FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENTS' COUNCILS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIRINYAGA EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University

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This work is dedicated to my parents: Charles Kithaka and Virginia Kariuko, my wife Cate Nyaga and, my daughters Lydiah Igoki and Charlotte Wanjiku Kinyua. God bless you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDICES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure   **Page**

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

B.O.M   Board of Management

HASAS   Having a Say at School

KSSHA   Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association

KSSSC   Kenya Secondary Schools Student Council

MoE   Ministry of Education

NYCI   National Youth Council of Ireland

SC   Student Council

SCs   Student Councils

SCLs   Student Council Leaders

SRC   Student Representative Council

TSC   Teachers' Service Commission

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Education Fund

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the various factors influencing effectiveness of students' councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County, Kenya. Five research questions were formulated to guide the study. Research question one sought to find how the students' councils election process influence the effectiveness of students' councils, research question two sought to find out how training of students' councilors influence the effectiveness of students' councils, research question three sought to assess how students' councils' size influence the effectiveness of the students' councils, research question four sought to find out how school size influence the effectiveness of students' councils and the last research question sought to assess the influence of principals' administrative experience on the effectiveness of students' councils.

The literature review focused on the effectiveness of students' councils in terms of how they operate and in terms of what they accomplish. The study employed descriptive survey design. The target population consisted of 33 public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County which had 33 principals and 660 students' leaders. The sample size comprised of 20 principals and 198 students' councilors. Self administered questionnaires were used to solicit data from the respondents. Findings revealed that most students' councils, 73 percent, were democratically elected with input from principals and teachers. It was also noted that majority of the students' councils were inducted in to their new roles through training- both formal and informal training was offered. However principals preferred offering formal training to the students' councilors. It was observed that the training given to the students' councilors was not adequate. The students' councils were made of different number of students' councilors and their sizes were directly proportional to the students' body population. The research also concluded that principal's administrative experience influenced the effectiveness of students' councils. The researcher recommended that a well planned and structured training programme should be organized for students' council leaders by the principals in schools. A curriculum of training students' council leaders should be developed and implemented in schools to enable them resolve conflicts, perform their duties with ease, comfortably and effectively. Both formal and informal training should be offered regularly to induct the students' councilors to leadership.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Back ground to the study

There are many reasons advanced about why student councils should be promoted. The main arguments stem firmly from the changing attitudes towards children and young people in society, and the increasing need to encourage and promote youth participation (Keogh & Whyte, 2005). Empirical evidence that exists demonstrates the positive aspects of student councils. These are, assistance in management, improving staff and student relationships, reduction in indiscipline cases, unrests in schools and improved performance in both academic and co-curricular programmes (UNICEF/KSSHA, 2013).

The Working Group of Student Councils in Ireland defined a Student Council as a representative structure for students only, through which they can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents for the benefit of the school and its students (National Youth Council of Ireland, 2002). The student councils (SC), formerly prefect body exists but their level of effectiveness is influenced by factors like the election process/method, training, size of the student councils, school size and principals' administrative experience.

The election process is an important way to raise awareness among staff of the students' council (Keogh & Whyte, 2005). In a study carried out by the Children's Research Centre, on behalf of the Working Group on Students' Councils in Second Level Schools in Ireland (2005), four schools were surveyed. Three were voluntary secondary and one community college. The election process was reported as being very important. Councils which were mainly elected by students but had some teacher input into the election of council leaders seemed to be the most effective, as the council members were sanctioned by students and staff. This was contrary to the ones appointed by the school management. There was more commitment from council members if the election process was seen to be fair and involved nominees demonstrating their interest in the council.

On training, Sabitu (2014) did a study on students' assessment of the extent and prospect of their participation in maintenance of discipline in public secondary schools in Osun state, Nigeria. Data was obtained from 500 stratified randomly sampled male and female students from ten public secondary schools in the state. He concluded that courses and seminars in leadership training should be organized occasionally for student leaders on the effective maintenance of school discipline. Vundi, Majanga and Odollo (2014) conducted a research in Kenya to look into the effects of socializing student council leaders on conflict management in secondary schools. The student council leaders (SCLs) opined that formal

training in conflict management had improved their competence in resolving conflicts among fellow students.

A research report done by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College on behalf of the National Children's Office, Ireland (2005) assessed a number of issues related to the internal working of the council which impact on how well it operates. One of the issues assessed was the council size and whether junior students were represented on the council. In this research, size was raised as an issue for a lot of councils, and especially for large schools. The Centre observed that in smaller schools, it is possible to have representation from each class on the council yet have a small, manageable council. In larger schools however, the decision had to be made about how many representatives there should be. The researchers observed that large councils provide wider representation of the students' body, but they face more challenges in terms of organisation and communication.

School size is another factor that influences the effectiveness of student councils. Bukaliya (2012) conducted a case study assessing the effectiveness of students' representative councils in open and distance learning at the Zimbabwe Open University, in the Mashonaland East region. A sample of 100 students was drawn and consisted of 10 Student Representative Council (SRC) members, and 90 ordinary students. From his findings, the majority, 7(70%) of the SRC members indicated that due to the geographical dispersion of the students, the SRC was

unable to arrange meetings with them, even when tutorials were in session because most students did not attend the tutorials resulting in planned meetings failing to take off. Feldman and Newcomb (1993) suggests that students at large institutions may feel anonymous in relation to the student body as a whole and that size itself poses consequences for interpersonal relations.

Administration support is a key factor in the enhancement of the effectiveness of student councils. Obiero (2012) did a study and assessed the influence of University administration on the involvement of student leaders in the governance of university. He based his case study on Kenyatta University, Kenya. He conducted his study after the University had restored some calm after a period of successive unrests. He attributed the calmness experienced to adequate consultation between the student leaders and the university administration. But even though the students indicated that they were involved in the decision making process, there were times they felt they were being ignored on sensitive issues where decisions were made without consulting them.

Mule (2011) conducted a study on factors influencing student leaders' involvement in governance of public secondary schools in Mwala District. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and the study participants included 17 principals and 255 student leaders. The study found out that all principals are aware of the importance of participatory school management as a way of governance. The study established that there was no significant difference

4

between level of students' involvement in school governance and principals' administration experience.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In Kirinyaga East Sub-County, cases of student indiscipline have been more rampant than in the other 4 sub-counties in the larger Kirinyaga County (Kirinyaga County Director of Education). In Kirinyaga East Sub-County, there have been more schools involved in strikes and unrests in the past three years unlike in other sub-counties despite them having student councils. For example, out of 7 schools involved in strikes and unrests, 4 came from Kirinyaga East Sub-County representing 57%. The researcher notes that one of the reasons advanced by stakeholders and policy makers in the education sector in Kenya for setting up students' councils is to avert strikes and unrests and to assist students use non-violent means in resolving conflicts. Therefore this researcher wants to assess the factors influencing effectiveness of the students' councils in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors influencing effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i)   To establish the influence of the election process on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

ii)   To establish the influence of training on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

iii)   To assess the influence of council size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

iv)   To determine the influence of school size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

v)   To determine the influence of principal's administrative experience on the effectiveness on student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

i)   What is the influence of student councils election process on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County?

ii)   What is the influence of training on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County?

iii)   What is the influence of council size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County?

iv)   What is the influence of school size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County?

v)   What is the influence of principal's administrative experience on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County?

1.6 Significance of the study

The Board of Management (B.O.M) and the principals may gain a deeper understanding of the effect of a democratic election process, and training of student councils leaders in an effort of enhancing their effectiveness in school management. The gap between teachers and students may be narrowed when the student councils are effective in the execution of their mandate. The study findings may also add knowledge to the already existing stock of knowledge about the role and importance of student councils in school management in secondary schools.

1.7 Limitations of the study

There exists inadequate literature discussing the factors- election process, training, council size, school size, and principals' administrative experience- influencing effectiveness of student councils. The respondents involved only the principals and the students' leaders. The study was also limited by the fact that

data was collected using a self-assessment questionnaire which was subject to respondent bias. However, the researcher tried to ensure reliability and validity of the questionnaire by conducting a pilot study and seeking the advice of research experts.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was confined to public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County. Private schools were not included in the study. Hence the research findings may not be generalized to all schools. The study sample included only principals and student leaders and it was conducted in only one Sub-County. This means that the findings of the study may only be generalized to other parts of the county with restraint.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The study was based on the following assumptions. That:

i)   The principals and the student leaders would give opinions uninfluenced and honestly

ii)   The schools within the area of study have student councils.

