

Influence of School Physical Facilities on Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Makueni County, Kenya



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Significance and Impact of the Study: The study could help the ministry of education to review the existing legal framework so as to enhance discipline through provision of physical facilities in schools.

ABSTRACT

Students' discipline is critical to the attainment of positive school outcomes. However, learning institutions have been plagued with cases of students' unrest which undermine quality education. This study sought to investigate the influence of school physical facilities on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to determine the influence of adequacy of classrooms on students' discipline, to establish the influence of school library facilities on students' discipline, to establish the influence of science facilities on students' discipline and to determine the influence of adequacy of sports grounds on students' discipline. Descriptive survey design was employed. The target population was 324 principals, 3,865 teachers and 97,200 students in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The sample size of the study was obtained by stratified and simple random sampling procedures. The total sample matrix was 68 principals, 350 teachers and 380 students. Questionnaires, interview guide and observation schedule research instruments were utilized for the study. Test-retest technique of reliability was used to affirm the reliability of the instruments. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was 0.765 for questionnaire for students and 0.814 for questionnaire for the teachers. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in frequency tables. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. From the data analysis, it was found out that adequacy of physical facilities had significant positive relationship at $r=+0.78$, $P=0.002$ with levels of students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The study recommended that educational stakeholders should expand school physical facilities in order to enhance students' discipline.

Keywords: Physical facilities, Discipline, Secondary schools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Discipline, as the most significant feature of schooling and parenting, has gained increased research attention (Yudan, 2013). From a progressive perspective, school discipline can be described as all the strategies that can be used to coordinate, regulate and organize individuals and their activities in the school to establish and maintain an environment in which teaching and learning can take place (Fields, 2011). This view is a critical starting point in understanding school discipline in that it includes all activities used to maintain discipline. Most importantly, it includes the creation of a liberating environment that enhances the process of teaching and learning. This study was informed by the views of educators operating from a progressive perspective.

Indiscipline in schools has been cited as an issue of great global concern, traversing political, economic, geographical, racial and even gender boundaries (Kajubi, 2007). According to Mukharjee (2005) there has been a growing concern on the issue of indiscipline in Mexican schools where administrative practices and teaching methods have been blamed for students' indiscipline. In the USA, increased incidences of school violence have received great public concern that has necessitated legislation on laws and policies governing where they killed a teacher and twelve students, injured twenty three others before killing themselves (Skiba and Sprague, 2008). The greatest challenge facing South African education during the past three decades has been lack of discipline and safety in schools (Maphosa and Shumba, 2010). Maphosa and Shumba (2010) posit that school disciplinary problems in South Africa range from late coming to drugs and substance abuse.

Kindiki (2009) posits that due to its relationship with student academic performance and moral maturity, school discipline is often viewed as an issue of national concern in Kenya and is becoming more serious by the day. Medlen (2012) corroborates this view by observing that practicing teachers, educationists, parents and students across the globe must increasingly get concerned with discipline-related problems in schools. According to Medlen (2012) many educationists and researchers have been trying to identify the most efficacious methods of improving school discipline. In a similar vein, Shawcross (2009) avers that the use of reward and punishment has been used by many school teachers, although in varying degrees of success, in the management of students' discipline. Notably, the use of corporal punishment has gained much controversy, especially on its efficacy and its consequences to students.

Way *et al.* (2007) observe that school environment is of paramount importance in promoting students' discipline. According to Way *et al.* (2007) factors closer to students' actual interaction have the strongest impact on their behaviour. Scheerens (2003) concluded after a study on school environment and students' behaviour that availability of physical resources enhances the effectiveness of schools and brings about good behaviour. When students believe that a school will provide a second home that cares about them, provide the support essential to their success, they will be disciplined (Scheerens, 2003). Akinsolu (2008) posits that enrolment explosion without supplemental provision of school physical facilities to match the student population was a key factor affecting students' discipline in Nigeria.

