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Abstract

The cases of students' unrests in secondary schools have been rampant across the country. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of student council's involvement in school policy formulation on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. The study adopted mixed methods approach. The target population was deputy principals, heads of departments of guidance and counselling, and presidents of student councils all drawn from 326 secondary schools of Meru County summing up to a total population of 978 respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect data from heads of guidance and counselling department and presidents of student councils while interviews schedules were used to collect data from deputy principles. The findings indicated that students' council involvement in policy formulation was statistically associated with the level of students' discipline in secondary schools. This was supported by the log odds result where a unit increase in students council involvement on policy formulation does improve the odds of the level of discipline being satisfactory as indicated by the exponential beta results (Exp (B) = 6.271). An improvement on student councils' involvement on policy formulation increases the probability of having satisfactory discipline in secondary schools by 6.271 times. Therefore, at P= 0.023<.05 level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected and accepts the alternate hypotheses implying that student council's involvement in school policy formulation has a significant influence on students' discipline. It can therefore be concluded that schools with high students' council involvement on policy formulation have higher chances of having higher level of students discipline as compared to those without or with low student council involvement in policy formulation. The school administration should involve student's council in the management of discipline by engaging them in amendment, formulating and enforcing school rules and regulations. This would reduce indiscipline cases in the school and improve on their management of students' discipline.

Keywords: *Student Council's Involvement, School Policy Formulation to enhance, Students' Discipline, Public Secondary Schools*

1.0 Introduction

Discipline is an important component of students' behaviour and without it; a school cannot function well towards the achievement of its goals. In the context of a school system, a disciplined student is one whose behaviours actions and inactions conform to the predetermined rules and regulations of the school (Ali, Dada, Isiaka & Salmon, 2014). However, discipline ideally means more than adhering to rules and regulations and entails a student's ability to discern what is right or wrong (Ali *et al.,* 2014). Cognizant of these assertions, Masitsa (2011) posits that students' discipline is widely acknowledged to be essential for creating a positive school climate that is conducive to sound learning outcomes. Indiscipline among students especially at the secondary school is a universal challenge that is facing many schools in various parts of the world. In a study conducted in Italy amongst 14 households about achievement, motivation, and self-concept, Emmanuel, Adom, Josephine and Solomon (2014) found that indiscipline is a multifaceted phenomenon regarding its displays and causes as well as its meanings, management, and functions in the social, psychosocial, and pedagogical fields. Students' discipline in schools is a product of various dynamics found within school and home micro-systems.

However, the role of student councils as a panacea to increasing cases of students' indiscipline is yet to be fully explored. In keeping with these assertions, various stakeholders in secondary school education have increased their expectations of school leaders, demanding higher academic results and performance standards. In this context, it is important to re-orient the role of the school governance and identify the forms of leadership actions, behaviours, and practices that influence the main purpose of a school's mission that of enhancing student learning through effective governance of students' discipline. In this re-orientation, specific areas of school governance require adjustment such as those that recognise students as important stakeholders in decision-making processes (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011).

1.1 Research Problem

In Kenya, the idea of student councils was conceived in 2006 and enacted in 2008. At the time of its conceptualization and subsequent implementation, it was identified that the direct involvement of students in school governance affairs would be the solution to the recurrent cases of unrests witnessed in secondary schools across the country. The study intends to find out why school unrests have continued unabated despite the existence of student councils. Recent increase in school unrests in most parts of the country between 2016 and 2018 in particular, has cast doubts on the efficacy of student councils in helping resolve indiscipline issues in these schools. The problem is especially rife in Meru County where in 2016 there were 77 schools out of the 326 schools in the region, who reported cases of unrest to the County Director of Education and Meru County was ranked second position in the country for students strikes and second last in terms of KCSE performance. Therefore, considering the significance that student councils have been accorded in the management of discipline, there exists a possibility that the solution to the growing cases of indiscipline could have been caused by inadequate involvement of student councils in school administrative affairs. It is against this background of sustained indiscipline and poor performance in schools that the researcher intended to find out why the phenomenal persists despite the establishment of student councils in secondary schools, hence the significance of the study. The purpose of this study was therefore to assess the influence of enhancing student council's involvement in school policy formulation on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

The social contract theory was coined in response to the early democratic view held by the ancient English parliamentarians that power was supposed to be shared between the Parliament and the King only. According to Thomas Hobbe, one of the main contributors to this theory, people exhibit two dominant behaviors: selfishness and rationality. The first construct implies that humans' actions are driven by the desire to satisfy their best interests or desires. Nonetheless, Hobbes argues that when pursuing the self-interests, people act rationally so that they accomplish their desires efficiently and maximally (Laskar, 2013). Hence, based on these two antecedents, people will choose to submit to a sovereign authority in order to achieve easily their interests in the civil society. This line of argument is justified in the fact that in a hypothetical state of nature, life is unbearably brutal due to the lack of a central authority. All people are considered equal and vulnerable to malice from one another. Simply, trust never exists, and the society lives in a constant state of conflict.

However, because people are reasonable, they have devised ways of avoiding the brutalities of the state of nature by establishing laws of nature that create civil societies. Towards this end, humans enter into social contracts that induce them to renounce the state of nature rights against one another and accept to bestow upon a person or a group of people the authority to enforce the social agreement. Subsequently, people in the society are expected to obey and to never resist the conferred authority in order to avoid the harsh realities of the state of nature, which are often worse than the doctrines imposed by the sovereign. Additionally, as a result of enacting the social contract, society values are created, which define acceptable and unacceptable codes of behavior within the civil society (Laskar, 2013).

In the context of school governance, student councils and the administration are the Sovereigns to whom the authority of enacting social contracts is bestowed. The absence of these two units would leave school societies as states of nature. Life would be brutal: students would bluntly disrespect teachers and obviously unrests would become a norm. To avoid these undesired possibilities, it is important to have in place enforceable laws that must be respected by the students to whom the absence of such laws would act in the highest disadvantage. For example, in the absence of such laws, education would become impossible and many students would drop out of school. Thus, it implies that the bodies of governance act in the best interest of the students by ensuring that they pursue their rational interests of attaining quality education with minimal conflicts amongst themselves and other key stakeholders.