1.10 Definitions of significant terms

The following are the definitions of significant terms used in the study.

Council size refers to the number of student leaders' representatives that make up a student council in a school

Effectiveness refers to the ability to produce the intended results.

Election process refers to the procedure of electing student leaders

School size is measured in terms of student population in a school

Student council refers to a representative body of students within a school

Training means to teach student leaders the skills necessary to do their representative role effectively.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one consists of the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objective of the study, research questions, significance and limitations of the study, delimitations, assumptions of the study, and definition of significant terms of the study. Chapter two expounds on the literature review and looks at the following sub-headings: students' councils in secondary schools and their effectiveness -effectiveness of students' councils in terms of how they operate, and effectiveness of students' councils in terms of what they accomplish. The chapter further includes election process and

its effectiveness on students' councils; training and its effectiveness on students' councils, council size and its effectiveness on students' councils, school size and its effectiveness on students' councils and principals' administrative experience on the effectiveness of students' councils.

Chapter three explains the research methodology that includes introduction, research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, instrument validity, instrument reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques. Chapter four presents the findings from data analysis in line with the research questions of the study, while chapter five is concerned with the summary of the research study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research in the same area.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section presents a review of literature related to the study. The literature is presented under the following sub-headings: student councils in secondary schools and their effectiveness - effectiveness of student councils in terms of how they operate, and effectiveness of SCs in terms of what they accomplish. The other sub-headings will be election process and its effectiveness on student councils; training and its effectiveness on student councils, council size and its effectiveness on student councils, school size and its effectiveness on student councils and principals' administrative experience on the effectiveness of student councils.

2.2 Students' councils in secondary schools and their effectiveness

Effectiveness of student councils can be measured in terms of how they operate and in terms of what they accomplish.

2.2.1 Effectiveness of students' councils in terms of how they operate

According to a research report by The Children's Research Centre, Trinity College, on behalf of the National Children's Office (2005), holding regular meetings is one of the essential factors for a successful council. The HASAS School Survey (2010) revealed that the common pattern across Scotland is for

pupil councils to meet once each month. Fewer than 19% of pupil councils meet fortnightly. 14% of pupil councils meet only once each school term, while the remaining 33% of pupil councils reported no set schedule and meet on an irregular basis. 61 percent (the great majority of pupil councils) meet during lesson times, while one in five (20%) meet during breaks or lunch times. It is necessary for SCs to be holding frequent meetings and give immediate feedback. The timing of meetings has been observed as an important factor (Hannam, 2001; Davies, 1998; Dobie and MacBeath, 1998). Timing of meetings has key psychological and practical implications. Holding meetings after school or during lunch break places the SC on the same level as a club, but using lesson time places it on the same footing as the National Curriculum (Davies, 1998). Davies (1998) also notes that co-operation of staff is needed about students missing lessons and making up work.

The other essential factor for a successful SC is the need to have a written constitution or official ground rules for reference purposes. Moreover, the roles and the responsibilities of the SC need to be made clear to all the members. Kyungu (2009) in his research emphasizes the need to have clear enumerated responsibilities for all the students' council leaders for effective execution of their duties.

Effective feedback and communication procedures and the involvement of senior management is the other essential factor for an effective SC. Sometimes feedback

through informal friendship groups is preferable, as some pupils listen better outside the classroom environment. There should be inclusive structures and lines of communication through class councils so that an individual voice can be heard. (National Youth Council of Ireland, 2002) .Good communication should be enhanced within meetings so that there can be cordial working relationship with others within the council. In terms of day-to -day operation, there ought to be a fair representation. Fair representation may be measured in terms of the extent to which student councilors solicit and reflect the views of the fellow students/ constituents, rather than just assert their own personal opinions. This will improve the council's credibility and effectiveness.

Having adequate time enhances effectiveness of a SC. According to Having a Say at School (HASAS) Survey(2010), time allocated for SCs may be looked in terms of how often the council meets; how long each session lasts; planning or preparation time; implementation of decisions made ; and communication with both adult decision makers and fellow students. Lack of enough time to talk at meetings about all the issues was identified as an obstacle by 55% of both pupil councils and school staff. Lack of enough time to collect other pupils' views was seen as a problem by 38% of pupil councils and 46% of adult advisors.

The National Youth Council of Ireland (2002) surveyed all the second level schools in Ireland. The council highlighted a number of particular issues which impact on the successful operation of SCs. One of the most important issues is

that there should be clarity about the role of the SC and realism about what it can achieve. There is need to be a concurrence between the principal and the SC on the role of the SC representatives (Dowling, 2003).

Support is also key for an effective operation of SCs. There should be support from a majority of the teachers and absolutely essentially from the principal. Whyte and Keogh (2005) points out that some factors external to the school environment have been identified as helping SCs operate effectively. These factors are: financial support, laws guaranteeing student representation, real support from the government, being taken seriously by the public and working together with other organisations towards a goal. For an effective operation of SCs, there should be a wide-ranging agenda, not tightly prescribed by the principal, which includes both students' immediate concerns and school policy issues including matters that affect teaching and learning.

Woods (2002) says:

"Students have a voice and a contribution to make to their school. They should not only be given the opportunity to express their views on issues of concern to them in the school but they should also be listened to and encouraged to take an active part in promoting the aims and objectives of the school (p.4)."

2.2.2 Effectiveness of students' councils in terms of what they accomplish

The effectiveness of SCs can be judged upon the positive changes in school life that result from their activities. The most common reason to have a SC at all is to create an opportunity for collaborative decision-making between students and staff members within the school. They also exist as a way of accomplishing significant changes in school life (HASAS School Survey, 2010). A council can be said to be effective when it successfully discusses ideas or problems, makes recommendations and influences change and takes action on such things as school uniforms , break times , special projects fundraising, school environment and lunches (HASAS School Survey, 2010).

According to HASAS School Survey (2010), the effectiveness of SCs can also be measured in terms of the achievements like, what they hoped to achieve by the end of it. This relates to matters students perceive as affecting the quality of their- and their fellow students'- daily school lives. According to the National youth Council of Ireland (2002), SCs can be effective in several ways: representing other students, including attendance at meetings, bringing issues from classmates and being prepared to speak at meetings; individual effectiveness in terms of decision making and communication and carrying out leadership roles; carrying through with their plans and organizing activities; making concrete improvements in school life; and improving school ethos.

2.3 Election process and effectiveness of students' councils

According to Having a Say at School(HASAS): Research on Pupil Councils in Scotland(2010), the ways in which pupil councilors are elected/selected and a variety of communication issues, are deemed to be as significant in judging "effectiveness" as the actual changes in school life to which pupil councils contribute. The researchers observe that when selection is seen as fair, pupil councils are more likely to be perceived as effective. A SC will work well if its establishment is perceived by other students to be right and that it followed a democratic process in setting it up. The HASAS School Survey (2010) suggests that the perceived fairness of each school's election/selection process is an important predictor of SCs perceived effectiveness. Pupil councils that help to make significant changes in school life elicit somewhat negative reactions if the student councilors were selected in a manner that was perceived as unreasonable, undemocratic or otherwise unfair.

2.4 Training and effectiveness of students' councils

Training is an important factor in preparing the student councils to function, and it should happen before the ground rules are established so the council is involved in the process (Keogh & Whyte, 2005). Training is an important support for councils as it will provide members with the skills they need to operate effectively, manage meetings, come to consensus about issues, organize activities, access views and represent views and negotiate with the management. It will also

provide the council members with the opportunity to bond and build relationships. There is need to have a clear role definition for student council and its members and there should be adequate preparation and on-going training and development to be made available to students. Students should also be made aware of laws guaranteeing student representation (Vundi, Majanga and Odollo, 2014).

To ensure that student leaders execute their mandate effectively, they should be trained and inducted appropriately to enable them to handle even complicated issues by themselves. Kyungu (2009) emphasizes that, for a student leader to be exemplary in his execution of his mandate and to be accepted by the student body, he needs to undergo training, should be guided by rules and procedures of work, and there should be clear enumerated responsibilities. The school management and administration should develop a Student Leaders Training Manual that covers all areas of interest dealing with student leadership. This training provides SCs with knowledge; skills and resources that they need to become active and engaged leaders in their schools and communities. To a great extent, the effectiveness of a student council is dependent on whether or not leadership training is provided for the newly elected student leaders.

