engaging in illegal groups are exhibited.

Therefore the students' unrest experienced in most of our secondary schools may be a clear indication that little or no moral input has been imparted in the students. For this reason the researcher wonders whether the schools and the parents through guidance and counseling are effective in reinforcing moral formation to the students.

In school, the teachers expect the students to behave strictly what the rules and regulations states as a lot of input on guidance and counseling is expected to have been carried out by parents and the school. However they act contrary to the expectations of the teachers, then the students are considered to be behaving wrongly.

The indicators of effective expectance theory are; the stakeholders change the attitude towards good discipline and cooperation between all the stakeholders such that students, teachers and parents. Reduction of cases of school unrests, active participation in guidance and counseling, mature and responsible relationships and good performance index are noted.

The administration styles are very important. The way the administrators communicate with the students is very important. When the administration refuses to resolve students' grievances or listen to their points of view, the students become tense and stress builds up. If the tension becomes very intense something seemingly very trivial like badly cooked food, refusal to participate in an activities outside school or even a transfer of one of the teachers triggers the students to indulge in mass unrest.

The students who do not have the interest to learn and are indisciplined will influence other students negatively, while the disciplined students will influence the others positively. For example the poor performers do not want to be identified alone and therefore they are likely to influence others negatively in an attempt to belong, leading to indiscipline. Students who are good in academics and are well disciplined may act as mentors and in the process they are likely to influence others positively.

When the teacher do not cover the syllabus adequately, the students are likely to feel inadequately prepared for the examinations. This may lead the student into undisciplined behaviours so as to be sent home giving them an opportunity not to do the exams as scheduled and vice versa. For instance the students of Kiru Secondary School in Murang'a North District had not revised for the mock examinations and they had contributed some money to buy the examination, when they finally realized they could not get them they opted to go home (Maina et al., 2008).

According to Njoya (2008), parent mediates security, health, justice, orderly knowledge, affection and peace. In homes where there is a lot of violence between spouses or when parents are constantly absent from home, a sense of insecurity and lack of self-esteem develops in the children. This can cause a build up of tension in students to an extent that they release it through violence even in schools.

When the relationship between the administrator and the non-teaching staff is not good, the staff is likely to square their differences through the students. The students may be incited to intentionally disobey the school rules and regulations.

Students may abuse drugs, which may alter their feelings and emotions, causing physical discomfort, restlessness, lack of sleep, anxiety and impaired judgment, which can result in breaking of school rules and regulations.

The teachers may promote indiscipline by overstressing their pupils intellectually, particularly if they force the students to remain in class to cover the syllabus within a short period well after school hours, hence becoming fatigued. In some cases individual needs of learners are not addressed which causes frustration and the resultant acts of violence. In all these cases counseling can be used as an intervening variable to avoid the indiscipline caused by the students.

### **3. Research Design and Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive research design is used in cases where researchers expect to have target group explain or describe certain issues about important variables of the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) it is important and appropriate to use data where subjects are observed in either natural set ups without manipulating the environment. It can be used when collecting information about people's attitudes and opinions. The research design was chosen because the study was not confined to the collection and description of the data, but sought to investigate and establish the existence of certain relationships among the variables under investigation. Hence; the design was selected to satisfy this aspect of the study. It was an efficient way to obtain information needed to describe the attitudes, opinions and views of various stakeholders on the causes of the differences in academic performance among secondary school students in private and public schools in Machakos District.

#### 4. Literature Review

Several studies have been undertaken by scholars in an attempt to explain the factors leading to school unrest/strike. In order to address the problems, it is logical to look into the root cause of the issue and eventually propose viable strategies that can be adopted to alleviate the problem. The literature review is conveniently subdivided into various subtopics, which include the concept of discipline, nature and trend of secondary schools strikes, possible causes of school strikes in secondary schools, strategies of dealing with students' indiscipline in secondary schools and finally summary and the conclusion.

##### 4.1 The Concept of Discipline

According to Mbiti (2007) discipline as a concept is used to mean moral capacity or disposition, which is ingrained into human personality. It becomes a powerful habit for self-control. Discipline is also viewed as a capacity that enables the students to use the voice of reason in making the right decision, even when the natural desires are pulling them towards the other direction. According to Mwangi (2006) discipline is a set of procedures designed to eliminating behaviours that compete with effective learning. These definitions emphasized the role of administrator/teacher as that of simultaneously dealing with learning and any behavior that conflict with learning. This is supported by Okumbe 1998, (p.117) and Mbiti 2007, (p. 8).

The role of discipline is to correct faults, to prevent bad habits, to restrain unruliness, to free the will from despotism of desires and to keep man's animosity from interfering with his humanity (Mbiti, 2008, p. 80).

Discipline is viewed in three major schemes each of which gives its justified position on how it should be managed. These schemes include - the traditional scheme of discipline, the free expression scheme of discipline and the modern scheme of discipline. The tradition scheme of handling discipline is guided by the basic idea that the child was born naturally bad. In this view, all children are naturally inclined to do evil unless adults control them properly. This is effected through harsh punishment or through rewards (Mbiti 2008).

The free expression movement scheme views the child to have been born naturally good and is completely opposite of the traditional view. The proponents of this scheme believed the child should be allowed to grow and develop in atmosphere of total freedom, with no restrictions or any form of behavior control. The rules of control were replaced by persuasion. They felt that the child personality would not blossom in an environment where rules and other form of restrictions are bounded. The scheme overlooked the fact that the children are born ignorant and that they need the guidance of adult in acquiring basic worthwhile habits, knowledge and attitudes as they grow up.

According to Mbiti (2007), modern scheme of discipline believes that discipline is learnt. It is the fundamental responsibility of family, the school and the religious community to fashion good conduct or discipline among children under their care. A child whose informed conscience has blossomed obeys the voice of reason to do the right thing in any given situation not because the individual is convinced that it is the right thing to do. The modern scheme of discipline therefore puts great emphasis on the teaching of good conduct. Dobson (as Mbiti 2007, p. 83) states that:

*The basic foundation of ingraining the child's informed conscience is most important that a child respects his parents, not for the purpose of satisfying their egos, but because the relationship with his parents provide the basis for their attitude towards other people. His view of parental authority becomes the cornerstone of his later outlook on school authority, police and the law, the people with whom he eventually live and work with and for the society in general.*

##### 4.2 Natures and Trend of Secondary School Strikes in Kenya

According to literature, the nature and trend of secondary school strikes/unrest have been characterized by mass indiscipline involving loss of human life, violence, wanton destruction of school property, loss of learning and teaching time due to the unwarranted disruption. For example in Upper Hill Secondary School in Nairobi, a students' life was lost and hostels burnt down whereas at Mbugiti Secondary in Thika District, several buildings were razed down in 2008 (Mathenge et al., 2008, p.1).

According to the statistics from the Task Force (M.O.E.S.T, 2001), between 1980 and 1990 the number of schools experiencing students' unrest increased tremendously from 22 to 187. This is an increase of 6.3 % basing on the number of secondary schools registered by then. The figure is compounded more and according to Ngare (2008, p.4). In the year 2008 alone, 254 school strikes had been reported by July to the Ministry of Education. These figures comprise of the known and recorded cases and perhaps the number could be higher.

The task force views are that cases of students strike are not new, they are on the increase and their dimensions are changing. For one, the students under the influence of drugs and peer pressure become unreasonable and violent. After their action, students get a false sense of greatness and power. According to Tirop, as quoted by Ngare (2008, p.1), "The trend is worrying as incidence of burning down schools property are now preferred choices of many student in expressing grievances". From the above information a study was carried out to find out for instance:-

- Why has the trend been on the increase?
- Why the trend is changing for the worse to the extent that they are premeditated and planned?
- Why are the students engaging themselves in such a mass indiscipline, as the audacity and the level of the destruction that have been witnessed are indicators that things are falling apart in secondary schools in country?

#### 4.3 Effects of School Strikes in other Countries

The schools strikes problem is not unique to Kenya alone. The problem has also been experienced in other countries. According to Wikipedia (2008) the Chinese middle schools riots where a series of riots that broke out in a Singaporean Chinese community in Singapore in 1956, resulting in 13 people killed and more than 100 injured. The students were protesting due to deregistration of the Singapore Chinese, middle school students union (SCMSSU). They sat-in over the next two weeks, organizing meetings and holding demonstrations. The government issued an ultimatum that the schools should be vacated and then the riots started at Chinese High School and spread to other parts of the Island.

