

## Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Nyeri South Sub County, Nyeri County, Kenya

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**ABSTRACT:** *The purpose of this study was to determine the challenges that head teachers of public secondary schools face encounter in improving and maintaining high academic performance and maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. The study adopted the descriptive research design and targeted head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of departments (HODs) and teachers. Two types of research instruments were used for the study namely questionnaires and structured interview schedules. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used in the analysis of data with the help of SPSS software. Findings were presented in form of tables and charts. The major challenges identified in improving and maintaining high academic performance were indiscipline, teachers' attitude, poor infrastructure, failure to do assignments by students and uncooperative parents. The most widely mentioned problems encountered by head teachers in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools were high enrollment of pupils, drug abuse and high exposure to televisions and videos. The study concluded that head teachers are facing serious challenges when they want to implement strategic management plans in the areas of improving academic performance and maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools.*

**Keywords:** *Head Teachers, Academic Performance, Discipline, Secondary School, Strategic Management*

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Date of Submission: 11-08-2017

Date of acceptance: 24-08-2017

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### I. Introduction

According to chapter four (4) of Kenya Vision 2030 (2007), Education and Training is a social pillar that is fundamental to the success of the vision. According to the vision Kenya shall be a middle income economy by the year 2030, with many industries and showing a high growth rate of more than 8.5. Education helps people to make informed decisions and choices. According to chapter 4 of the vision the four main challenges facing the education sector are; provision of well qualified human resources to help attain the vision, provide an education system of very high standards which is relevant and will help in attaining the vision. It also states that some regions in the country are lagging behind in terms of development and improve transition rates from primary to secondary all the way to tertiary levels.

Many are the times head teachers do not follow the above nine steps when making strategic decisions in their institutions. The end result is uncompleted projects in many institutions, a clear indication of poor management. It is therefore important to carry out this study so that education managers can be advised on better ways of implementing strategic management. Saleemi (2013) emphasizes the fact that strategic management includes monitoring and evaluation of external opportunities and threats in light of a corporation's strengths and weaknesses. It also includes environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and evaluation and control.

It is the responsibility of head teachers to select long term objectives and also set up strategies to ensure that the strategies will achieve best results. For example, a school must be in a position to produce people who are highly disciplined and competent, people who can be relied upon to develop the nation in different areas. Annual objectives and short term strategies that are compatible with the selected set of long term objectives and grand strategies. It is also the duty of head teachers to set up annual objectives and also oversee the implementation of the objectives by coming up with strategies to achieve the same. Some of the long term objectives are provided by the government through ministry of education. (Cameron & Green, 2015).

It is important for organizations to assess its internal environment. For example, in a school situation the administrators must assess availability of classrooms, offices textbooks, land for expansion, student population and even the available manpower. Assessing the company's external environment, including both the competitive and general contextual factors. It is important for an organization to assess the external environment. Head teachers must study the surrounding environment, which is the source of its students and even most of the personnel working in the school. The surrounding environment must be ready to support the existence of the organization. (Kuratko, et al. 2015).

The mission must be written and clearly communicated to all the stakeholders in the organization. For example in a school situation, the mission must be placed in a strategic place where everyone can read and be clearly comprehend. Conducting an analysis that reflects a company's internal conditions and capabilities. It is important for organizations to assess its internal environment. For example, in a school situation the administrators must assess availability of classrooms, offices textbooks, land for expansion, student population and even the available manpower. Assessing the company's external environment, including both the competitive and general contextual factors. It is important for an organization to assess the external environment. Head teachers must study the surrounding environment, which is the source of its students and even most of the personnel working in the school. The surrounding environment must be ready to support the existence of the organization. (Kuratko, et al. 2015).

Implement the strategic choices by means of budgeted resource allocations, in which the matching of tasks, people, structures, technologies and reward systems is emphasized. It is the duty of the head teachers to do budgeting so that they will be able to implement strategic choices. Budgeting must be done annually and even daily and then strict monitoring and evaluation is required to ensure success of the whole institution (Saleemi, 2014). Evaluate the success of the strategic process as an input for future when decision making. Managers must evaluate all the strategic processes that they put in place. This helps in future decision making. For example in a school situation, the head teachers must keep proper records and write reports concerning all the activities in the institution as a proper way of evaluating success as well as help in future decision making processes. (Hynes, 2015).

Many are the management decisions that have to be made in education institutions, for example buying a new vehicle constructing a new classroom or even coming up with ways of how performance will be improved. The managers must therefore be ready and willing to study the institution's external and internal environment, study the strengths of the institution and also its weaknesses. The head teachers must also come up with ways of how strategies will be formulated, implemented evaluated and controlled for them to be successful.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Education managers are faced with a great challenge today than ever before because the government and even the Kenyans expect them to fully help in achieving the vision 2030. The government is allocating a lot of money to schools so as to help in attaining the vision, and therefore in this era of transparency and accountability, education managers have no option but to improve on strategic management. This study therefore aimed at finding out the challenges that head teachers of secondary schools are facing in implementing strategic management with a view of helping them to overcome the challenges and become better and more efficient managers.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

- i. To establish the challenges that head teachers face in improving and maintaining high academic performance in their schools.
- ii. To find out the challenges that head teachers face in maintaining high levels of discipline among students in their schools.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The Social Systems Theory provided the theoretical underpinning for the study. Social Systems Theory is a theory that attempts to describe, explain and predict organizational behavior. The general systems theory is based on the work of biologist, Ludwig Von Bertalanffy. From a biological stand point, an organism is an integrated system of interdependent structures and functions. (Miller et al, 2010). According to Parsons (2011), an organism is constituted of cells and a cell consists of molecules, which must work in harmony. Each molecule must know what the others are doing. Each one must be capable of receiving messages and must be sufficiently disciplined to obey. According to the Social Systems Theory, all organizations are systems comprised of different units or parts, known as sub systems which are interrelated and independent in carrying out their activities, all geared towards attainment of common goals.