2.5 Council size and effectiveness of students' councils

Sometimes the size and composition of a SC is normally determined by the B.O.M and the school administration having regard both to the need for the council to be representative of all students in the school and the need for it to

function effectively. It may not always be appropriate for each class to have a representative on the council, for example in a large school. When the B.O.M and the school administration decide to allow representation for each year group rather than each class, each class should be allowed to nominate a candidate for election (Keogh & Whyte 2005).

In large schools, consideration may also be given to having two councils, one for junior class students and one for senior class students (Keogh & Whyte 2005). A B.O.M may, at its discretion or on the advice of the principal, decide that first year students should not be appointed to the SC having regard to their relatively recent introduction to secondary school. Where a B.O.M takes such a decision, it should provide adequate structures to ensure that the views and concerns of first year students are addressed, for example through a mentoring programme. It should be noted that first years are very valuable as they see the school with fresh eyes and opinions (www.studentcouncil.ie/Running).

Sharkey and Guerin (2006) surveyed the views of 129 female students in Ireland. They found that first year students perceived the student council to be more beneficial than the fifth year students. When asked if the council was a benefit to the school, 75.6% of first year and 51% of fifth year students answered that it was beneficial, and 65.4% of first year and 53.1% of fifth year students believed that the council did benefit the students. When asked 'is the student council effective?'

57.6% of first year students responded positively compared to 34.6% of fifth year students.

2.6 School size and effectiveness of students' councils

The size of the school may dictate the size and composition of a SC. Just like in any democracy, the bigger the population of the citizenry the higher the number of the peoples' representatives. It is argued that smaller schools strengthen interpersonal relationships and sense of community. Smaller schools are also associated with stronger parental commitment and have higher rates of parental involvement. This improves educational effectiveness, no matter its form (Henderson, 1987).

Researchers also report that interpersonal relations among students and teachers are more positive at smaller schools. That is, the interpersonal bond between students is stronger in smaller schools than in larger schools (Ehrich, 2013). It is therefore expected that SCLs would be more effective in discharging their mandates in smaller schools than in bigger ones. Rayfield, Compton, Doerfert, Fraze and Akers (2008), in a study conducted in Arizona, Florida and Texas, established that student demographics, school size, and participation in multiple activities may explain how and why students participate in leadership development activities.

2.7 Principals' administrative experience and effectiveness of students' councils

Administrative experience is knowledge and skill gained through time spent doing administrative work (Macmillan English dictionary for advanced learners, 2005). While high school administrators and educators may have diverse viewpoints of the purpose, place and structure of student councils in a high school, the bottom line is that student councils can fulfill multiple roles within the educational, personal and social growth process of young adolescents, especially in creating a positive school climate. Effective principals have learned to use student councils as a vehicle to share their vision for school expectations by having student leaders effectively communicate these goals with the entire student body (Sherrill, 2014).

Sherrill (2014) observes that there are two keys that unlock the success of a high school student council. One is the principal who supports the SC, understands its purpose and potential as a functioning organisation within the school and provides opportunities for student leaders to lead in authentic way that serve to improve the school climate. The other key is a dedicated advisor who is able to introduce students to leadership opportunities in a meaningful age –appropriate ways, guide students through the processes of identifying and planning projects and activities, and help students understand the responsibilities that go with the leadership roles.

In a study conducted by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) in 2002, it was reported that the school principal was responsible for the establishment of the student council in 79 percent of cases compared to only 8 percent of cases where students took the initiative. Dowling (2003) compared student councils in three schools and argues that the role of the school principal is of central importance in the establishment and operation of a student council. He argues that the principal needs to be open and responsive if student engagement is to be effective. 'It is imperative that principals put in place professional practices that allow parents, teachers and students to have their say in educational change and development in their schools.' He acknowledges that school principals are often fully engaged with the challenge of implementing the continuous flow of educational reforms cited in recent legislations.

2.8 Summary of the literature review

For student councils to be effective in public secondary schools, the election process must be seen to be fair and democratic. The student leaders need to be trained to equip them with necessary knowledge and skills for effective execution of their mandate. The school administration has an obligation to help form a student council that is of manageable size. A well constituted student council should be able to fully represent the student body in the matters that concern them, help create a conducive learning environment and help reduce the many cases of unrests experienced in schools (Chemutai & Chumba, 2014). It is against

this background that a research need arose to determine the factors influencing effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

2.9 Theoretical framework

This study is based on the Social Systems Theory. Systems theory is the interdisciplinary study of systems in general, with the goal of elucidating principles that can be applied to all types of the systems at all levels in all fields of research (En.wikipedia.org/systems_theory). School system is a living and a dynamic organisation. A school is made up of several smaller social institutions like departments, committees and students' council which are constantly interacting and inter-dependent. Everything in a school is a complete system on its own. But it is a unit or sub-system of yet a larger system (supra system) and all are interdependent. From the supra system(environment) ,the school gets students, teachers, resource materials, finances , constraints such as requirements of the law and policy and expectations of parents, values and goals, and existing knowledge in the society. Schools are essentially living systems and that without people they are nothing but concrete and paper (Schmuch, 1977).

The system transforms the inputs in to finished products. Systems mean 'complexes of elements standing in interaction' (Bertalanffy, 1971). An example is that a school produces a changed person with skills, knowledge, values, and

competences to enable him/her contribute positively to self and society. Sub-systems have distinct properties both in specialization and scope of responsibilities but there is no single sub-system that is superior or inferior to others. All sub-systems perform unique and complementary roles to attain the common goals of the system. Thus, even if the principal occupies a higher position than the students' council who are in the lowest rank of the administrative hierarchy, the role of the SC is not inferior.

The Systems Theory was found appropriate for this study because a school being a social system has sub-systems such as students' council sub-system, which requires proper coordination, role clarity, training and healthy relationship with the school management, administration, school teaching and non- teaching staff and students to enable it carry out its role effectively.

2.10 Conceptual framework of the study

The conceptual framework shows that various factors can influence effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools. These are the independent variables of the study. These factors will impact directly on the dependent variable of the study which is the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework on factors influencing effectiveness of students' councils

Election process		
Students' council training	Inclusive management process; involving students, teachers and B.O.M.	Effectiveness of students' councils: reduction of strikes, friendly conflict resolution mechanisms, conducive learning environment e.t.c.
Students' council size		
School size		
Principal's administrative experience		
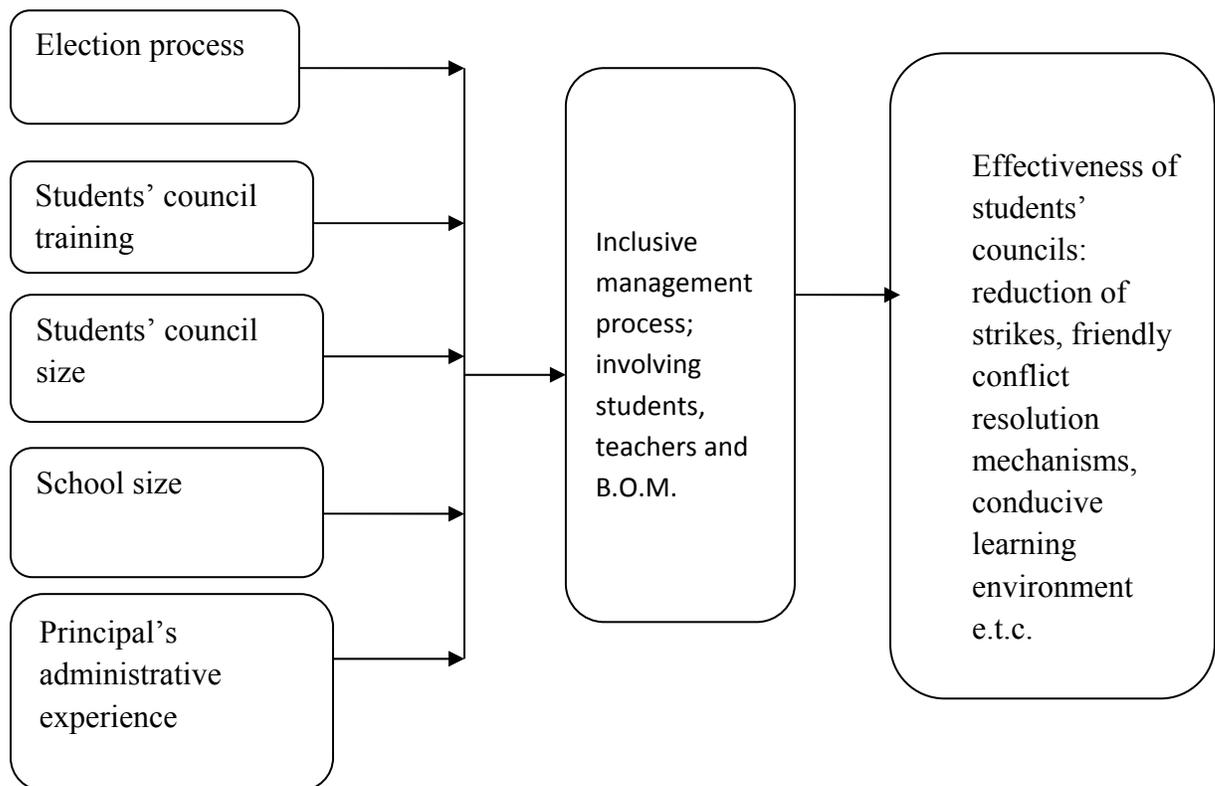
The independent variables of this study are the student council election process, student council training, student council size, school size and principals' administrative experience. These variables have an influence on the dependent variable of the study which is the effectiveness of the student councils. It is expected that in schools where student councils are effective, governance and management processes are inclusive. It is expected that in schools where there is a democratic election process, training of student councilors, a manageable student