In Escambia country, Florida according to (Wikipedia, 2008) Escambia High School experienced racialism riots. This occurred in varying forms between 1972 and 1977. The centrepiece riot, which received the most publicity and was the most violent demonstration, occurred on February 5, 1976. According to wikipedia (2008):

*On February 4, 1976, an Impromptu school election was held in which students were allowed to vote to either keep the name of the athletic team as "Raiders" or change the name back to "Rebels". The students who preferred "Rebels" failed to secure as super majority needed to win ballot, and the next day, a riot ensued over four hours in the school. Four students were shot in the violence and twenty-six students were injured by rocks and debris while the calamity involved students smashing windows and trophy cases as well as fighting other students.*

In New York a guidance counsellor and five students at the Rachael Carson High School for Costal studies in Brooklyn were arrested on April 28, 2006 and charged with rioting after a student protest over the removal of the principal turned violent and one student hit a police officer (The New York Times, 2006, April 26). According to Mwangi and Birgen (2008) in Uganda, over 30 schools were set on fire during the month of June 2008. A confidential security report presented to Uganda President Yoweri Museveni on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 revealed that more than half of the fires that gutted school buildings in this country were caused by undisciplined students, mostly as a revenge for disciplinary action meted out to them by the school administration.

#### 4.4 Possible Causes of Strikes in Secondary Schools

A strike is an expression of an individual or group's anger to pressurize for the attainment of his/her group. There are two types of strikes, the mild strike and the violent strike. The mild strike can be controlled since the parties concerned only need an explanation and advice or guide and counseling for them to cool down. Violent strike is accumulation of several mild riots and the students now set off to stage their anger wildly (Ndakwa, 2006, p.14). According to Mwangi and Birgen (2008), talks on school violence that rocked schools in Kenya and Uganda during the first half of the year 2008 are blamed on peer influence, bad parenting, laxity in teaching service, sloppiness in the Ministry of Education and rivalry in private schools owners. Other people have blamed it on media, the mobile phones, pocket money and drugs. In Uganda, investigations conducted revealed that students as young as 12 years old have admitted torching their own schools, sometimes for what seems as petty reasons. A 12 year old admitted having committed the offence because he did not like the school whereas a 13 year old, as a revenge for having been chased from school for cheating in exams. Other causes of arson in schools have been retaliation by students over suspension.

Poor quality resources have been recipe of chaos. On July 22 year 2008, The Minister of Education closed schools in the Central Region of Uganda because they were running unregistered boarding facilities. One of the schools in Mubende had only three teachers. Some of the school closed had girls sharing one latrine with boys, and the girls' dormitory had no curtains. In one of the secondary school, boys slept in a primary school dormitory (Njenga, 2008, p.7).

Anderson (as cited by Kabiru 2007) observed that in Uganda, it is in boarding schools where most school strikes take place and he argued that it is because of facilities that are not adequate in these schools. To know the origin of students' strikes in Kenyan secondary schools, it is therefore good to understand the factors, which drive and compel students to be in that state of unrest.

The literature reviewed in Uganda had its findings based in that country. The secondary schools in Uganda have students from different countries thus different social, political and geographical background with the study to be carried in Kenya (Murang'a North District) where secondary schools admit 80% of the students from the district and the rest are from other parts of the country. The study carried out concur with the study by Anderson that most of the schools that were involved in the strikes were boarding schools as most of the students are dissatisfied with the school environment. Most of them have been forced to be in boarding schools as the parents are very busy to take care of them at home.

#### *4.5 School Administrative Styles and Students' Discipline*

This is the procedural and authoritative art of getting things done in the school. According to Waihenya (2001), a great number of head teachers are lacking in management skills. According to the findings from the study most of them have undergone through the training of either, finance, guidance and counselling or administration while it is necessary to train in all. This limits their capacity to be effective in their job, and they are often accused of being authoritative and inaccessible to the students. This leads to discontent among both teachers and students, causing an accumulation of stress and the inevitable explosion. According to Mwangi and Birgen (2008), the Secretary General, Kenya Nation Association of Parents stated that hundred schools in Kenya were forced to close in June 2008. He attributed students' unrest to absenteeism of principals. He claims today's principals are perpetually away from schools in meetings or running their own errands in town or in their farms. Powerless deputies are left to run the schools from the corridors.

The increased wave of students' unrest prompted the Minister of Education to appoint a Task Force in year 2008 chaired by the Chairman Parliamentarian Education committee and Senior Ministerial Officials whose mandate was to meet the stakeholders, gather views and information and make recommendations in order to stem out the culture of violence taking root in our secondary schools. According to the September 2001 Task Force findings, poor school administration was cited as the major cause of indiscipline. Some head teachers lacked managerial skills in planning, budgeting and expenditure control, bookkeeping, procurement and human resource management. Consequently lack of skills in budgeting and book-keeping leaves most heads at the mercy of bursars who could easily mismanage school finances leading to misallocation of resources hence resulting to lack of essentials and services.

The Task Force (2001) was informed that the authorities' structure of the school contributes a lot of students' unrest. According to the Task Force, the administration should be in direct contact with students to determine the problems they may be facing with an aim of ensuring that student live in most conducive atmosphere of learning. This points the need for open dialogue with students so that the administration could be in a position to offer suitable explanations when problems occur. On the contrary, most secondary schools are characterized by mal-administration that creates a wide gap between the students and the administration. This results into total breakdown in communication between the two parties such that the students views are not listened to, their problems not solved and their rights not respected. This creates stress in students, which translate into violence whenever the slightest opportunity presents itself (NCKK, 1999).

According to Macharia, Muchire, (2008) students accused their deputy head teacher of high handedness and complained of being served with small rations of poorly cooked food. A study carried out by Kabiru, (2007) on factors contributing to students' unrest in Kirinyaga District of Central Province targeted secondary schools, teachers and students. A simple random sampling technique was used to select eight secondary schools after stratifying the schools into three strata: two provincial secondary schools for girls and two for boys, one district school for boys and one for girls and two mixed day schools. The deputy head teachers and teachers were purposively selected. He used questionnaires, interview guide and document analysis to collect data. In his findings 100% of the students indicated that the causes of indiscipline were: - negative societal influence, 85.7% was due to poor role modelling by the parents and another 85.7 % due to failure to cover all academic and non academic needs of the students. The findings of their study cannot be generalized for the whole country thus presenting a gap that this study attempted to fill. The study findings were that students indicated that the following were the causes of school unrest: - 70% of the students indicated that friends at school contributed to the unrest and 51.1% was due to peer pressure from friends outside the school. 63.3% was due to drug and alcohol abuse and 44.4% due to the outlawed groups. Others factors included the influence of teachers, poor school administration and the non-teaching staff. The findings from Murang'a North District thus differ with the above findings from Kirinyaga District.

#### 4.6 Effect of Parents on Students' Discipline

The parents and the society at large in their hunger to educate their children have not emphasized on character training in schools and at home. This is one of the causes of indiscipline in schools. For instance Mbiti (2007, p. 88) indicates that "both parents and teachers have placed a lot of emphasis on academic studies due to great national examination performance competition. In search of academic excellence, the need to indicate positive character in children has been sidelined". Parents and the adult community misbehave in the presence of their children and expect these children to behave properly. According to Ng'ang'a (2008, p.14), Parents have given too much freedom to their children. They accompany them to entertainment joints where they are exposed to all sort of behaviours. The parent must come back to their senses and realize that they are ruining their children. Parents have also abandoned their traditional ways of enforcing discipline. They pamper the children at home. These students attend the best academies for their primary education. By the time they go to secondary schools, they find conditions in public secondary schools very different from what they are used to. They find rules and regulations they have to follow and they are not used to them and they rebel, (Muindi and Ngare, 2008).