Students' indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya has been an issue of great public concern for the last few years. The subject has for long been debated and has featured repeatedly in schools, the press, as well as in national agenda. The Government of Kenya (GOK) is currently implementing several measures aimed at curbing the various cases of indiscipline in learning institutions particularly the use of guidance and counselling units in all secondary schools (MOEST, 2008). Task forces on students' indiscipline and unrest in secondary schools have been formed. The Wangai Commission (Republic of

Kenya, 2001) for example, recommended the introduction of guidance and counselling units in public secondary schools. In spite of these efforts, there have been several cases of student indiscipline reported in media and in studies done in this field (Kindiki, 2009; Muratha, 2013).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To determine the influence of adequacy of classrooms on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County.
- ii. To establish the influence of library facilities on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County.
- iii. To establish the influence of science facilities on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County.
- iv. To determine the influence of adequacy of sports grounds on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H₀ There is no significant relationship between school physical facilities and students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive survey research design to achieve its objectives. According to [Makueni County Education Office \(2015\)](#) there are 9 sub counties with a total of 324 public secondary schools and an equal number of principals, 3,865 teachers and 97,200 students. The sample matrix comprised of 100 principals, 387 teachers and 398 students from the 324 schools in Makueni County. Three types of instruments were used for data collection; the questionnaire, interview guide and observation guide. Instrument validity was established by pre-testing of data collection tools by a pilot study. Test-retest technique of reliability was used to affirm reliability of instruments. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was 0.765 for questionnaire for students and 0.814 for questionnaire for teachers. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data which was presented in tables. Responses from interviews with principals were transcribed and organized into themes and reported in narratives.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher managed to interview 68%, that is, 68 out of 100 of the Principals. On the other hand, 387 and 398 questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and students respectively with 350 and 380 accurately filled and retrieved, representing 90.4% and 95.5% retrieval rates for teachers and students respectively. This represented a response rate of 84.3%.

In order to determine the influence of school physical facilities on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County, the participants (students and teachers) were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with: My school has adequate classrooms and school library has adequate relevant books as shown in Table 1.

Table-1. Students' and teachers' responses on: adequacy of classrooms and school library with relevant books

Statements	SDF	%	DF	%	UF	%	AF	%	SAF	%
My school has adequate classrooms										
Student	21	5.5	52	13.7	8	2.1	135	35.5	164	43.1
Teachers	11	2.9	53	15.1	6	1.7	136	38.9	144	41.1
The school library has enough relevant books										
Students		48	12.6	54	15.4	14	3.7	142	37.7	32.1
Teachers		42	12.0	70	20.0	23	6.6	110	31.4	30.0

(Source: Researcher)

5.1. Adequate Classrooms

Data in Table 1 shows that a considerably large number of students, 299 (78.6%) agreed that their schools have classrooms enough for at most 45 students per class. This was confirmed by majority of the teachers 280 (80.1%) who agreed with the statement. The findings show that schools had adequate classroom facilities and this provided a conducive learning environment. This is consistent with the Choice Theory philosophy that advocates for the creation of a safe space for students to learn, as mainly it is their space, their classroom, and they own it Fields (2011). When a sense of ownership is established, students will come to class willingly and with enthusiasm because they want to be challenged. In a school set up, this is the starting point of students' discipline control.

Data generated from interviews with principals indicated that school physical facilities greatly influence students' discipline. On adequacy of classrooms and whether this influences students' discipline, one of the principals heading a mixed day Sub County secondary school narrated:

My school has been utilizing Constituency Development Funds (CDF) to put up new classrooms in the last five years. However, with Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) capitation and the ministry's regulation on secondary school fees, classrooms are overcrowded. In my school, each stream has over 70 students. As a result, a conducive learning environment which enhances students' discipline has not been attained.

The study further conducted an observation schedule in 98 public secondary schools in Makueni County on whether the schools had adequate classrooms. Through the observation check list, 61 schools (62.2%) were found to have inadequate classrooms while 37 (37.8%) had adequate classroom. The observation schedule revealed that a considerable number of classrooms in most mixed day and mixed day and boarding Sub-County schools were not adequate for at most 45 students per class. The scenario was the same for most County schools which had a history of good KCSE results in the past for they had big classes of up to 80 students per class. Incidentally, these were schools that reported most cases of students' unrests in the last five years and most likely because they lacked physical facilities.