24

council and principals with more administrative experience, student councils are more effective in discharging their duties like, reduction in administrative and governance problems, improved school learning climate and good relationship amongst all stakeholders.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter was divided in to the following sub-sections: the research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures and techniques of data analysis.

3.2 Research design

The study employed a descriptive survey design. The design was considered appropriate for collecting information that would demonstrate relationships and because it examines a situation as it is. Glass and Hopkins (1984) argue that, descriptive research involves gathering data that describes events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts and describes data collection. Survey research involves acquiring information about one or more groups of people- perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes, or previous experience- by asking them questions and tabulating their answers. The ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population.

3.3 Target population

Kirinyaga East Sub-County has 33 public secondary schools and 4 categories of schools. Boys' boarding are 4, Girls' boarding are 7, Mixed day are 21 while Mixed day/ boarding is 1. The proposed student council structure comprises of about twenty student leaders (UNICEF/KSSHA, 2013). So, in 33 schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County, the researcher targets 660 student council leaders and 33 principals who form the respondents in this study (Kirinyaga East Sub-County T.S.C Unit). The study targeted schools according to school category, that is, National, Extra-County, County and Sub-County public schools. The schools were further stratified according to type-boys' boarding, girls' boarding, mixed day and mixed day/ boarding schools.

3.4 Sample size and sampling techniques

The researcher used stratified random sampling technique to sample his data. Gay (1992) states that a sample size of 10% of the target population is considered minimum, while a sample of 20% is required for smaller population and 30% for statistical analysis. Of the 33 public secondary schools and 33 principals in the Sub-County, the researcher obtained a sample size of 20 public schools and 20 principals by stratified random sampling across the four strata. 30 percent (30%) of the 660 student council leaders (SCLs) were chosen to give 198 SCLs. The total number of respondents is therefore 198 SCLs and 20 principals to yield a total of 218 respondents.

Table 3.1 Schools' sample frame

School type	target population	Sample of schools	SCLs	principals
Boys' boarding	4	2	20	2
Girls' boarding	7	4	40	4
Mixed day	21	13	120	13
Mixed day/ boarding	1	1	18	1
Total	33	20	198	20

3.5 Research instruments

Data was collected using questionnaires, one for principals and the other for student leaders. The tool was considered appropriate because the respondents are literate and able to complete questions on their own. Both questionnaires collected information related to election process/method used in electing student leaders, types of training given to the student leaders, the size of the student councils, and school size. The principals' questionnaire gathered information on principals' administrative experience on top of other items. Both questionnaires gathered information that assessed the effectiveness of student councils in represented schools.

3.6 Instrument validity

Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Key, 1997). Content validity refers to the appropriateness of the content of an instrument like questions and observation logs. According to Borg and Gall (1989), expert opinions are needed to establish content validity. In this case, expert advice was sought from my supervisors and other experts from the University in order to help improve content validity of the instrument. Content validity in both the questionnaires was checked by pilot testing them. A pilot study was done with three principals and six student leaders from three schools before the actual administration of the questionnaire. The data collected helped the researcher in redesigning ambiguous questions. These three schools were excluded during the time of actual data collection and the pilot data was not used during analysis.

3.7 Instrument reliability

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). In order to improve the reliability of the instrument, an assessment of the consistency of the responses on the pilot questionnaires was made to make a judgement on their reliability. Test- retest technique of reliability testing was employed whereby the pilot questionnaires were administered twice to the respondents, with a one week interval, to allow for reliability testing. The scores

were then correlated using Pearson Product- moment Correlation formula to determine the reliability coefficient (r) between the two sets of scores. Reliability of an instrument is strong when the coefficient is close to 1 while an instrument is unreliable if the coefficient is close to zero. The reliability test realized a coefficient of 0.72057 and hence the instrument was deemed to be reliable.

Pearson Product- moment Correlation formula

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where
$\sum X$ = Sum of X scores

$\sum Y$ = Sum of Y scores

$\sum X^2$ = Sum of squared X raw scores

$\sum Y^2$ = Sum of squared Y raw scores

$\sum XY$ = Sum of the products of paired X and Y raw scores

N = Number of paired scores

3.8 Data collection procedures

A research permit was obtained from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. Thereafter the office of the Sub-County Director of Education for Kirinyaga East was notified before the start of the study. The selected schools were visited and the questionnaires administered to the

respondents. The respondents were assured of their confidentiality. The filled-in questionnaires were collected after four days. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the principals and the SCLs.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

The data was analyzed and interpreted to provide meaningful and final results. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. The researcher presented the data in frequency and percentage tables, bar graphs and pie charts to answer the research questions. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme was used in data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The data analysis in this chapter was aimed at addressing the purpose of the study which was to investigate the factors influencing effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County, Kenya. This chapter begins with the demographic information of the principals and students' councilors, followed by presentation and discussions of research findings based on the research questions.

4.2 Questionnaire completion rate

Completion rate is the proportion of the sample that participated as intended in all the research procedures. Out of 20 sampled principals, 15 returned the questionnaires, which was a 75% return rate. Out of 198 sampled students' council leaders, 179 returned the questionnaire which was a 90% return rate. These return rates were deemed adequate for the study.

4.3 Demographic information of the respondents

4.3.1 Demographic information of the principals and the students' council leaders

The demographic information of the principals and the students' council leaders was based on their gender. The principals and students' council leaders were asked to state their gender. The data is presented in table 4.1

Table 4.1: Gender of principals and students' council leaders

Gender	Principals		Student council leaders	
	F	%	F	%
Male	9	60	90	50.3
Female	6	40	89	49.7
Totals	15	100	179	100

Data on the gender of principals indicated that (60%) were males while (40%) were females. Data on the students' council leaders showed that (50.3%) were males while (49.7%) were females. This shows a small disparity in terms of gender among the principals. There was also a small disparity among the students' council leaders. The gender distribution was deemed appropriate to give information about students' councils in their schools.

4.4 Influence of students' council's election process on the effectiveness of student' councils

The study aimed at establishing the influence of students' council's election process on the effectiveness of students' councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County. The principals and the students' council leaders were asked how the students' councils were formed in their schools.

Table 4.2: Principals' response on how the students' council was formed in their schools

Response	F	%
Appointed by the principal without students input	1	6.7
Elected by students without principals input	1	6.7
Elected by students with principals input	11	73.3
Any other	2	13.3
Totals	15	100

The majority 11(73.3%) said that the students' council was elected by students with an input from the principal. Some principals indicated that that besides input from the principals there was input from the teachers. This agrees with Keogh and Whyte (2005) who observed that councils which were mainly elected by students

34

but had some teacher input in to the election of council leaders seemed to be the most effective.

