AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' PREPAREDNESS IN DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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Abstract

Discipline from time immemorial has never been a soft landing for any manager. The need and procedure of discipline has not been welcomed by the one to be disciplined. Secondary schools inherit discipline problem from the primary school or families where the child come from. The study was aimed at investigating the preparedness of deputy principals in the management of discipline under the following objectives: To establish the level of preparedness of deputy principals in the management of discipline and to examine the extent to which deputy principals apply the discipline policy guidelines in managing discipline in secondary schools. The population yielded 37 deputy principals of secondary schools in Murang'a South District Murang'a County. Mixed methodology with descriptive survey design was used to collect data. 12 schools were sampled using Simple random sampling. This yielded 30% of the population. Qualitative data was thematically analyzed and presented in simple statistic of mean, percentages and bar graphs. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS and presented using table and charts. Discussions were done on the objectives under study. The respondents suggested on review of discipline policy, fair participation of the principals and Board of management (BOM) and listening to students in the disciplinary procedures. They too affirmed that the discipline policy was available and clear to follow. The study concluded that the preparedness of deputy principals in discipline management in secondary schools in Kenya have been a difficult experience. It recommended on a review of the discipline policy, more participation of teachers, the principal and BOM members in the management of discipline.

Key words: Preparedness, discipline management, Board of management

1.0 Background Information

Discipline of students is decisive for the proper running of a school. The nature and type of discipline vary from child to child, according to age and the environment of their upbringing among others. Parents start addressing discipline issues from very early age and the teacher takes over this duty as the child is maturing. This prepares the child to be personifying herself as an orderly and organized human being. Order is grounded on external control. Discipline emanates from the individual for they understand the need for it (Chambers 1983, Okiemute**,** 2011). Therefore, discipline should be addressed as an endless process and not a paradigm Secondary schools in Kenya have experiencing problems of student discipline since 1971 when the first case of violent student strike was reported. The government thought that the strike occurred because schools did not have a strong internal mechanism of dealing with student disciplinary problems. It therefore introduced corporal punishment in schools in 1972 (Education Act,1980, Ajowi,

2013).To save the child from teacher tyranny, corporal punishment was banned in schools in 2001 (MOEST, 2001). Guidance and counseling services in schools were strengthened to provide new ways of managing student discipline. This in a way operates hand in hand with the discipline machinery in secondary schools which is headed by the deputy principal.

Strengthening of guidance and counseling services in schools aimed at providing lasting solutions to the internal mechanism of managing student discipline. The challenge lies upon deputy principals to replace the vice with a positive view of education. Deputy principals can only perform their managerial duties if there is discipline and order in the whole school (Freiberg & Driscoll, 1992 24, Mtshali, 1993:2, Squelch & Lemmer, 1994:61, Mokwana, 1994:17, Tauber, 1995:259, Watson, 1996:1, Mtsweni, 2009).

Discipline is a necessary for active learning, appropriate functioning, and the quality of school life. Operational discipline approaches should be pursued to encourage responsible behavior; to offer students satisfying and prolific school experience (Bunwaree, 2009). Where school culture upholds discipline strongly, students benefit the most and develop positive attitudes towards the school. Discipline management should be viewed as the degree of difference between reinforcement of appropriate behaviors and simple suppression of problems. A discipline program therefore should eliminate behavior problems and systematically build the positive behavior replacement activities.

This background literature therefore, intensely submits that many deputy principals have been denied their expectation in administrative, leadership and curriculum development; Secondly, the attendance and disciplinary functions have not met the expectations of the deputy principals. This study, therefore, was set to establish how the deputy principals prepare themselves in managing student discipline post primary institutions in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Lack of sufficient discipline has pushed Kenyan secondary schools dearly for many years. Despite the governments' effort to provide resources for tuition and improving the school, many schools are still struggling to address discipline. Schools are finding it difficult to attain high levels of discipline. Delivery of public services in support of deputy principals' has been negligible. Discipline is peeling off and the relationships between the learner and deputy principal have been deteriorating. Refusal to rationalize, late coming, truancy, negligence towards homework and physical violence among others (Mtsweni , 2009) have been a scaring management task. Principals have been trying to transfer from discipline related schools or blaming or leaving such schools in the hands of deputy principals (Charles, 1996).However, deputy principals' cause has been made mandatory to any aspiring principal. Research sought to unearth the truth about the preparedness of deputy principals on management of discipline in post primary education in Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study
The following objectives guided the study:
1. To establish the level of preparedness of deputy principals in managing discipline in secondary schools
2. To examine the extent to which deputy principals apply the discipline policy guidelines in managing discipline in secondary school