At the same time, where governance is shared as is the case of school councils and the administration there would be expected cases of malice from either party. Hence, to avoid such challenges it is important to anticipate them and create safeguards in advance. Borrowing from the field of corporate governance, the co-governance of student councils and the administration can be equated to a corporate alliance, where two firms combine resources in order to enhance their competitiveness, gain additional competencies, or improve service or product quality (Schmoltzi & Wallenburg, 2011). Nonetheless, many alliances never yield these benefits due to opportunistic behaviors, and this underscores the importance of good governance mechanisms in minimizing the exposure to opportunism (Schmoltzi & Wallenburg, 2012). According to a study conducted by Wallenburg and Schäffler (2014), social contract is the solution to the problem of opportunism in joint governance. When applied in alliances, social contracts enforce formal control mechanisms for joint governance that are legitimized by underlying agreements. In the case of school governance, it implies the need for student councils and the administration to set collective objectives and define the scopes of their decision-making, which constitute the social contract. Therefore, when used in

the context of this study, the social contract theory justifies the significance of students respecting and submitting to their governance authorities and at the same time, it highlights the importance of mutually beneficial governance alliances between the administration and the student councils.

2.1 Literature Review

Sound school policy development plays an essential role as a violence prevention and control tool. By anticipating safety problems and actively addressing them, schools increase their ability to avoid or respond to a crisis (CDC, 2018). Cognizant of these assertions, Huddleston (2007) posits that clearly articulated rules and policies, established through students' involvement and implemented fairly, will provide a solid foundation for a comprehensive approach to school safety. In a study conducted in Scotland, Maitles, and Duechar (2006) indicated that a comprehensive approach to school safety involves meeting challenges on several fronts. Administrative support is essential to provide the necessary resources for governance of students' discipline and violence prevention efforts.

School-wide education and involvement of student council in formulating school policies such as diet, school uniform, trip regulations, and co-curricular programmes prepare students to take careful action to avoid becoming either perpetrators or victims of violence. Involvement of students provides essential resources and support. In the course of these activities, teachers and school leaders face important legal questions that affect many lives (Maitles & Duechar, 2006). These questions centre on issues involving privacy and school records, discipline and due process (including zero tolerance policies), search and seizure, dress codes, security measures and school resource officers, and general liability issues. These assertions attest to the fact that when appropriate measures are taken by involving students through their councils in all these areas, the risk of violence at school or the effects of aftermath of violence will be minimized. In keeping with these suggestions, McKenna (2016), in a study conducted in Germany, noted that clear and consistent policies, developed proactively by school officials, teachers, and students establish their expectations and promote a stable school setting, leading to a safe educational environment if followed. At the same time, the philosophical outlook of any youth violence prevention effort is important to the results that are anticipated (McKenna, 2016). In other words, even while developing school policies and meeting legal requirements, schools, students, parents, teachers, and communities 'reap what they sow'.

Policies set the tone of school administration and shape the culture of each classroom and schools. Accordingly, while it is important to focus on the legal implications and issues of school safety efforts, this must be balanced by a strong sense of fairness and concern for the levels of discipline, dignity, and integrity of every member of the student council and school community. However, in a study about school governance dynamics, Pont, Moorman, and Nusche (2008) argue that by involving student council in formulating school rules and regulations, there is minimal excessive attention to wrongdoing and the minutiae of legal requirements, paperwork, hearings, and compliance, which may ultimately detract from the creative effort to build a more peaceful school.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted mixed methods approach research design. The target population was deputy principals, Heads of Departments of Guidance and Counselling, and presidents of student councils all drawn from 326 secondary schools of Meru County summing up to a total population of 978. Using stratified sampling based on the number of sub counties that is nine (9), in Meru County and random sampling to select four (4) schools from every sub

county, a study sample of 36 public secondary schools was selected. Hence, the study sample was 36 deputy principals, 36 heads of guidance and counselling department and 36 presidents of student councils. Questionnaires were used to collect data from heads of guidance and counselling department and presidents of student councils while interviews schedules were used to collect data from deputy principles. Qualitative data was analysed thematically along the objectives and presented in narrative form. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferentially using logistic regression. After coding, cross – case analysis was done which is an analysis that examines themes, similarities, and differences across cases was done, it also includes visual displays of similarities and differences across. The quantitative findings of the study were presented using tables and charts.

4.0 Results and Discussion

This section presents study findings and discussions on student councils' involvement in policy formulation; levels of students' discipline, bivariate analysis for heads of departments data, and bivariate analysis for student leaders' data.

4.1 Student Councils' Involvement in Policy Formulation

The heads of departments were asked to tick aspects of school governance student councils are always involved in. Table 1 illustrates that 66.7% of the respondents indicated that the student councils was not involved in policy formulation, while 69.4% indicated the students' council was not in subject selection and 88.9% indicated that the student councils were involved in peer mentoring. Fifty-eight-point three percent of the respondents indicated that the student council was involved in teachers' supervision while 66.7% indicated that the student councils were not involved in infrastructural management. The findings thus imply that the student council was not involved in aspects of school governance fully only in a few aspects such as teachers' supervision and peer mentoring.

Table 1: Student Councils' Involvement in Policy Formulation- Head of Department

	No		Yes	
	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Policy formulation	66.7%	24	33.3%	12
Subject selection	69.4%	25	30.6%	11
peer mentoring	11.1%	4	88.9%	32
Teachers' supervision	41.7%	15	58.3%	21
Infrastructural management	66.7%	24	33.3%	12

The presidents of student's council were asked to tick aspects school governance student councils are always involved in. Table 2 illustrates that 61.8% of the respondents indicated that the student councils was involved in policy formulation, while 82.4% indicated the student councils were not involved in subject selection and 85.3% indicated that the student councils were involved in peer mentoring. Fifty-eight-point eight percent of the respondents indicated that the student council was not involved in teachers' supervision while 52.9% indicated that the student councils were not involved in infrastructural management.

