An Assessment of Influence of Suspension as Teachers' Discipline Management Strategy on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination in Public Secondary Schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

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Abstract: **Discipline in schools is about positive behavior change in order to create conducive environment for learning. When discipline is achieved in secondary schools, it becomes instrumental in students academic performance. This study focused on assessment of the influence of suspension as discipline management strategy on KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The objective of this study was to establish the influence of suspension, on KCSE performance. The county has had a trend of grade wastage from KCPE to KCSE. The study adopted descriptive survey research design which used mixed method approach. The study targeted 104 public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, with 10 boys schools, 17 girls schools and 77 mixed schools. Stratified random, purposive sampling method and Krejcie & Morgan population sample table was used to determine the sample size. Principals and teachers were the respondents in this study. Interview schedule for 21 principals and 346 questionnaires for teachers were used as tools for data collection. The study sampled 42 schools, which constituted 40% of the total population size. The researcher prepared the instruments with expert judgment by supervisors. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α) was employed in determining the reliability of the instruments. A pilot study of 10% of the sample schools and respondents was carried out from each of school category. Alpha index of 0.869 was obtained for the teachers' questionnaires. The reliability of the interview schedule was ensured by the consistency of the questions and the order in which they were administered. The study used descriptive statistics which included frequencies, measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). Inferential statistics Pearson r was used to test the relationships of the hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in analyzing the data. The data from the interview guide was arranged thematically, transcribed and then presented verbatim in order to triangulate the results. The results revealed that suspension of indisciplined students influence KCSE Performance negatively. The findings of this study are expected to be of benefit to different stake holders, who are sensitized with new information on alternative disciplinary strategies to be used on students' discipline in schools, the policy makers are assisted to come up with a new policy on use of alternative disciplinary methods in schools.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Suspension, Miss Campbell explained, serves the purpose of giving the offending student time-out to reflect on his or her improper conduct and in some instances, to get counselling for behaviour modification. In Britain, responsiveness to rules can become a consequence of how managers view them. Despite the increase in the use of suspension, research is yet to establish whether this sanction is serving as a punishment for all students – that is, that it is actually reducing the frequency of the behaviours it supposedly sanctions. Atkins (2002) found that suspension proved to be an ineffective punishment in curtailing inappropriate behaviour. Other research has also suggested the possibility of undesirable side-effects from suspensions, including higher rates of dropping out of school, drug abuse, and delinquency in targeted students (Kilpatrick, 1998; Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001).

Students suspended for successions of minor infractions (i.e. in which teachers referred on the basis of a 'cumulative' effect) have reported feeling 'singled out' and seeing suspensions as unjust (Vavrus & Cole, 2002). More so, in one study conducted by Costenbader and Markson (1998), students reported being "angry at the person who sent them to suspension" and "happy to get out of the situation" (p 76). As far as the actual suspension as concerned, responses included "(It's) a good excuse to stay at home" and "It's just a vacation." (p. 76). Responses such as these suggest that suspension is not having the effects it is anticipated to have on many students.

According to Mongezi (2010), twenty nine students were suspended from Umthwalume High school in South Africa on

suspicion that they were homosexuals. Despite the introduction of altanative to corporal punishment (ATCP), research has shown that indiscipline in schools has continued to grow (Shumba, 2010). This implies that the ban of corporal punishment did not improve the state of school discipline nor the introduction of alternatives to corporal punishment. Mlilengo (2010) asserts that in Nigerian schools, some students were suspended when they were found roaming in the street instead of being in school. After suspension, Milengo continues to say that some students went back to school while others dropped out and engaged themselves in other unlawful activities.

Whereas some methods have been alleged to be effective in managing student discipline inschools suspension has been a cause of failure in academics (Rono, 2006).

Incidences of indiscipline have negative effects on academic performance. Rarely will you hear of a school known for indiscipline mentioned among the top performing schools when results are released. On the other hand, schools which are known to perform excellently are equally known for being some of the most disciplined schools. The maintenance of discipline in a school depends on how effective the set rules and regulations are adhered to. Between 2012 and 2013 alone, the secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County have recorded over 30 incidences of unrest. For example students in eight schools (8) out of twenty eight (28) in Tharaka District protested at the DEOs office against the way they were being handled in their schools in 2013. This led to suspension of 59 students, according to Tharaka Nithi County education office report, (2013). The academic trend for 2013 to 2015 shows a grade attained in KCPE and a decline of the grade at KCSE in the same years in Tharaka Nithi County. In 2013 the mean grade for KCPE was C and for KCSE D+. IN 2014 KCPE was C and KCSE was D+. In 2015 KCPE attained grade C+ whereas KCSE managed grade C-. The results show a lot of wastage from primary to secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Suspension can be used as discipline management strategy in public secondary schools. Suspension is popular as a tool for administrators in United States because it takes less time than other alternatives and school officials feel that it is effective. In 1971, the Ohio law allowed a principal to suspend students for up to ten days from school for misconduct. Notification had to be made to parents within 24 hours of the suspension stating the reason for the action (Harris & Bennet, 2012). Students engaging in risk behaviors impact the safety and learning environment of the school. Risk taking behaviors are a concern for schools. Often in their search to find out who they are, adolescents will experiment with alcohol or other drugs, violence, and sexuality. Adolescents' participation in risk behaviors have been a concern for many years. As a result, schools must look to try to reduce the behaviors (Wilson, Lipsey & Derzon, 2007). These risk behaviors in

adolescence will inevitably impact the school at some level, as teens spend at least seven hours out of their day at school. Engaging in violence in school is one risk behavior that schools hope to curtail through programs such as ISS or OSS. ISS and OSS both remove the problem from the classroom, hopefully creating a safer environment.

Developmental theories help to identify key reasons adolescents behave the way they do and thus help to inform what may be effective in aiding their growth and development. Erik Erikson's developmental theory consists of a series of life stages beginning at birth spanning through death. Identity development is a part of the life stage that is associated with adolescence (Santrock, 2011). Erikson asserts that during adolescence, youth are in the identity versus role confusion stage. During this stage adolescents are working to determine who they are as individuals, they're developing their identity. According to Erikson, adolescents are trying to determine where they fit in, how do they want to be and one way they determine this is through the reactions of others to their behaviors and actions. Eriksonian theorists explored the idea of crisis and how it impacts the development of identity (Santrock, 2011). Crisis is part of the identity development process. Adolescents experiment with alternatives during a period of crisis to help them determine what parts of their identity they have committed to and which parts are still flexible. Adolescence is a formative time period in a person's life. The experiences one encounters in the adolescent years could shape who that person becomes as they develop into adulthood. This is important to understand because adolescents spend a majority of their days in school, meaning many of those experiences that contribute to who they become as adults happen in school.

Adolescent behaviors are impacted by internal experiences. This means that processes, such as developmental ability, thoughts and/or emotions can impact an adolescent's behavior. Erikson's theory explains the importance of trying on different behaviors in the growth process from adolescence to adulthood. Determining which behaviors fit and which do not is an essential part of the growth process as well. Adolescents could learn from the consequences of the behaviors. If used effectively, ISS/OSS could be a helpful part of the growth process. In school and out of school suspension are used as punishment, and punishment is not often conducive to learning This knowledge seems to imply that change to the ISS/OSS practices in schools is necessary.

The previous section discussed internal factors that impact student behavior. The following section will consider some external factors that influence student behavior. These factors are teacher wellness, the school environment and perception of organizational health. The environment the adolescent is in at any time can affect how they respond or behave in certain situations. An environment that adolescents spend more than half their day in is school. School climate can impact students' behavior. Adolescents do not just make choices as individuals they are influenced by their environment. The school climate

can be defined as the environment that is created and perpetuated by the administration and faculty throughout the school. At times, this environment can exacerbate student misbehaviors (Bevans, Bradshaw, Miech & Leaf, 2007). Some of the phenomena that contribute to the school climate include teacher burnout, faculty preparedness to handle student misbehavior, pressures of high stakes testing initiatives and ambiguity of school rules.

Teacher wellness is another key component that can impact student behavior. For example, teacher burn-out has been shown to impact student behavior issues (Pas, Bradshaw, Hershfeldt & Leaf, 2010). Teacher burn-out refers to the emotional exhaustion that occurs as a result of stressors in the work environment. When teachers experience burn-out they become less emotionally invested in their jobs and their students. This can result in a less effectively managed classroom that causes disorder that the teacher is no longer capable of diffusing effectively. The emotional fatigue, which is a symptom of burnout, can also lead to reactivity. An example of a teacher being reactive to a situation is when they quickly decide to send a student out of the room or raise their voice at the student without taking a step back to consider the whole situation. Essentially their patience has worn thin and they respond to a situation without thinking. Confronting student behaviors is often a delicate process. Depending on the approach, the confrontation has been shown to exacerbate the disruption rather than alleviate it (Pas et al, 2010). When a teacher is reactive to a situation, the problem behavior often does not stop or even increases. This decrease in management efficacy correlates with increased student referrals for behavior issues, which often result in suspension. Due to teacher burn-out, moments that could be capitalized on to teach a student about their behavior is lost. Kennedy (2011) identified teacher-student rapport and relationship as key in aiding students to manage their behavior. An emotionally exhausted faculty member is likely to react quickly, pass judgment and miss the opportunity to help the struggling student (Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004). Teachers who are emotionally invested in their work may be more effective at diffusing a situation. Thus, teacher wellness impacts the overall health of the school climate.