According to Gachagua, (2005) as cited by Kabiru, (2007) in his comparative study between disciplined and less disciplined students found out that parental involvement influence student's discipline for example consultation between parents and teachers on student's progress was found to enhance discipline among students. Shannon (2008) carried out a case study to explore the critical roles that fathers can take in children's development in an early childhood center in U.S.A, where she was a teacher. She found out that fathers sometimes interact with children in ways that may differ from those used by mothers. She was committed to involving fathers as much as possible and encouraged other teachers to increase father's involvement (Appl, Brown and Stone, 2008). The study reviewed was based in a U.S.A. context hence has age, perception, social, economic and political background difference with the study carried out which focused on a different Kenyan context. Literature reviewed on Shannon, (2008) presents a gap for another study as her study was based on an early childhood pupil in the U.S.A. hence has age, perception, social, economic and political background difference with the study to be carried out. The study undertaken was based on adolescents who are in secondary schools in the Muranga North District of Central Province in Kenya. Shannon's study used a naturalistic design (case study) while the study undertaken used both descriptive survey design and the naturalistic design. The study concurred with the study above as the students indicated that the parenting's styles do contribute to secondary school strikes as indicated below. 50 % was due to poor role model by parents, 37.5 % was due to support of the strikes given by parents, 37.5% due to problems associated to broken homes and 25% due to too much pocket money given by the parents.

#### 4.7 Drug and Substance Abuse and Students' Discipline

As has been noted earlier drug abuse is the use of illegal or dangerous substances in form of liquid, solid or gas. Drugs affect the people who have taken them physically and mentally (Ndakwa, 2006). An alarming number of students have fallen into the trap of drugs and its not surprising that wave of unrest in 2001 was mainly blamed on the influence of drugs (Kangaro, 2003, p. 26). A survey carried out by the Drug Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation Centre (DAPAR) released shocking statistics on drug abuse in secondary schools in Nairobi, Central and Eastern province. Out of 2080 students sampled in the DAPAR survey, 1082 (52 percent) admitted having taken illicit drug at one stage of their life.

Drug peddlers in schools are the non-teaching staff and other individuals neighbouring the school. This is supported by Njeng'a (2008) who observed that underpaid workers would result to drug peddling, pilferage, deceit and other vices that would earn them extra money to boost their low income. Availability and ease of use of drug that students see around them are some of the main causes of drug abuse by students. Children grow up watching adults taking drugs to escape from physical and emotional pain. They consequently develop the idea that drugs are panacea of all problems. This influences their discipline negatively. According Ngare and Muindi (2005) some parents turn a blind eye even when they are aware that their children are engaging in antisocial behaviors due to drug addiction. This could explain when the rebellion of student occurs accompanied by wanton destruction of property in schools. M.O.E.S.T (2001) confirms drug abuse as major causes of student unrest.

The use of drugs has not been unique to Kenyan schools only. In 1994, the goals of 2000: Educate America Act declared that by the year 2000 every school in the United States would be free from drugs, alcohol and violence Kristin et al. (2003). Yet when the interim report for goals 2000 were published in 1995, the use and sale of illicit drugs at school had actually increased. According to Kaufman et al. (2001), the USA's Department of Justice and Education jointly published indicators of school crime and safety and its survey found that students reported greater availability of drugs in

1999 than in 1993 and that the 12<sup>th</sup> graders use of marijuana and alcohol was on the rise.

Machoka (2003) in her study on psychological and social causes of substance abuse among public secondary school in Kisii Central District targeted all secondary schools, principals, teachers and students. Stratified random sampling procedure was used to select ten secondary schools into five strata: "Girls" only urban boarding, "Boys" only urban boarding school, "Mixed" urban boarding and any rural boarding school. Two schools were selected randomly from each stratum. Thirty teachers were randomly selected. Questionnaires were used for collecting the data. In her findings students were found to have been abusing drugs. About 36.1% of the students accepted that they use drugs of one kind or another. Another 66% said that they have friends who use drugs thus presenting a gap for another study, as the findings cannot be generalized to all students' population. The literature reviewed in this study shows that drug and substance abuse by the students is rife in school. The study carried out confirmed the same as half of the school heads, 50% were of the view that drug and alcohol abuse were the serious cases of indiscipline among secondary school students in Murang'a North. About 38% of the discipline teachers and 7% of the students held a similar view, implying that drug and alcohol abuses are serious causes of indiscipline the secondary schools in the district.

#### *4.8 Teachers Contributions to Students' Discipline*

The relationship between teachers and students has contributed to student unrest in the schools. NCKC (1992) observed that some teachers are never interested in their work and hence they lack commitment to duty. Such teachers do not take their responsibility to ensuring that the syllabus is well covered. They frequently absent themselves from classes leaving some lessons unattended and thus accumulating student's workload. As a result students become unsettled and uneasy wondering about how they will perform in their examination. This creates stress in the student to the extent that later may result to violence to register their feelings about the former.

The M.O.E.S.T. (2001) Task Force further observes that the current curriculum in its implementation, teachers tend to be more examination oriented and since the introduction of 8-4-4 system various curriculum evaluation have been undertaken resulting in reduction of curriculum load and number of subjects offered both at standard eight (8) K.C.P.E and form four (4) K.C.S.E levels. These measures however seem not to have gone far enough in addressing suitability, relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum. Moreover, the curriculum was still overloaded despite the current reduction. Ranking of schools in accordance with performance in the national examinations causes teachers to be preoccupied with testing and examining at the expense of character moulding. Njoroge, (2005) noted that students are given too much assignment which they find difficult to complete and when the teachers label such student as in disciplined, the labelling causes them to behave negatively. The study carried out tried to find out whether teachers contribute to secondary school strikes to fill the gap. 18.3 % of the students' indicated that the teachers had an influence on students' indiscipline.

#### *4.9 The Impact of Non-teaching Staff on Students Discipline*

The non-teaching staffs are lowly paid which demoralizes them. They serve students who may have a lot of pocket money. This tempts them to do favors to the students such as buying drugs and allowing the students to sneak out of school when the students corrupt them. This leads to a lot of indiscipline, which results to school strikes. Njeng'a (2008) observed that the non-teaching staff are lowly paid and overworked. KUDHEIHA (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Education Institutions, Hospital and Allied workers) gave an incidence in one of the schools in central where a watchman peddled drugs in school to supplement his meagre income. The watchman earned Ksh 3000 per month. The lowly paid watchman argued that the rich paid him peanuts to guard their children while his own children were at home because he couldn't afford school fees. Research conducted in Statehouse Girls Nairobi by the schools research club revealed that girls paid as little as Ksh twenty to watchmen to allow them sneak out at night. Bus drivers are reported to collude with mechanics to replace school vehicle parts with old ones this results to vehicles breaking down quite often, consequently, resulting to inconveniences and dissatisfactions, which may lead to students' unrest (Njagi. 2008).

A study by Ochenge, (2007) to find out about the influence of the non-teaching staff on students' indiscipline among students' in public secondary schools carried in Masaba Division of Kisii District. The study targeted secondary schools, principals, teachers and the non-teaching staff. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the non-teaching staff. Simple random sampling was used to select the principals and the teachers. The research instruments included the questionnaire and the document analysis. The findings were that 4% of the causes of indiscipline in secondary schools were due to non-teaching staff who were either rude or collude with students or unsupportive to school administration. The study carried out concurred with Ochenge's findings as the 18.3 % of the students' indicated

that the teachers had an influence on students' indiscipline, 15.3% and 13.3% indicated that the head teachers and the non-teaching staff respectively contributed towards year 2008 students' indiscipline in the district. For example the non-teachers seek favours from the students by accepting to be sent for drugs after being given tips. This influences the students' discipline negatively causing the unrests.

#### *4.10 Peer Pressure Influence on Students Discipline*

According to Ndakwa (2000), there are some students who influence others to cause chaos due to stress. This is because they see learning process as a burden to them hence they result to violent strikes as a solution to ease or receive tension. This happens mostly when students meet with other students with different behaviors which after interacting, influences them and causes havoc as a solution to problems.

Njeng'a (2008) discusses that in Uganda a girl influenced and convinced the others to burn a school because she was convinced the school administration act of favoritism towards foreign students in the eye of the students, the school applied double standards. Literature reviewed on peer influence on discipline presented a gap for a study to find out whether peer influence does contribute to secondary schools strikes which has been limitedly been studied in Murang'a North District. This study attempted to fill this gap and it confirmed the fears as 63% of the teachers indicated that peer pressure contributes to secondary school unrest in Murang'a North District.