Subsystems are interdependent interacting elements that need to function in a coordinated way so that the entire system functions properly to achieve its goals. A system gets its inputs from the larger societal environment (supra system). From the supra system, the school gets students, teachers, resource materials and so on. The system transforms the inputs into finished products. For example, a school produces a changed person with skills, knowledge and values to enable him/her to contribute positively to self and society. Peter (2005) points out that the Social Systems Theory was developed to from the social theory to explain social changes and human interaction in organizations.

Since organizations are a collection of individuals or people who come together to perform specified tasks geared towards the attainment of common goals, they are referred to as social systems. Thus schools are social systems. According to Wanjiru (2002), head teachers, teachers and parents carry out various tasks towards the major purpose of enhancing student learning. Subsystems have distinct properties both in specialization and scope of responsibilities but there is no single subsystem that is superior or inferior to the others. All subsystems perform unique but complementary roles to attain the common goals of the system. Thus even if the head teacher occupies a higher position than the teachers, he/she requires the input of the BOM members in order to recruit staff, erect new infrastructure, maintain discipline and even improve the academic performance. The head teacher must also work very closely with the teachers and the parents if the above goals have to be achieved. Thus head teachers must appreciate and recognize the role played by the students, parents, the government and other stakeholders regardless of their position in the administrative hierarchy.

The malfunctioning of an organ in a human body will negatively affect another organ or even the whole body. According to Wanjiru (2002), since a system is a set of interdependent and interacting elements, a change at one point will eventually trigger off a chain of events that will have an impact on the entire system. This spillover effect is referred to as, the concept of multiple causation, where one unit causes reactions, which spread to the entire system affecting all its operations or part of them. Thus the malfunctioning of the BOM or the teaching staff can greatly affect the whole school system. That is why malfunctioning of the prefect system can cause serious indiscipline cases that can cause great losses. The head teacher plays a very important role of, among other things, being the coordinator, planner, controller and facilitator of the entire system to ensure efficiency. The head teacher would have to define clearly the goals of the school and the role of each individual or group towards the attainment of this goal. He should carry out division of labor and delegate responsibilities accordingly. Job description will have to clearly show the scope of responsibilities to avoid conflicts and role ambiguity in carrying them out. It is because of the above reasons that the Social Systems Theory was suitable for this study. This is because schools are social systems with subsystems such as the prefect system, the teachers, BOM, among others, which require proper selection, training and induction, role clarity and involvement for them to be able to carry out their roles effectively.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

### **2.2.1 Challenges in Improving Academic Performance**

According to Orodho, et al, (2014), most of the Board of Management (BOM) members lack financial powers and others have vested interest when it comes to procurement of supplies. When the BOM members lack financial powers and yet they are the managers of the school, then they may not be able to support academic programs such as buying of stationery, constructing tuition and administrative blocks as well as paying salaries to the subordinate staff. When the same BOM members have vested interests in procurement of supplies, that might easily force the school to collapse since some may supply items at inflated prices. Incompetent BOM members, inefficient management skills and styles indiscipline of students and teachers has also greatly affected academic performance. The government of Kenya provides money to schools (Republic of Kenya, 2005), and as such the finances must be well managed. When finances are not well managed, this may cause poor performance.

School facilities have a great impact on academic performance (Tuitoek, et al, 2015). Staff houses are vital to academic performance as staff would be within reach. When the teachers are residing in the school compound they are likely to help in maintaining discipline of students as well as be available to the students most of the time, thus enhancing performance. Bell and Rhodes (2003) also notes that administrative offices, classrooms, staff houses, laboratories and laboratory equipment, libraries, hostels, dormitories, staff houses, school playing ground and other facilities have a very big impact on academic performance. This is on condition that the facilities are used well. However, due to over enrolment especially after the introduction of free primary education, free day secondary education and the rise in population, the facilities are getting stretched.

Onyango,(2001) argues that teachers are the most important human resource as compared to secretaries, bursars, accountants and other subordinate staff. He argues that teachers should be skillful, knowledgeable and dedicated to their work. It was also noted that Principals and teachers' experience in school is paramount to performance. This means that teaching experience and effectiveness of individual teachers dictate performance. Teachers must be professionally competent and experienced in instruction and assessment tools appropriate to the curriculum. However, current over enrolment is causing teachers to have high workloads, thus causing poor performance. A study by Gatheru (2008) in Narok County, Kenya, established that due to over enrolment in public secondary schools, teachers are overwhelmed and are not able to give individual attention to students. Teachers may not mark assignments and this may attribute to poor performance. A study by Mackenzie (2009) and Purkey Smith (2001) noted that school climate influence performance, ie how the goals have been clearly communicated by the head teacher , especially on the expected academic performance.