Perceptions of organizational health have been shown to impact student behavior (Bevans et al., 2007). School environment has received increased attention as the pressure to perform has increased. Student performance, absenteeism, rates of suspensions, academic achievement and student satisfaction are all correlated with faculty perception of organizational health (Bevans et al., 2007). Poor organizational health has an impact on the attitudes of those working within the environment. Employees could become less dedicated to their work, which can also impact student behavior.

Another aspect of organizational health that impacts student behavior is the ambiguity of school rules (Varvus, 2002). If school rules and regulations are unclear, they are likely to be subjectively interpreted which can lead to miscommunication between students and staff. A student may interpret a rule one way and behave accordingly; essentially the student would believe that they are following the rules. If the same rule is interpreted by faculty in another way, the student may be perceived as misbehaving. This leads to controversy when the student is confronted on their behavior by the faculty member. Often the situation is mis communicated on both sides. The student does not believe he/she has done anything wrong and the faculty trying to maintain order in the classroom does not have time to understand what the student is missing (Varvus, 2002). If the student does not understand what he/she has done wrong, it is not likely he/she would be able to learn from it, especially if the rules were unclear initially. In this way, the school climate has an impact on student behavior.

Each individual the student comes in contact with throughout the school day can inform their behavior in some way. Teachers who are feeling exhausted and stressed can react to a student, which could in turn exacerbate disruptive behavior. As shown in the above paragraphs, students feed off negative attitudes or energies expressed by faculty members. School climate can impact student behaviors that lead to the assignment of ISS or OSS in any given situation. Considering that a student's behavior may be a result of something beyond their control is important in determining the appropriate consequence for the student's action. Adolescents are impacted by a number of emotions throughout their day and how effective they are in coping with those emotions can dictate their behavior. School with high academic standards and rigorous testing, is already a stressful environment for a student. The addition of stress from the student's outside life can result in negative behaviors if the student does not have effective coping mechanisms. The various roles students fulfill, individual capabilities, and personal understanding of expectations can all impact how a student may behave in school (Ehiane,2014).

Adjustment refers to an individual's ability to cope with change or stress in his/her life. When a student is not prepared to cope with a situation, they may act out or behave in a way that is unacceptable in school (Boon, 2011). This is a result of their effort to manage the emotions that they are feeling, but not doing so effectively. Students who have moved often or recently moved to a new school district often face this challenge (Boon, 2011). Boon (2011) found a correlation between academic achievement and behavior in students who have moved, and it is suggested that they may need more support after moving. The issues for students that are related to moving are also correlated with suspension. There are a number of situations that could trigger behaviors that are a result of adjustment issues for students, moving to a new home and/or a new school is one of them. Overall it is evident that students who are not well equipped to cope with change or stress could find themselves suspended for exhibiting inappropriate behaviors.

One group of students that need consideration when attempting to understand student behavior is the special education population. These students' behaviors and emotional management skills are often inhibited by their classifications or diagnoses. The IDEA legislature outlines that when assigning suspension for a classified student, for a period of time longer than 10 days, the symptoms of the student's disability must be considered (Goran & Gage, 2011). There is not a clear outline for the team considering the student's prolonged suspension to determine whether or not the behavior is related to their disability. Parents will often argue that the behavior is a result of the disability. Thus, fairness is often called to question. Another layer that has been noted to be on the rise in the special needs population is emotional disturbance (Eklund et al., 2009). The numbers of students who are identified to be at risk for emotional struggles are on the rise, and this disability is correlated with suspension in school (Eklund et al., 2009). These students often also learn differently than others, so a consequence that may help one student learn may not be effective for a student with special learning needs. For students with disabilities, there are often processing and/or language deficits associated with their classification, which implies that their understanding of expectations may be different (Goran & Gage, 2011). A student with special needs may act out if he/she does not understand why they are getting in trouble. Looking beyond the negative behaviors may help students learn from their mistakes in the future.

Recognizing that a student may not be intentionally inappropriate as a result of their culture is necessary to consider when assigning consequences. For example, there is a correlation between a student's cultural background and likelihood of being suspended (Mendez, 2003). Mendez (2003) identifies that minority students such as, African Americans and Hispanic Americans have a higher likelihood of suspension than Caucasian students. This phenomenon may be explained by cultural misunderstandings of expectations between the student and the teacher or school. Rules and expectations are often written out in a code of conduct that has been distributed to stakeholders with the intention that it is understood universally. However, certain cultural norms that teachers, students or the school as a whole may expect everyone to follow are unwritten rules (Varvus, 2002). For example, raising hands or talking in turns is an expectation in the Anglo-Saxon culture. In contrast, in the African American or Latino culture shouting out or speaking out of turn is culturally acceptable. In an Anglo Saxon cultured classroom, this could be considered disruptive and inappropriate behavior and could result in being removed from the classroom. The ambiguity between the teacher's thinking and the students' thinking is a cultural difference which may now impact the student negatively. Taking time to be sure that all students understand all expectations is important in avoiding such scenarios (Skiba, 2011). Cultural barriers are another aspect that impact student behaviors and understanding of behavior expectations. Students do not behave in a way that disrupts the classroom, just to be disruptive. They may misunderstand rules due to language barriers, developmental abilities or cultural differences. They may also have a number of struggles in their personal lives that impact their ability to regulate themselves emotionally in school. Overall students' behaviors are a result of a combination of occurrences (Robinatte, 2012).

Theoretical foundations that were widely researched and used in the mid-20th century have shown difficulties in the use of punishment. B.F. Skinner developed the foundation for the counseling practice known as behavioral therapy (Gewirtz & Pelaez-Nogueras, 1992). Behaviorists believe that all behavior is learned, and Skinner developed a set of techniques for counselors to use when working with clients towards behavior change. One of the techniques that Skinner explored is punishment. Punishment is aimed to decrease unwanted behaviors (Elsevier Science Publishing Company, 1973). This is essentially the goal of suspension to decrease or eliminate problem behaviors for students. However, Skinner and subsequent researchers of his work found that punishment is not an avenue that teaches new behaviors, often because of the way that it is used and applied. Rather, punishment was often found to suppress behaviors for a time and would later re-surface. He did note that positive reinforcement is a much more effective way of helping individuals learn new behaviors. Punishment according to Skinner is an ineffective modality for behavior management.

Skinner's work regarding punishment's ineffectiveness is upheld today. For example, one of the markers of suspension's ineffectiveness is the number of repeated offenses by students who have previously faced consequences for certain behaviors (Massey et al., 2007). This demonstrates that students are not learning from the punishment, but rather it seems to exacerbate the behaviors. Atkins et al. (2002) support that assertion. Their research indicated that, for a group of students in inner-city schools, behaviors were either suppressed for a time or exacerbated depending on circumstances. This research also called to question the idea that students may find reward in suspension, due to increases in behavior issues following punitive disciplinary measures. Both findings showing the less effective impact that suspension seems to have on students.

Another area of controversy regarding punitive measures is that in schools the severity of the punishment does not seem to fit the perceived crime. This is a result of zero tolerance policies (Skiba & Knesting, 2001). The idea is that certain behaviors will simply not be tolerated and a severe consequence will be assigned to impact behavior change (Skiba & Knesting, 2001). Zero tolerance policies were put in place in schools in the early 1990s in response to increased violence at school. These policies essentially created a concrete way to respond to various offenses in school. Thus there are no gray areas when it comes to assigning punishment for the offenses such as drug and alcohol use, bringing weapons to school, fighting, and threats of violence. However

this has led to trivial incidences resulting in the most severe of punishments. Policies that were once put in place to abate violence are now applied when students share cough drops or headache medicines (Skiba & Knesting, 2001). The controversy around zero tolerance policy is whether or not suspension is being used effectively, much less whether or not it is a disciplinary measure that is effective in its own right. Since the implementation of zero tolerance policies in the early 1990s school violence and safety remains an issue. This reiterates the assumption that these measures, while well-intentioned, are not as effective as they could be. Zero tolerance policies contribute to the negative impacts of suspension.

Overall, there are a number of concerns regarding the use of suspension at a fundamental level. Theory that was developed in 1973 and has subsequently been proven as accurate through the years suggests that punitive measures are ineffective. Suspension is often used as a punishment for an unacceptable behavior in schools. Also the idea that the punishment should fit the crime has been impacted by the implementation of zero tolerance policies. Often misbehavior is met with a severe consequence for which the rationale is unclear, again impacting the student learning from the consequence. The concerns identified across the studies identified above have led to other research regarding alternative programming (Josephine, 2014).