Figure 4.1: Principals' response on how the students' council was formed
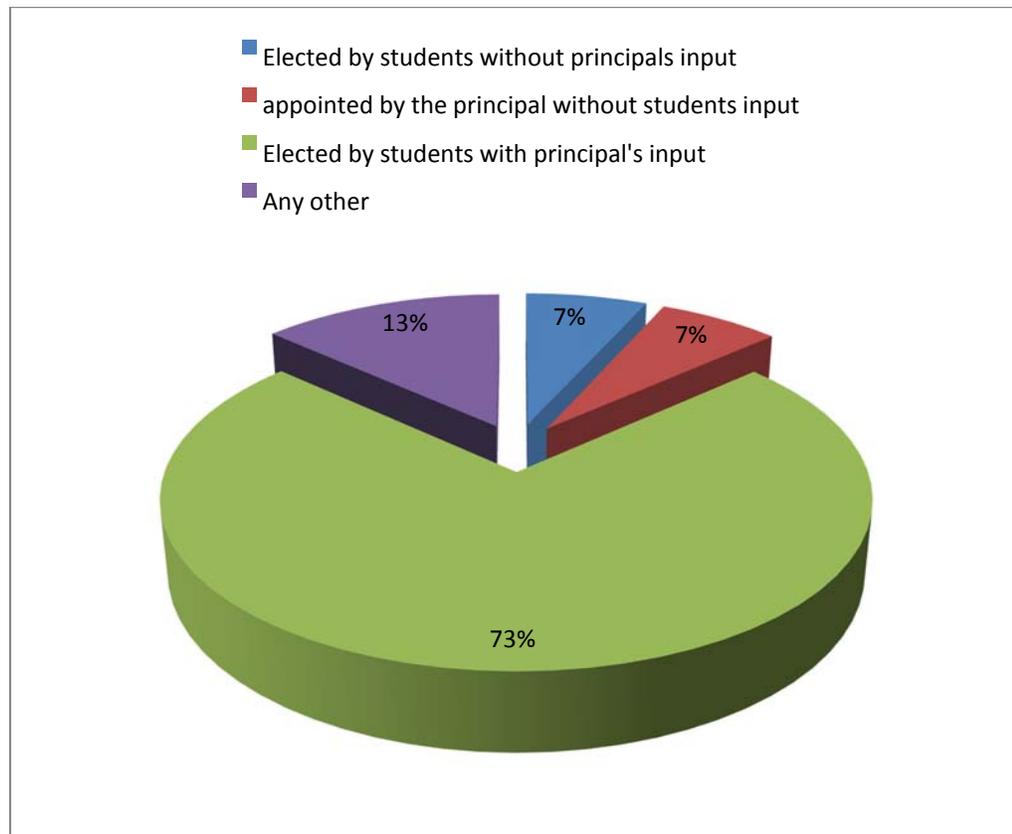
The response from the student council leaders was that (4%) of the respondents said the student council was appointed by the principal without students input. (8%) of the respondents said that the students' council was elected by students without principals input whereas the majority (88%) said that the student council was elected by students with principal's input as shown in figure 4.2

Figure 4.2: Students council leaders' response on how the students' council was formed
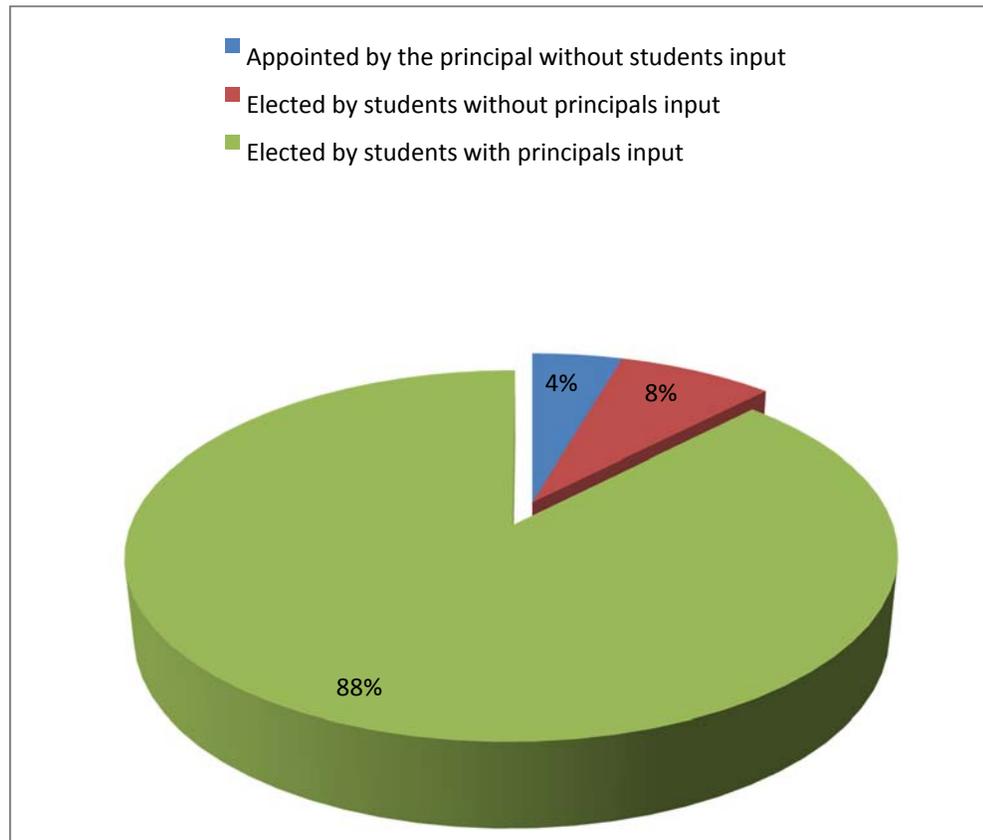
4.4.1 Representation of students in the students' council

The principals and students' councilors were required to state how students are represented in the student council. Their response was recorded in table 4.3

Table4.3: **Principals' and students council leaders' response on representation of students in the students' council**

	Principals		Student councilors	
	F	%	F	%
Every class is represented in the council	12	80	129	72.1
Every form is represented in the council	3	20	50	27.9
Totals	15	100	179	100

Among the principals 12(80%) of the respondents indicated that every class was represented in the student council whereas 3(20%) of the principals respondents said that every form was represented in the council.

129(72.1%) of the student council leaders indicated that every class was represented in the council and 50(27.9%) said that every form was represented in the council. These statistics show that there is a more wide representation per class in the student council than per Form.

4.5 Influence of training on the effectiveness of students' councils

Principals and students' councilors were asked whether students' councilors have ever received any kind of training on student leadership since the formation of the student council. Their response was recorded in table 4.4

Table 4.4: Principals' and student councilors' response on training of students' council leaders

	Principals		Student council leaders	
Response	F	%	F	%
Yes	13	86.7	103	57.6
No	2	13.3	72	40.2
No response	—	-	4	2.2
Totals	15	100	179	100

Majority 13(86.7%) of the principals said that student council leaders received some training. On the other hand, 103(57.6%) of the students' council leaders respondents indicated that the students' council leaders had been trained. 4(2.2%) of the student councilors never responded to the question.

4.5.1 Type of training offered

The principals and the student councilors were asked to state the kind of training that was offered to the student councilors once they were elected in to office- whether formal or informal. Their response was tabulated in table 4.5

Table 4.5: Principals' and student council leaders' response on type of training offered

	Principals		Students' council leaders	
Type of training	F	%	F	%
Formal	11	84.6	91	88.3
Informal	2	15.4	10	9.7
No response			2	2.0
Totals	13	100	103	100

The data that was collected revealed that majority 11(84.6%) of the principals respondents stated that the type of training offered to the students' council leaders was formal. On the other hand, majority 91(88.3%) of the students' council leaders respondents said the training they received was formal. This revealed that the principals preferred giving formal training to students' council leaders as compared to informal training.

4.5.2 Response on the number of times student council leaders had been trained

The students' council leaders were asked to state the number of times they had been trained since the formation of the current students' council in their schools. They gave their responses and the data was recorded in table 4.6

Table 4.6: Student council leaders' response on the number of times they had been trained

Number of times	F	%
Once	47	45.6
Twice	31	30.1
Thrice	4	3.9
4 times	1	1.0
No response	20	19.4
Totals	103	100

The majority 47(45.6%) of the student council leaders respondents said that in their current student council, they had only been trained once. This shows that training of students' council leaders was inadequate.

4.5.3 Frequency of training

The principals were asked to state how often the students' council leaders were trained. Their response was recorded in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Principals' response on the frequency of training of students' councilors

		Principals
Time	F	%
Once in a year	7	46.7
Once in a month	1	6.7
Once in a term	2	13.3
No specific time	5	33.3
Totals	15	100

In their response 7(46.7%) of the principals respondents indicated that training was done once in a year. This concurred with the response of the students' council leaders who reported being trained just once in their current student council.

