GREAT JOURNS

The Contribution of Principals 'Strategic Planning Skills on Management of Student Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Bomet County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT: One of the major roles of education is to instil discipline in students. Therefore, in any educational institution, training of discipline is incorporated into all the instructional and managerial processes. Kenya has witnessed numerous indiscipline cases among secondary school students in the recent past. These indiscipline cases include boycotting of lessons, dishonesty, disobedience to teachers, prefects and school administration, drugs and substance abuse, violence against fellow students and staff, and arson attacks. The purpose of this research was to investigate the Contribution of Principals 'Strategic Planning Skills on Management of Student Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Bomet County, Kenya. The study was guided by human Capital Theory**.** Descriptive survey design was used in this research. The target population was 572, comprising of 5 Sub-County Education Directors, 189 principals and 189 deputy principals and 189 senior teachers. A sample size of 239 respondents, comprising of 78 principals, 78 deputy principals and 78 senior teachers proportionally distributed and all the 5 Sub-County Education Directors, was obtained using Yamane's formula. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling was used to select respondents. The research instruments for this study were structured questionnaire and an interview schedule. A pilot study was carried out in Kericho County to ascertain the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used. Interview data was subjected to content analysis to gain insight into the meanings and consequences of the participants' responses. For this research, SPSS version 24 was used to code and analyse quantitative data by generating descriptive statistics. The study findings revealed that principals' strategic planning skills had a positive and significant effect on the management of student discipline in public secondary schools (β_2=0.247, p=0.000). The study further concludes that school principals are able to devise possible solutions to students' discipline issues. Furthermore, they always evaluate the chosen options for dealing with students' discipline issues. Additionally, the principal soldierly brainstorming sessions to maximize teachers and students' creativity in problem-solving. Further, time management has helped school principals to stay organized during each stage of the decision-making process concerning student discipline. The researcher recommended that school principals should apply problem-solving skills when dealing with student discipline issues. More importantly, students should be involved in problem solving to reduce their engagement in indiscipline in the first place.

Key Words: *Contribution of Principals, Strategic Planning Skills & Management*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The education sector, requires the employment of human, material, and financial resources in to function. Secondary school is the starting point for all educational institutions, as it prepares students to make a long-term decision about who they are in society tomorrow as they prepare for a university study career (Macabinguil, 2022). This necessitates strategic preparation in order to satisfy this expectation. Strategic planning, according to Bryson (2018), is one of the most important measures schools may take to address the issues they have in improving the quality of their educational programs. Many organizational leaders walk around with a virtual strategy locked in their heads they know where their organization needs to go and the critical activities that brought them there, but the strategy isn't written down and hasn't been fully conveyed. This study, on the other hand, did not focus on principals' strategic planning abilities and how these influence student discipline in the classroom.

II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Principals' strategic planning skills and management of student discipline are two essential aspects of school leadership (Day *et al.*, 2016). Strategic planning helps principals set goals and develop initiatives to improve student achievement and school climate. Effective discipline management helps to create a safe and orderly learning environment where all students can thrive.

There is a growing body of research that suggests that there is a positive relationship between principals' strategic planning skills and their ability to manage student discipline (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2022). For example, one study found that principals who were more effective at strategic planning were also more likely to have schools with lower rates of student suspensions and expulsions. Principals who are good at strategic planning are more likely to have a clear vision for their school and a plan for how to achieve it. This can help them to create a school culture that emphasizes positive behaviour and discourages disruptive or harmful behaviour (Austin, 2020).

Principals who are good at strategic planning are more likely to be able to build consensus among stakeholders on school discipline policies. This can help to ensure that discipline policies are fair and consistent, and that they are supported by the entire school community (Dolph, 2017). A study by DeMatthews*et al.* (2017) asserts that principals who are good at strategic planning are more likely to be able to identify and address the root causes of student misbehaviour. This can help to prevent future discipline problems and create a more positive school climate for all students. Once a strategic plan has been developed, principals must be able to delegate tasks to others in order to implement the plan. This includes delegating responsibility for specific goals, as well as delegating tasks such as data collection, analysis, and reporting (Andriani *et al.*, 2018).

Principals who are skilled at managing student discipline are able to create a positive and orderly school climate (Berg& Cornell, 2016). They must be able to identify and address potential disciplinary problems, as well as respond to disciplinary incidents in a fair and consistent manner. They must also be able to delegate responsibility for student discipline to others, such as teachers, assistant principals, and school counsellors. This allows them to focus on the most serious disciplinary cases and to provide support to teachers and other staff members who are responsible for managing student behaviour (Mayworm *et al.*, 2016).

According to the study by Baird and Maruping (2021), there are many benefits to delegating tasks to others. By delegating, principals can free up their time to focus on the most important aspects of their job, such as strategic planning and student discipline. They can also build the capacity of their staff members by giving them opportunities to take on new responsibilities. In addition, delegating can help to improve communication and collaboration within the school. When tasks are delegated, it is important to provide clear expectations and to give feedback. This helps to ensure that everyone is on the same page and that the work is being done to the highest standards (Overman, 2016).