#### *4.11 Strategies of Dealing with Student Indiscipline*

It is worth noting that the increase in the number of schools that experience some form of students' unrest in year 2008 was alarming compared to the previous years. The disturbances were characterized by violence and wanton destruction of school property. Therefore urgent resolutions were necessary. This was a strong justification for a study to investigate how school should resolve, manage, prevent indiscipline problems and implement appropriate methods to resolve this dilemma. The following are some of the ways of managing schools strikes from the literature reviewed.

#### *4.12 Use of Civic Education to Eradicate Drug and Substance Abuse*

The ministry of education science and technology (2001) cited drug abuse as one cause of disturbances in schools. The Ministry of Education was to work closely with the National Agencies of the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) and the provincial administration and they were expected to contain the problem of drug abuse. However, NACADA have not been able to reach the stakeholders at the ground level to achieve their objectives.

Parents were asked to be vigilant in detecting causes of drug abuse and they should mould their children spiritually and morally (Ndakwa, 2000, p.11). Schools should be vigilant in order to detect students with drug problems so that they can refer such cases for professional help. The issue of drug has been quite sensitive when being handled between teachers, students and the parents. The parents mostly do not want to accept the truth. This hinders the proper channels of handling the victims of drug abuse in schools. It has become quite difficult as parents cover their children even where there is evidence. According to Tirop, (2008) (as cited by Muindi 2008) many parents have turned a blind eye even when they are aware their children were engaged in anti social behaviours. The schools used to operate on the principals of mutual understanding with the parents and other stakeholders, but of late parents are rushing to courts to seek redress.

#### *4.13 Provision of Guidance and Counselling Services*

Guidance and counseling is viewed as another method of dealing with indiscipline of the students. Most of the students are in adolescent stage, which is characterized by identity crisis, rebellion against authority and tendency to identify with, this cause them to respond to peer pressure. The Ministry tried to strengthen Guidance and counseling both at the Ministry and at the schools level by providing teacher counsellors to every public school, facilitate their training and provide necessary resources to enable them perform their duties effectively (M.O.E.S.T., 2001). Parent's roles in disciplining their child through guidance and counseling is very important to enable them raise their children responsibly. Jores (as cited by Kabiru 2007) confirms that children accept in general those values that they know their parents accept. However this role has been left with the house girls (who in most cases are adolescents) who spend a lot of time with these children at home.

A study by MingTsui in China and United States explored on the relationships among family income, parenting, and home environment and mathematics achievement. The findings were that factors such as parenting and home

environment could be more important for children's academic achievement than money. The study was carried outside Kenya and on the achievement of mathematics. However the study carried out in Kenya was in a different environment with different objectives and endeavored to find out whether parenting styles has any effects on discipline. The response by the respondents over the same is as was given elsewhere in the report findings.

#### *4.14 Role of Communication between the School Administration and the Students*

Communication is the process of giving information from one source to another. Communication between the school administration and the students is very important. It is used as a bottom line of solving indiscipline problems. Nyaigo (2008) points out that the students want to be listened to and appreciated therefore the teacher should have a close link with parents and talk with them at least once a term through proper communication.

According to Odera and Muthiora, (2008) communication with students is key and things like strikes are students' only ways of communication when freedom of expression is denied. If only the administration opened channels of communication things would change. The students should hold interactive sessions with the administration and the students should demand answers to their problems during those sessions. The members of staff must be accessible to the students and it is the small things that make students blow up. Odera and Muthiora (2008) concur with this. They feel that students should be allowed to air their views through barazas, as communication is the bottom line to a good relationship between the teachers and the students. This was confirmed by the study carried out as 50% of the head teachers and 25% of the teachers indicated that student parliaments/Barazas are used to curb students unrests in Murang'a North District.

#### *4.15 The Role Played by the church in Reducing Students unrest*

According to NCKC (1992) the church is supposed to offer spiritual and moral guidance to the students. In this respect, the church stands for virtues and condemns for vice. The students should be made to understand that they have a duty to God's creation to the neighbours, to the entire society, and to themselves, and therefore obedience, honesty and sincerity are vital virtues that should be inculcated and practiced by all in society.

Clark and Callan (as cited by Romata 2008), in his study on effectiveness of the Catholic Church in reinforcing moral formation in Catholic sponsored secondary schools in Nyeri North District pointed out that the causes of indiscipline are the rigorous studies, adjustments to the adolescents new role in the society, weakened home and family structures, crime and violence modeled by the media. Considering that indiscipline cases are indiscriminative in all secondary schools the researcher attempted to find out the major strategies of curbing secondary school strikes in the area of study, which were not addressed in the study carried out by Romata. The findings of the study carried out differed with Romata's findings as none of the respondents indicated that church as a major strategy of curbing students' unrests.

#### *4.16 Improved Relationship between Teachers and Students as a Strategy for Curbing Students Unrest*

Calderhead (as cited by Kinyanjui 1976) says that teachers achieved a high level of pupil's involvement not through handling of deviance but through their careful planning and design of activities. This can only be achieved through establishment of norms for classroom behaviour and work procedures, which enables activities to be easily implemented and changed. This is through a number of classroom management skills that ensured the efficient working of the class. If the students are allowed to participate in school decision making process, which concern them it could be a step forward in solving indiscipline problems in schools today.

Kiruma (2004) carried out a study on the measures of curbing the students' strikes in Mukurwe-ini Division in former Nyeri District. The study targeted secondary schools, head teachers and the teachers. Stratified random sampling was used to select the secondary schools, simple random sampling to select the head teachers and the teachers were purposively selected. Questionnaires were used to collect the data. Her study findings recommended Guidance and counseling as one of the major measure that should be put in place to curb students' strikes, however, her study never included students' in the sample. The study conducted used both survey and narrative research design and students were included in the sample with the view of finding out whether similar findings on strategies that can be used to curb students' strikes in secondary school were attainable in a different social and geographical background. The study findings confirmed Kiruma's findings as 75% of the class teachers indicated that guidance and counseling as an effective method in assisting students from engaging in indiscipline cases that could lead to unrests.

#### 4.17 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 4.1:** Gender of Students, Teachers and School Heads Respondents

Gender	Students		Class teachers		Discipline teachers		Headteachers	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	202	56	7	88	5	62.5	5	62.5
Female	158	44	1	12	3	37.5	3	37.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study required the respondents to indicate their gender; on this question the study established that 56% of the students who participated in the study were males while 44% were females. The study also established that of the class teachers were 88% male with only 12% female class teacher participant. As concerns discipline teacher participants, 63% were males and 37% females. The distribution of the participating schools heads was similar as that of discipline teachers. This implies that there is great disparity of teachers based on gender in the district with more male teachers than female teachers. Hence, the need to give female teachers the opportunity to be involved in discipline matters in secondary schools. The result therefore indicates that there were more male than female teachers in the secondary schools in Murang'a North.

#### 4.18 Age and Class of Students Respondents

The information on the age and class of the participating students was of importance to the study in determining whether students' age and the class they were in had influence in school indiscipline and unrests in district. The study categorized the age of students into four age groups and the participating form 2, 3, and 4 students were asked to indicate under age group they belonged. Table 4.2 shows the summary of the data from the students.

**Table 4.2:** Distribution of Students by Class by Age bracket

Class	14-16 years (Frequency)	Percentage	17-19 years (Frequency)	Percentage	20 and above	Percentage	Total no of students
Form 2	89	25	38	11	1	0	128
Form 3	26	7	83	23	5	2	117
Form 4	1	0	111	31	6	1	115
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>360</b>

The study also sought to establish the class and age of the students who took part in the study. On this question, the study found out that majority of the form two students were aged between 14-16 years as shown by 25%, 23% of the form three students were aged between 17-19 years while 6% of the form four students aged 20 or above.

#### 4.19 School Category and Type

**Table 4.3:** Distribution of Students by School type and Category

School Category	District (Frequency)	Percentage	Provincial (Frequency)	Percentage	Total frequency
Boys boarding	101	28	59	16	160
Girls boarding	73	20	56	16	129
Mixed day/boarding	71	20	0	0	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>360</b>

The study sought to establish on the distribution of students by school type and category. The study established that majority of the students who took part in the study were from boys boarding schools, district category as indicated by 28%, while an equivalent of 20% came from both girls boarding and mixed/boarding secondary schools, district category. This study therefore revealed that there was fair representation of students in all the schools types except for the provincial schools which had no mixed day/boarding type of schools in Murang'a district. This means that data was

obtained from a cross-section of students representing all the secondary schools in the study area.