Table 2: Student Councils' Involvement in Policy Formulation- President of Council

	No		Yes	
	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Policy formulation	38.2%	13	61.8%	21
Subject selection	82.4%	28	17.6%	6
Peer mentoring	14.7%	5	85.3%	29
Teachers' supervision	58.8%	20	41.2%	14
Infrastructural management	52.9%	18	47.1%	16

From the interview guide the deputy principals asserted that the student council are involved in various aspects of school governance such as; preparing duty rooster, formulate rules and regulations, president presents students grievances to the Board of Meeting during their meetings, outing days are discussed, students' discipline, students' welfare, students' hygiene and class governance, students' welfare, policy formulation in Board of Members, student mentorship, curriculum delivery.

In addition the council is involved in discipline matters, maintenance of school infrastructure, monitoring of teachers, teachers supervision, infrastructure management, peer mentoring, formulation of school rules, design of school uniforms, preparing or giving the programme to be followed on special days like public holidays, supervising and inspecting cleaning, Sending a representative to Board of meeting when matters touching on students are being discussed, bridge between teachers, administration and students in communication of policies and maintenance of student discipline. This was a clear confirmation of what the head of departments teachers and the student councils responded in the questionnaires.

The respondents were asked to tick policy formulation activities student council was always involved in. The findings are presented in figure 1 and table 3 for head of department and president of students' Council respectively. figure 1 shows that majority of the respondents (30.6%) indicated that the students council was involved in types of co-curricular activities, 25% indicated choice of school diets and another 25% indicated they were involved in designing of school uniform.
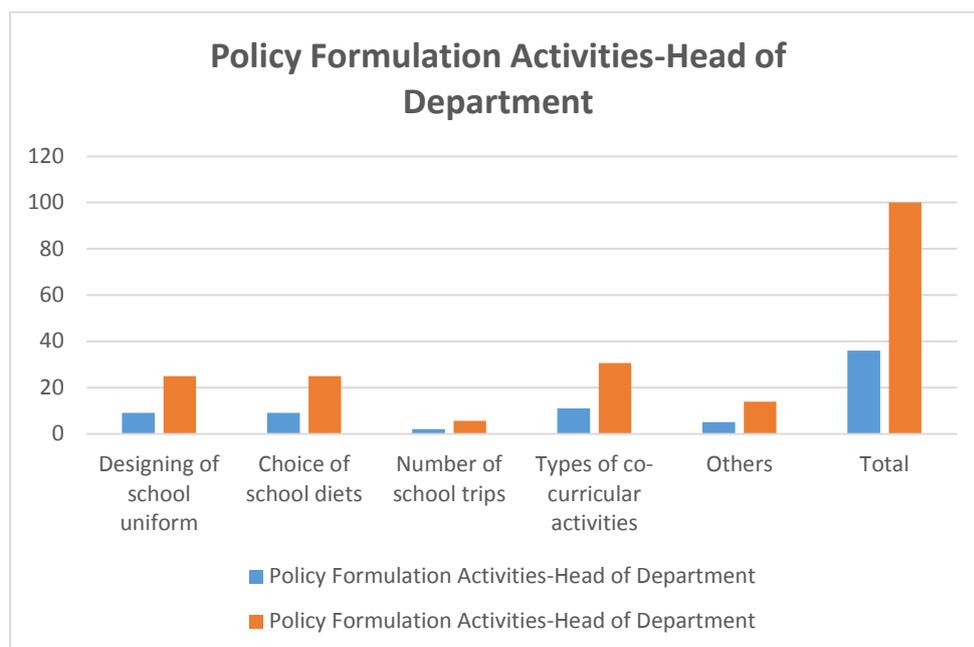
Figure 1: Policy Formulation Activities-Head of Department

Table 3 illustrates the responses for president of students' council which reveals that 91.2% of the respondents indicated that they were not involved in designing of school uniform, 58.8% were not involved in choice of school diets and 76.5% indicated they were not involved in number of school trips. Sixty-one-point eight percent (61.8%) indicated that the student councils were involved in policy formulation of different types of co-curricular activities.

Table 3: Policy Formulation Activities-President Council

	No		Yes	
	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Designing of school uniform	91.2%	31	8.8%	3
Choice of school diets	58.8%	20	41.2%	14
Number of school trips	76.5%	26	23.5%	8
Types of co-curricular activities	38.2%	13	61.8%	21

The study sought to assess the influence of student council's involvement in school policy formulation to enhance on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. Table 4 presents the responses from head of departments and from the president student council for comparison purposes while Table 5 and 6 subsequently presents the responses for each category in depth separately.

Table 4: Responses on Students Council involvement on Policy Formulation

Statement	Head of Department		Student Council	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student council in my school participates in designing school uniforms	2.61	1.42	2.29	1.194
Student council in my school is always involved in planning and choosing school diets	2.78	1.29	2.74	1.355
Students council is involved in formulation of school rules and regulations	3.14	1.334	3.82	1.193
The number of trips students in my school participate depends on the student council	2	0.926	2.38	1.28
Student councils organize co-curricular activities and encourages participation in the same	3.56	1.252	3.56	1.211
Student council plans tournaments amongst students in my school and other schools	2.89	1.26	3	1.279
Student council decides on the number of co-curricular activities the students should take part in	2.14	0.931	2.26	1.053
Aggregate Score	2.73	1.202	2.86	1.224

The results in Table 4 indicate that the respondents, on average had a low rating on aspects of student councils' involvement in policy formulation with an overall mean score of 2.73 and 2.86 (2=disagree) for head of department and president student council respectively. This implies that student councils do not participate adequately in policy formulation in public secondary schools. The student councils had 1.355 rating in planning and choosing school diets where head of department had a mean score 2.78 and student council had a mean score of 2.74 respectively. Similarly, student councils organize co-curricular activities and encourages participation in the same had moderate mean score of 3.56. Further the respondents indicated that student council was involved in formulation of school rules and regulations to a moderate extent with mean score of 3.14 and 3.82 for head of departments and student council respectively.