By delegating effectively, principals not only alleviate some of their own workload but also empower staff members by providing them with valuable opportunities for growth and professional development (Oplatka, 2017). One particular area where principals must exercise both strategic planning skills and effective delegation is in managing student discipline. Maintaining a safe learning environment requires proactive measures aimed at preventing behavioural issues from occurring in the first place as well as responsive interventions when incidents do arise (Pickens& Tschopp, 2017). Effective discipline management involves establishing clear expectations regarding behaviour standards through policies communicated consistently throughout the entire school community. When disciplinary matters do occur, skilled principals address them promptly using strategies tailored to individual circumstances rather than adopting one-size-fits-all approaches (Arthars *et al.*, 2019). They consider factors such as age appropriateness, previous behaviours exhibited by students involved, cultural considerations, and restorative justice principles when deciding how best to handle each situation fairly yet firmly. The thesis statement encapsulates this notion: Principals' effective strategic planning skills, delegation abilities, and proficient management

It is a critical tool for principals to use to ensure that their schools are achieving their desired outcomes. One of the most important aspects of strategic planning is establishing measurable objectives (Valjevac *et al.*, 2018). Measurable objectives allow principals to track their progress and make sure that they are on track to achieve their goals. This objective is measurable because it can be quantified and tracked over time. Stakeholders include students, teachers, parents, and community members. By involving stakeholders in the strategic planning process, principals can ensure that the plan is responsive to the needs of the school community (Obiekwe *et al.*, 2020).

According to the study by Bellibas and Liu (2018) principals need to be able to create a safe and orderly learning environment for all students. They also need to be able to deal effectively with student misbehaviour. The best approach to student discipline will vary depending on the specific circumstances of the school. However, all principals need to be able to establish clear expectations for student behaviour and to enforce those expectations consistently (Wang& Degol, 2016). By developing strong strategic planning skills and by effectively managing student discipline, principals can create schools that are safe, orderly, and conducive to learning (Mundiri& Hamimah, 2022).

It is essential for principals to have strong strategic planning skills in order to set a clear vision for their school, develop a plan to achieve that vision, and allocate resources effectively (Mensah, 2020).One of the most important aspects of strategic planning is creating and enforcing timelines. Timelines help to ensure that goals are met on time and that progress is being made towards the school's vision. When timelines are not enforced, it can lead to delays, missed opportunities, and frustration among staff and students (Ginter *et al*., 2018).

Management of student discipline is another important aspect of school leadership. Principals need to be able to create a safe and orderly learning environment for all students (Raba, 2016). This includes developing clear rules and procedures, enforcing those rules consistently, and providing support to students who are struggling with discipline problems. According to the study by Silva (2021), there is a strong relationship between principals' strategic planning skills and their management of student discipline. When principals have strong strategic planning skills, they are more likely to have a clear vision for their school and a plan to achieve that vision. This can help to create a more positive and orderly school climate, which can in turn reduce discipline problems.

Here are some tips for principals on how to create and enforce timelines in their strategic planning: Break down large goals into smaller, more manageable tasks. Set realistic deadlines for each task. Communicate deadlines to staff and students (Gamage et al., 2020). Track progress and adjust as needed. Be flexible and willing to adjust timelines as needed.

Organizations engage in strategic planning to achieve clarity of future direction, design internal action approaches, make proper choices and priorities, deal effectively with organizational changes and uncertainties in the external environment, build teamwork and expertise based on resources, processes, and people, and develop effective strategies to improve organizational performance, according to a study conducted by Weston (2020). The study, on the other hand, did not go into detail on principals' strategic planning skills and how they affect student discipline, leaving a gap in the literature that the current study filled.

Ramlal (2019) undertook a qualitative study to learn more about how principals conduct strategic planning aimed at raising literacy and numeracy success in eight high performing primary schools in Trinidad and

Tobago. The study's framework was the change process hypothesis proposed by Fullan. Eight principals were interviewed for the data. Themes were found by coding, categorization, and categorization of the data. According to the findings, principals organize, carry out, and oversee the enablement of organization change through intricate teaching and learning methodologies with a constant emphasis on numeracy and literacy. This study covered how teachers and management's strategic planning skills affect student's performance and not principals hence leaving a gap

According to Naranjo-Gil (2016), the realized strategy may be the consequence of a purposeful (planned) or emergent strategy. This is because a well-thought-out, logically comprehensive strategy can be put to the test by the market and tweaked by management to improve its ability to generate competitive advantage (Agwu, 2018). This also indicates that proponents of the design school of thought (deliberate, deterministic, or prescriptive strategic plans) should value the arguments advanced by the process school (emergent, intuitive, contingency or descriptive strategic plans). Strategic decisions should be long-term, provide a competitive advantage, build mechanisms to implement the strategy, leverage the business's relationships with its environment, and propel the firm ahead to a significant position. However, this research was conducted in a corporate setting, which differs from the present area of study in schools, and it did not examine the impact of principals' strategic skills on student discipline.