### 2.2.2 Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

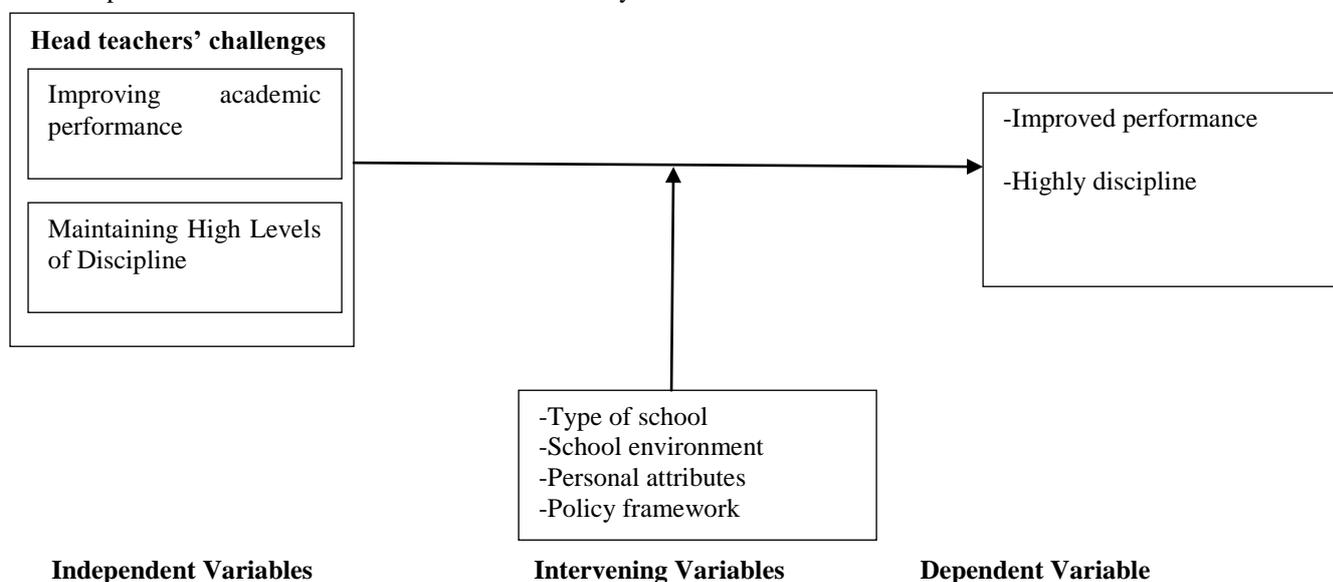
Wainaina (2015) noted that common indiscipline among secondary school students include truancy, cursing, rowdy behavior, non-compliance, bullying other students, annoying and bothering others, unruly behavior, use of bad language, smoking, drinking alcohol, stealing items from other students, and stealing school property among others. He notes that indiscipline among secondary school students is a great challenge to head teachers since it also affects academic performance of the students.

The Basic Education Act (2013) Part IV Section 36 abolished corporal punishment in schools. This has posed a great challenge to head teachers and teachers since they struggle in looking for other methods of punishing errant students. Nyongesa (2007) attributes causes of indiscipline among students to lack of communication between the students and the school administrators, conflict between house and school rules, peer influence and deviant habits. Many head teachers sometimes find it hard to deal with extreme indiscipline cases like school unrests, some of which end up causing heavy losses to the school. Mbiti (2007) attributes drug abuse among students, drug trafficking, corruption, family breakdown as a cause of lawlessness and indiscipline among students. Siringi (2003) attributes drug abuse to stress, fatigue, anxiety and even to the extent of committing murder.

Baker and Gerler (2001) notes that school managers are making use of guidance and counselling as a way of instilling discipline to students. However, it is not very clear how guidance and counselling is effective in instilling discipline among students. Mbiti (2007) stresses on the need to use traditional scheme of discipline and use of rewards as sure ways of instilling discipline among students. Waweru (2008) emphasizes on the need to effectively use of the prefect system as a sure way of maintaining discipline.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the variables in the study



**Figure 1 Conceptual Framework**

In the current study, the independent variables are the challenges that the head teachers encounter as they seek to maintain high academic performance and maintaining high levels of discipline. Other factors that may confound the relationship between the independent and dependent variables but are not within the scope of the study include prevailing policy frameworks regulating maintaining discipline and improving performance and also personal attributes of the administrators and the prevailing social economic environment of the school. These variables are presented as the intervening variables in the conceptual framework. In the current study, the influence of these variables is assumed to be insignificant. The model shows that adequate and appropriate application of the independent variables results in higher levels of efficacy of administrative duties by the head teachers. The conceptual framework has also outlined the important aspects in each variable. The conceptual framework displays relationship between the variables as constructed from the literature reviewed. The independent variables are the challenges that head teachers face in strategic management, which are maintaining high academic performance and maintaining high levels of discipline. The independent variables influence the achievement of the dependent variables, which are improved performance and disciplined students. Intervening variables include the type of school, personal attributes of the administrators, schools' academic and social environment and the prevailing policy framework.

### **III. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted descriptive research design. As pointed out by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), descriptive design can be used to collect information about people's attitudes, opinions or habits. They further note that descriptive research designs are used to allow researchers gather, present and interpret information for the purpose of clarification. As pointed out by Orodho (2004), descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact finding, but may often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems. This design was therefore deemed most efficient in analyzing the challenges facing head teachers in implementing strategic management in their schools.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

The target population was all the 34 head teachers in the 34 secondary schools in Nyeri South Sub County, plus their 34 deputy head teachers, 180 Heads of Departments (H.O.Ds) and the 680 teachers in the Sub County. The target population is drawn from all the schools since the researcher intends to study the challenges facing head teachers in implementation of strategic management in the whole Sub County. It was of importance to evaluate the effectiveness of MOE policy guidelines on procurement.