#### 4.20 Distribution of Teachers by School Category and Type

**Table 4.4:** Distribution of Teacher Participants by School type and Category

School type	School Category	
	Provincial N %	District N %
Boys	3 50	6 33.3
Girls	3 50	6 33.3
Mixed day and boarding	-	6 33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.21 Teaching Experience of Class, Discipline and Head Teachers

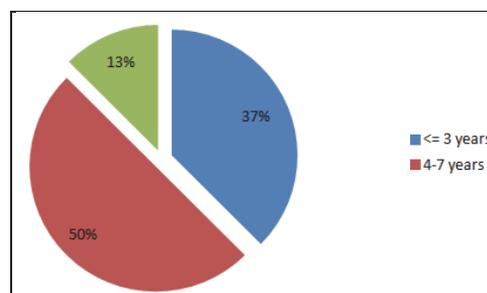
The study also sought for information about the experience of participating teachers. Class, discipline and head teachers were asked to indicate their teaching experience and the gathered responses were summarized as presented in Table below;

**Table 4.5:** Distribution of class teachers by Experience

Experience	Class teachers		Disciplinary system Teachers		Head Teachers	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<3yrs	1	12.5	-	-	3	37.5
4-7yrs	1	12.5	-	-	4	50
8 and more	6	75.0	8	100	1	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above it can be seen that all the participating discipline teachers 100% and 75% of class teachers had teaching experience of 8 years and more respectively. About 87% of the school heads had teaching experience of 7 years and below while 13% had 8 years and more. Further, the study also sought for information about the experience of discipline teachers as discipline masters, and the responses gathered show that about 50% had experience of between 4 and 7 years while 13% had experience of 8 years and more. Figure 4.1 shows the experience of the discipline teachers as discipline masters. This shows that teachers had knowledge of student unrests and that they had handled various discipline cases for the years they had worked.

**Figure 4.1:** Distribution of Discipline Teachers by Number of Years in Discipline



Data displayed in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1 clearly implies that data was collected from participants who had long service as class teachers, discipline masters and school heads, hence, able to give reliable information about students' indiscipline cases and school unrests in general. The findings imply these teachers understand why the students behave in this way and the strategies that can be taken to alleviate the same.

#### 4.22 Indiscipline Cases and Unrests in Secondary School in Murang'a North District

The study explored on the cases of school indiscipline and unrests from the participating respondents from the selected secondary schools in the study area. All Respondents (students, discipline teachers, and school heads) were asked to indicate the worst cases of students' indiscipline witnessed in their respective schools and the collected responses were summarized as shown in Table 4.6 below.

#### 4.23 Types of cases of indiscipline in secondary schools in Murang'a North

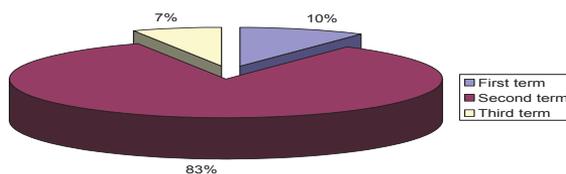
The study also wanted to establish the types of cases of indiscipline in secondary schools in Murang'a north district. On this question, the study established that the various types of cases were either, Drug and alcohol abuse, unrests/strikes, Stealing and fighting, Sneaking, General truancy, Cultism (e.g. Mungiki), Homosexuality as well as acts of Bullying. On the same question, the discipline teachers held a similar view, implying that drug and alcohol abuses are serious causes of indiscipline the secondary schools in the district. This could be the reason why the district is registering high number of secondary school strikes. All the discipline teachers were of the view that school strikes and unrests were the worst indiscipline cases of students.

Fighting and Stealing of students' pocket money, clothing, stationary and school properties in secondary schools was prevalent in Murang'a North district. This was demonstrated by each of the participating school heads and discipline teachers. Sneaking from school and general truancy, which includes; noisemaking, lateness, sleeping in class, speaking in vernacular, and disrespect were also cited by about most secondary school heads. Some discipline teachers also noted that bullying was as a serious case of indiscipline among students in the study area. Other serious cases of indiscipline cited mainly by students were homosexuality and cultism of outlawed Mungiki group.

#### 4.24 Occurrence of cases of Indiscipline

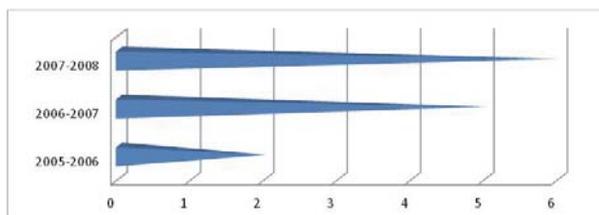
Students were further asked to indicate when most of these cases of indiscipline occurred and the results of the responses obtained are as presented in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2:** Students' Responses on when cases of Indiscipline occurred



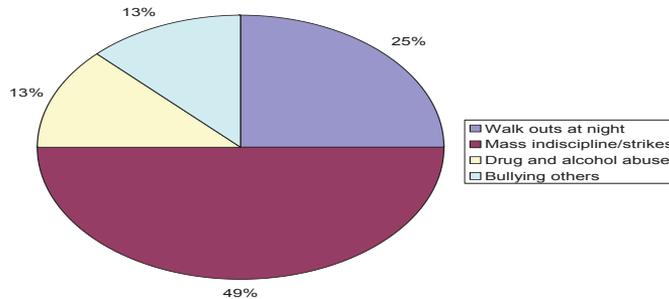
The figure above shows that majority of the cases of indiscipline occurred in the second term (83%) while a few occurred in the first and third terms. This scenario can be attributed to the fact that it is during the second term when mock exams are done. The students who had not prepared enough or completed the syllabus want to disrupt the school programme so that they may not do the exams. The same question was posed to school heads to indicate the years when they experienced the worst cases of indiscipline in their respective schools and responses were summarized as shown in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3:** School Heads Responses to indiscipline cases occurring between 2005 and 2008



The study also sought to establish the number of indiscipline cases occurring between 2005 and 2008. On this question, the study established that most of the worst cases of indiscipline in secondary schools occurred between 2007 and 2008. The school principal and the quality assurance officer were of the opinion that this could be attributed to the general election of 2007 and the post election violence that was witnessed in many parts of the country. Most politicians used the youth (students included) in their political campaigns which could have influenced them negatively.

**Figure 4.4:** Worst experienced form of Indiscipline Witnessed in Secondary Schools during the Strike



Mass indiscipline/strike in secondary schools in the district is the worst form of indiscipline as it exposes the students to a lot of danger such as rape for the girls and initiation of the boys to the outlawed groups. This was response of the head teacher who was interviewed from of the mixed day/boarding school. By large, we must be thankful to God. The boys and girls in this school went on strike at night when they heard girls in the neighbouring school screaming. They assumed the girls had gone on strike while the girls were screaming due to the excitement of the arrival of their new school bus. The girls could have been harassed by the boys in darkness and exposed to any kind of danger if they would have been met by these boys.

All this information shows that strikes, especially in mixed schools are one of the worse forms of indiscipline. To enable the schools manage the indiscipline, boarding schools should admit single sex only. The big challenge according to the researcher's observation and interpretation would lie on how to convince the community that the school should belong to one sex and not the other. They feel the school is for all their children and they should be given equal chances as it was stated when the school was registered.