Arend *et al.* (2017) argue that strategic planning has a favourable impact on business performance, and variations in the research are mostly due to measurement techniques and contingency factors. For example, Hübner *et al.* (2017) suggest that it is impossible to assess the usefulness of planning in a scientific manner without a comprehensive description of the planning processes. According to Kitsios and Kamariotou (2018), methods can hinder a researcher's ability to comprehend the impact of strategic planning on performance. The concept of formality in strategic planning is defined as systematized, step-by-step, chronological procedures for developing or coordinating an organizational strategy. It did not, however, address the impact of principals' strategic planning abilities on student discipline.

Through undertaking a meta-analysis of these associations, the empirical literature from 51 research of principal actions and teacher, student, and school outcomes was reviewed (Liebowitz & Porter, 2019). Three key conclusions emerge from our analysis: link between principal behaviour patterns and student performance, teacher well-being, teacher teaching techniques, and school organizational health; significance of principal behaviours beyond instructional leadership as potential methods to enhance school performance outcomes.

In general, more formality in strategic planning is linked to higher company performance (Ali, 2018). Although Wolf and Floyd (2017), warn that too much formalization of the strategic planning process can lead to lower performance, Ansoff *et al.* (2019) point out that deliberate and systematic preplanning of strategy acquisition produces significantly better financial performance than an opportunistic, adaptive approach. Formal strategic management systems have a considerable impact on organizational performance, according to Pollanen *et al.* (2017). Similarly, John (2017) cites Boyd (1971), who states that there were small positive correlations between strategic planning and financial success based on a meta-analysis of 21 research with 29 samples and 2,496 firms. However, none of this research looked into the impact of principals' strategic planning skills on student discipline.

On the other side, Singh (2019) suggests that concluding that formal planning is the primary driver of business success is naive because firms may be steering high performance by other management techniques such as organization design, strong human resource practice, or corporate culture. Taneja *et al.* (2016) have argued for and against the notion that formal strategic planning is only suitable for large companies, and

that it increases performance in both large and small companies. Small businesses do not focus on market positioning and competitive advantage, but the entrepreneur engages in unplanned and completely guesswork methods of creating resources and sales. These studies however focused on firms which differ with current area of study which is on school and also it had not highlight on the influence of principals' strategic planning skills on student discipline.

Bryson *et al.* (2018) opine that if the public sector is to meet its issues, it must seek advice from the private sector. The commercial sector has benefited from strategic planning, and schools can gain as well. Smith (2020) outlines the following advantages of a strategic plan for a school: first, the school establishes a clear vision, mission, goals, and objectives that are all agreed upon. The objective regions are well defined, as are the methods for achieving them. Second, it aids in the communication of the established objectives to all members and stakeholders. As a result, the motto, vision, mission, goals, and objectives must be prominently displayed where all stakeholders can see them. However, the study did not look into principals' strategic planning abilities in terms of student discipline.

As per Perryman and Calvert (2020), instructors must be well-qualified and motivated in order to give high-quality education. Jenkins (2020) also states that teachers must be proactive in their efforts to change the external environment and deploy resources to do so. This may necessitate teachers devising appropriate tactics for achieving defined objectives. Low-motivated employees may avoid implementing such tactics or may be absent during the strategy development process (Armstrong, 2021). The Herzberg hypothesis (1966) and the worker's adjustment to equilibrium strategy provide theoretical foundations for absenteeism (Holston-Okae &Mushi, 2018). Thus, for that reason, job discontent with terms and conditions of employment such as supervision, organizational policies, income, job security, interpersonal relationships, and physical surroundings may be connected to absenteeism. The study, on the other hand, did not focus on principals' strategic planning abilities in terms of student discipline.

The organization needs manpower with effective planning abilities, interpersonal skills, professional skills, and the capacity to scan an area in order to foresee future events in order to be able to design strategies effectively (Chakraborty & Biswas, 2019). Effective planning abilities are essential for a leader to communicate his or her vision to all employees and stakeholders. Santura *et al.* (2017) believe that communication should flow from the top to the bottom of the organization so that all employees are aware of how the strategic plan is being developed and what is expected of them. This means that managers should not keep any data in their possession that could be useful in strategic planning hidden from them. Strategic planning necessitates professional abilities. The study, on the other hand, did not focus on principals' strategic planning abilities in terms of student discipline.

Specific goals and objectives to increase the school's efficacy may be established based on the school's vision and mission, as stated in the principal's strategic planning. The school's capacity to successfully implement the strategic plan influenced by these goals and objectives. For example, if the school's goal is to expand by enrolling more students, strategic plans must be in place to ensure that adequate resources are available to hire adequately trained additional educators to manage this expansion (Virgana&Lapasau, 2019). However, the focus of this study was not on principals' strategic planning abilities in terms of student discipline.

Further, Itegi (2016) notes that there is widespread support for strategic planning in schools since it creates a fresh focus on educational quality. Nonetheless, certain elements can influence the implementation of strategic planning in schools; however, this study did not focus on the impact of principals' strategic planning skills on student discipline. A qualified principal must devise methods based on the school's

curriculum, staff members, students' personnel, and facility management (Irmayani *et al*., 2018). A qualified principal serves as a role model for children because he is competent and exhibits high standards in decision-making. As a result, the school's level of discipline is efficiently maintained, and both teachers and students perform well. Qualifications of principals, school culture, structure, policies, and community have a significant impact on school characteristics that affect student learning results. The study however did not dwell on principals' strategic planning skills on student discipline which is the focus of the current study. Principals' strategic planning has an impact in schools, and their involvement contributes to positive learning outcomes, such as weekly planning, meetings, frequent problem-solving sessions, staff development, and cross-departmental team teaching (Dez *et al*., 2020). Because most of their concerns are dealt with and they are always busy, this decreases student indiscipline.