As concerns about the effectiveness of suspension programs have grown, research on alternative programming has increased as well. A number of programs have been developed. Problem behavior tracking, classroom management strategies, utilizing counseling in conjunction with disciplinary measures, and evaluations of school's mental health programs have all been researched (Burke, Oats, Ringle, Fichtner, & DelGaudio, 2011; Lannie, Codding, McDougal, & Meier, 2010; Massey et al., 2007; Wilson et al., 2003). Many of the programs have shown a positive impact on the schools in which they've been tested as a pilot (Wilson et al., 2003). The fact that these programs run as pilots means that once the research is complete, the program stops running. Often this is due to the fact that the school is left without the appropriate resources to continue running them.

Early identification programs tracking problem behaviors and classroom management training for teachers have been considered effective for decreasing discipline referrals. Early identification programs have been suggested as a proactive approach to disciplinary measures (Eklund et al., 2009; Smith, Bicard, Bicard & Casey, 2012). Students may not always be identified to have a behavioral or emotional struggle as they continue through school. Yet these students may consistently be facing consequences for their behaviors without any added support to see what might be going on for the student. Using a screening tool to identify students who struggle with emotional and behavioral regulations has been shown to be a helpful approach to alleviate disciplinary issues early on. Getting students help to manage the issues they struggle with

early on could essentially prevent or curb problem behaviors in the future. Tracking student problem behavior can help to inform administrators as to how to approach a disciplinary situation. Creating a classroom environment that is safe and proactive in managing behavior has proven successful in a number of school districts (Burke, 2011 and Reglin, 2012). Tracking behavior and the interventions used has also been identified as effective in managing problem behaviors in school (Spaulding et al., 2010). Brown (2006) rolled out new district policy in Cincinnati to effect change in behavior for students.

The schools accomplished this through a community effort, where a team of community members, parents, school officials and faculty came together to address concerns about the current state of discipline in the district. The team developed district wide policies that applied to students beginning in kindergarten and following them throughout high school. Creating policy that remained the same from kindergarten through senior year of high school made rules more clear to students, the ambiguity of what is expected was decreased. The code is clear and understood by those who must abide by it; helping to improve behavior concerns. Discipline tracking and classroom management seem to target parts of the concerns that were raised regarding the effectiveness of suspension programs.

Some programs take a more holistic approach. The combination of discipline and mental health support services has been explored as an alternative program to suspension. Research suggests that a combination of these services could be the most effective model for an in school suspension program (Morris & Howard, 2003). Using suspension in school, character education strategies while the student is in ISS, and offering direct counseling as a follow-up has been suggested to be successful. This seems relevant as much discussion has focused on the personal needs of students that often drive the behaviors. This is supported by Nabors et al. (2000), who show positive student outcomes. The counseling services provided students with the skills and resources they needed to enhance protective factors in their life that reduce the risk of violent and/or disruptive behavior. Since these services are more individualized and attend to the specific needs of each student, they may seem more effective in the long run than other alternative programs. They take into consideration what is beyond the behavior that the student may need help with.

There are issues with the research regarding alternative programs. One of the issues with these alternative programs is that they've been run as a pilot program on a small scale with program specific trained professionals (Massey 2007). Thus, the generalbility and true effectiveness is often questioned. There is also a lack of empirical research for these programs at the high school level. Implementing these programs has also been a struggle for schools. Once the pilot testing is completed, the researchers do not stay with the district and training is often extensive and time consuming. Teacher and

other faculty are on limited schedules, so the applicability is also brought into question for these alternative programs. In addition, model fidelity and consistency when being facilitated are important when implementing these programs (2011). This is a struggle many schools face as attempting to get 70 plus individuals to have the same perspective has proven quite problematic. This in turn impacts student behaviors, which will be discussed at a later point. There are difficulties with follow through and implementation of these programs. In summary, alternative programs have been researched to an extent. The implementation after the pilot test and follow through have proven to be the downfall of these programs. The programs have shown success while they run, which implies that suspension is not the only existing behavior management program. The difference between the alternative programs and suspension is that the alternative programs have been proven to show change in individuals who experience the program.

According to Stewart (2004), out of school suspension is used in United States of America (USA) for serious misconducts such as drug possession, the carrying of illegal weapons, poor attendance and truancy. Suspension of students from schools involves temporary exclusion of a student from school. However, there is considerable debate over just how effective excluding a learner from the school setting really is. Stewart (2004) argues that measures such as the exclusion of misbehaving learners should be treated with caution for they might not reflect accepted international principles and practices and should only be exercised in the most extreme circumstances.

Stewart (2004) observed that in Australia, a range of measures which teachers use to ensure appropriate standards of learner behaviour presently range from preventive action by individual teachers to punitive measures such as suspension. Most Australian education authorities have passed regulations providing principals with the power to exclude misbehaving learners from their school and this power includes suspension. Suspension from school has commonly had the major objective of removing an offending learner from the classroom and thus allowing the teacher to get on with the lesson in hand. It also provides an opportunity to require parents to be involved in any review of a learner's behaviour problems and it can be used as a mechanism for punishing unacceptable behaviour. It can be argued, that the major consequence for some learners is that any suspension becomes a reward and thus it serves to reinforce the form of behaviour the teacher or school was trying to eliminate. Moreover, there is also evidence that suspended learners receive support from many of their classmates (Slee, 2015). This implies that as an alternative punitive disciplinary method, suspension has no effect on learner behaviour. This means that use of suspension to manage students' discipline may not change the behaviour of learners.

According to a study carried out by Nyang'au (2013) on the effects of disciplinary strategies on students' behaviour in public secondary schools in Matungulu District, Machakos County, suspension was an effective discipline strategy on students' behaviour. This means that its use could be enhanced by incorporation of other stakeholders and training of those charged with its use could guarantee them of appropriate competencies on use of suspension as an alternative disciplinary method. However, this study by Nyang'au (2013) did not look at the effect of suspension of indiscipline students on students' performance. Hence there is need to carry out this study in order to address this gap.

Guidelines on the suspension of in disciplined students in Kenya are contained in the Education Act Cap 211 on school discipline regulations. Republic of Kenya (1980) stipulates that suspended students shall not be allowed to attend classes and shall be required to be physically away from the school precincts until he/she is informed of the outcome of the case to the parent or legal guardian through a letter. When a head teacher finds it necessary to suspend a student from school, the principal should inform the student's parents or guardian of the suspension, the length of the suspension and the specific reasons for it by formal notification. Particulars for the formal notification should include sufficient reason for suspension and relevant circumstances which should be fully understood by the students, parents and guardians. The principal should inform the BOM members of the punishment at once and convene a meeting within 14 days to discuss the discipline issues. Although suspension of indiscipline students consumes time, these legal provisions entails good legislative practices in administering suspension as an alternative disciplinary method and procedures to be followed in dealing with students' discipline.

A study by Harris and Bennet (2012) on Student Discipline: Legal, Empirical and Educational Perspectives found that those students who are repeatedly suspended sometimes make the discipline problem appear greater than it is. Suspension rarely encourages students to control their behaviour although it gets the parent into the school. The study recommended that school officials should make every effort to help students learn to control their own behaviour and designing and utilization of disciplinary approaches that could directly address the discipline problems.

Mutua (2004) did a study that sought to investigate alternative strategies of discipline in the absence of Corporal punishment in public secondary schools in Matungulu Division, Machakos District Kenya. The instruments for data collection were questionnaires and an interview schedule and an observation schedule. The study used survey method and random sampling to get a sample of four principals and 60 classroom teachers. Data was analyzed by descriptive statistics where means, percentages and frequencies were used. Chi-square($x2$) was used to measure the relationship between alternative strategies that teachers preferred to use and the independent variables.

The findings by Mutua (2004) indicated that teachers had a range of alternatives that they used. These includes guidance and counseling, manual work, extra class work, having a set of school rules, withdrawal of privileges, kneeling down, dialogue and suspension was used at times. The study recommended that teachers should use alternative methods of behaviour modification which have a positive impact on students' behaviour instead of using punishment which only suppressed behaviour. From the findings, suspension as an alternative strategy had not been given prominence as the chi square value is 0.17 meaning that the method was not statistically significant for it was rarely used. This was also confirmed by the other range of alternatives which were used to modify learner behaviour. Despite the appropriateness of the research methodology, this study has however identified a research gap on effects of suspension of indiscipline students on students' academic performance.

Mugo (2006) did a study on participatory processes used by principals in enhancing students discipline in public secondary schools in Kiambu Division, Kiambu District. Questionnaires were used as tools for data collection. The study used ex post facto design. The target population was five principals, 25 teachers and 150 students. The study found that suspension of indiscipline students was used in extreme cases and for habitual offenders. Guidance and counseling were identified coupled with punishment as leading methods of enhancing discipline in secondary schools. The study recommended development and implementation of proper guidance and counseling programmes in all schools by school management and parents should be informed of proper parenting and the relevance it has to school discipline in our contemporary society. This implies that suspension was used subjectively based on students' indiscipline cases.