#### **3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

Due to the large area to be covered in the research, the subjects were sampled to obtain a representative sample size. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample size of between ten percent and thirty percent is adequate to represent items in a large population. The current study therefore used 29% to enable the study get a large enough sample to justify generalization of findings. From the 34 schools in the location of the study, 10 (29.41% of 34) schools were sampled out by stratified random sampling by picking 2 county schools, that is a boy school and a girl school, four district boarding schools that is 2 boys and 2 girls' schools and 4 district day secondary schools at random from lists of each category of schools obtained from the DEO's office.

**Table 1 Sampling Frame**

| Stratum              | Number In The Population | Number In The Sample (29%) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Principals           | 34                       | 10                         |
| Deputy Principals    | 34                       | 10                         |
| Heads of Departments | 180                      | 30                         |
| Teachers             | 680                      | 70                         |

10 (29.41%) head teachers and 10 (29.41%) deputy head teachers from the 10 sampled out schools participated in the study. Also included in the study was 3 H.O.Ds from each of the selected school to make a total of 30 (16.67%) and 7 teachers from each of the sampled out school to make a total of 70 (10.29%) as shown in Table 1.

#### **3.4 Research Instruments**

Two types of research instruments were used for the study namely; questionnaires and structured interview schedules. The questionnaires were administered to the head teachers, heads of departments and teachers while the interview schedules were administered to the deputy head teachers. These persons were selected because they are involved in the day to day running of the school and they interact with the head teacher often therefore they are resourceful persons in the matter at hand.

Pilot study is vital as it enables the reliability and validity of the research instruments to be determined. In an attempt to pilot and pretest the instruments, a pilot study was carried out in the neighboring Sub County; Nyeri Central Sub County. The research instruments were administered in those schools and analyzed to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instruments.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In the current study, the researcher carried out a pilot study and then carefully analyzed the results for clarity, correctness and also ensure that the items are comprehensive as far as the coverage of objectives is concerned. Depending on the findings, the instruments was fine-tuned to increase the reliability. These measures ensured both contrast and content validity of the research instruments.

Mugenda and Mugenda define reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time. In the current study, the method used to ensure reliability was test retest method (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Results of the two sets of tests were correlated to obtain the reliability index. A reliability index of 0.77 was considered sufficiently reliable since the minimum acceptance reliability coefficient is 0.70 (Dawson, 2009). The study obtained a reliability of 0.83 from analysis of pilot data.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis techniques are statistical methods which are used to analyze data so that it can be interpreted. The data collected from the respondent was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Quantitative data was coded, tallied and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and averages. Qualitative data for the open ended questions were analyzed through content analysis where ideas will be grouped into themes and then analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of data analysis were reported in summary form using frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts. The frequencies of different descriptions were generated by categorizing and coding pieces of data into themes. Frequency distribution tables and percentages were obtained using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

## IV. Findings

### 4.1 Response Rate

Findings in Table 2 shows that out of the percentage return rate averaged 93% and it was deemed adequate for analysis and reporting. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting. A rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. So, from Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), the response rate was excellent.

**Table 2 Response Rate**

| Population           | Questionnaires distributed | Questionnaires returned | Response rate |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Head teachers        | 10                         | 9                       | 90%           |
| Deputy head teachers | 10                         | 10                      | 100%          |
| Heads of departments | 30                         | 27                      | 90%           |
| Teachers             | 70                         | 65                      | 93%           |
| Total                | 120                        | 111                     | 93%           |

### 4.2 Challenges in Improving Academic Performance

#### 4.2.1 Head Teachers' Responses on Challenges in Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance

Head teachers in the study were asked to list challenges that they encounter in improving and maintaining high academic performance their schools. (1= Very strongly agree, 2= Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 4 =Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree)

**Table 3 Head Teachers' Responses on Challenges in Improving High Academic Performance**

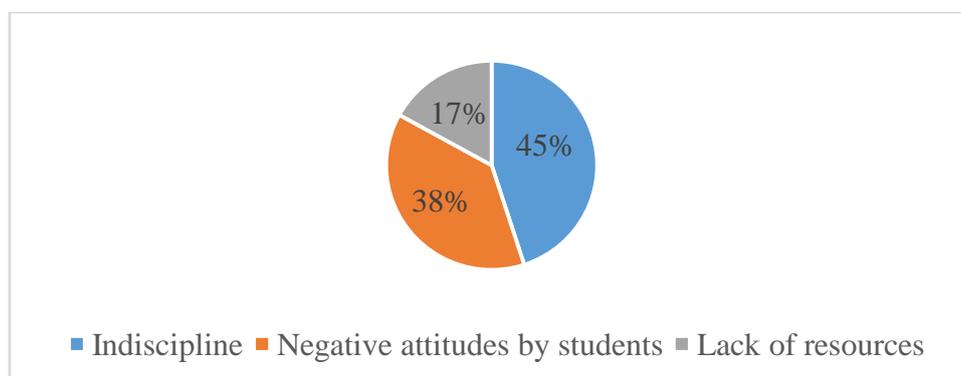
| Statement  | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Most students miss classes due to high poverty levels and perform poorly in exams.                                 | 44% | 11% | 22% | 11% | 11% |
| Parents do not give teachers maximum cooperation, resulting in poor academic performance.                          | 33% | 11% | 44% | 0%  | 11% |
| Most students do not do assignments and end up performing poorly in exams.   | 33% | 33% | 22% | 0%  | 11% |
| Indiscipline among students results in poor academic performance.  | 50% | 25% | 25% | 0%  | 0%  |
| In most cases students oppose new academic programs initiated by teachers, thus causing poor academic performance. | 33% | 22% | 11% | 11% | 22% |
| Sometimes teachers oppose new programs that were aimed at improving academic performance.                          | 0%  | 33% | 56% | 11% | 0%  |
| Lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories contributes to poor academic performance.                 | 44% | 22% | 22% | 11% | 0%  |
| Poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers contributes to poor academic performance.     | 33% | 11% | 33% | 11% | 11% |