In Kenya, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has created a policy guideline on the identification, appointment, and training of principals in an attempt to strengthen and upgrade the management of learning institutions, according to Muchanje *et al*. (2016). The policy aims to simplify and rationalize the process of appointing principals by establishing criteria standards and clear guidelines for identifying and selecting institutional managers. The goal is to avoid undue interference and influence from interested parties, which has previously prevented schools from hiring the best managers. It did not, however, go into detail on principals' strategic planning abilities or how these affect students' discipline. Strategic planning by a principal improves an individual's competency, operational, and conceptualizing skills (Cheng, 2021). Principals' academic qualifications are critical for effective curriculum implementation. This is also true in terms of facility management and principal control over decisions that affect students' punishment.

Principals must be visionary educators, instructional and curricular leaders, assessment experts, public relations community builders, experts, facilities managers, and special program administrators (Sutcher *et al.*, 2017). This improved discipline and focus on the 16 school's goals. Principals' administrative experience and expertise in school administration and management influence their attitudes, tactics, and problem-solving procedures in their schools (Mestry, 2017). The number of years the principal has been in charge could influence his decision-making and raise awareness of how to manage school resources effectively and efficiently. Work experience can help you make better decisions, be more effective, and be more efficient. Secondary school is the next level of education. Principals must have managerial experience and understanding. These studies, on the other hand, did not focus on principals' strategic planning abilities, which have an impact on students' discipline.

Belle's (2016) study findings revealed that school administrators' administrative planning tactics impact how exposed students are to disciplinary issues and how familiar they are with various disciplinary approaches to dealing with them. It goes on to say that in-service training is critical for principals' development programs in order to maximize human potential and reach higher levels of achievement, excellence, and success. In-service training is intended to upgrade, add, or expand job-related skills and data. It did not, however, highlight the principals' strategic planning abilities, which have an impact on pupils' discipline.

Fathurrochman *et al.* (2017), in their research, focused on principals' planning methods based on competency and training in school administration and management, and it was discovered that newly hired principals required extensive induction and in-service training. The development of planning strategies skills and competence by principals through in-service training to perform the desired duties, as well as raising their confidence in their ability to deal with student issues and investing in their capacities, is an important step in incorporating the social curriculum. Their research did not, however, focus on the principals' strategic planning abilities, which have an impact on pupils' discipline.

2.1 Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory was developed by Becker and Schultz (1960). It is a concept used to designate personal attributes considered useful in the production process in an organizational set-up. It encompasses employee knowledge, skills, know-how, good health and education. The theory posits that human beings can increase their productive capacity through greater education and skills training. Human capital theory assumes that investment in education or training is necessary to acquire skills, which, in turn, will increase individual capital. The basic view of human capital goes like this: iinvesting in human capital allows an organization to see growth – measured through staff's abilities, values and skillset. This will increase business productivity, and in time, revenue, and brand name. The concept of human capital recognizes that not all labour is equal. However, employers can improve the quality of that capital by investing in employees. This can be done through education, experience and abilities of eemployees.

Human capital theory is a framework that views education as an investment that yields returns to the individual in the form of higher earnings and to the state in the form of increased productivity. In the context of principals' human resource skills and management of student discipline, the lens of human capital theory can be applied to understand how the principals' interpersonal skills, strategic planning skills, problem-solving skills, and decision-making skills can contribute to the development of human capital among students. Effective management of student discipline is important in ensuring that learners display acceptable behaviour and follow set rules and regulations.

The theory suggests that the skills and knowledge of principals are important investments in human capital. When principals have strong interpersonal skills, they are better able to build relationships with students, teachers, and parents. This can lead to a more positive and supportive school climate, which can help to reduce student discipline problems. The theory further suggests that principals need to be able to plan strategically in order to effectively manage student discipline. This includes developing clear policies and procedures, and allocating resources effectively. When principals have strong strategic planning skills, they are better able to anticipate and address potential discipline problems. Additionally, the theory suggests that principals need to be able to solve problems effectively in order to manage student discipline. This includes being able to identify the root causes of problems, and developing and implementing solutions that are likely to be successful. When principals have strong problem-solving skills, they are better able to resolve student discipline problems quickly and efficiently.
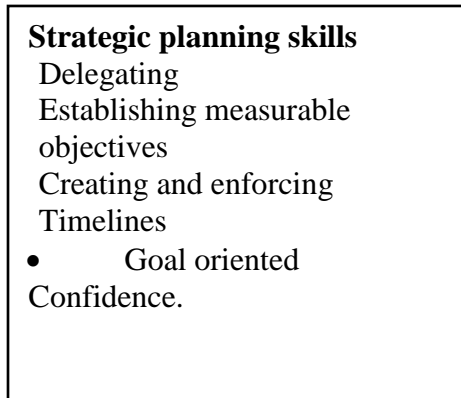
The Human Capital theory also suggests that principals need to be able to make decisions effectively in order to manage student discipline. This includes being able to weigh the pros and cons of different options, and making decisions that are in the best interests of the school community. When principals have strong decision-making skills, they are better able to take the necessary steps to prevent and resolve student discipline problems.