#### 4.25 Factors Influencing Indiscipline and Student unrests in Murang'a North

The study also sought for information about the main factors influencing students' cases of indiscipline and student unrests in the secondary schools in the study area. Data gathered from the respondents were analysed and summarized as presented by Table 4.7

**Table 4. 6:** Class Teachers' Responses on Factors causing Indiscipline in schools

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Apathy (the national trend)	1	12.5
Peer and academic pressure	3	37.5
Social economic background	2	25.0
Drug and alcohol abuse	3	37.5
Poor administration	2	25.0
Mass media influence	2	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study sought to establish the factors influencing indiscipline in the schools. According to the participating class teachers, 37.5% were of the view that peer and academic pressure were the main factors causing indiscipline and school unrests cases in secondary school in Murang'a North by the time of the study. This can happen if some are not interested in academics or well prepared for the exams, hence, they influence others in engaging in indiscipline behaviours. When

one of the Qaso interviewed was asked to share her view about the influence of peer pressure on indiscipline the Qaso replied:

*I think peer pressure have a lot of influence on the indiscipline of the students especially at the teenage years, when they experience adolescent crisis. In one of the incidences in a music festival function, students resolved they that were all to go on strike on a particular Saturday at mid-night. None of the schools organizing was to be left behind as they would be termed cowards. They were able to use mobile phone to communicate their progress and influence the others. Were it not for the head teachers who took the necessary action fast and swiftly, learning of the institutions in one of the Education zone in the district would have been paralyzed by peer pressure.*

About 25% of the class teachers attributed indiscipline and student unrests to the social background of the students such as single parenthood, families affected by domestic violence, drugs and alcohol abuse, which in turn impacts negatively to students and can influence them into bad behaviours. In one of the schools the teachers interviewed said that:

*A parent could be stressed by financial obligations especially when the parent is single this may lead to immorality or alcohol abuse. This will leave the student with no one to emulate and no one to counsel when need arises. The student becomes stressed too and could end up engaging him/herself in indiscipline.*

Drug and alcohol abuse (37%) taken by some students can influence others to engage in indiscipline behaviors by altering their feelings and emotions, thus causing physical discomfort, restlessness among others which can result in breaking of school rules and regulations as explained in another section

Poor school administration (25%) such as lack of dialogue between the administration and students, highhandedness in dealing with students can lead to tensions and stress build-up. when there is communication breakdown the students have no one to turn to when they have a problem. They sometimes end up acting violently to communicate their dissatisfaction. Other factors cited by class teachers included apathy (13%) whereby the media over highlighted other cases of mass indiscipline in Kenya.

#### 4.26 Class Teachers' Response on Factors that Influence Students' Behaviors in School Unrests

Further, class teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed and disagreed to a given set of factors that influence students' behaviours and school unrests in Murang'a North district. The responses collected were analyzed and summarized as displayed in Table 4.7 below.

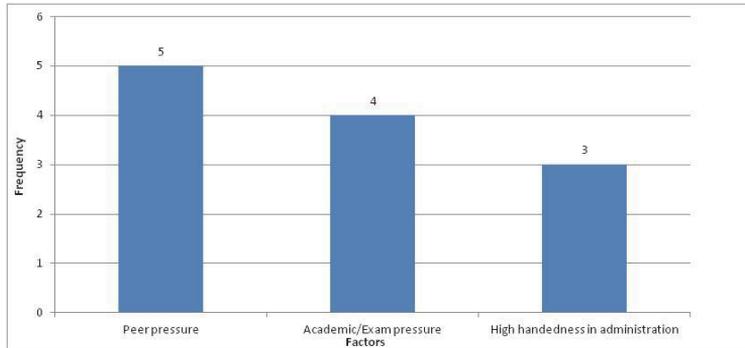
**Table 4.7:** Class Teachers' Factors that Influence Students' Behaviors in School unrests

Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Books and magazines	5 62.5	3 37.5	0 0	0 0	0 0
Media	5 62.5	2 25	0 0	0 0	1 2.5
Peer pressure	6 75	1 12.5	0 0	0 0	1 2.5
Unstable families	4 50	0 0	0 0	3 37.5	1 2.5
Lack of self esteem	2 25	2 25	1 12.5	2 25	1 2.5

The study wanted the respondents to indicate their level of agreement on statements related to influencing Students' Behaviors in School Unrests. On this question, majority of the respondents as shown by 62.5% strongly agreed that books, magazines and media were the most factors influencing student's behaviour in schools. On the same question, majority of the respondents were also in disagreement that unstable families influence student's behaviour in schools.

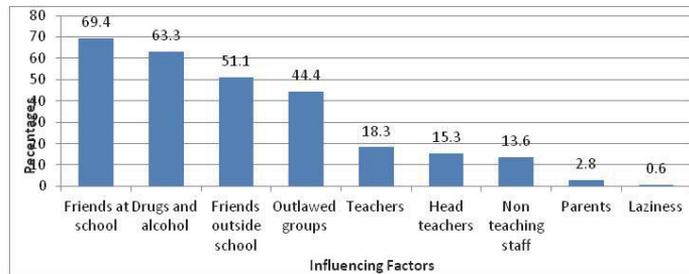
Discipline teachers were also asked to indicate the major contributing factors to the students' unrest. Obtained data from the respondents concerning this aspect were collated and the results are presented in the figure below;

**Figure 4.5:** Discipline Teachers' major factors contributing to the students' unrest.



From Figure 4.5, it is evident that discipline teachers identified three major factors that influence students' behaviours and school unrests in Murang'a North. Among the three, peer pressure was cited by 62.5% participating discipline teachers while 50% cited academic and exam pressure. High handedness in school administration was cited by 38% of the discipline teachers. Further, students were asked to indicate the factors they think influenced students' indiscipline in their respective schools in Murang'a. Collected data from the participating students were summarized and the results are as shown in Figure 4.6

**Figure 4.6:** Students' Responses on factors influencing students Indiscipline



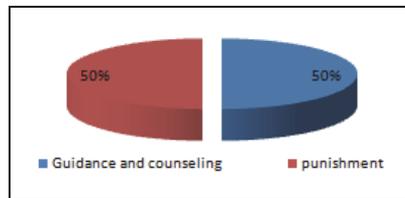
Displayed data in Figure 4.3 clearly depicts that the participating students identified four main factors that influenced indiscipline among students in the district under study. Majority of the students, 70%, indicted that friends at school contributed to indiscipline cases which can come about as a results peer influence as explained elsewhere in the report. The peer influence of friends at school and from outside could also lead to drug and alcohol abuse, and joining outlawed Mungiki group operating in the area. Those who joins the outlawed groups are forced to engage themselves with indisciplined behaviours such as use of drugs in this case tobacco sniffing and they threaten the other students, teachers and to some extent the head teachers. Therefore the group can easily force the students to go on strikes.

Other factors cited by students were the influence by teachers, school heads' administration and non-teaching staff while parents and laziness of students contributes minimally to the students' indiscipline. The big challenge according to the researcher's observation is the choice of friends in the school by the students which is very crucial towards the achievement of minimizing students' unrest. Wrong group formation (anti-academic groups) means having wrong companies in the school and this is likely to lure a student into bad or ill planned activities that may be detrimental to both the school as a whole and even to the student the end being rupture of cases of indiscipline.

#### 4.27 Effective Methods of Instilling Discipline

Discipline teachers were asked to indicate the methods they consider most effective in instilling discipline in secondary schools. Responses obtained from the question were analysed and summarized as depicted in Figure 4.7

**Figure 4.7:** Discipline Teachers' Most effective in instilling discipline in your schools



According to discipline teachers, two methods were identified as the most effective in instilling discipline in secondary schools namely guidance and counseling and punishment. In support to these sentiments as is indicated in table 4.9, 75% of the class teachers indicated that guidance and counseling as an effective method in assisting students from engaging in indiscipline cases that could lead to school unrests followed by meting different forms of punishment such as kneeling (38%), withdrawal of privileges (38%) and caning (25%).

The researcher perused through and analyzed the head teachers Log Book and the Teachers on Duty (TOD) record and the file from guidance and counseling departments and the programmes available. It was noted that most of the schools had stable counseling departments and various counseling programmes are carried out. This is a requirement of the Ministry of Education. The department is headed by a senior teacher appointed by Teachers Service Commission (TSC) or internally appointed by the school administration. The following programmes were noted; Educational counseling which involved: class, stream and individual counseling, Vocational counseling which includes: career choices and development, Personal counseling which includes: individual and group counseling, Leadership training which includes: Teacher counselors training, peer counselors training, prefects training, staff seminars/workshops and support staff seminars and workshops as well as special counseling programmes that includes guidance and counseling of weak students/weak performance. Guidance and counseling of sick students such as those who are asthmatic or the epileptic ones. The guidance and counseling of traumatized students for example those exposed to violence and discrimination. Guidance and counseling of socially needy students those who bed wet and the orphans and the financially needy ones.