Smit (2010) did a study on the role of school Discipline in combating violence in schools in East London region. The study sample was composed of four primary schools and five high schools. The respondents to the study included principals or senior members of staff and 330 learners. Data was collected by use of a questionnaire and an interview guide. The findings indicated that suspension pushes students out of school and may only contribute to the broader problem of violence. The study recommended addressing alternatives to suspension in order to find ways of helping children who have shown signs of misbehavior problems. Counseling and focusing on problem solving relating to behaviour issue and community services could achieve more effective discipline. These results imply that suspension of students is counterproductive in dealing with indiscipline of students for it does not bring positive results. This study has, however, identified a research gap on effects of suspension of indiscipline students on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya.

A study done by Kindiki (2009) on effectiveness of communication on students' discipline in secondary schools in Kenya was conducted in Naivasha District. The study utilized qualitative approach with questionnaires, interviews and documentation as instruments of collecting data. Purposive sampling was used to identify Naivasha district as the location of the study. Stratified and simple random sampling was used to identify 8 secondary schools and 200 respondents from these schools. 20 students and 4 teachers in each sampled school were given the self-administered questionnaires while all the 8 head teachers were interviewed.

The data collected by Kindiki (2009) was analyzed descriptively. The study revealed that suspension was considered the most common technique used to deal with indiscipline in secondary schools. The study further revealed that suspended students rarely changed their behaviour and will most likely carry on with the same delinquent behaviour after suspension. The study recommended effective guidance and counseling for students would realize their mistakes and initiate behaviour change aimed at being better disciplined. Guidance of students on proper use of information Communication Technology (ICT) would also minimize antisocial behaviour among students. This implies that the executors of suspension get a little relieve for a while as the student services the suspension period but the student may come back with worse indiscipline issues than they left the schools. Although the research methodology used in the study was appropriate for the study, this study has identified a knowledge gap on effects of suspension of indiscipline students on students' academic performance in public secondary school in Kenya.

A study by Simatwa (2012) on management of students discipline in secondary schools in Kenya which was carried out in Bungoma County used questionnaires and an interview schedule and document analysis to collect data. The study population consisted of 125 principals, 125 deputy Principals, 1575 teachers and 2075 prefects managing 20107 students in 125 secondary schools. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data. The findings revealed that many infractions were experienced in public secondary schools and principals used a wide range of methods managing students discipline in schools including suspension. The study indicated that Principals had powers to suspend students for 14 days and no absolute powers to suspend students for a period exceeding 14. days. It was further revealed that most students and the society in general were against the use of suspension as a sanction.

The affected students could come back to school determined to revenge. The study by Simatwa (2012) concluded that suspension as a sanction should be used sparingly. The recommended way forward for using these sanctions included prompt resolutions on suspensions whereby students were to be kept out of schools as little as possible since the use of these sanctions had drastic consequences and suspension was only used as the last resort in which case the school administrators first considered use of alternative sanctions. This means that suspension was not an effective sanction of dealing with students' discipline issues. From these findings,

this study has identified a research gap on effects of suspension of indiscipline students on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya. Ouma, Simatwa and Serem (2014) conducted a study on Management of pupil discipline in Kenya: A Case Study of Kisumu Municipality. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study population consisted of 115 head teachers, 115 deputy head teachers, and 460 class teachers of standard seven and eight, 2530 prefects and one Municipal Quality Assurance and Standards Officer.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select a study sample that consisted of 37 head teachers, 37 deputy head teachers, 152 class teachers of standard seven and eight and 370 prefects. Saturated sampling technique was used to select one Municipal Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. In-depth interview schedules, questionnaire and document analysis guide were used for data collection. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of means, percentages and frequency counts. Qualitative data collected from open-ended items in the questionnaire and in-depth interviews were analyzed and organized into themes and sub-themes as they emerged.

The study by Ouma, Simatwa and Serem (2014) revealed that Pupil discipline problems experienced in primary schools included; noise making which was rated 3.7, failure to complete assignment 3.8, truancy 4.0, lateness 4.0, theft 3.5, and sneaking 3.5. However, the study established that effective methods of dealing with indiscipline were; Involving parents who was rated 4.2, Guidance and counseling 4.2, manual work 4.0, caning 3.3 suspensions 2.5 and reprimanding 2.4. The study recommended that appropriate pupil discipline management methods be used in schools to create peace and harmony. Despite the appropriateness of the research methodology used in the study, this study has identified a research gap on effects of suspension of indiscipline students on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya. From the findings Stewart (2004) observed that suspension is a punitive measure used as a mechanism for punishing unacceptable behaviour. Kindiki (2009) says that suspension was the most common technique used to deal with indiscipline in secondary schools. Any suspension becomes a reward and reinforces the form of behaviour the teacher or school was trying to eliminate. Simatwa (2012) observed that suspension was among a wide range of methods used to deal with the many infractions that were experienced in public secondary schools by principals.

In conclusion on suspension of indisciplined students and students' discipline, Mugo (2006) observed that suspension of indiscipline students was used in extreme cases and for habitual offenders. This is consistent with Mutua (2004) who found that suspension was used at times as an alternative strategy meaning that it had not been given a lot of prominence. Smit (2010) argues that suspension pushes students out of school and may only contribute to the broader problem of violence. Kindiki (2009) agrees in that suspended

students rarely changed their behaviour and will most likely carry on with the same delinquent behaviour after suspension. This is not consistent with Nyang'au (2013) who established that 58.6% of the respondents were of the view that suspension from school was effective in improving student behaviour. The revealed literature has identified a gap of effects of suspension as principals' discipline management strategy on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya hence a research gap that this study sought to fill.

According to Okumbe (1998) management is the process of designing, developing and effecting organizational objectives and resources so as to achieve the predetermined organizational goal. Management as to make sure policies, goals and objectives are formulated and clearly stipulated and well known to both the occupants and the society Okumbe (1998). According to Weber for an organization to be successful there must be strict adherence of rules and regulation so as to ensure conformity and uniformity among people.

According to Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001), section 8(1) of SASA empowers a governing body of a school to formulate or adopt the code of conduct that aims at establishing and purposeful environment to effective education and learning in schools that should not be punitive but facilitate constructive learning and establish moral values. In formulating the code of conduct, a governing body must involve parents, learners, educators and non-educating staff at school. Masite and Vawda (2003) assert that co-operative discipline encourages the involvement of all the stakeholders in drafting the code of conduct for learners. The importance of even primary school learners' contribution in drafting the code of conduct cannot be underestimated, although they are not represented in the school governing body. The educators must ensure that the learners make their contribution because they are likely to respect the code of conduct they had helped to prepare. Since discipline is concerned with guiding and controlling learners, Masite and Vawda (2003) say educators must be sensitive when making classroom/school rules.

They should make rules that tell the learners what behavior is expected in the classroom or school environment, because the expected behavior and the consequences of failing to comply should be made clear and applied to everybody. So disciplining in the classroom will have a purpose if rules are well known. According to Chang (1995), the managers can make use of meetings and discussions to communicate, clarify and simplify co-operative and democratic discipline to their staff members and encourage them to implement it in the schools and therefore the principal must communicate with the educators so that the educators have a clear picture of how they are going to maintain discipline (Badenhorst, et al, 1997).

The school head should not be the only disciplinarian in the school. Whisen and Ferguson (1996) express their opinion that disciplinary actions always start with the immediate

supervisor, so the principal must see to it that all staff members are entrusted with power to discipline to a certain extent. Ideally schools set rules and regulation to govern the various lifestyles of students containing the dos and don'ts (Okumbe, 1998). School discipline aims to control the students' actions, behavior, to ensure the safety of staff and students, and to create an environment conducive to learning.

Okumbe, (1998), pronounce that regulations on the other hand are authoritative disciplines with a course of law intended to promote discipline in school. Lupton and Jones (2002), also agreed with Okumbe (1998), and said schools that are effective demonstrate sound inclusive practices, which includes emphasizing school rules and regulations, collaborative leadership and their good practice. However there is nothing has been said on the effect of rules and regulation on students' academic performance. Thus need for this study.

Jones (2002), also agree with Hernandez and Seem, (2004), he argues that effective schools demonstrate sound inclusive practices which includes emphasizing school discipline, collaborative leadership and their good practice. Hernandez and Seem, (2004), argue that the operation of schools' is directly influenced by the way the schools' administered students disruptive behavior. The school discipline therefore prescribes the standard of behavior expected of the teachers and the students. Schools disciplines are among the strategies designed to instill good conduct of students, this implies self-control, good behavior and obedience to school authority (Adams, 2003).

During admission students are given prospectus, which spell out some of these rules specify in most cases what students should do and what they should not do (Adams, 2003). Rules and the consequences of breaking them should be clearly specified and communicated to staff, students, and parents by such means as newsletters, student assemblies, and handbooks. Meyers and Pawlas (1989) recommend periodically restating the rules, especially after students return from holidays. Kabandize, (2001) observes that disciplines are enforced through prefects' bodies and councils, disciplinary committees, teachers and involvement of parents. Cotton (2000) also say that the best results could be obtained through vigilantly reminding students about disciplines in school and monitoring their compliance with them. Once rules have been communicated, fair and consistent enforcement helps maintain students' respect for the school's discipline system.