Nevertheless, the human capital theory lens was not applied in this study since many of its basic assumptions are subsumed in Douglas McGregor's (1960) Theory X and Theory Y.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variables

Strategic planning skills

Strategic planning skills
Delegating
Establishing measurable objectives
Creating and enforcing
Timelines
- Goal oriented
Confidence.

Student Discipline
Obey rules and regulation
Respect teachers
Be responsible both to teachers and society
Well behave conduct
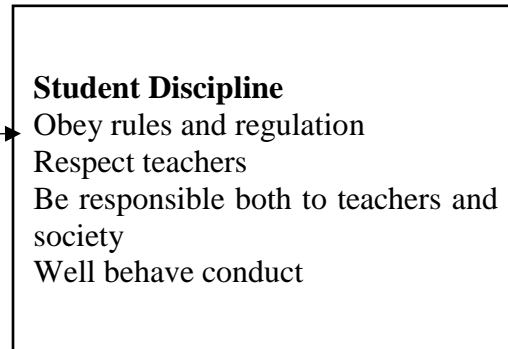
III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research used a descriptive survey design that can handle both quantitative and qualitative data. Participants in descriptive survey research were asked to respond to questions via interviews and questionnaires. In addition to providing a high level of generalizability, a survey also gives a high level of representation by covering a broad population. It is more important to adopt an exploratory research design since it allows the researcher to gather, summarize, present, assess, and interpret data in a way that is easier to comprehend and compare (Kothari, 2008). It is possible to get a more accurate picture of general demographic characteristics because of the large number of people doing the survey (Omair, 2015).

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Bomet County. Bomet County is bordered by four counties, namely; Nakuru to the East, Kericho to the North East, Nyamira to the South and Narok to the West. Total land area is 2037.4 km^2, with fertile ground suitable for agricultural totalling 1,716.6 km^2. Bomet East, Bomet Central, Chepalungu, Konoin and Sotik are some of the sub-counties that make up Bomet. The County had a population of 782,531 in 2012 and was expected to reach 846,012 in 2015, according to the KNBS (2009) housing and population census report. In 2017, this population was predicted to reach 891,168, an increase of 2.3 percent.

Sub-counties with the largest densities of persons per square kilometre are Bomet central (494) and Bomet east (393) followed by Konoin (393) and Sotik (393) followed by Chepalungu (303), correspondingly. The county has 189 public secondary schools distributed across the five sub-counties as follows: Sotik (36 schools), Bomet Central (36 schools), Bomet East (34 schools), Chepalungu (46 schools) and Konoin (37 schools). Bomet County was chosen because it has witnessed several cases of indiscipline cases and the appended map (Appendix VI) shows that indiscipline cases are distributed all over the County. Examples of such cases are: the case of the year 2021 when ten students of Kimulot Boys High School were arrested following a fire incident in their dormitory. Additionally, in Menet Secondary School a Form Four student was arrested after he allegedly attacked and injured a fellow student with a machete. Tenwek High School was closed after a night of tension as students threatened to go on the rampage. There was damage on dormitories burnt down at Tengecha Boys' High and Cheborgei Boys in Kericho County, and Kimulot Boys' High in Bomet County. Dormitories at Kabungu Boys' High School and Chebunyo Boys' Secondary in Bomet Central and Chepalungu constituencies were also destroyed in suspected cases of arson by students.

3.3 Target Population

The term 'target population' denotes to the entire group that a researcher is interested in or is trying to make a conclusion about. The target population for this study was 189 public secondary schools. Therefore, the target population were 572 comprising of 5 sub county education directors, 189 principals and 189 deputy principals and 189 senior teachers. The target population were drawn from the five sub counties in Bomet County. The respondents were chosen for this study because they have the required data concerning effects of principals' managerial skills on academic performance in public secondary school in Bomet County, Kenya. The study population is presented in Table3.1.

Table 3.1: Target Population

Respondents	Population	Sub County Education directors	Principals	Deputy Principals	Senior teachers	Total
Sotik	36	1	36	36	36	109
Bomet Central	36	1	36	36	36	109
Bomet East	34	1	34	34	34	103
Chepalungu	46	1	46	46	46	139
Konoin	37	1	37	37	37	112
Total	189	5	189	189	189	572

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Sample size refers to the number of data or replicates contained in a statistical sample (Schoemann, Boulton& Short, 2017). To draw conclusions about a population from a small sample, a study's sample size must be large enough. To ensure that the results of a study can be applied to the full community, sampling techniques are used to pick a subset of a population from whom research can be done. For qualitative studies, the researcher makes use of the purposive sampling technique. Principals and teachers were selected for interviews using the probability sampling method. When using probability sampling, a random approach was employed to ensure that each sample unit is selected at random. There is a chance that a member of the study population was selected for the sample.