Majority (77%) of respondents indicated that most students miss classes due to high poverty levels and perform poorly in exams. Majority (88%) agreed that parents do not give teachers maximum cooperation, resulting in poor academic performance. An equal number (88%) agreed that most students do not do assignments and end up performing poorly in exams. All (100%) agreed that indiscipline among students results in poor academic performance. Majority (66%) indicated that in most cases students oppose new academic programs initiated by teachers, thus causing poor academic performance. Majority (89%) of the respondents agreed that sometimes teachers oppose new programs that were aimed at improving academic performance. Similarly, 88% agreed that lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories contributes to poor academic performance. Majority (77%) also agreed that poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers contributes to poor academic performance. The findings therefore show that head teachers experienced challenges in in improving and maintaining high academic performance their schools. Some the major challenges identified are indiscipline, teachers' attitude, poor infrastructure, failure to do assignments by students and uncooperative parents. This finding is in agreement with Bell and Rhodes (2003) who noted that

administrative offices, classrooms, staff houses, laboratories and laboratory equipment, libraries, hostels, dormitories, staff houses, school playing ground and other facilities have a very big impact on academic performance.

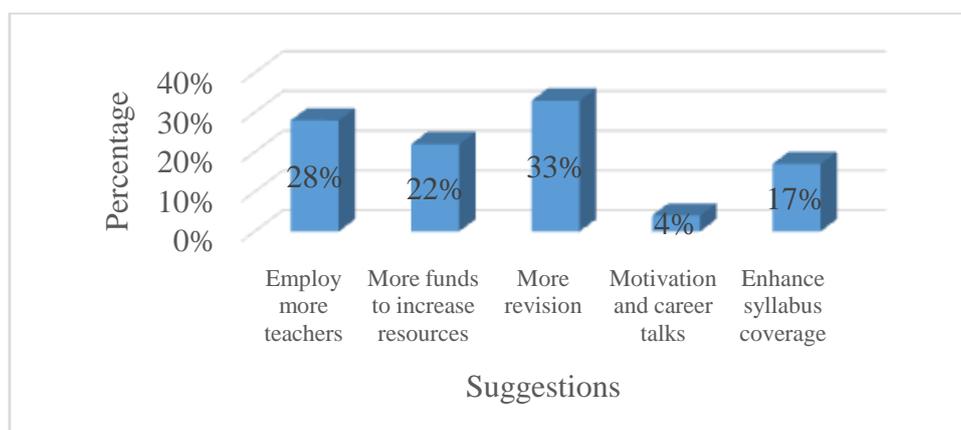
#### 4.2.2 Deputy Head Teachers' Responses on Challenges in Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance

Deputy head teachers in the study were asked to list some the challenge they faced in improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance



**Figure 2** Deputy Head Teachers' Responses on Challenges in Improving Academic Performance

Findings in Figure 2 show that 45% of respondents cited indiscipline while 38% indicated that there were negative attitudes towards learning by students. The respondents were also asked to recommend strategies to correct the situation.



**Figure 3** Deputy Head Teachers' Suggestions on Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance

Findings in Figure 3 show that 33% of the respondents recommended more revision by students, 28% recommended employment of more teachers while 22% suggested more funding to increase resources such as books and laboratory equipment.

#### 4.2.3 HOD's Responses on Challenges in Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance

HODs in the study were asked to list challenges that they encounter in improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance their schools. The findings are presented in this section. (1= Very strongly agree, 2= Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 4 =Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree)

**Table 4** HOD's Responses on Challenges in Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance

| Statement  | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Most students miss classes due to high poverty levels and perform poorly in exams.                                 | 27% | 21% | 27% | 18% | 6% |
| Parents do not give teachers maximum cooperation, resulting in poor academic performance.                          | 11% | 40% | 37% | 10% | 3% |
| Most students do not do assignments and end up performing poorly in exams.   | 24% | 35% | 29% | 11% | 0% |
| Indiscipline among students results in poor academic performance.  | 56% | 18% | 21% | 3%  | 2% |
| In most cases students oppose new academic programs initiated by teachers, thus causing poor academic performance. | 14% | 28% | 36% | 19% | 3% |

|  |     |     |     |     |    |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Sometimes teachers oppose new programs that were aimed at improving academic performance.                      | 5%  | 28% | 41% | 18% | 8% |
| Lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories contributes to poor academic performance.             | 34% | 24% | 34% | 3%  | 5% |
| Poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers contributes to poor academic performance. | 48% | 26% | 24% | 0%  | 2% |

