

Student Participation in Decision Making in Secondary Schools and Its Influence on Student Discipline in Tharaka-Nithi and Nairobi Counties, Kenya

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Abstract

The recurrent student indiscipline in form of unrests in secondary schools and their incessant desire to destroy school property probably reflects the feeling of alienation rather than of ownership of the schools they attend. By striking and destroying property, the students may be expressing their demands for involvement in the running of the schools. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of student participation in decision making in secondary school management as well as determining its influence on student discipline in Tharaka-Nithi and Nairobi counties, with a view of informing educational practices in Kenya. The objectives of the study were to determine the extent of student participation in decision-making, examine the influence of type of school, class level and the gender of the students on student participation in decision-making; establish the status of student discipline, analyse the extent to which student participation in management of curriculum, and management of students and welfare issues influenced student discipline. The study employed mixed method design, specifically triangulation method. Stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, purposive and convenience sampling were used in drawing the samples. The Krejcie and Morgan's table for determining large sample size was used to determine the sample size of students. The sample consisted of 38 secondary schools, 38 head teachers, 293 teachers, 753 students, 72 student leaders, 24 parents and 3 SCDE. Data collection instruments included questionnaires, interview guides and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide. Content validity was determined by seeking expert judgement from educational management. Cronbach's alpha was used to establish the reliability of the instruments. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data were organized into themes and presented using descriptions and quotations. The findings showed that majority of the schools had established Student Council form of student leadership, although the councils were not represented in BOM, PA and staff meetings. The study found that there were low levels of student participation in management of school finances, physical resources and staff personnel. The extent of student participation in management of school curriculum, and management of students and welfare issues was found to be moderate. The interaction between type of schools, class levels, and gender of the students did not influence student participation in decision making. However, the interaction between class levels and type of schools significantly influenced student participation in decision making. Student discipline was found to be good during the three years prior to the study. The serious expression of indiscipline in form of strikes had significantly reduced. The influence of student participation in management of the school curriculum, management of students and welfare issues were found to be of moderate levels. The study concluded that student participation in management of school curriculum, and management of students and welfare issues influenced student discipline moderately. The study therefore recommends that secondary school managements should actively involve students in all areas of

decision-making in school with particular emphasis on decisions relating to the foregoing decision-making areas.

Full text: <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/19073/Student%20Participation%20in%20Decision%20Making%20in%20Secondary.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>