For the head of department responses on student involvement in policy formulation in percentage, the findings are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Responses on Student Council's Involvement in School Policy Formulation - Head of Department

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
Student council in my school participates in designing school uniforms	27.8%	27.8%	13.9%	16.7%	13.9%	2.61	1.42
Student council in my school is always involved in planning and choosing school diets	19.4%	27.8%	16.7%	27.8%	8.3%	2.78	1.29
Students council is involved in formulation of school rules and regulations	13.9%	25.0%	8.3%	38.9%	13.9%	3.14	1.334
The number of trips students in my school participate depends on the student council	30.6%	50.0%	8.3%	11.1%	0.0%	2	0.926
Student councils organize co-curricular activities and encourages participation in the same	2.8%	27.8%	8.3%	33.3%	27.8%	3.56	1.252
Student council plans tournaments amongst students in my school and other schools	8.3%	44.4%	11.1%	22.2%	13.9%	2.89	1.26
Student council decides on the number of co-curricular activities the students should take part in	22.2%	55.6%	8.3%	13.9%	0.0%	2.14	0.931
Aggregate Score	17.9%	36.9%	10.7%	23.4%	11.1%	2.73	1.202

The findings in Table 5 above shows that 55.6% of the respondents disagreed that student council in their school participated in designing school uniforms, 47.2% disagreed that student council in their school was always involved in planning and choosing school diets and 52.8% agreed that student's council was involved in formulation of school rules and regulations. These findings corroborate the findings of a study conducted in Scotland in which Maitles and Duechar (2006) established that involvement of student council in formulating school policies such as school uniform prepare students to take careful action to avoid becoming either perpetrators or victims of violence. This indicates that policy formulation about school uniforms design, colour and shape is a key and sensitive issue which require involvement of education and school stakeholders including student councils in order to reduce incidences of indiscipline.

In addition, 80.6% of the respondents disagreed that the number of trips students in their school participated depended on the student council, while 61.8% agreed that student councils organized co-curricular activities and encouraged participation in the same and

52.7% disagreed that student council planned tournaments amongst students in their school and other schools. Finally, 77.8% of the respondents disagreed that student council decided on the number of co-curricular activities the students should take part in. The mean score for responses for this section was 2.73 which indicates that majority of the respondents disagreed that student councils was involved in school policy formulation on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. Therefore, the findings imply that the support the school administration gave was not sufficient to the student council which would help them deal with discipline issues. The students also felt that if the support was there and may be more support through involvement accorded to the student leaders, they would be more effective on handling discipline issues in the school.

This however, contradicts the assertions of Pont *et al.* (2008) that, by involving student council in formulating school rules and regulations, there is minimal excessive attention to wrongdoing and the minutiae of legal requirements, the paperwork, hearings, and compliance which may ultimately detract from the creative effort to build a more peaceful school. Such an approach provides an environment which is more secure for school to grow from the sense of integrity, fairness, justice and cooperative effort exhibited by school principals, teachers, students and others in positions of leadership. These findings point to the fact that school rules and regulations are the epicentre of reducing cases of indiscipline. Despite their lack of involvement in designing such rules and regulations, it is incumbent upon secondary schools to involve the student councils from the point of formulation to implementation.

In regards to student council's involvement on policy formulation, the president for student council indicated that 67.6% of the respondents disagreed that student council in their school participated in designing school uniforms. Table 4.8 illustrated further that 55.9% of the respondents disagreed that student council in their school was always involved in planning and choosing school diets, 73.4% agreed that students council was involved in formulation of school rules and regulations and 58.9% disagreed that the number of trips students in their school participated depended on the student council. These findings lend credence to the assertions of Maitles and Duechar (2006) that involvement of student council in formulating school policies such as trip regulations also prepare students to take careful action to avoid becoming either perpetrators or victims of violence.

In addition, 64.7% of the respondents disagreed that student councils organized co-curricular and encouraged participation in the same, while 41.2% agreed that student council planned tournaments amongst students in their school and other schools and 76.4% disagreed that student council decided on the number of co-curricular activities the students should take part in. The mean score for responses for this section was 2.86 which indicates that majority of the respondents disagreed that student councils was involved in school policy formulation on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. The findings imply that by not involving student councils in policy formulation, the student councils cannot alert the school management of students concerns, some of which they might not be aware of and provide the management with ideas and solutions to problems that students have. Hence making it difficult for students' council to effectively enhance discipline in schools.

This however, is not in agreement with the assertions by Pont et al. (2008) that, by involving student council in formulating school rules and regulations, there is minimal excessive attention to wrongdoing and the minutiae of legal requirements, the paperwork, hearings, and compliance which may ultimately detract from the creative effort to build a more peaceful school. Such an approach provides an environment of less concern with blame, punishment and legal wrangling. These findings point to the fact that school rules and regulations are the epicentre of reducing cases of indiscipline. Despite their lack of involvement in designing

such rules and regulations, it is incumbent upon secondary schools to involve the student councils from the point of formulation to implementation.

The findings agree with those of Huddleston (2007) who posited that clearly articulated rules and policies, established through students' involvement and implemented fairly, will provide a solid foundation for a comprehensive approach to school safety. Similarly, Maitles, and Duechar (2006) indicated that a comprehensive approach to school safety involves meeting challenges on several fronts. Administrative support is essential to provide the necessary resources for governance of students' discipline and violence prevention efforts.