Although majority of teachers and students reported that their schools had adequate classrooms, the observation checklist and most principals revealed findings on the contrary. Findings from the principals' interview and the observation checklist indicate that most schools had overcrowded classrooms. The contrasting views could perhaps be attributed to the fact that both students and teachers may not know the ministry of education (MOE) directive that a class should have a maximum of 45 students. Indeed, a number of principals confessed that both classroom and school discipline had greatly been compromised due to over enrollment in most schools. Most principals concurred that adequacy of classrooms greatly affected students' discipline. The general feeling by the principals was that free day secondary education

(FDSE) had greatly affected school climate, leading to indiscipline. The findings concur with [Bennell and Akyeampong \(2007\)](#) who posit that years after Kenya began offering free primary and secondary schooling, the education system is still struggling to adjust to the influx of students. They observe that vast numbers of additional pupils were brought into the education system overnight in 2003, without supplemental provision of physical facilities.

5.1.1. School Library with Adequate Relevant Books

Data in Table 1 further shows that majority of the students, 264 (69.8%) agreed that their schools had a school library with relevant books. This was confirmed by the teachers 215 (61.4%) who also agreed that their school libraries had relevant books. Although the principals were in agreement that adequacy of relevant books promotes students' discipline, one of the female principals heading a Sub County secondary school with 388 students observed:

Although with subsidized secondary education, the government has been providing capitation for teaching and learning resources in all public secondary schools, the school enrolment has kept on increasing and the school uses a small bookstore as library. We have relevant books, but not adequate. The resultant effect is that not all students can concentrate on their studies and we have had a number of indiscipline cases.

Findings from the observation checklist agree with the principals' views on availability of school library with relevant books. From the observation schedule, 58 (59.2%) public secondary schools did not have a library with adequate relevant books while the remaining 40 (40.8%), mainly County and National public secondary schools, had a library with adequate relevant books. Interviews with principals indicated that availability of school libraries with adequate relevant books influence students' discipline. These findings are consistent with [Muratha \(2013\)](#) who found out that on-site availability of lavatories and a clean water supply, adequate classrooms, space and availability of libraries and laboratories have an impact on students' peaceful stay in schools. Inadequate facilities, on the other hand, create insufficiency and makes learners feel neglected which can lead to conflicts within the school.

Table-2. Students' and teachers' responses on: availability of science laboratory with apparatus and chemicals and sports ground for each game

Statements	SDF	%	DF	%	UF	%	AF	%	SAF	%
My school has Science laboratory with apparatus and chemicals										
Student	23	6.0	68	17.9	17	4.5	135	35.5	137	36.0
Teachers	3	0.9	42	12	2	5.7	156	44.6	129	36.9
My school has a sports ground for each game										
Students	172	45.3	94	24.7	13	3.4	77	20.2	24	6.3
Teachers	16	4.6	64	16.9	32	9.1	102	29.1	136	38.9

(Source: Researcher)

5.1.2. Science Laboratory with Apparatus and Chemicals

As shown in Table 2, majority of the students, 272 (71.5%) agreed that their schools had adequate science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals. This was confirmed by majority of teachers, 285 (81.5%) who also agreed that laboratories in their schools had adequate apparatus and chemicals. The

study further conducted an observation schedule in 98 public secondary schools in Makueni County on whether the schools had adequate science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals. Through the observation check list, 71 (72.4%) of the public secondary schools were found to have science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals while 27 (27.6%) did not enough science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals.

Interview with principals established that adequacy of science facilities influence students' discipline. One principal from a mixed day Sub County School with 256 students reported that:

My school received constituency development fund for the construction of a modern laboratory. Through the subsidized secondary education, there is capitation for science laboratory apparatus and chemicals in all public secondary schools. As a result, my students feel they are at par with those in National schools and therefore do not complain.

The findings show that schools with adequate science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals are likely to make students feel that they are at par with their counterparts in well-endowed schools. According to the principals interviewed, this feeling creates a positive school climate that enhances students' discipline. On the other hand, the few schools with inadequate laboratories are likely to have a negative school climate, leading to students' indiscipline.

5.1.3. A Sports Ground for Each Game

Data in Table 2 indicated that a small number of students, 101 (26.5%) agreed that their schools had a sports ground for each game. However, majority of the teachers who took part in the study, 136 (68.0%) agreed that their schools had a sports ground for each game. The divergence in opinion could be that students felt that a number of games had not been introduced in the school. The feelings of the students concur with the observation check list which revealed that 62 (63.3%) public secondary schools did not have a sports ground for each game while the remaining, 36 (36.7%) public secondary had a sports ground for each game.