Majority (93%) of respondents indicated that most students miss classes due to high poverty levels and perform poorly in exams. Majority (88%) agreed that parents do not give teachers maximum cooperation, resulting in poor academic performance. Majority (81%) agreed that most students do not do assignments and end up performing poorly in exams. Majority (96%) agreed that indiscipline among students results in poor academic performance. Majority (73%) indicated that in most cases students oppose new academic programs initiated by teachers, thus causing poor academic performance. Majority (78%) of the respondents agreed that sometimes teachers oppose new programs that were aimed at improving academic performance. Similarly, 85% agreed that lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories contributes to poor academic performance. All (100%) respondents agreed that poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers contributes to poor academic performance. The findings therefore show that HODs experienced challenges in improving and maintaining high academic performance their schools. Some the major challenges identified are poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers, indiscipline among students and high poverty levels in students' homes. These findings are in agreement with those of Mackenzie (2009) and Purkey Smith (2001) who noted that school climate influence performance; how the goals have been clearly communicated by the head teacher, especially on the expected academic performance.

#### **4.2.4 Teachers Responses on Challenges in Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance**

Teachers in the study were asked to list challenges that they encounter in improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance their schools. The findings are presented in Table 5. (1= Very strongly agree, 2= Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 4 =Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree)

**Table 5 Teachers on Challenges in Improving and Maintaining High Academic Performance**

| Statement  | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Most students miss classes due to high poverty levels and perform poorly in exams.                                 | 19% | 41% | 33% | 4%  | 4%  |
| Parents do not give teachers maximum cooperation, resulting in poor academic performance.                          | 12% | 31% | 46% | 8%  | 4%  |
| Most students do not do assignments and end up performing poorly in exams.   | 19% | 33% | 30% | 19% | 0%  |
| Indiscipline among students results in poor academic performance.  | 44% | 48% | 4%  | 4%  | 0%  |
| In most cases students oppose new academic programs initiated by teachers, thus causing poor academic performance. | 12% | 23% | 38% | 15% | 12% |
| Sometimes teachers oppose new programs that were aimed at improving academic performance.                          | 19% | 33% | 26% | 19% | 4%  |
| Lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories contributes to poor academic performance.                 | 37% | 30% | 19% | 15% | 0%  |
| Poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers contributes to poor academic performance.     | 48% | 41% | 11% | 0%  | 0%  |

Majority (76%) of respondents indicated that most students miss classes due to high poverty levels and perform poorly in exams. Majority (87%) agreed that parents do not give teachers maximum cooperation, resulting in poor academic performance. Majority (89%) agreed that most students do not do assignments and end up performing poorly in exams. Majority (95%) agreed that indiscipline among students results in poor academic performance. Majority (78%) indicated that in most cases students oppose new academic programs initiated by teachers, thus causing poor academic performance. Majority (74%) of the respondents agreed that sometimes teachers oppose new programs that were aimed at improving academic performance. Similarly, 92% agreed that lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories contributes to poor academic performance. Majority (98%) respondents agreed that poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers contributes to poor academic performance. The findings therefore show that teachers experienced challenges in improving and maintaining high academic performance their schools. Some the major challenges identified are poor working relationship between the head teachers and the teachers, indiscipline among students and lack of infrastructure like laboratories and dormitories. Wainaina (2015) also noted that indiscipline among secondary school students is a great challenge to head teachers since it also affects academic performance of the students.

### 4.3 Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

#### 4.3.1 Head Teachers’ Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

Head teachers in the study were asked to list challenges that they encountered in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. (1= Very strongly agree, 2= Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 4 =Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree)

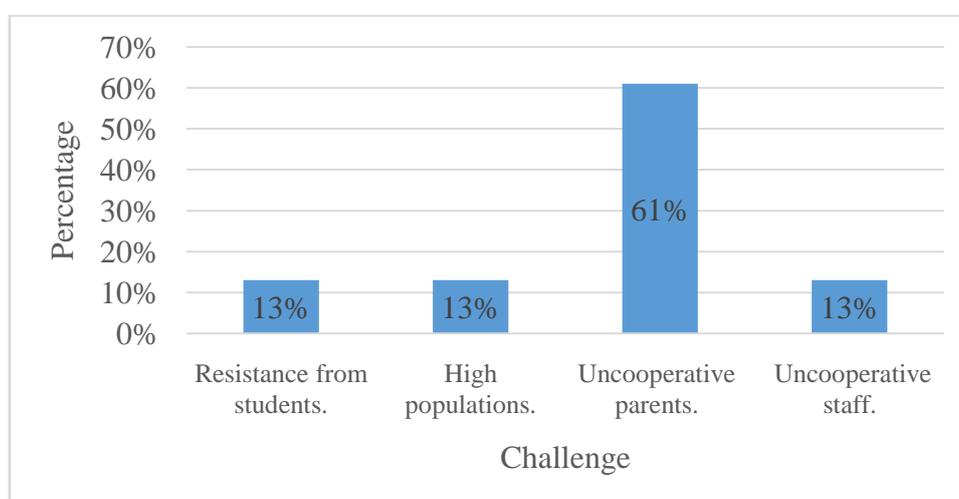
**Table 6Head Teachers’ Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline**