Johns Hopkins University researchers Gary Gottfredson and Denise Gottfredson analyzed data from over 600 of the nation's secondary schools, they found that the school characteristics were associated with discipline problems: rules were unclear or perceived as unfairly or inconsistently enforced; students did not believe in the rules; teachers and administrators did not know what the rules were or disagreed on the proper responses to student misconduct; teacher-administration cooperation was poor or the administration

inactive; teachers tended to have punitive attitudes; misconduct was ignored; and schools were large or lacked adequate resources for teaching (Gottfredson,1989).

Gottfredsons (1989) continued to argue that orderly schools usually balance clearly established and communicated rules with a climate of concern for students as individuals, and small alternative schools often maintain order successfully with fewer formal rules and a more flexible approach to infractions than large schools typically have. The Gottfredsons (1989) further suggested creating smaller schools or dividing large schools into several schools-within-schools. This has been done in several Portland, Oregon, middle schools that have large numbers of at-risk students. For example, as Director of Instruction Leigh Wilcox explained, Lane Middle School has been divided into three mini schools, each with a complete age range of students taught by a team of teachers. Discipline policies should distinguish between categories of offenses. Minor infractions may be treated flexibly, depending on the circumstances, while nonnegotiable consequences are set for serious offenses. Actual criminal offenses may be reported to the police as part of a cooperative anticrime effort (Gaustad 1991). Different Research shows that social rewards such as smiling, praising, and complimenting are extremely effective in increasing desirable behavior.

Students who dislike school, do poorly academically, and have limited career objectives. They are more likely to be disruptive Gottfredson (1989). He recommends that schools work to increase academic success for low-achievers. However, Gottfredson continues to argue that this alone is not enough. He recommends a comparison of three alternative programs for at-risk youth revealed that while achievement increased in all three, delinquent behavior decreased only in the program that also increased students' social involvement and attachment to school. Discipline problems will be reduced if students find school enjoyable and interesting. For example; when teachers at Wilson Elementary School in North Carolina changed their instructional practices to accommodate a variety of learning styles, discipline problems decreased dramatically. Sometimes problem behavior occurs because students simply don't know how to act appropriately (Gottfrdson, 1989)

Black and Downs (1992) urge administrators to regard disciplinary referrals as opportunities to teach students valuable social skills that will promote success in future employment as well as in school. They present detailed procedures for "de-escalating disruptive behavior, obtaining and maintaining instructional control, teaching alternative behaviors, and preparing students for classroom re-entry." Though students are reminded on what they should do there is still wide spread violation of school rules and regulations whereby students beat their teachers, involve themselves in drug abuse, drink alcohol and go out of school without permission this hinder the smooth functioning of the school system and thereby affect students' performance. These happen due to disrespect done by students on the formulated

school rules and regulations that could assist them guide their behaviors at school. Though the researchers concerned much on discipline in schools without studying its effects on students' academic performance, this is aim of this study.

The impact of being suspended - whether it is in school or out of school - on a student's academic success and self-perception are two concerns that are repeatedly addressed in the literature (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2003; Marrison et al, 2001; Spaulding et al., 2008). Being removed from the classroom or from school for a long period of time will likely have consequences for the student (Marrison et al, 2001). The question is, how far is too far. The negative consequences for students have long lasting effects that can impact their futures. This is a major concern of all stakeholders involved, does the impact of suspension go too far is the ultimate question.

Being suspended from school indicates that the student is not allowed back on school property until the delineated time is served and the school deems that it is safe and appropriate for him/her to return to school. The idea that students are required to stay out of school is a concern for a number of reasons. Students who are suspended often spend their day home where they are likely unsupervised; thus it is questionable whether or not they are actually staying out of trouble (Taras et al., 2003). Students who are removed from school typically do find themselves in a situation where they are involved in juvenile delinquency (Menzies & Lane, 2011). In fact, regular suspensions from school can exacerbate student tendencies for crime and violence. Ultimately suspension can pave the path for a future of trouble (Breunlin, Cimmarusti, Bryant-Edwards & Hetherington, 2002). This is also evidenced through students who are considered repeat offenders, which further supports the argument that suspension is ineffective indecreasing delinquent behavior in school. Suspension in some cases seems to perpetuate the cycle that schools are attempting to prevent.

Suspension for many students also means that they will suffer academically (Brown, 2006). This applies specifically to students assigned out of school suspension (Raffaele-Mendez, Knoff & Ferron, 2002). Teachers are not required to send the student's work to them while they are suspended, and suspension can last up to ten days before the school is required to provide alternative instruction (Dickinson & Miller, 2006). The experience of falling behind academically can be frustrating for many students and their families. This may explain the correlation between suspension and likelihood of dropping out (Christle et al., 2004). Students can develop a poor attitude towards school, particularly if they are repeatedly being suspended and falling further behind (Breunlin et al., 2002). This frustration may not only lead to dropping out, but could increase behavioral issues as well. As the cycle continues to repeat itself, students' self-perception can be affected. They may begin to see themselves as trouble makers and begin to believe that they will always be a trouble maker. As previously discussed, adolescence is a formative

time period for any individual. Suspension decreases the opportunities that students have to learn appropriate behaviors and effective coping mechanisms. When students are out of school they are often not supervised and do not have the resources to help them learn from their problem behaviors. Based on this information, it seems that suspension often can add the negative situations in a student's life rather than help to decrease negative situations.

As mentioned previously, research to date has not supported the efficacy of suspension as a behaviour management procedure (Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001; Kilpatrick, 1998; Costenbader & Markson, 1997; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). The purpose of suspension, especially in the US, is to provide a sanction for major disciplinary problems, such as the use of weapons, drug abuse, and gang fighting (Sughrue, 2003). Research has revealed, however, that suspension is being applied most often for lesser infractions, such as lack of punctuality, non-compliance, and disrespect (Skiba, 2000). Indeed, suspension has become the most commonly used sanction for inappropriate behaviour (Skiba & Knesting, 2002) since the inception of zero tolerance policies (Brooks, Schiraldi, & Ziedenberg, 2000).

Examining students' perspectives on classroom management and suspension practices may provide insights into how such sanctions affect them and their behaviour. Researchers have used these beliefs as a starting point when discussing the efficacy of suspension and discipline practices (Partington, 2001; Gordon, 2001; Coslin, 1997; Lewis, 2001). Some research has suggested that students are more likely to accept discipline and feel that they are being treated fairly if they have a positive relationship with their teachers (Partington, 2001; Wu et al., 1982; Bru, Stephens & Torsheim, 2002; Partington, 1998).

Other alternatives that aim to keep the students in school include employing social workers to work both with the students and with their families. The latter approach is grounded in holistic approaches which aim not only to manage misconduct and inappropriate behaviour in schools, but also to link disadvantaged families to services that could improve the home-life of the students (Bagley & Pritchard, 1998). Researchers have also investigated improving relationships between teachers and students, particularly in the areas of cultural understanding, relevant curriculum, building rapport and improving classroom management techniques (Partington, 1998; Townsend, 2000; Uchitelle, Bartz & Hillman, 1989). Improving conflict resolution skills has also been examined as a strategy for reducing the need to use out-of-school suspensions (Garibaldi, Blanchard, & Brooks, 1996).

Christine (2001) indicates that students from divorced, separated, single and unmarried parents are more likely to be suspended than students who are more from stable married families. Students living with both biological parents are less likely to have behavioral problems at school that result in

them being suspended. Kenyan constitution allows suspension of students. For example failure to hit the school's expectations in the student's infractions has resulted to major violations. The following model explains that major violations can be dealt with as follows: First the offenders should be summoned to the head teacher's office for reprimanding, punishment and counseling. If they do not hit these corrective measures, the second action is to exclude them from school up to five days plus written warning and a letter summoning both parents to accompany the student back to school at the end of the five days. The student should be punished and counseled. Where there is no positive change, the third action is to treat the case as an intolerable offence. Intolerable offences are grave and the action against the offenders is to exclude them from school indefinitely and convene a Board of Governors committee meeting within fourteen days to deal with the matter. The recommended punishments for intolerable offences include suspensions. Taking too long breaks, leaving classroom or school early, littering, noisemaking, Drug abuse, drug trafficking, keeping fire arms, sexual harassment, rape and Robbery are offenses in this category. (Republic of Kenya, 2001, Education Act Legal Notice No. 56 of 2001).

Students are the key stakeholders. They are also the most essential resources in education. It is absolutely necessary to instruct the students to exhibit acceptable behaviour within and outside the school. In an attempt to achieve an organized and peaceful school environment and also to maintain law and order, school managements have set specified rules and regulations to guide the activities of members in their educational institutions. Student's discipline is a prerequisite to almost everything a school has to offer students (McGregory, 2006). Seifert and Vornberg further connected discipline to both the culture and climate of the school. Therefore according to them in order for a satisfactory climate to exist within a school, a certain level of discipline must exist. In schools where discipline is a serious problem, for example, where students bully others, parents can transfer their children to „better" schools. Since the well behaved students usually perform well their transfer can affect the overall performance of that school. However punishment can aggravate behaviour instead of curbing it (Rigby, 2000).The problem of indiscipline in schools is a global concern, traversing political, economic, geographical, racial and even gender boundaries (Kajubi, 2007).