#### 4.28 Strategies put in place to Curb Student Strikes in Secondary Schools

Information about the strategies put in place to curb school mass indiscipline case in secondary schools was sought by the study. Obtained responses from class, discipline teachers and school heads were summarized and the results are as depicted in Table below;

**Table 4.8:** Methods used to curb student unrests

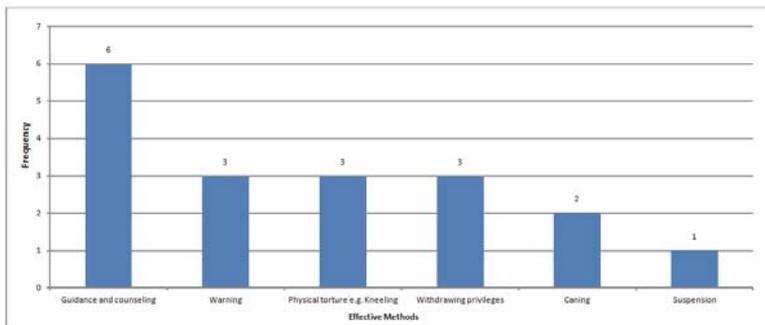
Methods	Class & Discipline Teachers		Head Teachers	
	n	%	n	%
Student parliaments/Barazas	2	25.0	4	50
Guidance and counseling	4	50.0	6	75
Stakeholders involvement	3	37.5	4	50
Effective communication	2	25.0	0	0
Reliable Administration	3	25.0	1	12.5
Co curricular activities	1	12.5	0	0
Expelling culprits	0	0	1	12.5

The study also sought to establish the strategies put in place so as to curb student unrests. As can be seen from the above table, the effective methods that could be used to curb student unrests as advanced by most of the participating class teachers and school heads were guidance and counseling, student barazas/parliament and peer counseling where open discussions could be held freely without intimidation. Involvement of all stakeholders, awareness creation campaigns, effective communication such as the use of suggestion boxes in schools and reliable school administration both from the school heads and good prefect bodies could effectively curb student unrests.

Further analysis on the availability of suggestions boxes in school and effectiveness of guidance and counseling teams revealed that all the participating schools had suggestions boxes while 63% of the participating school heads were

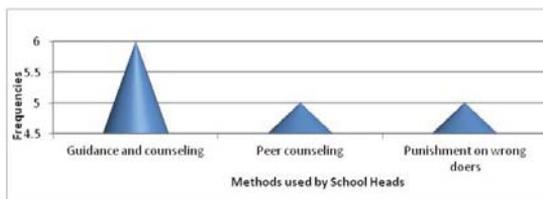
of the view that the guidance and counseling teams were effective. Most of the guidance and counseling teams in secondary schools were found to employ peer counseling and foster parenting and had calendars that ran throughout every term.

**Figure 4.8:** Class Teachers' Responses on Most Effective in Instilling Discipline Schools



Apart from guidance and counseling and giving warnings, there are other methods involved is meting of different forms of punishment. This implies that teachers in the district were of the opinion that punishment was effective in instilling discipline in schools. The same views were supported by school heads where 75% indicated guidance and counseling by teachers as well as fellow students (peers) while punishment on wrong doers was indicated by 38% of the school heads. Figure 4.9 shows the distribution of the responses on discipline methods used by school heads.

**Figure 4.8:** Discipline Methods used by School Heads



#### 4.29 School Administrative factors that Impact on Students' Discipline

The study obtained data about school administration factors that impact on secondary school students' discipline in the study area. School heads who participated in the study were asked to indicate the administration factors that impact on students' discipline in their respective schools. The collected data on this issue were analysed and the results are as explained in the sub-sections that follow.

#### 4.30 School Heads Training on Administration

The study was interested in knowing whether the schools heads in the district had any training in school administration that guarantee knowledge in handling cases of indiscipline and school unrest. Data obtained from the participating school heads is as presented in Figure below.

**Figure 4.9:** Responses on Whether School Heads had Training in Administration

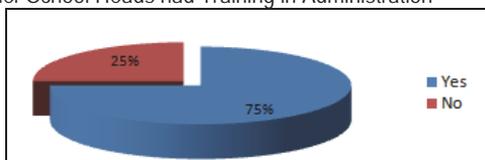


Figure 4.9 clearly shows that majority of the schools heads, 75%, had received training in various aspects of school administration while 25% had not. Those who had not been trained had been found to have been appointed in administration recently. They were asked further to indicate the kind of training they received, 63% had trained in school administration, 50% in financial management and only about 13% in guidance and counseling as is shown in data presented in Table 4.10 below.

**Figure 4.10:** Types of Training Undertaken by Participating School Heads

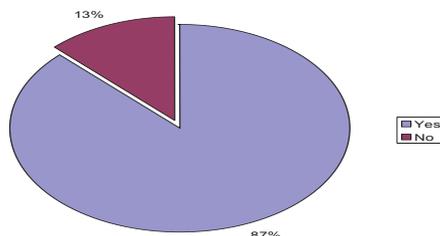
Training	Frequency	Percent
Administration	5	50
Financial management	4	40
Guidance and counseling	1	10
Total	10	100

The study wanted the respondents to state the types of training Undertaken by Participating School Heads. On this question, majority of the respondents as shown by 50% had training on administration, 40% on financial management while those who had guidance and counselling were represented by 10%. The data displayed implies that majority of the school heads in the district had relevant training to handle students' indiscipline and school unrests effectively. That notwithstanding, most schools in the study had many cases of school unrests, meaning that there are other administrative factors that impact on students' discipline. School heads were further asked to indicate in which ways teaching and non-teaching staff in their respective schools had effect on the discipline of students. From the responses gathered, it shows that many a times, teaching and non-teaching staff fail to support the school administration in matters dealing with the discipline of students. They may also incite the students to strike especially if they feel that the administration is not supporting them. For example when the non teaching staff wants salary increments and then the head teacher ignores to listen to their grievances.

#### 4.31 Syllabus coverage

The issue of completion of the syllabus before the students sit for KCSE exams was explored by the study whose findings show that 88% of the teachers complete the syllabus while only about 13% do not as is indicated in Figure 4.11 below.

**Figure 4.11:** Responses on Whether Teachers Complete syllabus before KCSE exams



The head teacher responded by saying:-

*I make sure that all the teachers complete the syllabus in time. Unless where a problem may occur when the teacher falls sick or is transferred in between the year.*

Although a high percentage of the teachers complete the syllabus before the final exams, the 13% of the teachers who do not complete can cause academic pressure on the students as they may feel unprepared for the examination thus, may be at a disadvantage compared with the other students hence lead to indiscipline and school unrests in the affected schools.

#### 4.32 Parenting style

School heads were further asked to indicate whether they thought the parenting of the students had contributed to the

recent wave of school unrests in the district. In response to the question, all school heads admitted that the parenting of students did contribute to the school unrests. One head teacher commented that:- "Some parents gave too much upkeep money to their children for one to hide the identity which led many students to drugs and alcohol abuse. Others are poor role models to their children; they abuse alcohol in the presence of their children and fight too. Due to broken homes and lack proper parenting the students behave in the same way or they may be stressed by their parents' behaviour which can manifest itself in form of indiscipline".

**Table 4.9:** Parenting styles that contribute to School unrests

	Frequency	Percent
Poor role models	4	50
Some parents support the children	3	37.5
Broken homes	3	37.5
Too much pocket money	2	25.0

#### 4.33 Prefects

The other administrative factor that can impact on students' discipline is the use of prefects by school heads in order to enhance discipline. Asked how that can be achieved, 50% of the school heads indicated that prefects can act as role models to the other students while 38% each indicated that they perform peer counseling and supplement the work of teachers in maintaining discipline in the schools. Table 4.12 below shows what prefects can do to enhance school discipline. The problem of stealing, drug and alcohol abuse by school students seems to be serious administration challenge to most of the school heads in Murang'a North district which might require the involvement of other stakeholders such as parents, the church and government and non-governmental agencies.

**Table 4.10:** What prefects can do to enhance discipline in schools.

	Frequency	Percent
Role modelling	4	50
Peer counseling	3	37.5
Supplement teachers	1	12.5

#### 4.34 Whether prefects are trained for disciplinary cases in schools

The study also sought to establish there was training of prefects in enhancing discipline in the school. On this question majority of the respondents said that there were training sessions on good leadership and indiscipline.