Table 6: Responses on Student Council's Involvement in School Policy Formulation - President Council

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student council in my school participates in designing school uniforms	29.4%	38.2%	8.8%	20.6%	2.9%	2.29	1.194
Student council in my school is always involved in planning and choosing school diets	20.6%	35.3%	2.9%	32.4%	8.8%	2.74	1.355
Students council is involved in formulation of school rules and regulations	5.9%	11.8%	8.8%	41.2%	32.4%	3.82	1.193
The number of trips students in my school participate depends on the student council	32.4%	26.5%	17.6%	17.6%	5.9%	2.38	1.28
Student councils organises co-curricular and encourages participation in the same	2.9%	26.5%	5.9%	41.2%	23.5%	3.56	1.211
Student council plans tournaments amongst students in my school and other schools	8.8%	38.2%	11.8%	26.5%	14.7%	3	1.279
Student council decides on the number of co-curricular activities the students should take part in	17.6%	58.8%	8.8%	8.8%	5.9%	2.26	1.053
Aggregate Score	16.8%	33.6%	9.2%	26.9%	13.4%	2.864	1.224

The deputy principals supported the idea that the student council are involved in policy formulation activities for instance formulation of rules and regulations, school programmes beyond normal school activities, in preparing the daily routine of the school, in determining the time to come back from holiday or outing, the issue of uniform-dress code on weekdays and weekends and they are involved in developing policies concerning student discipline and students' welfare. The deputy principals further opined that the student council was involved in discipline, welfare issues, clubs and movements, student's mentorship, discipline, diet,

school uniform, suggestions about meals, giving suggestion on leadership in school (students), identification of new or incoming counsellors, discussion on school uniforms, the school routine and scheduling preps time- when preps should begin and end. Deputy principals further asserted that student council are involved in coming up with rules and regulations that will govern the school. Also, they can be used may be if they want to change from one meal to the other. They are incorporated in major decisions especially those that involve the welfare of the students such as meals to be taken and utilization of preps time, students council meeting and school general assembly where different issues are discussed. In drafting requirements and criteria for clearing students who should vie for leadership in school, also in determining light punishment for offences, organises co-curricular activities and monitors participation, participate in choosing the school diet, chooses the co-curricular activities to participate in.

These findings lend credence to the findings of a study conducted in South Africa in which Bush (2007) argued that involving student council in deciding on the types and number of co-curricular activities students need to undertake and their planning and school entertainment programmes is flows from the duties placed upon all school governing bodies by statute to ensure that school policies promote good behaviour and discipline amongst the pupil body. According to Bush (2007), such initiatives of student council's involvement in school policy formulation strongly play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone. These findings thus point to the fact that co-curricular activities and other tournaments form part and parcel of the student learning process and thus effective planning by involving student councils is key to their success. This further affirms that, for effective school governance, different school policies should be formulated by involving a multiplicity of stakeholders such as the student council's involvement to ensure managerial efficiency, students' performance and governance of students' discipline.

4.2 Levels of Students' Discipline

The study sought to determine the students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. Results are presented in Table 7, and 8 for combined responses, Heads of Departments and President of Students council respectively.
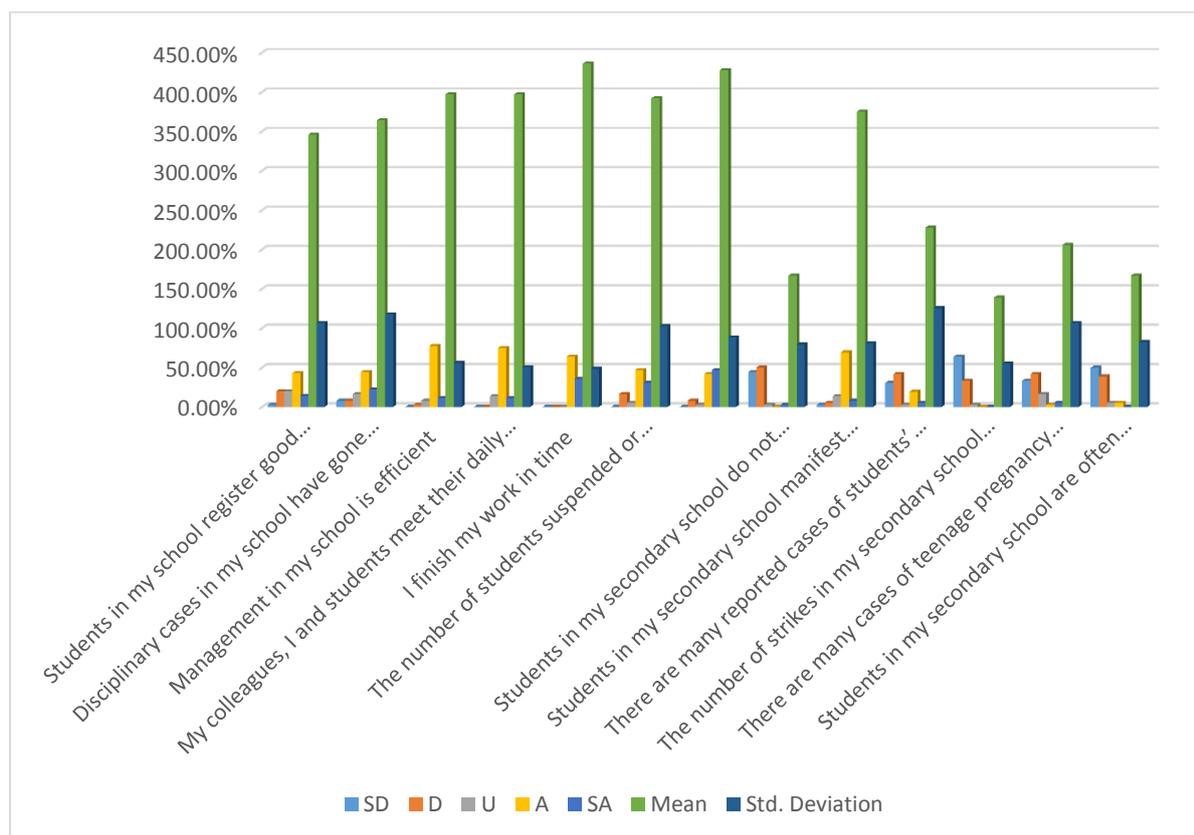
Table 7: Levels of Students' Discipline

Statement	Head of Department		Student Council	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students in my school register good performance	3.46	1.067	4.09	0.753
Disciplinary cases in my school have gone down due to student council involvement	3.64	1.175	3.85	1.234
Management in my school is efficient	3.97	0.56	4.29	0.524
My colleagues, I and students meet their daily task deadlines	3.97	0.506	4.12	0.808
I finish my work in time	4.36	0.487	4.53	0.615
The number of students suspended or expelled have decreased with introduction of student council	3.92	1.025	4.41	0.701