| Statement   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Most indiscipline cases are as a result of poor parenting.  | 56% | 11% | 11% | 22% | 0%  |
| The general community should be blamed for high indiscipline among students.  | 22% | 11% | 22% | 33% | 11% |
| High exposure to televisions and videos has caused increase of indiscipline among students.                         | 44% | 11% | 33% | 11% | 0%  |
| The abolition of corporal punishment has caused indiscipline cases to increase.                                     | 33% | 22% | 11% | 22% | 11% |
| Very high numbers of students in schools and classrooms have caused indiscipline cases to increase.                 | 11% | 22% | 11% | 44% | 11% |
| As enrolment of pupils increase, the number of teachers should be increased in the same ratio.                      | 89% | 0%  | 11% | 0%  | 0%  |
| Drug abuse in schools has caused indiscipline cases to increase.  | 67% | 11% | 22% | 0%  | 0%  |
| Guidance and counselling of students is not an effective method of managing indiscipline among students in schools. | 22% | 11% | 33% | 22% | 11% |

Majority (78%) of the respondents indicated that most indiscipline cases are as a result of poor parenting. Over half (56%) of the respondents agreed that the general community should be blamed for high indiscipline among students. Majority (89%) of the respondents indicated that high exposure to televisions and videos has caused increase of indiscipline among students. Majority (67%) also indicated that the abolition of corporal punishment has caused indiscipline cases to increase. Over half (56%) of the respondents agreed that very high numbers of students in schools and classrooms have caused indiscipline cases to increase. All (100%) of the respondents agreed that as enrolment of pupil’s increase, the number of teachers should be increased in the same ratio. Similarly, all (100%) of the respondents agreed that drug abuse in schools has caused indiscipline cases to increase. Majority (67%) agreed that guidance and counselling of students is not an effective method of managing indiscipline among students in schools. The findings therefore show that the head teachers in the study encountered various challenges in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. The most widely mentioned problems were high enrollment of pupils, drug abuse and high exposure to televisions and videos. This is consistent with findings of Gatheru (2008) who established that due to over enrolment in public secondary schools, teachers are overwhelmed and are not able to give individual attention to students.

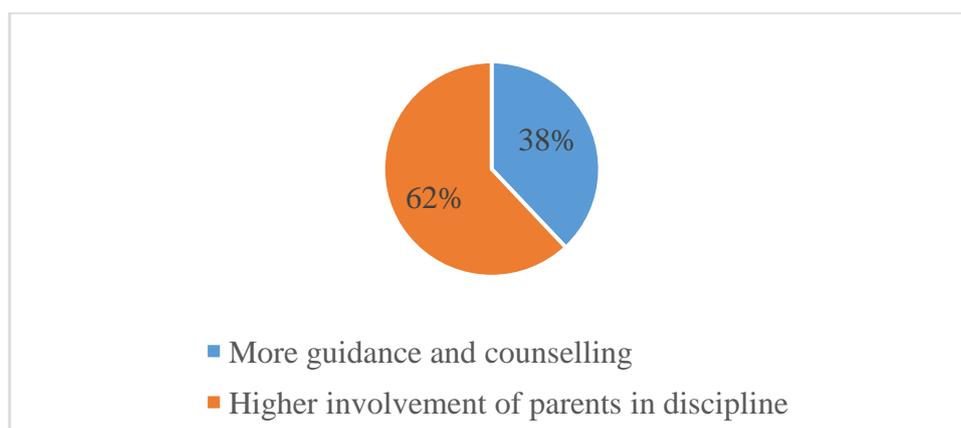
#### 4.3.2 Deputy Head Teachers’ Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

Deputy head teachers in the study were asked to list some challenges that they faced in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools.



**Figure 4Deputy Head Teachers’ Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline**

Over half (61%) of the deputy head teachers cited uncooperative parents as one of the challenges that they faced in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. The findings show 13% cited resistance from students, while an equal number indicated high population of students and uncooperative staff respectively. The deputy head teachers were asked to suggest remedies to correct the situation. The findings are shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5** Deputy Head Teachers' Suggestions on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

Majority (62%) of the teachers recommended that guidance counselling be use more often while 38% recommended greater involvement of parents in discipline of the student. This is consistent with Baker and Gerler (2001) who noted that school managers are making use of guidance and counselling as a way of instilling discipline to students

#### 4.3.3 HODs' Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

Heads of departments in the study were asked to list challenges that they encountered in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. (1= Very strongly agree, 2= Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 4 =Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree)

**Table 7** HODs' Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

| Statement   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Most indiscipline cases are as a result of poor parenting.  | 22% | 33% | 37% | 7%  | 0%  |
| The general community should be blamed for high indiscipline among students.  | 7%  | 26% | 44% | 22% | 0%  |
| High exposure to televisions and videos has caused increase of indiscipline among students.                         | 11% | 22% | 41% | 26% | 0%  |
| The abolition of corporal punishment has caused indiscipline cases to increase.                                     | 37% | 33% | 11% | 15% | 4%  |
| Very high numbers of students in schools and classrooms have caused indiscipline cases to increase.                 | 11% | 19% | 37% | 30% | 4%  |
| As enrolment of pupils increase, the number of teachers should be increased in the same ratio.                      | 67% | 30% | 4%  | 0%  | 0%  |
| Drug abuse in schools has caused indiscipline cases to increase.  | 41% | 37% | 15% | 7%  | 0%  |
| Guidance and counselling of students is not an effective method of managing indiscipline among students in schools. | 19% | 19% | 19% | 26% | 19% |