**Table 4.11:** Indiscipline Experienced in Schools and Punishment given that were Recorded in the Logbook, Punishment and TOD Books in Murang'a (N=8)

	Very Poor	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Truancy	4 50	3 37.5	2 12	0 0	0 0
Fighting	4 50	3 38	2 12	0 0	0 0
Drug Abuse	4 50	3 40	2 10	0 0	0 0
Insubordination	0 0	2 12	3 39	3 39	0 0
unfinished homework	0 0	2 25	3 37	2 15	2 11
Poor Dressing	0 0	2 25	3 37.5	3 37.5	0 0
Manual work	0 0	3 37.5	2 25	2 25	2 25
Cleaning classes	2 25	3 37.5	2 25	2 25	0 0
Caning	1 12.5	2 25	2 25	4 50	2 25
Sweeping the compound	1 13	3 39	4 33	0 0	0 0
Suspension	3 37.5	3 37.5	0 0	2 25	2 25
Expulsion	1 12.5	2 25	0 0	6 75	0 0
counseling by teachers	3 37.5	2 25	3 37.5	2 25	0 0
counseling by Professionals	0 0	2 25	5 62.5	2 25	0 0
Suspension followed by counseling	0 0	0 0	2 25	5 62.5	2 25
Punishment followed by counseling	1 12.5	0 0	2 25	3 37.5	2 25
Behavioural Change	1 12.5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0

The study employed document analysis in order to obtain information on the availability of logbooks, punishment and TOD books a way of determining whether school administration keeps proper records of student indiscipline and school unrests. Table 4.12 below shows a summary of what found in the sampled secondary schools in Muranga's North District. From the data displayed in Table above, it can be deduced that most school heads did not keep proper records on general truancy, fighting and drug abuse and counseling of students by teachers however these records were kept by various departments. For example issues on discipline were kept by the Deputy/Heads and record on counseling by the HOD Guidance and Counseling. Proper recording of indiscipline cases were found to be kept on insubordination, suspension and punishment followed by counseling.

From the records 70% of the discipline teachers recorded that expulsion was very effective in reducing the school unrest. This may be confirmed by the fact that there were very few unrest in year 2009 as the M.O.E. came up with a policy that students who were identified positively to have been involved in mass indiscipline should be given an expulsion or be suspended for one year. The response from the counseling teachers indicated that suspension followed by counseling was the second effective method with 63%. A teacher interviewed confessed that:- 'Students do not like to be suspended as they will have to under go through screening either by the disciplinary committee or the BOG members. The experience is not very pleasant. Therefore those who are subjected to the same rarely repeat the mistake unless student has a deeper problem'.

#### 4.35 Effects of the Students' Strikes in Secondary Schools in Murang'a North District

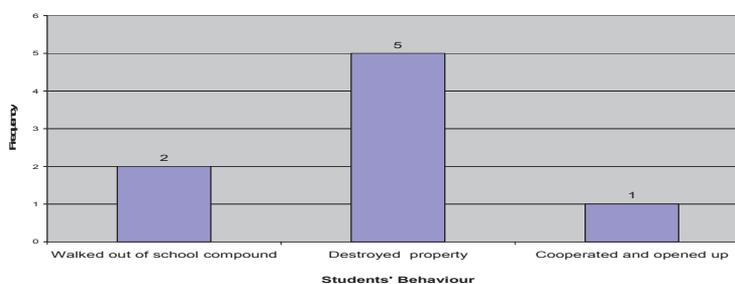
Information about the effects of the students' indiscipline cases and school unrests/strikes were investigated by the study. A question was posted to students, teachers and school heads to indicate how the students behave during the mass indiscipline cases. Data collected from students were analysed and the results are as shown in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.12:** Students' Behaviours during Mass Indiscipline

Behaviour	Frequency	Percent
Pouring food	142	24
Destroying school property	131	22
Stoning teaching and non teaching staff	83	14
Fighting other students	83	14
Stealing school property	71	12
Burning school property	36	6
Walking out peacefully	34	6
Destroying other students' property.	7	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above table, it is demonstrated that 39.4% of the participating students indicated that students poured food, meaning that they are either discontented with the type, quality, and quantity. 36.4% indicated that school and students' properties are destroyed due to poor administration and unrealistic school rules and regulation as a sign of dissatisfaction. Other behaviours noted by the participating students were fighting 23.1% and stealing 19.7% of school property. The same findings were supported by school heads responses where 63% indicated that the students destroyed property while 25% indicated that students walked out of school compound as is shown in Figure 4.12.

**Figure 4.11:** How Students Behaved during School Unrests



According to the participating class teachers as shown in Table 4.15, the effects of mass indiscipline in secondary schools in Murang'a resulted to poor academic performance (50%), wastage of time, disorientating school programmes and school dropouts (38%). The poor performance is attributed by the wastage of time and the disorientation of the school programmes in that the implementation of the curriculum/syllabus coverage is affected. It may be covered in a hurry and the students may not master the contents well or it may not be covered. This will eventually affect the students' performance. School dropout may be attributed by the students who do not want to carry out the punishment given by the BOG or the parent have appeared before the BOG often and they may not stand to be screened again to defend their son/daughter. Some prefer to forget the continuation of education of their children or they may transfer them to other schools.

Other effects were sexual assaults which happen in mixed boarding schools when the girls decide to leave school at night together with the boys who may be having other wrong motives. Girls only school may experience the same if they also leave school at night shouting alerting the local community especially the youth who have no moral obligations. This may also lead to physical injury to the students especially if the students fight against each other during the fracas. Unnecessary expenses come in when the parents have to pay for the damaged school facilities and equipments destroyed by the students. There is also the transport cost involved and payments for the treatment of student injured if it happens too.

**Table 4.13:** Effects of Mass Indiscipline

Effect	Frequency	Percent
Disorientation and time wasting	3	37.5
Dropouts and wastage	3	37.5
Poor/low academic standards	4	50.0
Unnecessary Expenses	1	12.5
Sexual assault	1	12.5
Physical injury	1	12.5

On other effects of mass indiscipline in the schools, the study found out that majority the respondents as shown by 50% were of the opinion that a major effect of indiscipline in schools was Poor/low academic standards.

**Table 4.14:** Ratings on Damage Caused on Various School Properties

Property	Non-existence	Few	Average	Many	Very Many
Classes	3	0	0	2	1
Laboratory	4	0	0	1	1
Kitchen	4	1	0	0	0
Dinning Hall	4	1	1	0	0
Administration offices	3	2	1	0	0
Gate	6	0	0	0	0
Dormitories	5	0	0	1	0
Sockets	5	0	0	1	0

The study wanted to establish the respondent's rating on damage caused on various school Properties. From Table above, it is evident that the school properties that are damaged mostly are dormitories, class, laboratories, dining halls and the administration offices. In most of the schools, the damages on all the school properties are non-existence from the observation. A lot of repairs had already been carried out on the buildings and other school properties. From the schools where the study was carried out, there was only one school that experienced major damages where by all the buildings were destroyed. The doors and the window panes were broken. This implies that most school unrests between 2007 and 2008 rarely resulted to serious damages to school properties in the district. This observation concurs with what the students indicated as the major effects of indiscipline and school unrests in Murang'a North district. The response of one of the discipline teacher interviewed was that:- "The boys resolved that their new school bus should not be destroyed by the students. However all other school property was to be destroyed including an old school bus"

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the research finding of the study, the study concludes that secondary school strikes are caused by various factors that range from school based factors, student based factors as well as home based factors.

The study also concludes that the behaviors of the students were also largely influenced by the kind of books and magazines they read, peer pressure (from within and without), mass media, drug and alcohol abuse, poor parenting and the operations of the outlawed group of Mungiki.

The study also concludes that mass indiscipline in secondary schools in Murang'a North have resulted to the destruction of school and students' properties, fighting and stealing, poor academic performance, and high dropouts, sexual assaults and unnecessary expenses to parents, schools, government and other stakeholders.

That some school administrative factors such as high handedness of school heads, uncooperative teaching and non-teaching staff, lack of proper communication and full involvement of students, parents and other stakeholders in discipline matters, impacted negatively to students' discipline.

Finally, the study concludes that the main challenges of combating the mass indiscipline in the district include students' engagement with the outlawed peer groups. The group allows the members to abuse drugs such as tobacco which has its own negative effects.

The study concludes that various strategies to curb the students' mass indiscipline should be adopted whereby all stakeholders of the secondary school education should be involved. The study concludes that strategies should range from guidance and counseling of the students by the teachers and the professional counselors.

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