4.5.4 Training and effectiveness of students' council leaders

Principals were asked the question, *"Does training enhance effectiveness of student council leaders?"* They gave their response as indicated in table 4.8

Table 4.8: Principals' response on whether training enhances effectiveness of students' councilors

	Principals	
Response	F	%
Enhances	14	93.3
Doesn't enhance	1	6.7
Totals	15	100

The results showed that 14(93.3%) of the principal responded that "It enhances" while 1(6.7%) responded that it "doesn't enhance." Majority of the principals agreed that training enhances the effectiveness of the student council leaders while the minority thought that it doesn't.

4.6 The influence of council size on the effectiveness of students' councils

The study aimed at establishing the influence of council size on the effectiveness of students' councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County. The principals and students' council leaders were asked to state the number of student leaders who form the student council in their schools. Their responses were summarized in table 4.9

Table 4.9: Principals' and student council leaders' response on the number of students' council leaders forming their student council

Number	Principals		Student council leaders	
	F	%	F	%
1-10	2	13.3	24	13.4
11-20	6	40	51	28.5
21-30	3	20	27	15.1
31-40	1	6.7	21	11.7
41-50	1	6.7	5	2.8
51-60	1	6.7	15	8.4
61-70	-	-	5	2.8
71-80	1	6.7	10	5.6
No response	-	-	21	11.7
Totals	15	100	179	100

Most of the principals 6(40%) indicated that their students' councils were composed of between 11-20 students which is in agreement with most of the students' council leaders 51(28.5%) who indicated that the composition of their students' council was between 11-20 students' council leaders. This is as a result of having very few schools having more than four streams per form. Majority of the schools have between 1-4 streams per form.

4.6.1 Effectiveness of student councils in relation to size

On the same item of council size, the principals and the student council leaders were asked what they thought about the effectiveness of their student councils in relation to their sizes. Their response in recorded in table 4.9.1

Table 4.9.1: Principals' and students' council leaders' response on the effectiveness of their students' councils in relation to size

	Principals		Student council leaders	
Response	F	%	F	%
Too small to be effective	3	20	7	3.9
Too large to be effective	-	-	3	1.7
Appropriate and effective	12	80	150	83.8
No response	-	-	19	10.6
Totals	15	100	179	100

Majority of the principals respondents 12(80%) stated that the students' council in their schools is appropriate and effective. On the other hand, majority of students' council leaders respondents, 150(83.8%), stated that their student councils were appropriate and effective.

4.7 The influence of school size on the effectiveness of student councils

The researcher also intended to assess the influence of school size on the effectiveness of students' councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County. The principals were asked, *"Does school size determine the*

effectiveness of the student council?" 9(60%) "Strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement while 6(40%) "Disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" with the statement. When the same question was asked the student council leaders, 64(47%) "Strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement while 72(53%) "Strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" with the statement.

The researcher also observed from the study that there is a strong relationship between the student population in a school and the number of students' council leaders. A larger student population required a larger students' council to cater for more student representation in the council. This is shown in table 4.9.2

Table 4.9.2: Principals' response on the relationship between students' population and number of students' councilors

No. of students	No. of councilors
90-189	6-15
290-389	16-24
390-489	37
590-689	42
690-789	22-56
790-889	23-72
890-789	28

The study found that schools with a students' population of between 90-189 students had a student council of between 6-15 councilors. A school with between 290-389 students had a council of between 16-24 councilors. A school with student population of between 390- 489 had a student council of 37 councilors. A school with a student population of between 590-689 students had a council of 42 councilors. A school with a student population of between 690 -789 had a council of between 22-56 councilors. A school with a student population of between 790 -

889 had a council of between 23-72 councilors. A school with a student population of between 890-989 students had 28 councilors.

Figure 4.3: Principals' response on whether school size influences effectiveness of student councils
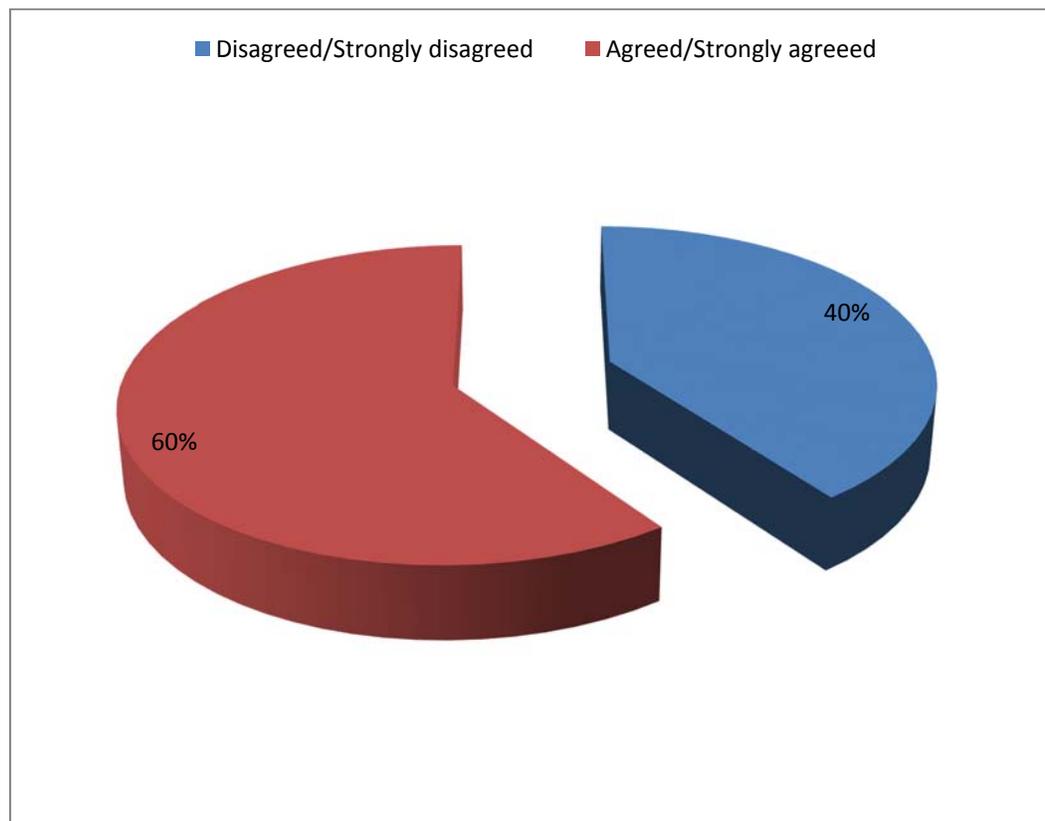
When principals were asked *"Does school size influence the effectiveness of students' councils?"* 60% "Disagreed" or "Strongly disagreed" while 40% "Agreed" or "Strongly agreed" as shown in figure 4.3. When the same question was asked the students' councilors, 53% "Agreed" or "Strongly agreed" while

47% "Disagreed" or "Strongly disagreed" with the question as shown in figure 4.4

Figure 4.4: Student council leaders' response on whether school size influences effectiveness of student councils
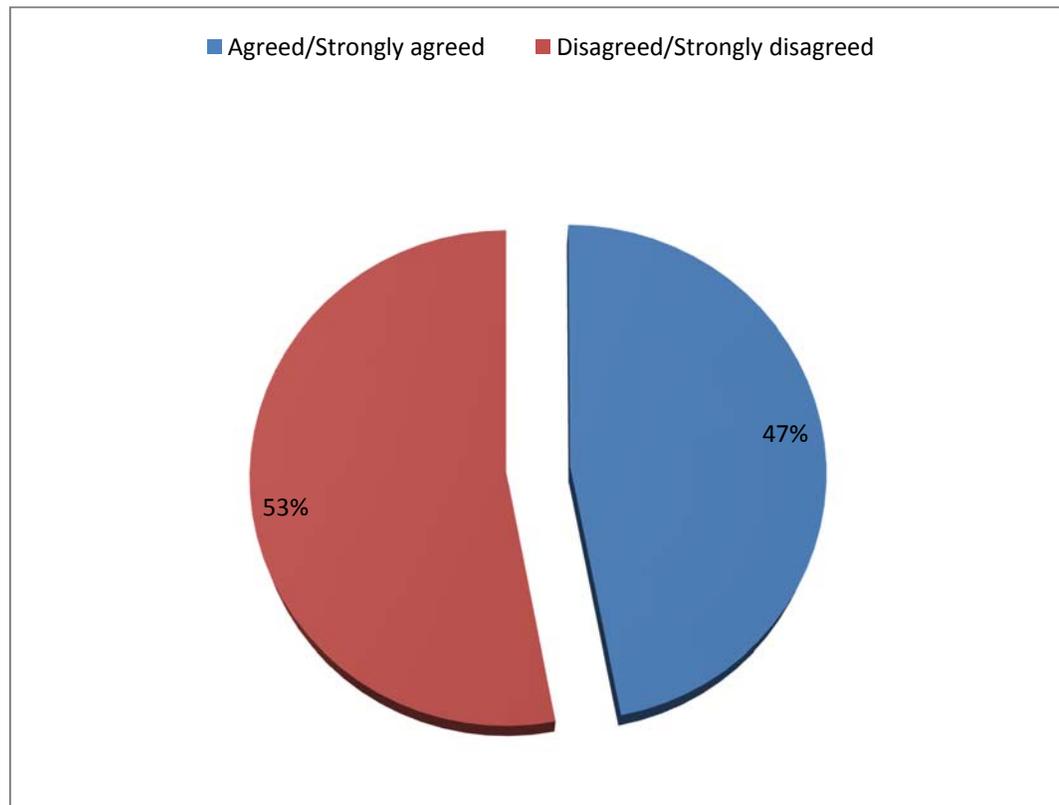
4.8 The influence of principal's administrative experience on the effectiveness of students' councils