Majority (93%) of the respondents indicated that most indiscipline cases are as a result of poor parenting. Majority (78%) of the respondents agreed that the general community should be blamed for high indiscipline among students. Majority (74%) of the respondents indicated that high exposure to televisions and videos has caused increase of indiscipline among students. Majority (81%) also indicated that the abolition of corporal punishment has caused indiscipline cases to increase. Over half (67%) of the respondents agreed that very high numbers of students in schools and classrooms have caused indiscipline cases to increase. All (100%) of the respondents agreed that as enrolment of pupil's increase, the number of teachers should be increased in the same ratio. Similarly, 93% of the respondents agreed that drug abuse in schools has caused indiscipline cases to increase. Over half (56%) disagreed that guidance and counselling of students is not an effective method of managing indiscipline among students in schools. The findings therefore show that the HODs the study encountered various challenges in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. The most widely mentioned problems were high enrollment of pupils, poor parenting and drug abuse.

#### 4.3.4 Teachers' Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

Teachers in the study were asked to list challenges that they encountered in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools.

**Table 8** Teachers' Responses on Challenges in Maintaining High Levels of Discipline

| Statement   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Most indiscipline cases are as a result of poor parenting.                                  | 27% | 38% | 25% | 7%  | 3% |
| The general community should be blamed for high indiscipline among students.                | 8%  | 22% | 42% | 23% | 5% |
| High exposure to televisions and videos has caused increase of indiscipline among students. | 15% | 22% | 51% | 10% | 2% |
| The abolition of corporal punishment has caused indiscipline cases to increase.             | 39% | 28% | 17% | 13% | 3% |
| Very high numbers of students in schools and classrooms have caused indiscipline cases to   | 7%  | 27% | 27% | 33% | 7% |

|   |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| increase.   |     |     |     |     |     |
| As enrolment of pupils increase, the number of teachers should be increased in the same ratio.                      | 61% | 23% | 10% | 7%  | 0%  |
| Drug abuse in schools has caused indiscipline cases to increase.  | 41% | 34% | 19% | 3%  | 2%  |
| Guidance and counselling of students is not an effective method of managing indiscipline among students in schools. | 8%  | 14% | 24% | 31% | 24% |

Majority (90%) of the respondents indicated that most indiscipline cases are as a result of poor parenting. Majority (72%) of the respondents agreed that the general community should be blamed for high indiscipline among students. Majority (88%) of the respondents indicated that high exposure to televisions and videos has caused increase of indiscipline among students. Majority (84%) also indicated that the abolition of corporal punishment has caused indiscipline cases to increase. Over half (60%) of the respondents agreed that very high numbers of students in schools and classrooms have caused indiscipline cases to increase. Majority (93%) of the respondents agreed that as enrolment of pupil's increase, the number of teachers should be increased in the same ratio. Similarly, 95% of the respondents agreed that drug abuse in schools has caused indiscipline cases to increase. Over half (54%) disagreed that guidance and counselling of students is not an effective method of managing indiscipline among students in schools. The findings therefore show that the teachers in the study encountered various challenges in maintaining high levels of discipline in their schools. The most widely mentioned problems were drug abuse, high enrollment of pupils and poor parenting and drug abuse. Wainaina (2015) also noted that indiscipline among secondary school students is a great challenge to head teachers since it also affects academic performance of the students.

## **V. Conclusions And Recommendations**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study concludes that head teachers face several challenges when they are implementing strategic management plans in secondary schools. On the issue of improving academic performance in schools, the head teachers also face several challenges and if the same were addressed, performance in schools would improve for the better. On the issue of maintaining high levels of discipline in schools, the head teachers get challenges like lacking necessary support from parents and the fact that drug abuse is common among students, not forgetting that corporal punishment cannot be administered on undisciplined students. There is need to overcome the above challenges for the better management of education institutions. The study concludes that though the head teachers face many challenges when they are implementing strategic management plans, the effect of the challenges can be minimized if the same challenges are exposed and addressed with the intention of resolving them. This requires a strong leadership that is ready to unite all the stakeholders in the education sector. When all the stake holders have been brought on board, there is need to remind them of what is expected of them if best results are to be achieved in schools. After all education institutions are public institutions that need to be managed in an excellent way for a better society.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Indiscipline among students is serious and is affecting performance. There is need for all stakeholders in the education sector to have a common forum where they address the causes of indiscipline among students and come up with possible remedies. Also the head teachers should improve working relations with their teachers for better performance. Academic performance can be enhanced if the issue of student-teacher ratio is addressed to avoid a situation where student population increase but the number of teachers is not increasing in the same ratio.

### **5.3 Suggestions for further study**

The study recommends further research on the following areas: An evaluation on the role played by other stakeholders such as parents when it comes to discipline of students in schools. The impact of drug abuse in schools and how this is affecting discipline of students in the schools. A study should be done on how head teachers relate with teachers and how this affects performance. There should be a study on how schools can acquire more funds for infrastructure development. The replication of this research study on other areas in Kenya.

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to thank my supervisors, Dr.Tarsilla Kibaara and Mr Zachary Njagi for the tremendous assistance they gave me during the development and preparation of this thesis. Thank you for the academic support you have given me over and over again. Special thanks goes to my wife Joyce and children Lilian, Dennis and Kelsy for their patience, material and moral support. God bless you all.

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\* Duncan Ndiritu GICHU " Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Nyeri South Sub County, Nyeri County, Kenya " *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)* 6.8 (2017): 29-40.