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1: Discipline Management in School

Schools rules and regulation are among the approaches considered in molding good behavior of students. Discipline Management is anchored in self-control, orderliness, good behavior and obedience to school authority (Adams, 2003). Rules and regulations specify what should be done and what should not. Students break these rules and regulations with wide spread indiscipline acts such as escaping from schools, abuse drugs and other substances, participating in frequent strikes making it mandatory for control measures to be reinforced. Kabandize (2001) observed that, rules and regulations are enforced through prefects bodies and councils, disciplinary committees, teachers and parental involvement. However consequences from such behaviors translate to poor students' academic performance.

A wide spread violence and misbehavior exists in many secondary schools (Matsoga, 2003). Theft is a common activity among secondary school students. For instance in 2003, a student broke into a biology laboratory, stole ethanol and consumed it ending up with loss of sight and even life (Banda, 2004). In many post primary institutions rules and regulations are not popular. Cotton, (2000) shared the same belief and recommended an open minded approach to school rules and regulations. Most of the school rules/regulations are established without the involvement of the students leading to their resistance (Kabandize, 2004). Many students in many institutions ends up setting up their own rules parallel to ones set by the school. Responsiveness to rules could become a concern of how managers view them (Salzer-Morling, 2000).These makes management differ from one school to another. The Elton Committee (1989) reported on violence that involved verbal and physical aggression to teachers. In the long run, these events have ripple effects in the running of a school.

Changes signaling maturity in the course of growth and development of students in secondary schools tend to make students disobey (Mukharjee,1985). These changes are too strong among youth in secondary schools. Rebelliousness and pressure of students result in limitless school and classroom disruptions ending up with many suspensions in a year (Cotton, 2000). These experiences make the office of the deputy principals a beehive of activities in discipline management among other duties.

2.2: Discipline Management

There should be a sound relationship between the teacher and the learner, teacher and the top management, student and parents, and so creating an informal incentive system. A social distance must be maintained as well as a reward system to reinforce discipline. High- handedness should equally be avoided as it could endanger the life of a school. Incentive systems can be formalized and reviewed in form of written contingency incentives as found in businesses and industries. These are usually negotiated and drafted in form of a contract. The cost of mediation in education, and that of giving individualized reinforcement limit them to special settings (Jones, 2014). Deputy Principals should be well prepared and enter in to contract with the stakeholders in the management of school discipline.

Majority of deputy Principals use tie-up systems to break the pattern of disparity in reinforcement. Tie-up responses are negative endorsements (Jones, 1978). Relationship should be used to provide balance between small tie-up responses and limit-setting. Long negative endorsements are difficult to offset penalty with reward. Thus the higher up the tie-up system the more unbalanced the

management system. The more unbalanced the system, the more likely it will generate resentment, resistance, and revenge (Jones, 1978). This therefore makes the deputy principal more and more unpopular in secondary schools.

2.3 Discipline Policy and Deputy Principals in Secondary Schools.

The main avenue of acquiring skills to handle discipline issues in a school is to train deputy principal and prepare them, to create a conducive environment for learning and the development of the pupil in a more caring respectful manner (World Bank, 2010). This should be in accordance with the characteristic spirit of the school. This is the main objective in the management of a school. The priorities of school leadership should be to focus on the quality of teaching and learning; the enrichment of experience of school life for pupils and teachers; the provision of a broad based curriculum; a wide and varied range of extracurricular activities among others (TSC, 2003, Abaya, 2011).This requires an active involvement of teachers and pupils in as many aspects of school life as possible.

A firm but fair discipline policy coupled with an effective pastoral care program and the development of mutually supporting home-school and school-community links are essential ingredients in achieving these aims. Leadership in this context must recognize and nurture the teaching staff as well as the students. These are important asset in a school. An effective school discipline policy should encompass all the above mentioned guidelines.