The research used simple random sampling. All of the study's units were combined into a single numbered unit from which a random sample was taken. In order from 1 to N, each item on the list is numbered sequentially (where N is the size and the population). The researcher calculated the sample size for principals, deputy principals and senior teachers using Yamane (1969) formula, as shown in Equation 3.1. This equation was used to determine the nth value, which is the sample size.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (N)e^2}$$ …………………………….………………Equation 3.1

Where:

> n = sample size
> N = Population Size567
> e = error term of 0.05%
> n = 234 for principals, deputy principals and senior teachers

Therefore, the sample size was 239 respondents, comprising 78 principals, 78 deputy principals and 78 senior teachers proportionally distributed and all the 5 Sub County Education directors. Table 3.2 presents the sample size and distribution.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Respondents	Population	Sampling Techniques	Sample
Sub-County Directors	5	100%	5
Principals	189	189/567*234	78
Deputy principals	189	189/567*234	78
Senior teachers	189	189/567*234	78
Total	572		239

3.5 Research Instruments
This study used both structured questionnaires and interview schedule as the main research instruments.

3.5.1 Research Questionnaires
A data questionnaire collects data from a huge number of people (Rowley, 2014). Respondents have the flexibility to share their thoughts and ideas through the medium of a survey. The 78 principals, 78 deputy principals, and 78 senior teachers from selected schools were asked to fill out questionnaires. To save money, self-completion questionnaires was employed for large numbers of respondents, particularly those who are literate (Konig&Neumayr, 2017). Using a questionnaire helps the scholar to gather data from a wide range of people with different backgrounds. In addition to maintaining their confidentiality, presenting the findings in a printed format ensures that any potential bias was eliminated. Data gathered through the use of questionnaires is typically easy to summarize. The researcher used closed-ended questionnaires to obtain data from the participants in this study. Closed-ended questionnaires used a Likert scale (1-5) in which 5 represents highly agreeing, 4 represents agreeing, 3 represents disagreeing, 2 represents strongly disagreeing, and 1 represents extremely disagreeing. An important advantage of using questionnaires is that they allow the student to collect a large amount of data, which can then be analysed in greater detail.

3.5.2 Interview Schedule
An interview is a type of dialogue in which questions and answers are used to gather data for a specific purpose (Mann, 2016). Sub-County Education Directors were surveyed using an interview guide. The researcher provided semi-structured interview schedule with questions related to the research objectives. Using an interview schedule, the study's primary informants, sub county education directors, were able to provide in-depth data. Interviews are the most common method researchers use to get qualitative data. Researchers can gain deeper insight into people's ideas by conducting interviews, rather than by filling out questionnaires (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Interviewing is also a useful tool for studying the formation and negotiation of meanings in a natural situation, according to Alshenqeeti (2014). In addition, interviews are valuable given they allow subjects to express themselves verbally and emotionally about the topic under investigation; hence, it provides a comprehensive snapshot, analyses language, and reports thorough opinions of informants (King, Horrocks& Brooks, 2018).

3.6 Pilot Study
To ensure the validity and reliability of the research tools, a pilot study was conducted. Eight public secondary schools within Kericho County participated in pilot study representing 10% of sampled schools. Those who participated in pilot study was 8 principals, 8deputy principals and 8senior teachers from selected schools representing 10% of the sample size.

3.7.1 Validity of Research Instruments

According Hayashi, Abib and Hoppen (2019), validity is the correctness, accuracy, significance, and reliability of the results of study conclusions. Both on the content and the face validity of the study instruments, the researcher sought the advice of experts from Kisii University's school of educational studies. Before beginning the data collection procedures, the study's instrument was improved based on the expert's comments. A small number of principals in the neighbouring Kericho County, which has similar features as Bomet County, also tested the equipment. Piloting is considered significant in establishing the content validity of the instrument and in improving formats, questions and scales. Content validity encompasses the methodical scrutiny of the test content with an aim of establishing whether it covers a characteristic sample of behaviour aspect being investigated (Dunn,2020).

3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

This metric assesses how well a research tool reproduces the same results or data over and over again. It is only through doing a pilot study that the researcher was able to determine whether or not the questionnaire items are sufficiently clear to collect the data needed for the study and, if necessary, make changes as a result (Taber, 2018). According to Taber (2018), conclusions drawn from research results are correct as well as relevant if they are based on evidence that accurately represents the phenomenon under investigation. Experts indicated that a questionnaire is valid and reliable if it measures the parameters for which it was designed. No matter how many variables influence the precision and generalizability of a survey tool or concept, determining the precision of data and describing options for generalizing precision and enhancing replication opportunities always remained scientific evidence of a scholarly study (Saxe *et al.*, 2017).