The findings on the principal's administrative experience were summarized in table 4.9.3

Table 4.9.3: Principals' administrative experience in years

Years	F	%
1-6	8	53.3
7-12	3	20
13-18	3	20
19-24	1	6.7
Total	**15**	**100**

Majority of the principals respondents 8(53.3%) indicated that their administrative experience spans between 1-6 years. 3(20%) of the respondents had an administrative experience of between 7-12 years just like those with 13-18 years of administrative experience. 1(6.7%) of the principals respondents had an administrative experience of between 19-24 years.

When the principals were asked whether principals administrative experience influenced the effectiveness of the students' council, majority 14(93%) of the principals "Strongly agreed" or "Agreed" while 1(7%) "Disagreed" or "Strongly disagreed" with the statement.

When the student council leaders were asked whether principals administrative experience influenced the effectiveness of the students' council, 153(88%) of the

respondents "Strongly agreed" or "Agreed" with the statement while 21(12%) "Disagreed" or "Strongly disagreed" with the statement.

Figure 4.5: Principals' and students council leaders' response on the influence of principals' administrative experience on the effectiveness of students' councils
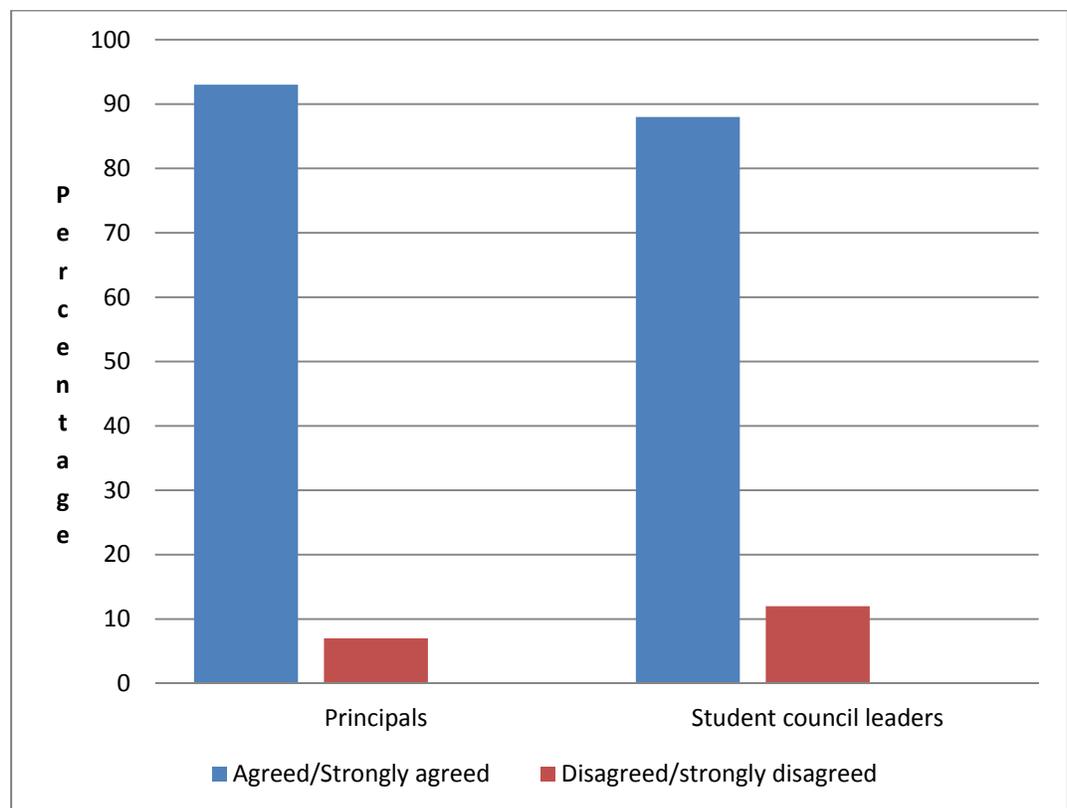
4.9 Challenges faced by the principals while working with student councilors

The principals stated the following as challenges they face while working with student councilors in governance and school management:

1. Uncooperative student councilors. Some of them fail to report indiscipline cases among students.

2. Students being unsupportive of the student councilors.

3. Lack of confidence among some of the student councilors in performing their roles.

4. Some student councilors being compromised by the other students.

5. Some student councilors are undisciplined.

6. Some student leaders are not firm in decision making and hence they are easily influenced by the other students.

7. Some student councilors are unable to handle and resolve some issues because of lack of adequate training.

8. Some parents refuse their children to be elected and appointed in the student council.

9. Some student councilors are unable to balance academics with leadership making them drop in their academic performance.

10. Some student leaders lack self-drive and motivation in executing their duties.

11. Lack of team work and support between the student leaders.

12. Junior student leaders fear senior school students.

4.9.1 Challenges faced by student council leaders

The student leaders indicated the following as the challenges they face in executing their roles:

1. Some students threaten and intimidate some student councilors.

2. The student body pressurizing the student councilors on matters that are not addressed by the school administration.

3. Failure by the administration to give proper recognition to the student councilors.

4. Sometimes there is some hostility coming from the students which they cannot cope with.

5. Some school administrators blame student council leaders when there is a crisis in school.

6. Failure by the administration to act on issues raised by the student councilors.

7. Some students' councilors do not know their role for failure of being inducted properly.

8. Sometimes teachers and principals change student councilors without involving or informing them.

9. Some student councils bear a lot of responsibilities due to the small size of the council.

10. There is lack of cooperation from the non- teaching staff.

11.   There is reported discrimination from some teachers.

12.   Administration and teachers trivializing issues raised by student leaders.

13.   Lack of confidentiality from some teachers.

14.   Failure to empower the council.

15.   Student body disrespecting the student councilors.

16.   Lack of teamwork in the council.

17.   Difficulty balancing leadership and academics.

18.   Laxity among some student councilors.

19.   Administration and teachers having very high expectations of the student councilors.

20.   A too big student council.

4.9.2 Ways of enhancing effectiveness of student councils in schools

The student leaders stated the following as ways of enhancing effectiveness of student council in their schools:

1.   Reducing the number of student councilors in the big student councils.

2.   Administration listening and giving support to the student council.

3.   Administration to act promptly to the issues raised by the student councilors.

4.   Making the student council autonomous.

5.   Administration holding regular meetings with the council.

6.   Training and giving appropriate guidance and counselling to the student council.

7.   Motivating the student councilors through for example, taking them for outings and trips.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study and made suggestions for more research.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study aimed at finding out the factors influencing effectiveness of student councils in Kirinyaga East Sub-County, Kenya. The study dwelled on the following objectives:

i) To establish the influence of the election process on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

ii) To establish the influence of training on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

iii) To assess the influence of council size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

iv) To determine the influence of school size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

v) To determine the influence of principal's administrative experience on the effectiveness on student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

The study was also geared towards finding solutions to the following guiding questions. What is the influence of student councils election process on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County? What is the influence of training on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County? What is the influence of council size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County? What is the influence of school size on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County? What is the influence of principal's administrative experience on the effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County?

The significance of the study was that the study could help the B.O.M and the principals understand the effect of a democratic election process and training on student council leaders in an effort to enhancing their effectiveness in school management. The study findings could also enable narrow the gap between teachers and students when the student councils are effective in the execution of their mandate. The findings of the study may also add knowledge to the already

existing stock of knowledge about the role and importance of student councils in school management in secondary schools.