2.3.1: Functions of the Deputy Principal

The core mandate of the Deputy principal is to help the principal in the management of the school (TSC, 2003' Abaya, 2011).The duo contributes to the administration of the school and team up in carrying out school discipline. The deputy principal more often should be physically present in school throughout the school day and specifically handles the issues of discipline among others. The duo should maintain discipline school during the examinations, meals and other episodes outside the normal working hours and days as may be necessary from time to time.

2.4: Discipline Policy in Managing Discipline in Schools

An effective discipline policy encompasses strategies and mechanisms available to all the members of the school community. Without these crucial resources, a school cannot function as a centre for teaching and learning (Blandford, 1998:39, Mtsweni, 2008, Moyo, 2014). This process of developing and implementing a discipline policy involves decision-making and team work. Discipline policy guidelines are designed to provide a structured corrective action process for improving and preventing recurrence of undesirable behavior or performance issues.

Disciplinary interventions may vary. Some of the factors that are considered depend on the nature of the offence, frequency of occurrence, impact on students' behavior as well as school' academic performance among others. Progressive discipline is a step-by-step process designed to modify unacceptable students' behavior. This allows discipline to start at a higher step based on the severity and circumstances of the situation (Vanderbilt, 2014)

2.5: The Attitude of Deputy Principals in Discipline Management.

The deputy principal's attitude is considered to be an important element in school functioning. It plays a vital role of creating a lively and an innovative environment of teaching and learning in

schools. In order to achieve its goal, the students must be disciplined and committed to their duties. The deputy principal should provide disciplinary control over the behavior of students for higher level of performance to be realized. School system has come under scrutiny by managers of education due to inability of school deputy principals to effectively manage indiscipline among students. Indiscipline among students manifest in truancy, lateness, absenteeism, non attendance of lessons, selling of goods during school hours and so on. The exhibition of these negative attitudes by students defeats the goals of education and inhibits the quality of secondary education (Ekpoh, 2007).

The primary concern of every school deputy principal is to ensure that students are disciplined. This forms the basis of achievement of schools goals through effective management. This requires the knowledge and application of good strategies. Effective discipline in schools depends on the ability of the school deputy principal to utilize various approaches of staff discipline intelligently in order to ensure compliance and good behavior. Ability to use a particular disciplinary strategy at the appropriate time and condition is fundamental to effective management of school discipline (Ikoya, 2009). Frame (1990) argued that school location had significant effect on the philosophy, tradition, perspective, discipline and performance of students as well as the attitude of deputy principals towards students.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mixed methodology with a descriptive survey design was used during the study. This was because the study required both quantitative and qualitative data. Descriptive research design was used to determine opinions attitudes, preference and perceptions of group of people of interest to the researcher (Kathuri and Pals, 1993). The study focused on preparedness of deputy principals in public secondary school in Murang'a South district. The target population consisted of all the deputy principals in secondary schools in the district. Murang'a South district has 44 public Secondary schools thus the target population will be 44 deputy head teachers from the district. The researcher carried out the study on those deputy principals who were able to attend a seminar in Nanyuki Town in the month of March after the KCSE results were released. All of the 37 deputy principals were given questionnaires.

The questionnaires were piloted to ascertain its validity and reliability. The researcher presented three questionnaires to three deputy head teachers from different Counties randomly. Borg and Gall (1989) suggested that, one can carry pilot study on two or three cases. The purpose of the pre-test was to assist the researcher to identity the instrument items which were inappropriate. This facilitated corrections, examination of responses, determination of ambiguity level of the questions and determine the percentage of responses. Ambiguous items were modified to more suitable forms to shorten the time required for the administration of the instrument. Piloting therefore assisted in testing validity and reliability of the research instruments.

To generate data for the study, the researcher obtained a letter of introduction from Mount Kenya University and availed it to the D.E.O for permission to carry out the research. Then the researcher proceeded to the venue and booked appointments with the organizers of the meeting. The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher. This enabled the researcher to conduct document analysis and carry out observation.