The instruments of study were administered in consistent fashion to enable reliability by using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha to compute for each item to determine the reliability of the research instrument. The instrument's internal dependability is considered to be at least 0.7 reliability coefficients high (Taber, 2018). Likert scale type questions are best assessed for reliability using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, which aggregates all the items and provides advise on which item should be discarded if it fails to obtain the data intended to gather (Safa, Von Solms&Furnell, 2016). Before conducting a full-scale research study, piloting and calculating obtained data is necessary to ensure the validity of research instruments and familiarize researchers with the administration of the questionnaires. It is at this stage that the instrument is deem fit for data collection of the said research.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The Board of Graduate Studies of Kisii University wrote an introduction letter to the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to request an authorization letter (permission) for research. Bomet County's Commissioner and Director of Education received the research authorization letters from the researcher. In addition, to explain the study's goals and methodologies to school administrators, head teachers set appointments for the researcher. The researcher then handed out questionnaires to the participants for them to fill out on their own. In addition, the researcher provided interview guidelines and coordinate interview times with school principals. Each respondent's data were compiled and recorded in accordance with the plan.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

In order to analyse data collected with a view to making deductions and inferences, data were classified, categorized and analysed in accordance with study objectives. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were used. This was done since each data type (qualitative and quantitative data) have their own unique way of data analysis.

Qualitative data involved a process of data editing, coding, classification, and identifying key themes and sub-themes. Content analysis was used to analyse the responses from interview schedule. Therefore, themes were identified and assigned codes, followed by classification of themes. Themes were then integrated and coding helped in generating new ideas and gathering materials by topic which helped in management of data. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) note that in qualitative analysis data is analysed in a systematic manner in order to come to conclusion and recommendations.

The quantitative data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 24. The descriptive statistics included percentages, frequencies, standard deviation and mean. To obtain these descriptive statistics the coded data in SPSS were analysed. Tables containing percentages, frequencies, standard deviation and mean as per the variables were produced. The inferential statistics used were correlation and multiple regression.

3.10 Ethical Considerations
Respondents should not be subjected to any bodily or psychological injury as a result of the researcher employing threatening language or asking questions that are irrelevant or embarrassing (Arifin, 2018). Prior to beginning data collection, permission was acquired from Kisii University, and strict adherence to ethical guidelines was enforced to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all participants. A copy of the NACOSTI permit were sent to the respondents to explain why the study is necessary. If any plagiarism is found during the research project, the intellectual property rights shall be protected. Human decency and respect for all participants in this study were of the utmost importance to the team conducting it. To ensure for plagiarism the research was run through Turn tin software where the requirement is below 20%.

IV: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Influence of Principals' Strategic Planning Skills on Management of Student Discipline
The second objective of the study was to assess the influence of principals 'strategic planning skills on management of student discipline in public secondary schools in Bomet County, Kenya.

4.2 Principals Response on Strategic Planning Skills
The study sought to assess principals' responses on the influence of principals 'strategic planning skills on management of student discipline. The study findings were as presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.1: Principals Response on Strategic Planning Skills

Statements		SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
I always delegate duties to teachers concerning students' discipline in the school	F	53	3	4	7	5	4.27	1.31
	%	73.1	4.8	5.1	10.1	6.9		
I always establish rules and regulations concerning student discipline in school	F	29	19	9	3	12	3.69	1.44
	%	40.3	26.6	12.2	4.5	16.4		
I always create and enforce discipline among students	F	26	7	12	21	6	3.35	1.43
	%	36.1	9.3	16.7	29.6	8.4		
They are always goal oriented in dealing with student discipline in the school	F	14	29	4	19	6	3.37	1.29
	%	20	40	5.4	26.3	8.4		
I apply my analytical skills in dealing with students' discipline	F	34	25	3	1	9	4.02	1.30
	%	47.2	34.6	4.5	0.9	12.8		
I apply interpersonal skills in dealing with students' discipline	F	38	9	5	6	14	3.73	1.61
	%	53.4	12.8	6.6	7.8	19.4		
	F	29	30	3	3	7	3.99	1.20

The leadership skills have helped me in dealing with students' discipline	%	40	42.1	4.8	3.6	9.6		
By using problem-solving skills, have managed to reduce students' indiscipline cases in the school	F	21	35	3	5	9	3.76	1.27
	%	29.3	48.1	4.2	6.6	11.9		
Applying critical thinking skills have assisted me dealing with students' discipline cases in the school	F	3	6	15	42	6	3.57	.922
	%	4.6	8.1	20.8	58.4	8.1		
Research skills has helped me to understand how to improve discipline among the students	F	3	9	12	42	6	3.53	.967
	%	4.6	12.1	16.8	58.4	8.1		

The study results in Table 4.12 show that majority, 56(77.9%), of the principals agreed that they always delegated duties to teachers concerning students' discipline in their schools. However, 12(17.0%) of the principals disagreed that they always delegated duties to teachers concerning students' discipline in their schools. Further, in terms of mean and standard deviation, the study deduced that the principals always delegated duties to teachers concerning students' discipline in the school (Mean=4.27, Std.dev=1.31).This finding was in line with the study done by Sebastian *et al*. (2016) who pointed out that school heads should delegate duties to the juniors in order to maintain school discipline.

The study further revealed that a significant number,48(66.9%), of the principals agreed that they always established rules and regulations concerning student discipline in school.Nevertheless,15(20.9%) of the principals disagreed that they always established rules and regulations concerning student discipline in their schools. Additionally, the mean and standard deviation revealed that the principals agreed that they always established rules and regulations concerning student discipline in their schools(Mean=3.69, Std.dev=1.44). This aligned with the study done by Holloway and Brass (2018) which highlighted that rules and regulations should be established in order to maintain school discipline.