The students' views and the observation check list findings do not concur with interviews with principals. Most of the principals felt that their schools had adequate sports grounds and that sports facilities influence students' discipline. One male principal from a Sub County school with 324 students said:

This school has adequate sports grounds in different games and most students in my school participate actively in co-curricular activities throughout the year. The academically weak students feel equally loved for they have a chance to realize their potential. This is a sure way of controlling students' discipline.

This scenario tends to indicate that while a number of the secondary schools in the County are well endowed with school physical facilities, many schools have inadequate physical facilities still in place. The findings here show that schools with adequate sports grounds and facilities are more likely to promote positive school climate that will enhance high students' discipline while those with inadequate sports facilities are likely to create a negative school climate leading to low students' discipline.

5.1.4. Teachers' Responses on Influence of Physical Facilities on Students' Discipline

In order to determine the influence of school physical facilities on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County, teachers were asked to indicate the overall extent to which they

agreed with influence of adequacy of physical facilities on students' discipline in their school were, on the Likert scale; Strongly Agree (SA) = 2; Agree (A) = 1; Undecided (U) = 0; Disagree (D) = -1 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = -2. The responses were summarized and presented in table 3.

Table-3. Teacher's responses on influence of adequacy of physical facilities on students' discipline

Statements	SDF	%	DF	%	UF	%	AF	%	SAF	%
Adequacy of physical facilities influence students' discipline in my school										
Teachers	18	5.1	46	13.1	26	7.4	135	38.6	125	35.7

(Source: Researcher)

Data in Table 3 shows that majority of the teachers in Makueni County public secondary schools, 260 (74.3%) agreed that adequacy of physical facilities in their schools influence students' discipline. This may imply that schools with adequate physical facilities in the County are likely to have disciplined students while those with inadequate physical facilities, on the other hand, are likely to experience low levels of students' indiscipline. These findings support and affirm conclusions found in existing research. [Khethiwe \(2008\)](#) found out that there was a strong link between school physical facilities and students' discipline. [Khethiwe \(2008\)](#) posits that children who experience a sense of ownership to their school have a stronger connectedness and discipline; they feel more competent and inspired. [Maphosa and Shumba \(2010\)](#) corroborate these findings by concluding that the solution to students' indiscipline is the creation of a safe environment at school.

5.2. Hypothesis Testing

H₀ There is no significant relationship between school physical facilities and students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County.

Table-4. Correlations between school facilities and students' discipline

	students' discipline	
School physical facilities	Pearson Correlation	0.78
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002
	N	96

(Source: Researcher)

The study findings indicate that school physical facilities such as classrooms, school library with relevant books, science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals and sports grounds had a significant and positive influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The findings showed that there was a strong positive correlation, $r=+0.78$ which was significant at $p=0.002$. The Null hypothesis was thus rejected. From this finding, the study concludes that adequacy of physical facilities has a significant positive relationship with levels of students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County. This means that schools with adequate physical facilities in the County are likely to have a healthy school climate which is likely to nurture highly disciplined students. Those with inadequate physical facilities, on the other hand, are likely to create a negative school climate which is likely to lead to low levels of students' discipline. The findings of this study support and affirm conclusions found in existing

research. They are mirrored by Marks (2000) who found out that the physical environment of the school contributed significantly to students' discipline. The findings are also consistent with Adeboyeje (2010) who found out that many schools in Nigeria had witnessed students' unrest in which students complained of the quality and inadequacy of school physical facilities.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that majority of the public secondary schools in Makueni County with adequate school physical facilities such classrooms, school library with relevant books, science laboratories with apparatus and chemicals and sports ground can be said to have a healthy school climate which may lead to high levels of students' discipline. Adequacy of physical facilities creates a conducive school environment which makes the school a second home to learners (Maphosa and Shumba, 2010). On the other hand, majority of the public secondary schools in Makueni County with inadequate school physical facilities are likely to experience low levels of students' discipline. The study therefore, concluded that adequacy of physical facilities promotes the establishment of a healthy school climate which has a significant positive relationship ($r=+0.78$, $P=0.002$) with levels of students' discipline in public secondary schools in Makueni County (Table 4).

7. RECOMMENDATION

Findings of the study indicate that adequacy of school physical facilities influence students' discipline. The study therefore recommends that educational stakeholders should come together and expand the schools' physical facilities as a strategy to create a healthy school climate. This creates a second home for learners and enhances their discipline. Specifically, the government should consider expanding the existing school physical facilities in line with the free schooling policy.

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