Completeness of collected data was checked. The data was then categorized into information that targeted the objectives of the study. Qualitative and quantitative data obtained in the study was

analyzed following the content analysis method (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). Open-ended questionnaires were grouped into sets of responses. These qualitative data was analyzed according to themes. The results were presented in tables, frequencies, and percentages depending on relative responses. Quantative data was coded into SPSS software for interpretation. Discussions and recommendations on the subject of the study were drawn from the analyzed data (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008)

4.0 Results and Discussions

The study sought to establish the level of preparedness of deputy principals in managing discipline and to examine the extent to which deputy principals apply the discipline policy guidelines in managing discipline in secondary schools. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS and the results were presented using table and bar charts in form of percentages. These were discussed per the objective. Those respondents who gave positive views were grouped to give a clear view of that tool.

4.1 Period of service in the office of deputy Principal

The respondents were grouped according to the period of service in the office of the deputy principal and the results tabulated as in table 4.1. The results were presented in percentages for discussions.

Table 4.1 Period served as deputy principal

		Frequency	%	% Valid	Cumulative %
Valid	-	2	5.4	5.4	5.4
	< 3 yrs.	14	37.8	37.8	43.2
	3-5 yrs.	13	35.1	35.1	78.4
	6-10 yrs.	7	18.9	18.9	97.3
	> 10 yrs.	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

The study established that around 73% of the deputy principals had served up to 5 years as compared to around 21% of those who had served for over 6 years. The results imply that majority of the deputy principals are young. There were around 3% of the deputy principals with wide experience still holding the office implying that role modeling of preparedness was far from possible.

4.2 Forms of Discipline in Schools

The following answers for the rating of different forms of discipline which included noise making, stealing, lateness, drug and substance abuse among others. Results were interpreted and percentages for noise making and stealing shown in figure 4.2a and 4 b.

Results indicate that around 70% rated stealing as discipline problem in their schools. This implies that deputy principals deal with cases of stealing most of the time in school. Stealing among other vices was cited by Jones (2003) as a form of revenge behavior among students.

Table 4.2 (a) Rating Stealing as form of discipline

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	-	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
	Moderate	10	27.0	27.0	29.7
	Low	26	70.3	70.3	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2 (b) **Rating Noise making form of discipline**

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative%
Valid	-	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
	High	5	13.5	13.5	16.2
	Moderate	20	54.1	54.1	70.3
	Low	11	29.7	29.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Result indicated that noise making rated at around 70% from moderate to high in all the schools sampled. This implies that the vice was an issue that the entire deputy principals manage in their schools which they have not succeeded so far. The study was anchored on order by Adams (2003) in the management of discipline.

4.3 Discipline Policy and Management of Discipline in Secondary Schools
The study sought to investigate preparedness of management of discipline in line with the discipline policy in secondary schools in Kenya.

Table4.3(a) Formation of discipline committee

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	30	81.1	81.1	81.1
	No	7	18.9	18.9	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

The study established that around 80% agreed that discipline committees are formed in their schools while around 20% disagreed. This implied that although most of the schools form discipline committees, 20% do not obey the policy guidelines from the government. Moyo (2014) argued that denial of such a resource a school cannot function. The deputy principal in such schools manages discipline issues with a lot of resentment (Jones, 1978)

Table4.3 (b) Training deputy principals in discipline management

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	-	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
	Yes	18	48.6	48.6	51.4
	No	18	48.6	48.6	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

The results indicated that, around 50% supported the training of all deputy principals in discipline management. Similarly, around 50% were against the proposal. This implies that those who objected the training supported the view that discipline comes from the individual and not a case in point (Chambers 1983, Okiemute**,** 2011)**.**

Table4.3 (c) Need to train student and teachers to help in discipline

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	-	3	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Yes	30	81.1	81.1	89.2
	No	4	10.8	10.8	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Over 80% preferred on training of teachers and students on management of discipline in secondary schools in Maragua sub county. Around 20% either failed to respond or voted against the proposal. This implies that training in discipline management should be a collective responsibility and not for the deputy principal.