Practicing teachers, educationists, parents and students across the globe must increasingly get concerned with discipline-related problems in schools. In its management efforts, many educationists and researchers have sought to identify the most efficacious methods of enhancing school discipline. The use of rewards and punishments, stemming especially from the psychological research works of Shawcross (2009), have been used by many school educators, although in varying degrees, in managing students behaviour. Of these methods, the use of corporal punishment has gained much debate, especially on its efficacy and its consequences to students (Adams, 2003).

In the past two decades, concern had been raised to the effect that there was unabated violent incidents of students' unrest in Secondary schools and tertiary institutions that resulted in loss of property, worth millions of shillings and lives in Kenya (Simatwa, 2012). During this time Machakos County was cited as one of the counties in Kenya that were experiencing many cases of student indiscipline in schools. The methods of managing student discipline that is alleged to be highly breached is suspension (Njoku, 2000). The Ministry of Education states that a student may be suspended from attendance at a school by the head teacher of the school or a teacher acting in that capacity, if his language or behaviour is habitually or continually such as to endanger the maintenance of a proper standard of moral and social conduct in the school, or if any single act or series of acts subversive of discipline is committed (Education Act, 2009).

Kenyan constitution allows suspension of students. For example failure to hit the school's expectations in the student's infractions has resulted to major violations. (Republic of Kenya, 2001, Education Act Legal Notice No. 56 of 2001). There has also been a variety of reactions to the rising incidences of indiscipline and unrests in schools in Kenya. Various views have been expressed regarding the cause of the indiscipline and possible solutions to the problems have been proposed. Corporal punishment in Kenyan schools was banned through a Kenya Gazette notice on March 13, 2001 by the then Education minister, Honorable Kalonzo Musyoka. If there is a topic that has of late generated a lot of heat regarding discipline in schools, it's the issue of the cane. There have been proposals by parents that they be allowed to cane their children to enhance discipline at secondary school in Coast province (Kiprop, 2007). This ban has been blamed for the increase in indiscipline, and naturally, there have been calls to rethink the decision. Kiprop is of the view that parents have a big role to play in instilling discipline into their children in and out of school. This is because a student more often than not reflects the same behaviour at school. However, these views are not in agreement with organizations such as the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC).

Along with academic performance, school discipline ranks as one of the major concerns voiced by the public about schools and the school system in countries worldwide. These concerns are echoed in frequent and often dramatic media reports of disruptive students, student riots, bullying and violence in classrooms and playgrounds across Kenya. There is a continuing and growing perception that behaviour problems are endemic in schools, that teachers are struggling to maintain order, and that school authorities are unable to guarantee the safety of students (Mutua, 2004). Because of its relationship with student academic performance and moral maturity, school discipline is often viewed as a national concern that is becoming more serious by the day for all societies (Mwangi, 2003).

According to (Okumbe, 1998) punishments are an effective method of remediating individual misbehavior and therefore improving school order if they commensurate with the offence committed and must also be perceived by students as punishments. However in most secondary schools in Dar es Salaam, some forms of punishments are unfair and undeserved like corporal punishment in schools involving severe canning of students. The effect of such severe punishments on students' academic performance had not been given attention. This study will investigate if student are affect by punishment administered to them.

The study carried out by Docking (2000), on application of punishments in schools in the United Kingdom observed that, some punishments are appropriate and constructive while others are not desirable, baseless and instead intended for instilling fear. Canter, (2000) in his agreement argues that although discipline remains one of the most common problems for teachers, some punishments such as suspension punishments should not be used because no evidence suggests that they have produced better results academically, morally or that it improves school discipline. Instead students provoke resistance and resentments such as cyclical child abuse and pro-violent behavior. Students turn to lying about their behavior so as to escape punishments.

Hyman and Perone, (1998) argues that suspension as a punishment is a technique that is easily abused, leads to physical separation and can cause serious emotional harm. There is no clear evidence that suspensions as a form of punishment will lead to better control in the classroom, enhances moral character development in children, or increase the students' respect for teachers or other authority figures (Society for Adolescent Medicine, 2003). Suspension as form of punishment does not instruct a child in correct behavior. Moreover, the use of the punishment in schools communicates that hating is the correct way to solve problems and disagreements and is acceptable in our society.

Suspension as a form of punishment does not produce long-lasting improvements in behavior; it negatively affects the social, psychological, and educational development of students; it contributes to the cycle of child abuse; and promotes negative attitudes of youth (Andero & Stewart, 2002; Gershoff, 2010; Owen, 2005; Society for Adolescent Medicine, 2003). Suspension is a behavior management strategy that has been used in the public-school system. Research regarding suspension is far reaching and widespread. One limitation of the existing research may be that it has been performed using mostly a quantitative approach. The subject matter covered considers the program's effectiveness, alternative programming, how to be proactive rather than reactive, contributing factors to a student being suspended and common themes in the characteristics of students who typically get suspended (losen,2011).

Suspension as a punitive disciplinary measure has proven to be unsuccessful for a majority of offenders. The idea that punishment is less effective than other avenues of behavior change strategies has been present since B.F. Skinner's work in 1973. The recognition of punishment's ineptitude seems to show that change is necessary. Considering the needs of students and how to most effectively help them learn and grow is essential. Creating alternative programming in schools has been an attempted as a solution to this issue in recent years. However, the effect of suspension as a form of punishment management on students' academic performance remained unknown and thus a need for this study(Hyman,1997).

In summary, the negative impacts of suspension on students academically and socially seem to far exceed the benefits of being assigned such a consequence. The goal of punishing problem behaviors in school should be not just to keep the school safe, but to help students learn from their mistakes. The research supports the notion that suspension is not effective for improving students' overall well-being. These children learn that violence is an appropriate method of getting what you want and that children copy their parents' behavior. Children describe feeling aggressive after being physically punished. In 12 of the 13 studies included in the meta-analysis, corporal punishment was found to be significantly associated with an increase in delinquent and antisocial behavior; the link with behavior problems has been confirmed by numerous later studies involving both young and older children. This would lead to absence from schools and consequently reducing the academic performance of the injured students (Gege,2011).

Overall, the research has shown that suspension programs are less effective than holistic approaches in helping youth to learn from and change their behavior. Using one standard program to teach and discipline unique individuals does not work. Throughout the research, surveys have been performed, programs have been implemented and statistics have been compiled and reviewed. Little to no research has considered the feelings and thoughts of the individuals who are directly impacted by suspension programs: the students. Working to understand what effects their behaviors, how suspension impacts their lives, and what they believe they may need to help them manage their behavior through the school day. By interviewing students about their attitudes and experiences with suspension at the high school level the study hopes to add to the research and help promote change. All of the literature and research discussed above show how disciplinary actions or reactions in school can have an impact on the developing identity of young people (Losen, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

Education is critical to industrial and technological development, with the history of developed nations bearing records of this, developing nations aspiring to realize the same status have to put a premium. UNESCO (2005) indicates that knowledge holds key to the attainment of the millennium development goals, which include, food security, eradication

of child mortality, and reduction of the spread of HIV and AIDS among others. Scholars and researchers generally agree that the school variables, which include teachers, administration and resources, perform a critical role in educational achievement especially in KCSE performance than other variables. The commitment and determination of Kenya government to provide education as a means of developing human resource cannot be overlooked. Over the years, the government has made several policy pronouncements and institutional changes aimed at improving the quality of the graduates of education system. There is great effort made by the Ministry of Education to offer guidance and counseling services to schools but still cases of indiscipline in public secondary schools are reported in Tharaka Nithi County.

Despite government effort and emphasis suspension asdiscipline management strategy,suspension is time wasting not only to students but also principals and BOM. It can therefore be easily avoided. The academic trend for 2013 to 2015 show a grade attained in KCPE and a decline of the grade at KCSE in the same years in Tharaka Nithi County. In 2013 the mean grade for KCPE was C and for KCSE D+. IN 2014 KCPE was C and KCSE was D+. In 2015 KCPE attained grade C+ whereas KCSE managed grade C-. The results show a lot of wastage from primary to secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.

Whereas, there has been studies carried out on the causes of indiscipline in schools and reasons for the lack of good performance in KCSE, there is scanty information on how suspension as discipline management strategy impacts on the students' performance in KCSE. Owing to the high number of indiscipline cases and decline in grade from KCPE to KCSE in Tharaka Nithi County, this study seeks to assess suspension as discipline management strategy and its impact on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in public secondary schools in the County.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive survey research design. This design was suitable because it fits the nature of the study. This study described the teachers' discipline management strategies and examined how they affected the students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. According to Bryman (2012), descriptive survey deals with counting the number of respondents with certain opinions, attitudes towards a specific object. For this study opinion was sought through questionnaires and interviews on whether the teachers discipline management strategies support students' performance in KCSE or not.

This study targeted all the public secondary schools of various categories in Tharaka Nithi County. There were a total of 104 public schools in Tharaka Nithi County with 104 principals and 6862 teachers.

Data collected through questionnaires was sorted, edited and cleaned. Coding is whereby researchers assign respondents' answers to pertinent responses categories, in tabulation form, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Descriptive statistics included frequencies, measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). The data was then keyed into the computer. Pearson r was used to test the relationships with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To present quantitative data, descriptive statistics was used. Data was presented in form of tables, graphs and pie charts.