The number of strikes in my have decreased due to student council involvement	4.28	0.882	4.47	0.896
Students in my secondary school do not adhere to school rules and regulations	1.67	0.793	1.12	0.327
Students in my secondary school manifest improved levels of hard work	3.75	0.806	4	1.073
There are many reported cases of students' absenteeism	2.28	1.256	1.76	0.855
The number of strikes in my secondary school is high	1.39	0.549		
There are many cases of teenage pregnancy amongst students in my secondary school	2.06	1.068	1.53	0.825
Students in my secondary school are often violent towards their peers	1.67	0.828	1.65	0.774
Aggregate Score	3.11	0.846	3.32	0.78

The study established that the most commonly experienced type of indiscipline cases were theft, lateness, absenteeism, fighting, and failure to do cleaning duties and drugs and substance abuse. Frequency of unrests or strikes in secondary schools was found to be low in the last three years prior to this study. The findings on the rating of the students' discipline revealed that it was good with a mean score of 3.11 and 3.32 from head of departments and president of student's council respectively. This can be attributed to the establishment of student Councils in majority of secondary schools and the increased levels of student participation in management of school co-curriculum, and management of students and welfare issues.

The perceptions of head of departments on the level of students' discipline since the introduction of student council are presented on figure 2.

Figure 2: Responses on Levels of Students' Discipline -Head of Department

Figure 2 shows that 57.2% of the respondents agreed that students in their school registered good performance, 66.6% agreed that disciplinary cases in their school had gone down due to student council involvement in school governance, while 88.9% agreed that management in their school was efficient and 76.1% agreed that their colleagues, they and students met their daily task deadlines.

In addition, all the respondents agreed that they finished their work in time, 77.8% agreed that the number of students suspended or expelled had decreased with introduction of student council and 88.9% agreed that the number of strikes in their school had decreased due to student council involvement in school governance. However, 94.4% of the respondents disagreed that students in their secondary school did not adhere to school rules and regulations, 77.7% agreed that students in their secondary school manifested improved levels of hard work and 72.3% disagreed that there were many reported cases of students' absenteeism.

Similarly, 97.25 of the respondents disagreed that the number of strikes in their secondary school was high, 75% disagreed that there were many cases of teenage pregnancy amongst students in my secondary school and 88.9% disagreed that students in their secondary school were often violent towards their peers. The mean score for the responses was 3.11 which indicate that many employees agreed to a moderate extent on the statements regarding levels of students discipline in public secondary schools. This was confirmed by the deputy principals in the interview guide where they asserted that the level of discipline was fairly good since there were no strike that had occurred and also discipline cases are minimal and others stated that it was fairly good with minor issues like absenteeism, drugs, premarital sex and social media phones. However as much as the deputy principals opined that the level of

disciple was fairly good some indicated that there has been rise of indiscipline cases in some instances.

These findings are inconsistent with the assertions of Kauchak (2011) that infractions in most secondary schools include assault, arson, fighting, theft and vandalism, destruction of school stores, administration blocks, libraries, harassment, riots, rape and loss of lives. These findings also disagree with the assertions of Ramani (2012) that, although, the Ministry of Education made a move to curb the destructive tendencies in schools by enacting the Children's Act, 2001 which provides that a child should be entitled to protection from physical and psychological abuse by any person, the unrest in schools is still being reported in large numbers. Despite these contradictions among Heads of departments, students' councils and deputy principals, cases of students' strikes and riots have been on the rise in Meru County which could be linked with low levels of involving student councils on school governance. Table 8 illustrates the responses from the presidents of student's council.

Table 8: Responses on Levels of Students' Discipline -President Council

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students in my school register good performance	0.0%	5.9%	5.9%	61.8%	26.5%	4.09	0.753
Disciplinary cases in my school have gone down due to student council involvement	8.8%	5.9%	11.8%	38.2%	35.3%	3.85	1.234
Management in my school is efficient	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	64.7%	32.4%	4.29	0.524
My colleagues, I and students meet their daily task deadlines	0.0%	5.9%	8.8%	52.9%	32.4%	4.12	0.808
I finish my work in time	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%	4.53	0.615
The number of students suspended or expelled have decreased with introduction of student council	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	44.1%	50.0%	4.41	0.701
The number of strikes in my have decreased due to student council involvement	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%	32.4%	61.8%	4.47	0.896
I do not adhere to school rules and regulations	88.2%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.12	0.327
I manifest improved levels of hard work	2.9%	11.8%	2.9%	47.1%	35.3%	4	1.073
There are many reported cases of absenteeism in my school	44.1%	41.2%	8.8%	5.9%	0.0%	1.76	0.855
There are many cases of	61.8%	29.4%	2.9%	5.9%	0.0%	1.53	0.825

teenage pregnancy amongst students in my secondary school							
My colleagues are often violent towards their peers	52.9%	29.4%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.65	0.774
Aggregate Score	21.8%	12.3%	5.9%	32.4%	27.7%	3.32	0.78

From Table 8, the findings shows that 88.3% of the respondents agreed that students in their school registered good performance, 73.5% agreed that disciplinary cases in their school had gone down due to student council involvement in school governance, while 97.1% agreed that management in their school was efficient and 85.3% agreed that their colleagues, and students met their daily task deadlines. This implies that the level of students' discipline is fairly good and this can be attributed to the establishment of student Councils in majority of secondary schools and the increased levels of student participation in management of school co-curriculum, and management of students and welfare issues