Table 4.3 (d) Code of discipline management present in school

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	-	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
	strongly agree	18	48.6	48.6	51.4
	Agree	11	29.7	29.7	81.1
	None	4	10.8	10.8	91.9

Disagree	3	8.1	8.1	100.0
Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Over 80% supported the idea that schools have established codes of discipline while around 20% either disagreed or were not aware of school codes of discipline. This implies that majority of the schools have been able to implement discipline policy and awareness creation. Around 20% of the schools have not created enough awareness or rules and regulations are not popular. Cotton, (2000) cited similar scenarios in his studies of school discipline management.
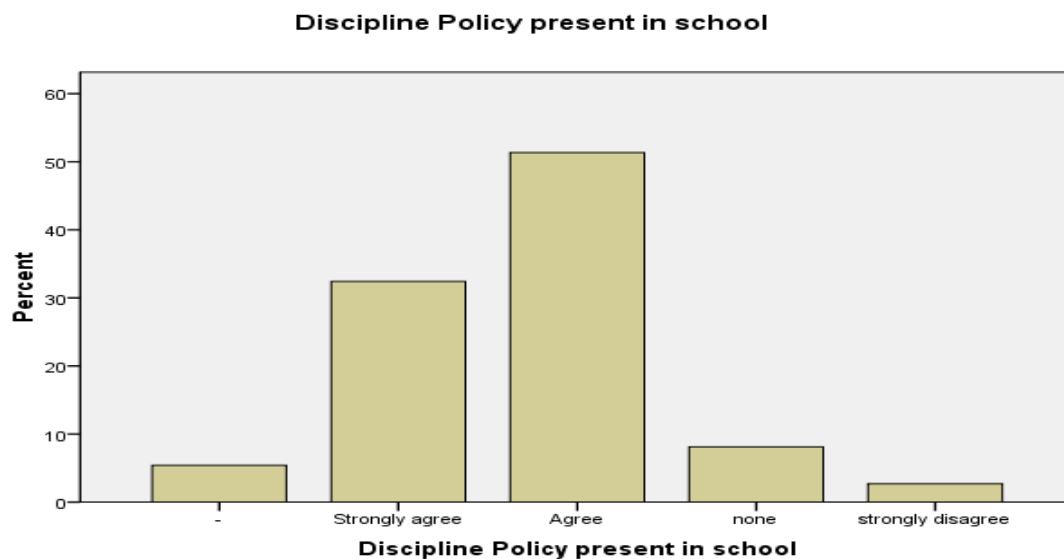

Figure 4. 3 (a) Availability of discipline policy in secondary schools
Figure 4.3 (a) over 80% confirmed that discipline policy was available in schools.
While less than 10% strongly disagreed with the idea that there was a discipline policy in schools. This implies that the ministry of education have cascaded the policy to secondary level.

**Table 4.3 (a) Clear Discipline procedure**

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	-	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
	strongly agree	10	27.0	27.0	29.7
	Agree	13	35.1	35.1	64.9
	None	9	24.3	24.3	89.2
	Low	3	8.1	8.1	97.3
	strongly disagree	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. (b) Indicate that over 60% were in agreement that discipline procedures are clear. This implies that the school management has invested on sensitizing its staff on discipline management thus making the deputy principal's work easier. However, 40% do not have established procedures. Jones (1978) argued that lack of procedures may lead to resentment by the students.