Purpose of the Study and objectives of the paper

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of suspension as discipline management strategy on KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The study was set to assess the influence of suspension on KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

The theoretical framework for the proposed study was based on Systems Theory of Peter M. Senge, (1990). Peter looks at organization as where people continually expand their capacity to create the result they truly desire, where new and expansive pattern of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations is set and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. For the discipline in a school to work, all the discipline strategies must work together for a common outcome. The four disciplines in an organization according to peter are discussed below. Systems thinking: this is the cornerstone of the learning organization. Each member sees himself as a member connected to the whole and having interrelationships with other members of the organization. In this study the administration system is the focus point where all discipline strategies of the organization can be coordinated. Personal mastery or continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision focusing our energies, developing patience and seeing reality of objectivity is the second discipline. This is the work of guidance and counseling in our schools.

Mental models are ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures that influence how we understand the world. This is the third discipline. When the student council is involved in the day to day of school management, their view of their academic performance is heightened and they contribute more to schools discipline. Team learning: process of aligning and the capacities of team to create the results its members truly desire. This is where students are suspended to pave way to the conducive environment for other stundents. This is the fifth discipline. The integration of the discipline strategies in management of discipline is geared towards good performance in KCSE**.** In this study the Systems Theory will be used to understand the influence of the suspension on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondents

Teachers

The total numbers of questionnaires issued to the teachers were 346. The collection of 340 realized. This was 98% return rate. These rates are high enough and therefore build confidence in the results as presented in figure 1.
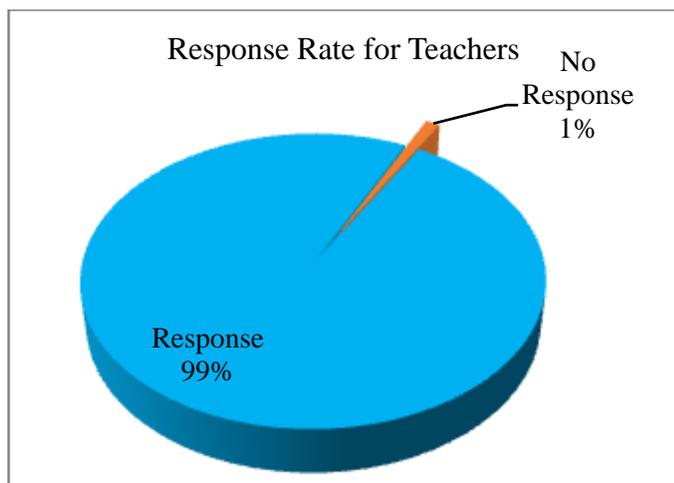

Figure 1: Response rate for teachers

Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to establish how the sample was spread out across gender. Results of the respondents in involvement in gender are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Principals

Gender of the Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Male	13	70
Female	8	30
Total	21	100.0

Results in Table 1 indicate that 70% of the principals who responded were male and 30% were female implying that majority of principals employed in these schools are males compared to their female counterparts.

Table 2: Gender distribution of teachers

Gender of the Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Male	208	61.2
Female	133	28.8
Total	340	100.0

Results in Table 2 indicate that 61.2% of the principals who responded were male and 28.8% were female implying that

majority of teachers employed in these schools are males compared to their female counterparts.

School Category

This study aimed at establishing the distribution of the respondents among the schools selected for this study.

Table 3: School Category

What is your School Category	Frequency	Percent
Boys School	4	10
Girls School	7	17.5
Mixed School	31	77.5
Total	40	100.0

Results in Table 3 indicate that majority of the schools studied were mixed schools (77.5%). Pure boys' schools studied were 10% of the total sample while pure girls' schools were 17.5% of the total sample. The study therefore recommends that stake holders should give more alternatives for pure girls' and pure boy's schools in the county**.**

Relationship between the use of Suspension of Indisciplined Students and KCSE Performance

This study aimed at establishing the Relationship between the use of Suspension of Indisciplined Students and KCSE Performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. To test the relationship between Suspension of Indiscipline Students and students' performance, hypothesis three was used.

$H_{03:}$ *There is no significant relationship between the use of suspension as teachers' discipline management strategy and KCSE performance among students in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.* The study subjected the test items that were based on a five Likert scale to descriptive statistics with the help of SPSS software. The results of the computation are shown in Table 11. From Table 11, we see that all the teachers i.e. 100% agreed that in their schools the parents were immediately informed when their children were suspended from school. 281(82.5%) of the principals agreed that they gave students warning before being suspended from school while 60 (17.5%) were not sure of this. On whether there is an arrangement for the suspended students to ensure they cover what they missed in during suspension, 291(82.5%) were non committal to this question while on 51(15%) agreed and

315(92.5%) agreed. Majority 323(95%) of principals strongly disagreed that suspension played a positive role in students' performance in KCSE; 9(2.5%) disagreed to this and another 9(2.5%) neither disagreed nor agreed. The results discussed above are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Suspension of Indisciplined Students and Students' Performance

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teachers are allowed to suspend students from class	58.2	38.6	2.3	.9	0	1.4591	.59056
Only the principal can suspend students from school	0	2.3	1.8	36.8	59.1	4.5263	.65268
We have set maximum days' students can be suspended from school	0	15.8	52.6	26.6	5.0	3.2076	.76250
Parents are informed immediately their children are suspended from school	0	0.0	13.2	39.5	47.4	4.3421	.69976
Students are given warning before being suspended from school	0	9.9	62.9	23.4	3.8	3.2105	.66510
Arrangements are made for student to recover what they missed during suspension	1.5	42.1	35.7	20.2	.6	2.7632	.80653
Suspension plays a positive role in students performance in KCSE	88.3	1.5	2.0	.9	7.3	1.3743	1.09931
Average	21.1	15.7	24.4	21.2	17.6	2.9833	0.7538

Results in Table 4 indicate that 198(58.2%) of teachers strongly disagreed, 131(38.6%) disagreed that teachers were allowed to suspend students from class. Only 3(0.9%) agreed to this and a further 8(2.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed. To justify their response, 201(59.1%) strongly agreed and another 125 (36.8%) agreed that principals were the only people allowed to suspend students from school. Only 6(1.8%) of the teachers were not sure and 8(2.3%) disagreed. On setting the maximum days the students can be suspended, the teachers had varied opinion with 179(52.6%) being neutral, 90(26.6%) agreed, 17(5%) strongly agreed while 53(15.8%) disagreed.

From Table 4, it further shows that 162(47.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed and 135(39.5%) agreed that in their schools the parents were immediately informed when their children were suspended from school while 45(13.2%) were not sure whether this is always done. On whether the students are warned before being suspended, 214(62.9%) of the teachers were not sure, 34 (9.9%) disagreed while 80(23.4%) agreed and only 13(3.8%) strongly agreed with the statement. Opinion of teachers on whether there are arrangements for the suspended students to ensure they cover what they missed in during suspension varied with 144(42.1%) disagreeing,

122(35.7%) not sure, 69(20.2%) agreeing while 6(1.5%) strongly disagreed and only 2(0.6%) strongly agreed with this arrangement. As to whether suspension played a positive role in students' performance in KCSE, majority 300(88.3%) of teachers strongly disagreed, 6(1.5%) disagreed, 7(2%) not sure while 3(0.9%) agreed and 25(7.3%) strongly agreed.

These results in Table 4 are in line with the Guidelines on the suspension of indiscipline students in Kenya. They are contained in the Education Act Cap 211 on school discipline regulations. Republic of Kenya (1980) stipulates that suspended students shall not be allowed to attend classes and shall be required to be physically away from the school precincts until he/she is informed of the outcome of the case to the parent or legal guardian through a letter. When a head teacher finds it necessary to suspend a student from school, the principal should inform the student's parents or guardian of the suspension, the length of the suspension and the specific reasons for it by formal notification. Particulars for the formal notification should include sufficient reason for suspension and relevant circumstances which should be fully understood by the students, parents and guardians. The principal should inform the BoM members of the punishment at once and convene a meeting within 14 days to discuss the discipline issues. Although suspension of indiscipline students consumes time, these legal provisions entails good legislative practices in administering suspension as an alternative disciplinary method and procedures to be followed in dealing with students' discipline. However, it is the responsibility of the principal to make arrangements for the time wasted by the learner during suspension.

These results can be explained by the fact that although students engaging in risk behaviors impacts the safety and learning environment of the school, these risk behaviors could be effectively solved and discouraged by suspension of students from the school for a couple of days . As a result, schools must look to try to reduce the behaviors (Wilson, Lipsey & Derzon, 2007). These risk behaviors in adolescence will inevitably impact the school at some level, as teens spend at least seven hours out of their day at school. Engaging in violence in school is one risk behavior that schools hope to curtail through programs such as ISS or OSS. ISS and OSS both remove the problem from the classroom, hopefully creating a safer environment.