The literature review focused on student councils in secondary schools and their effectiveness in terms of how they operate and in terms of what they accomplish. The study employed descriptive survey design. The target population consisted of the 33 public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County which had 33 principals and 660 student council leaders. The sample comprised of 20 public secondary schools with 20 principals and 198 student councilors. Self administered questionnaires were used to solicit data from the respondents. Data was analysed by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software for windows programme. Findings revealed that there were factors influencing effectiveness of student councils in public secondary schools. These factors included democratic election process, training, council size, school size and principals administrative experience.

The study showed that a democratic election process was embraced in many schools when setting up a student council. The study also revealed that student councilors underwent formal and informal training though most principals were found to prefer formal training of student councilors. The study further found that schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County were made up of different student council sizes which were effective in execution of their mandates. The principals reported that the school size does determine the effectiveness of the student council. This

observation differed with that of the student councilors who observed that school size does not determine the effectiveness of the student council. The study also found that the principals' administrative experience does influence the effectiveness of the student council.

5.3 Conclusion

From the above findings it can be concluded that most student councils in Kirinyaga East Sub-County were democratically elected by students with principals and teachers input. The representation in the student council was more in classes than in forms. Training was offered to the student councilors in these schools. It was observed that most principals preferred offering formal training and not informal training. However training of the student councilors was not done regularly in these schools.

The sizes of the student councils were directly proportional to the school sizes. However, it was not possible to come up with a general conclusion on the influence of school size on the effectiveness of students' councils since there was a difference in opinion between principals and students' councilors Principals felt that school size does influence the effectiveness of the student councils whereas the student councilors felt that it doesn't. The researcher also concludes that principals' administrative experience does influence the effectiveness of student councils. Schools with more experienced principals have a more effective students' council.

5.4 Recommendations

Since training is imperative in equipping student leaders for leadership, it should be well structured, planned and offered more regularly. A curriculum of intensive training of student council leaders should be developed and implemented in schools to enable them resolve conflicts, perform their duties with ease, comfortably and effectively. Both formal and informal training should be offered to induct the student councilors to leadership. Moreover the principals and the B.O.M should strive to address the challenges enumerated by the student councilors in their respective schools if the student councils are to be effective.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

A study should be done to establish the role of B.O.M in enhancing effectiveness of the student councils in public secondary schools. This study will highlight how conversant the members of the B.O.M are with the student councils. Given that this study dwelled on only public secondary schools in Kirinyaga East Sub-County, a similar study in other Sub-Counties in the country could be important for comparison purposes.

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APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Anthony Kinyua Charles,

P.O Box 27-10300,

Kerugoya.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Factors influencing effectiveness of Students' Councils in Kirinyaga East Sub-County.

I am a post graduate student pursuing a Masters Degree in Education in the University of Nairobi. My research area is as stated above. I hereby kindly request you to allow me in your school to enable me obtain important information for the research.

The identity of respondents will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The information obtained will only be used for this study and not otherwise.

Your assistance and cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Anthony Kinyua Charles

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

This questionnaire is for a post graduate research on the effectiveness of Student Councils in public secondary schools. Please do not write your name on it. The information obtained will only be used for this study and not otherwise. Indicate the correct option as honestly as possible by putting a tick (√) on one of the options where applicable. For the questionnaires that require your own opinion fill in the blanks .You are kindly asked to respond to all items.

A: Background information

1. What is your gender?   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

B: Election process

2. How was the student council formed in your school?

[ ] appointed by the principal without students input

 [ ] elected by students without principal's input

[ ] elected by students with principal's input

Any other specify---

C: Training

3. Are student leaders offered any kind of training once they are elected in to office?

                [ ] Yes   [ ]   No

  [ ] Formal   [ ] Informal

4. If YES, how often are they trained?

        [ ] Once in a month   [ ] once in a term   [ ] once in a year

  Any other specify…………………………………………………………………….

5. In your own assessment, does training enhance effectiveness of the student leaders?

                [ ] Yes   [ ]   No

D: Council size

6. Tick (√) where appropriate about the student council in your school.

[ ] every class is represented in the council

[ ] every Form is represented in the council

7. When was the current student council formed?

Year………………… term ……………………

8. How many student leaders form the student council in your school?

…………………………………..

9. Tick (√) where appropriate about the student council in your school.

[ ] the student council is too small to be effective

[ ] the student council is too large to be effective

[ ] the student council is appropriate and effective

E: School size

10. How many students do you have in your school? ………………..

11. How many Forms do you have in your school? ----------------------------

12. How many streams do you have in your school? ....

F: Principal's administrative experience

13. How many years have you served as a principal? ----------------------------

14. Are there days the student council holds meetings with the principal on matters affecting the students?

   [ ] Yes   [ ] No

15. If **yes**, how often?

[ ] Once in a week   [ ] Once in a month   [ ] Once in a term   [ ]

Once in a year

Any other time specify……………………….

16. Please indicate by use of a tick [√] in the relevant column the extent to which

each of the following statements applies in your school.

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) or Strongly disagree (SD)

	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
i	Student leaders would be more effective if the election process is fair and democratic				
ii	There is need to train the student leaders so that they perform their duties effectively				
iii	The student council size should be representative of the student body				
iv	The school size determines the effectiveness of the student council				
v	Principal's administrative experience influences the effectiveness of student councils				
vi	Student leaders would be more effective if they were given more support by the administration				

vii	All the classes should be represented in the student council				
viii	There is need for the school administration to be holding regular meetings with the student council				
ix	The student council system is more effective than the old system of prefects in enhancing a conducive learning environment				

17. How do you rate the effectiveness of the student council in your school?

[ ] Very effective   [ ] effective   [ ] not effective

18. If *not effective*, what can be done to enhance the effectiveness of the student council in your school?

....

....

19. What challenges do you face while working with student leaders in governance and school management?

....

....

....

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS' LEADERS

This questionnaire is for a post graduate research on the effectiveness of Student Councils in public secondary schools. Please do not write your name on it. The information obtained will only be used for this study and not otherwise. Indicate the correct option as honestly as possible by putting a tick (√) on one of the options where applicable. For the questionnaires that require your own opinion fill in the blanks .You are kindly asked to respond to all items.

A: Background information

1. What is your gender?   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

B: Election process

2. How was the student council formed in your school?

[ ] appointed by the principal without students input

 [ ] elected by students without principals input

[ ] elected by students with principals input

Any other specify---

3. Tick (√) where appropriate about the student council in your school.

[ ] every class is represented in the council

[ ] every Form is represented in the council

4. When was the current student council formed?

Year………………… term ……………………

C: Training

5. Have you received any kind of training on student leadership since the formation of the student council?

    [ ] yes   [ ] No

6. If **yes**, what kind of training?   [ ] Formal   [ ] informal

7. If **formal**, how many times have you been trained since the formation of the current student council? ------------------------

D: Council size

8. How many student leaders form the student council in your school?

……………………………

9. Tick (√) where appropriate about the student council in your school.

[ ] the student council is too small to be effective

[ ] the student council is too large to be effective

[ ] the student council is appropriate and effective

E: School size

10. How many Forms do you have in your school? ----------------------------

11. How many streams do you have in your school? ....

12. Are there days the student council holds meetings with the principal on matters affecting the students?

[ ] Yes   [ ] No

13. If **yes**, how often?

[ ] Once in a week   [ ] Once in a month   [ ] Once in a term   [ ] Once in a year

Any other time specify……………………….

14. Please indicate by use of a tick [√] in the relevant column the extent to which each of the following statements applies in your school.

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) or Strongly disagree (SD)

	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
i	Student leaders would be more effective if the election process is fair and democratic				
ii	There is need to train the student leaders so that they perform their duties effectively				
iii	The student council size should be representative of the student body				
iv	The school size determines the effectiveness of the student council				
v	Principal's administrative experience influences the effectiveness of student councils				
vi	Student leaders would be more effective if they were given more support by the administration				
vii	All the classes should be represented in the student council				
viii	There is need for the school administration to be holding regular meetings with the student council				

ix	The student council system is more effective than the old system of prefects in enhancing a conducive learning environment				

15. How do you rate the effectiveness of the student council in your school?

[ ] Very effective   [ ] effective   [ ] not effective

16. If *not effective*, what can be done to enhance the effectiveness of the student council in your school? …………………………………………

17. What challenges do you face as a student leader in your school?

…………………………………………………………

APPENDIX IV

RESEARCH AUTHORISATION

APPENDIX V

RESEARCH PERMIT