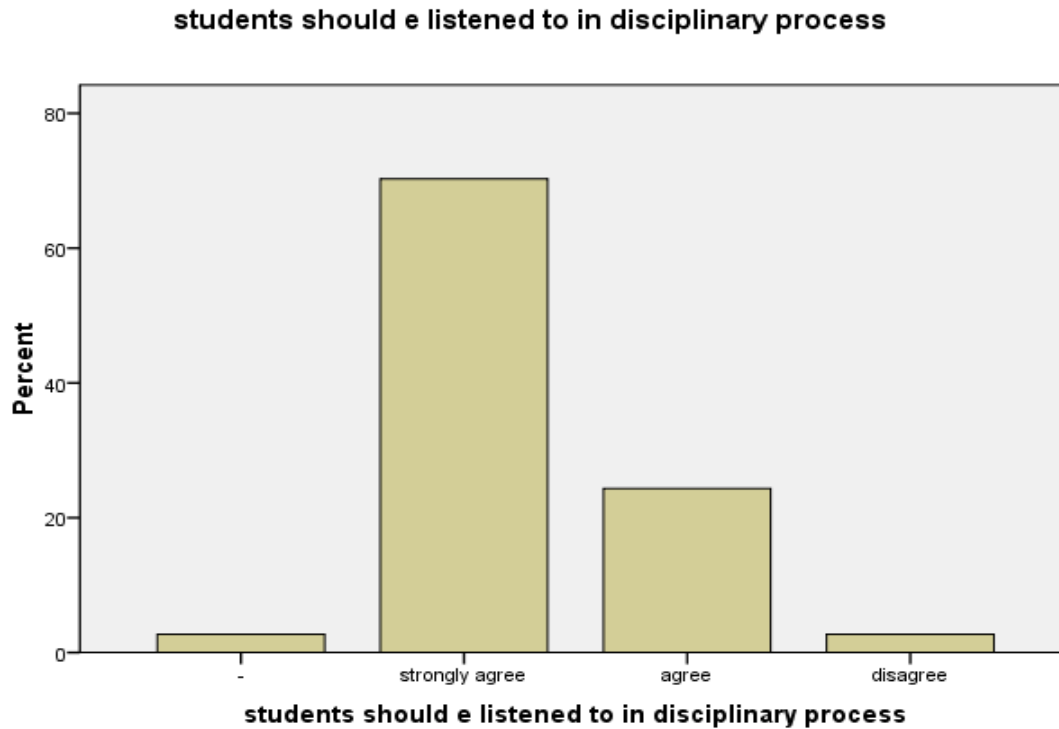**some cases should be left to principal**
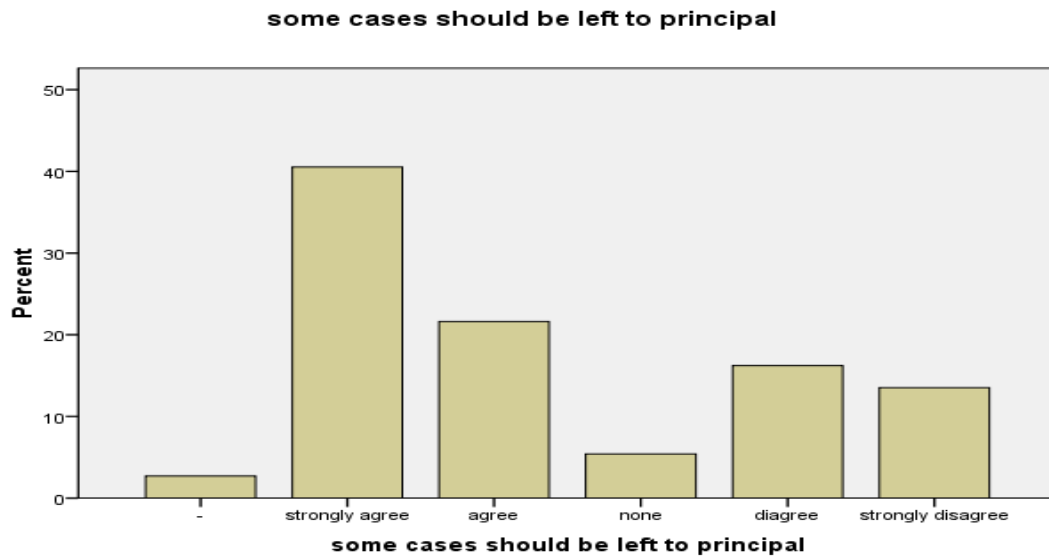
Figure 4.3 (c) whether some cases should be left to the Principal

Study indicates that around 60% were of the opinion that some discipline cases should be left to the Principal while around 30% were of contrary view. This implies that deputy principals do not get the desired support from principals on discipline issues contrary to the code of regulation (TSC, 2003) where the deputy is expected to assist the principal.