In agreement with the findings of suspension of indisciplined students and students' discipline, Mugo (2006) observed that suspension of indiscipline students was used in extreme cases and for habitual offenders. This is consistent with Mutua (2004) who found that suspension was used at times as an alternative strategy meaning that it had not been given a lot of prominence. Smit (2010) however argues that suspension pushes students out of school and may only contribute to the broader problem of violence. Kindiki (2009) agrees in that suspended students rarely changed their behaviour and will most likely carry on with the same delinquent behaviour after suspension. However, Skinner and subsequent researchers of

his work found that suspension is not an avenue that teaches new behaviors, often because of the way that it is used and applied. Rather, suspension was often found to suppress behaviors for a time and would later re-surface. He did note that positive reinforcement is a much more effective way of helping individuals learn new behaviors. The data collected by Kindiki (2009) revealed that suspension was considered the most common technique used to deal with indiscipline in secondary schools. The study further revealed that suspended students rarely changed their behaviour and will most likely carry on with the same delinquent behaviour after suspension. The study recommended effective guidance and counseling for students would realize their mistakes and initiate behaviour change aimed at being better disciplined. Guidance of students on proper use of information Communication Technology (ICT) would also minimize antisocial behaviour among students. This implies that the executors of suspension get a little relieve for a while as the student services the suspension period but the student may come back with worse indiscipline issues than they left the schools. The IDEA legislature outlines that when assigning suspension for a classified student, for a period of time longer than 10 days, the symptoms of the student's disability must be considered (Goran & Gage, 2011). They added that there here is not a clear outline for the team considering the student's prolonged suspension to determine whether or not the behavior is related to their disability. Parents will often argue that the behavior is a result of the disability. Thus, fairness is often called to question. Another layer that has been noted to be on the rise in the special needs population is emotional disturbance (Eklund, 2009). Added that the numbers of students who are identified to be at risk for emotional struggles are on the rise, and this disability is correlated with suspension in school (Eklun, 2009). These students often also learn differently than others, so a consequence that may help one student learn may not be effective for a student with special learning needs. For students with disabilities, there are often processing and/or language deficits associated with their classification, which implies that their understanding of expectations may be different (Goran & Gage, 2011), said that a student with special needs may act out if he/she does not understand why they are getting in trouble. He suggested that in dealing with the students discipline looking beyond the negative behaviors may help students learn from their mistakes in the future.

To test the relationship between suspension of indisciplined students and KCSE performance hypothesis 3was used. *H03: There is no significant relationship between suspension of indisciplined students and KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County*.

The researcher further tested the relationship by using a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis. The study aimed at determining the influence of suspension of indisciplined students as a Discipline Management Strategy on KCSE Performance. The results are represented in Table 5

Table 5: Pearson Correlation between Suspension of Indisciplined Students and KCSE Performance

		KCSE performance	suspension of indisciplined Students
KCSE performance	Pearson Correlation	1	-.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.766
	N	340	340
Suspension by Teachers	Pearson Correlation	-.049	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.766	
	N	340	340
p > .05 (2-tailed); df = 338; a = 0.05.			

A Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was run to access the relationship between suspension of indisciplined students and KCSE performance in 40 public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. This was out of data collected by questionnaire items 21 to 27 put in a Likert scale form that got information on suspension of indisciplined students (see appendix 3). The computation produced a p-value of .766 and an r-value of -.049 at a df of 340 at an alpha level of .05. The results of the computation are shown in Table 12. With a Pearson's Correlation value of -.049, it means that the relationship was significant. The results also indicated that a p-value of .766 was greater than the chosen alpha level of .05 that was used to determine the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis in this study. This means that the null hypothesis was accepted thus Table 5

I therefore accept hypothesis three and conclude that there is no significant relationship between the use of students' council as principal's discipline management strategy and KCSE performance among students in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. The two variables were moderately correlated (r (340) =.-049, p < .05).

Therefore I fail to reject the null hypothesis three and conclude that there is no significant relationship between the use of suspension of students as a principal's discipline management strategy and KCSE performance among students in public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.

These results can be explained by the fact that although students engaging in risk behaviors impacts the safety and learning environment of the school, these risk behaviors could be effectively solved and discouraged by suspension of students from the school for a couple of days . The results agree with findings by Elsevier (1973) that, essentially the goal of suspension to decrease or eliminate problem behaviors for students. However, Skinner (2003) and subsequent researchers of his work found that punishment is not an avenue that teaches new behaviors, often because of the way that it is used and applied. Rather, punishment was often found to suppress behaviors for a time and would later re-

surface. He did note that positive reinforcement is a much more effective way of helping individuals learn new behaviors. Wilson, Lipsey and Derzon (2007) concurs with these results when he said that these risk behaviors in adolescence will inevitably impact the school at some level, as teens spend at least seven hours out of their day at school. Engaging in violence in school is one risk behavior that schools hope to curtail through programs such as ISS or OSS. ISS and OSS both remove the problem from the classroom, hopefully creating a safer environment.

After testing the hypothesis, the researcher also analyzed data that was collected from the interview schedule form principals for triangulation purposes. The study aimed at determining whether there is a relationship between the use of suspension of indisciplined students as teachers discipline management strategy and the KCSE performance. Twenty one principals were interviewed based on structured interview questions seven to nine. These questions (see Appendix III) were designed to obtain relevant information from twenty one principals in relation to principals discipline management strategies. In answering interview questions 7 and 8, out of the 21 sampled interviewees, (100 %) had a clear guide on students suspension.

One of the principals, principal 20 responded that *"Suspension is done as per the code of regulations that allows suspending a student for a period of at-least two weeks depending on the weight of the offence. One, we let the student know of the offence committed. Secondly we inform the parents that we are suspending the child. We give the child a letter to go home for the duration which has been specified in the letter when he comes back he is supposed to come back with the parent so that they understands why the child has been at home and why the decision was take'.*

Most principals interviewed noted that suspension is done as the last resort when other avenues have failed. Principal 18 said *"We rarely suspend students because we do a lot of counseling to them and if there is a case of suspension we follow the ministry's procedure through the Board of Management (BOM), through the DEO's office and the like."*

Principal 3 responded that *"Few students have been suspended. Before we get to that point other strategies must have taken place and then that is the last option. We give the students some time through guidance and counseling to see whether they will change. When it gets to the extreme that is when we engage the student and sometimes suspend him though it is not our wish but we have to do that as a school to ensure that the programmes are running well."*

On whether there is an arrangement for the suspended students to ensure they cover what they missed in during suspension, 17(82.5%) were non committal to this question while on 3(15%) agreed and 1(2.5%) agreed. Majority 20(95%) of principals strongly disagreed that suspension played a positive role in students' performance in KCSE;

1(2.5%) disagreed to this and another 1(2.5%) neither disagreed nor agreed.

Principal 5 stated that *"Definitely suspension impacts negatively on performance because when a student is suspended he/she will be out for a long time without attending classes. At home they have no time to read, they have no time to concentrate on their studies and at the end of the day they end up failing."*

Principal 1. indicated that *"It has a negative effect because the child obviously misses out of class, will be out of school, would not do class work, may not do exams and with no contact with a teacher. It is not a very good measure but sometimes we are pushed to the extreme to do that."*

Principal 12 stated that *"Indiscipline among students leads to poor performance. Indiscipline cases will definitely lead to time wastage especially when the students are punished they are out there when learning is in progress; they are not able to get anything from class and they are not able to perform."*

However, one of the principal no 8 was of a mix opinion on the impact of student suspension. He responded that *"Suspension is not always the best because if you expect students to perform then you must ensure that they are in school all the time and are studying. In many cases there is a slight drop in performance of the students but there are those who are helped because they come back when they are serious and you find that they have changed and they do a lot and therefore they are able to do well".*

Majority of the principals faulted suspension of the indisciplined students as a strategy to KCSEperformance. In agreement with the results Skiba & Knesting (2001) said that the area of controversy regarding punitive measures is that in schools the severity of the punishment does not seem to fit the perceived crime. In agreement to these results, Burke, Oats, Ringle, Fichtner, and DelGaudio, (2011) said that the problem associated to suspension can be alleviated by problem behavior tracking, classroom management strategies, utilizing counseling in conjunction with disciplinary measures, and evaluations of school's mental health programs have all been researched. In agree with the results Eklund (2009), Smith, Bicard, Bicard & Casey (2012) suggest early identification programs and tracking problem behaviors and classroom management training for teachers to be considered in efforts to decreasing discipline referrals.

These results concur with the results from the principals' interview. Just as in the Pearson r results, the meaning is that whereas suspension has been used in management of discipline in schools, it has its disadvantages. The students lose a lot of study time and may not change the errant behavior hence interfere with KCSE performance. It is therefore imperative that it can be avoided and if not be used as the last result.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions were based on the findings of the study in reference to the specific objective.

On whether suspension of students enhances student performance in KCSE, when used as teachers discipline management strategy, the study concluded that increased student suspension does not affect students' performance positively. From the findings of the study, the researcher made the following recommendation:

Students' suspension as discipline management strategy should be reviewed with the intention of reinforcing the use of guidance and counseling. This can be done by detecting the problematic students early enough so that they can be subjected to guidance and counseling.

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