In addition, 94.1% of the respondents agreed that they finished their work in time, another 94.1% agreed that the number of students suspended and expelled had decreased with introduction of student council and 94.2% agreed that the number of strikes in their school had decreased due to student council. However, all the respondents disagreed that they did not adhere to school rules and regulations, 82.4% agreed that they manifested improved levels of hard work and 85.3% disagreed that there were many reported cases of absenteeism in their school. Finally, 91.2% of the respondents disagreed that there were many cases of teenage pregnancy amongst students in their secondary school and 82.3% disagreed that their colleagues were often violent towards their peers. The mean score for the responses was 3.32 which indicate that many employees agreed to a moderate extent on the statements regarding levels of students' discipline in public secondary schools. This was confirmed by the deputy principals in the interview guide where they asserted that the level of discipline was fairly good since there were no strike that had occurred and also discipline cases are minimal and others stated that it was fairly good with minor issues like absenteeism, drugs, premarital sex and social media phones. However as much as the deputy principals opined that the level of discipline was fairly good some indicated that there has been rise of indiscipline cases in some instances. In summary, these findings indicate that indiscipline has become a serious issue in public secondary schools. Many students have manifested incidences of indiscipline in one way or another and have thus become a national concern to education stakeholders. Cases of students' destructive tendencies in schools are on the rises which subject others to physical and psychological abuse. In other words, cases of students' indiscipline in secondary schools are still being reported in numbers.

These findings are consistent with the assertions of Kauchak (2011) that infractions in most secondary schools include assault, arson, fighting, theft and vandalism, destruction of school stores, administration blocks, libraries, harassment, riots, rape and loss of lives. These findings also agree with the assertions of Ramani (2012) that, although, the Ministry of Education made a move to curb the destructive tendencies in schools by enacting the Children's Act, 2001 which provides that a child should be entitled to protection from physical and psychological abuse by any person, the unrest in schools is still being reported in large numbers. Despite these contradictions among Heads of departments, students' councils and deputy principals, cases of students' strikes and riots have been on the rise in

Meru County which could be linked with low levels of involving student councils on school governance.

4.3 Bivariate Analysis for Heads of Departments Data

$H_{o1:}$ Student council's involvement in school policy formulation has no significant influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County

Binary logistic regression was used to model relationship between student council involvement in policy formulation and students' discipline. Table 9 shows that student council involvement in policy formulation was statistically associated with the level of students' discipline in secondary schools ($p = .023$).

Table 9: Logistic Regression for Policy Formulation: HODs Data

| Variable	Beta	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Policy Formulation	1.836	0.808	5.167	1	0.023	6.271	1.288	30.542
Constant	-4.674	2.415	3.746	1	0.053	0.009		

The regression results also indicated that student council involvement in policy formulation have an effect on the students' level of discipline in secondary schools as indicated by the log odds result where a unit increase in students council involvement on policy formulation does improve the odds of the level of discipline being satisfactory as indicated by the exponential beta results (Exp (B) = 6.271). An improvement on student councils' involvement on policy formulation increases the probability of having satisfactory discipline in secondary schools by 6.271 times. Therefore, at $P < .05$ level of significance the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and accepts the alternate hypotheses (H_A) implying that student council's involvement in school policy formulation has a significant influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. The findings imply that those schools with high student councils' involvement on policy formulation have higher chances of having higher level of students discipline as compared to those without or with low student council involvement in policy formulation. These findings further corroborate the assertions of Maitles and Duechar (2006) that student councils' involvement in formulating school policies such as diet, school uniform, trip regulations and co-curricular programmes reduce cases of indiscipline by preparing students to take careful action to avoid becoming either perpetrators or victims of violence in schools.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was done to assess whether similar results could be arrived at in relation to student councils' involvement in policy formulation and students' discipline. These results indicate that there was a positive correlation between students' discipline and student councils' involvement in policy formulation, Pearson's r (36) = .514, p = .012. This result is in line with the result from logistic regression that established a significant relationship between student councils' involvement in policy formulation and students' discipline.

Table 10: Students' Discipline and Student Councils' involvement in Policy Formulation Correlations: HODs Data

		Students' Discipline	Policy Formulation
Students' Discipline	Pearson Correlation	1	.514
	P – Value		.012
	N	36	36
Policy Formulation	Pearson Correlation	.514	1
	P – Value	.012	
	N	36	36

One way ANOVA was employed to examine the relationship between student councils' involvement in policy formulation and school type. The mean student councils' involvement in policy formulation for boys boarding schools was 22.1 (SD = 2.3), followed by mixed day secondary schools which posted a mean of 21.6 (SD = 4.3) while girls boarding secondary schools enumerated a mean of 21.2 (SD = 7.1). This result suggests that, in the opinion of the heads of guidance and counseling department interviewed, student councils' involvement in policy formulation for boys' boarding schools was higher than that of girls boarding and mixed day secondary schools. Hence, the involvement of student leaders in boys' boarding schools in matters relating to designing school uniform, choosing school diets, formulating school rules, and co-curricular activities was higher than that of their counterparts in girls boarding and mixed day secondary schools.
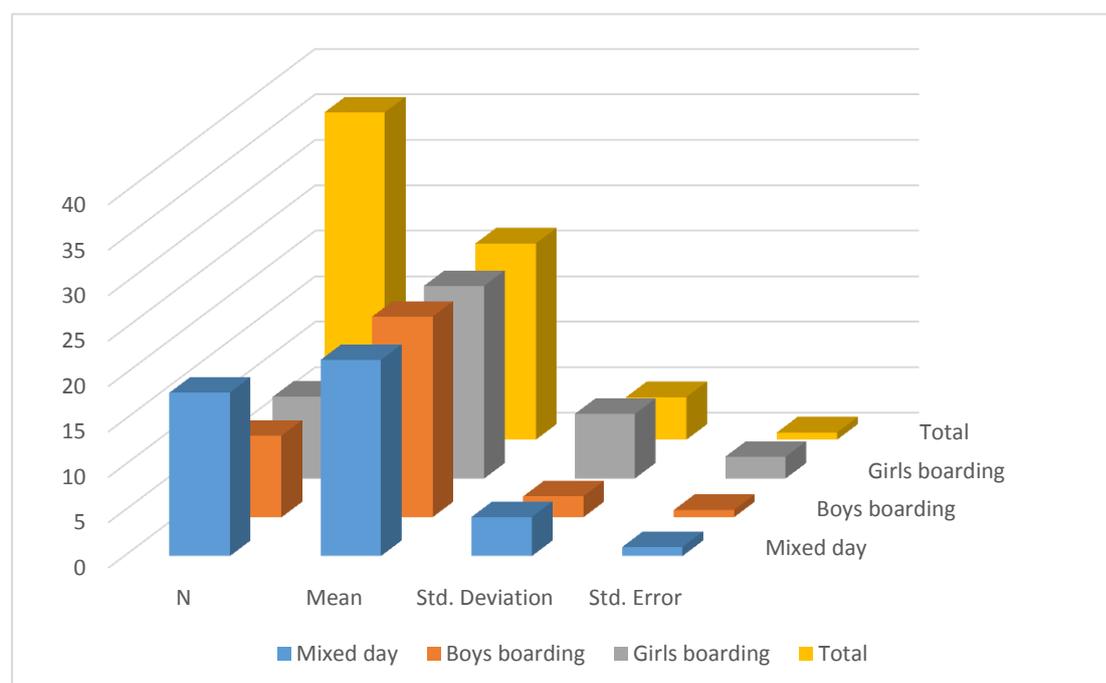
Figure 3: Student Councils' involvement in Policy Formulation Versus School Type Comparison Analysis: HODs Data