Judgements y BOG are sometimes unfair
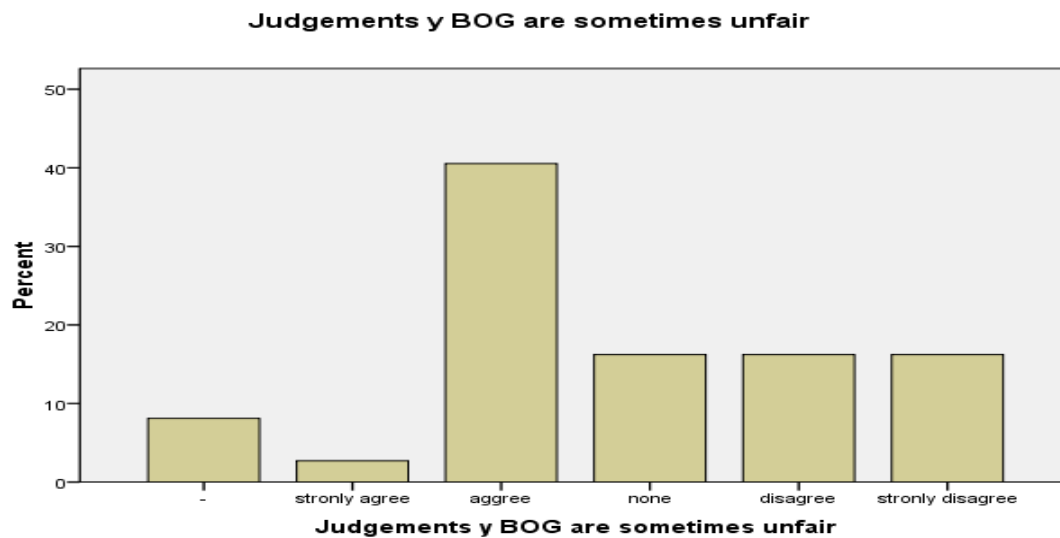
Figure 4.3 (d) Judgments made by BOG on discipline

students should e listened to in disciplinary process

students should e listened to in disciplinary process

Figure 4.3 (e) Listening to students in discipline cases

Figure 4.3 (e) indicate that over 60% were in agreement that students should be listened to in the disciplinary process.40% of the respondent were not positive to this idea. This implies that chances of highhandedness still exist in some schools. The deputy principals are not prepared enough in management of discipline together with the student body.

Table 4.3(b) Experience in Discipline Management

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	-	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
	strongly agree	27	73.0	73.0	75.7
	Agree	7	18.9	18.9	94.6
	None	1	2.7	2.7	97.3
	strongly disagree	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. 3b indicate that discipline management should be experienced by all members of the school community. Around 90% support the idea of sharing management responsibility. This

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implies that the deputy principals are well prepared to manage discipline with all the stakeholders. Kabandize (2001) also supported the idea.

Table 4.3(c) Review of the Discipline Policy

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid		2	5.4	5.4	5.4
	-	2	5.4	5.4	10.8
	Strongly agree	17	45.9	45.9	56.8
	Agree	15	40.5	40.5	97.3
	strongly disagree	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Over 85% agreed that discipline policy should be reviewed. This implies that the deputy principals consider the current policy outdated to the students of the current generation.

Conclusion and Recommendations
Results of the study indicate that participants felt that discipline policy deserved to be reviewed to make it more clear and flexible; all the members of the school community should be involved in discipline and given an opportunity to students to air their voices before determination of discipline cases; the principal and the BOG should practice fairness in discipline management. Committees have been established to manage discipline and establish discipline procedures. The participants also felt mixed reactions as far as training on discipline management was concerned. Noise making, disorderly behavior and stealing are some of the disciplinary problems common in most schools. The purpose of the study was to establish the level of preparedness of deputy principals in managing discipline in secondary schools and to examine the extent to which deputy principals apply the discipline policy guidelines in managing discipline in secondary schools. The study finally concludes that the level preparedness   of deputy principals in discipline management in secondary schools in Kenya have been below their expectations

Recommendations
1. The ministry of education should review the discipline policy to make it more clear

2. The principal should handle some of the discipline issues in liaison with the deputy principal and other stakeholders to make discipline management participatory.
3. The BOG should be as fair as possible when dealing with discipline cases in schools
4. Training on discipline management should be made compulsory to all deputy principals and teachers to make them prepare well for proper learning in schools.
5. Further research should be done to asses the level of preparedness of all teachers under different scenarios of discipline management.

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