On top of the above findings, 33(45.4%) of the participants agreed that they always created and enforced discipline among students. However, 27(38.0%) of the principals disagreed with this statement. Further, in terms of mean and standard deviation, the principals generally agreed that they always created and enforced discipline among students (Mean=3.35, Std.dev=1.43). This coincided with the study done by Feuerborn *et al*. (2016) that instilling and maintaining school discipline is paramount.

The study nonetheless indicated that majority, 43(60.0%), of the participants agreed that they were always goal-oriented in dealing with student discipline in the school. Conversely, 25(34.7%) of the principals disagreed with this assertion. In terms of mean and standard deviation, it was deduced that the principals were always goal-oriented in dealing with student discipline in the school (Mean=3.37, standard deviation=1.29). This matched with the study by Künsting *et al*. (2016) which noted that goal implementation and focus of it is crucial so as to ensure school discipline.

Additionally, a vast majority, 59(81.8%), of the principals agreed that they applied their analytical skills in dealing with students' discipline. However,10(20.9%) of the principals disagreed with this claim. Additionally, the study results on mean and standard deviation revealed the principals agreed that they apply their analytical skills in dealing with students' discipline (Mean=4.02, standard deviation=1.30). This was in line with the study by Mestry (2017) which noted that it is paramount to apply analytical while approaching discipline of students.

Moreover, most, 47(66.2%), of the participants agreed that they applied interpersonal skills in dealing with students' discipline. However, 20(27.2%) of the principals disagreed with this view. Further, in terms of mean and standard deviation, the principals agreed that they applied interpersonal skills in dealing with students' discipline (Mean=3.73, standard deviation=1.61). This resonated with the study by Du Plessis (2020) which noted that integrating interpersonal skills while dealing with students' discipline is of essence.

Further, majority of the principals, 59(82.1%), agreed that their leadership skills had helped them when dealing with students' discipline. However, 10(13.2%) of the principals disagreed that their leadership skills had helped them in dealing with students' discipline. From the mean and standard deviation, it was deduced that the principals agreed with the statement the leadership skills had helped them when dealing with students' discipline (Mean=3.99, standard deviation=1.20). This aligned with the study finding by Herman *et al*. (2021) that application of leadership skills in dealing with school discipline is of importance to any school institution.

In addition, majority of the principals, 56(77.4%), agreed that teachers used experience and discussed stories together with students to manage discipline. However, 14(18.5 %) of the principals disagreed with this assertion. Further, the mean and standard deviation showed that the principals agreed with the statement that teachers used experience and discussed stories together with students to manage discipline (Mean=3.76, standard deviation=1.27). This agreed with the study by Hartwell *et al*. (2017) which noted that experience and expertise is important while dealing with discipline management.

Further, 48(66.5%) of the respondents agreed applying critical thinking skills had assisted them to deal with students' discipline cases in the school. However, 9(12.7%) of the respondents disagreed. From mean and standard deviation, the respondents agreed that applying critical thinking skills had assisted them to deal with students' discipline cases in the school (Mean, =3.57, Std. dev=0.92). This was in accord with the study done by Utami *et al.* (2017) which revealed that application of critical thinking is important while dealing with students' discipline cases.

Finally, 48(66.5%) of the participants agreed research skills had helped them to understand how to improve discipline among the students. However, 12(16.7%) of the participants disagreed with this claim. Further, in terms of mean and standard deviation, it was noted that respondents generally agreed that research skills had helped them to understand how to improve discipline among the students (Mean=3.53, standard deviation=0.97). This tallied with the study done by Rao (2018) which posited that research skills aids in managing and improving school discipline in institutions.

V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Summary of the Findings
The contribution of principals' strategic planning skills on management of student discipline in public secondary schools in Bomet County, Kenya. The study results showed that majority the respondents always delegated duties to teachers concerning students' discipline in their schools. The vast majority of the respondents always established rules and regulations concerning student discipline in school. Moreover, the participants always created and enforced discipline among students. Further, majority of the participants were always goal-oriented in dealing with student discipline in their schools. Similarly, a vast majority of the respondents applied analytical skills when dealing with students' discipline. Besides, majority of the participants applied communication skills in dealing with students' discipline. Further, for majority of the respondents, leadership skills helped them to deal with students' discipline. In addition, in majority of the schools, teachers used experience and discussed stories together with students to manage discipline. Further, the respondents applied critical thinking skills to assist them in dealing with students' discipline

cases in their schools. Finally, research skills had helped most participants to understand how to improve discipline among the students.

5.2 Conclusions of the Study
The study further concludes that school principals are able to devise possible solutions to students' discipline issues. Furthermore, they always evaluate the chosen options for dealing with students' discipline issues. Additionally, the principal soldierly brainstorming sessions to maximize teachers and students' creativity in problem-solving. Further, time management has helped school principals to stay organized during each stage of the decision-making process concerning student discipline.

5.3 Recommendations of the Study
Secondly, it is recommended that school principals should apply problem-solving skills when dealing with student discipline issues. More importantly, students should be involved in problem solving to reduce their engagement in indiscipline in the first place.

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