The ANOVA table indicates some difference between the two Mean Squares (22.9 and 1.8). However, the difference in the means is not statistically significant since the p – value was greater than .05. Hence the relationship between student councils' involvement in policy formulation and school type was not statistically significant.

Table 11: Student Councils' involvement in Policy Formulation Versus School Type ANOVA: HODs Data

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P – Value
Between Groups	3.6	2	1.8	.079	.924
Within Groups	754.1	33	22.9		
Total	757.8	35			

4.4 Bivariate Analysis for Student Leaders' Data

$H_{o1:}$ Student council's involvement in school policy formulation has no significant influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. Binary logistic regression was used to model relationship between student council involvement in policy formulation and students' discipline. Table 12 shows that student council involvement in policy formulation was statistically associated with the level of students' discipline in secondary schools (p = .043).

Table 12: Logistic Regression for policy Formulation: Student Leaders' Data

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Policy Formulation	4.214	2.083	4.093	1	0.043	67.597	1.141	4005.7
Constant	-7.764	4.5	2.978	1	0.084	0		

The regression results also indicated that student council involvement in policy formulation have an effect on the students' level of discipline in secondary schools as indicated by the log odds result where a unit increase in students council involvement on policy formulation does improve the odds of the level of discipline being satisfactory as indicated by the exponential beta results (Exp (B) = 67.597). An improvement on student councils' involvement on policy formulation increases the probability of having satisfactory discipline in secondary schools by 67.597 times. Therefore, at P <.05 level of significance the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and accepts the alternate hypotheses (H_A) implying that student council's involvement in school policy formulation has a significant influence on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Meru County. The findings imply that those schools with high student councils' involvement on policy formulation have higher chances of having higher level of students discipline as compared to those without or with low student council involvement in policy formulation. These findings further corroborate the assertions of Maitles and Duechar (2006) that student councils' involvement in formulating school policies such as diet, school uniform, trip regulations and co-curricular programmes reduce cases of indiscipline by

preparing students to take careful action to avoid becoming either perpetrators or victims of violence in schools.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was done to assess whether similar results could be arrived at in relation to students' discipline and student councils' involvement in policy formulation. These results indicate that there was a positive correlation between students' discipline and student councils' involvement in policy formulation, Pearson's r (34) = .696, p = .021.

Table 13: Students' Discipline and Student Councils' involvement in Policy Formulation Correlations: Student Leaders' Data

		Students' Discipline	Policy Formulation
Students' Discipline	Pearson Correlation	1	.696
	P – Value		.021
	N	34	34
Policy Formulation	Pearson Correlation	.696	1
	P - Value	.021	
	N	34	34

One way ANOVA was done to examine the relationship between student councils' involvement in policy formulation and school type. The mean student councils' involvement in policy formulation for girls boarding schools was 22.9 (SD = 6.8), followed by boys boarding schools which posted a mean of 20.3 (SD = 7.1) while mixed day secondary schools enumerated a mean of 18.6 (SD = 4.1). This result suggests that, in the opinion of the leaders of the student councils interviewed, student councils' involvement in policy formulation for girls' boarding schools was higher than that of boys boarding and mixed day secondary schools. Hence, the involvement of student leaders in girls' boarding schools in matters relating to designing school uniform, choosing school diets, formulating school rules, and co-curricular activities was higher than that of their counterparts in boys boarding and mixed day secondary schools.

Table 14: Student Councils' involvement in Policy Formulation Versus School Type Comparison Analysis: Student Leaders' Data

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Mixed day secondary	16	18.6	4.1	1.0
Boys boarding	9	20.3	7.1	2.4
Girls Boarding	9	22.9	6.8	2.3
Total	34	20.2	5.9	1.0

The ANOVA table indicates some difference between the two Mean Squares (54.2 and 33.2). However, the difference in the means is not statistically significant since the p – value was greater than .05. Hence the relationship between student councils' involvement in policy formulation and school type was not statistically significant. This result is in line with an earlier finding that did not establish a significant relationship between student councils' involvement in policy formulation and school type where the respondents were heads of guidance and counseling department.

Table 15: Student Councils' involvement in Policy Formulation Versus School Type ANOVA: Student Leaders' Data

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P – Value
Between Groups	108.3	2	54.2	1.634	.212
Within Groups	1028.0	31	33.2		
Total	1136.4	33			

5.0 Conclusion

Student council involvement in policy formulation was statistically associated with the level of students' discipline in secondary schools. It can therefore be concluded that schools with high students' council involvement on policy formulation have higher chances of having higher level of students discipline as compared to those without or with low student council involvement in policy formulation.

6.0 Recommendations

The school administration should involve student's council in the management of discipline by engaging them in amendment, formulating and enforcing school rules and regulations. This would reduce indiscipline cases in the school and improve on their management of students' discipline.

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