

**HERMENEUTIC INQUIRY ON STRIKES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
KENYA: MITIGATING THE PROBLEM
THROUGH EXISTENTIALISM**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work, and has not been presented for the award of any degree of this or any other University or College.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	ii
Chapter One (Introduction)	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	6
1.3 Objectives of the study.....	6
1.4 Research questions.....	7
1.5 Theoretical framework.....	7
1.6 Significance of the study.....	12
1.7 Limitations to the study.....	12
1.8 Delimitations of the study.....	13
1.9 Assumption of the study.....	13
1.10 Definitions of operational terms.....	13
Chapter Two (Review of Related Literature)	16
2.1 Introduction.....	16
2.2 The Concept of Violence.....	16
2.2.1 Manifestation of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.....	18
2.2.2 The nature of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools.....	19
2.3 Causes of strikes and the approaches used to mitigate them in Kenya.....	22
2.3.1 Causes related to school administration and leadership styles.....	23
2.3.2 Causes related to parenting.....	26
2.3.3 Causes related to drugs and substance abuse.....	28
2.3.4 Causes related to influence of non-teaching staff on student’s discipline.....	30
2.3.5 Causes related to peer pressure influences.....	31
2.3.6 Approaches applied in mitigating student unrests in secondary schools in Kenya.....	32
2.3.6.1 Use of civic education to eradicate drug and substance abuse.....	33
2.3.6.2 Provision of guidance and counseling services.....	33
2.3.6.3 To improve communication between the school administration and the students.....	35
2.3.6.4 To involve the church in reducing students unrest.....	36
2.3.6.5 Improving teachers-students relationship.....	36
2.4 The Concept of Existentialism.....	38
2.4.1 The origin of Existentialism.....	39
2.4.2 Tenets of Existentialism.....	40
2.4.3 Critic on existentialism.....	42
2.4.4 Application of Existentialism in Education.....	43
Chapter Three (Research methodology)	47
3.1 Introduction.....	47
3.2 Methodology.....	47
Chapter Four (Hermeneutics of existential pedagogy)	57
4.1 Introduction.....	57

4.2 Cycle A: Theoretical perspectives on the fusion of horizon on understanding strikes in Kenya	58
4.3.Cycle B: Review of the horizon offered by mitigation measures	62
4.3.1 Causes of and strategies to avert violence in Kenyan secondary schools	63
4.3.2 Existential analysis of critical causes of student violence in secondary schools In Kenya.....	67
4.4 Circle C: Description of the phenomenon on causes and mitigation strategies.....	69
4.5 Circle D: Existential pedagogic approach in mitigating student violence	71
4.5.1 Benefits and challenges of Existential Education.....	72
Chapter Five (Summary, conclusion and recommendations)	79
5.1 Introduction.....	79
5.2 Summary of the study.....	79
5.3 Conclusion.....	83
5.4 Recommendations	84
5.4.1 Recommendations to address the phenomenon	84
5.4.2 Recommendations for further research.....	86
References.....	87

List of figures and Tables

Fig 1	59
Fig 2	72
Table 1	63

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

This chapter is an introduction to the study. It presents a brief discussion on the background information, statement of the problem, objectives and research questions, the theory and the philosophy that formed the conceptual framework of this research, significance of the study, the limitations of the study, delimitations and finally the assumptions of the study.

There have been increasing reports on the occurrence of student violence in recent years. The trend appears to indicate clearly that, this issue is established to the extent that it is a worldwide concern and it manifests in different proportions from one region to another Eisenbraun (2007). In the United States of America for example, it has been exemplified by the existence of gangs in schools with matching incidences of non-lethal violent bullying and mistreatment among students aged 12 to 18 years Smith (2002). Some teachers are reported having been threatened or assaulted physically and sexually by unruly students from their schools (Robers S. Kemp, J. Rathbun, A. and Morgan, R. 2014); young people carrying a weapon to school, some being threatened or injured with a weapon in school (Patton, Hong, J. S., Patel, S. & Kral, M. J., 2017). In the United Kingdom, media have reported in the past on schools where teachers are pressurized with distressing experiences of being abused, endangered and having loaded guns pulled on them and knives by their students who, purportedly, are out of control (MacMillan, 2002; Munn, P. Johnstone, M. Sharp, S and Brown, J. 2007). Within China, the media has in the past reported several occurrences of student violence. One of the cases that were captured on camera, students were beating up a teacher inside a classroom in solidarity with

their colleague whom the teacher had punished (CCTV News, 22 April 2016). In the African region, these cases of student violence in secondary schools have commonly been depicted as an escalating dilemma (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). What emerges, therefore, is that, the issue of student strikes, unrests and violence, is a concern worldwide. This problem is pointed out and described as such, by a number of researchers such as (Nkinyangi, 1981, Smith, 2002, Debarbieux, 2003).

In East Africa and specifically Kenya, many incidences of student unrest and violence have been witnessed since 1908 when the first one was recorded in Maseno School (Republic of Kenya, 2001). These cases were relatively small in the 1960s and 1970s and took the form of class boycott and mass walkouts (Kenya Republic, 1991). Their severity was not felt then since they were mild in the form in which they occurred, therefore, this issue was not much investigated well prior to the mid-1970s and early 1980s, when the first studies were conducted by; Kinyanjui (1976) and Nkinyangi (1981) respectively. Ushering the 1980s, however, through the 1990s and the 2000s, school unrest took a new dimension that involved meaningless destruction of school property, mass rapes and worst of all, loss of human life as indicated in Nkinyangi (1981). Through time, the frequency of these occurrences has also increased in secondary schools. For example, between 1980 and 1990, the number of schools that experienced student unrest and violence increased enormously from 22 (0.9%) to 187 (7.2%) and by 2001, this had increased to 250 (9.6%) secondary schools (Republic of Kenya 2001,) while in 2008, in second term alone (when form four students were preparing to write their Kenya National Examinations), more than 300 schools experienced violent protests. The period that followed, (1990 and beyond), more research that focused on this phenomenon was conducted in Kenya than in the preceding period. Examples of such findings are captured in a number of studies such as: (Kinyanjui, K. 1976, Nkinyangi, J. 1981, Njoroge, S. M. 2005, Mwangi, H.G. 2006, Kabiru, L. K. 2007, Njenga, F.

2008, Ngwokabuenui, P. Y. 2015 and Ndaita, J. S. 2016). The recommendations emanating from these studies were implemented, even though partially, but still violence among secondary school students persisted.

Nationally, the government has always responded to these occurrences through the Ministry of Education in the following ways; she begins with characteristic statements of condemnation as: ‘reckless’ destruction of school property will not be tolerated and new regulations will sometimes be enacted. For example, in the 1960s and 1970s, following the constant occurrence of student unrest, the president of Kenya, the then Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, issued a decree in August 1978, which banned strikes by both students and workers in Kenyan secondary schools. The following terms were reported to be relatively calm despite two schools in the whole republic going on strike, whose riots were blocked by the police as were starting (Kinyanjui, 1976). Within this time, the recommendations of the National Committee Report on Educational Objectives and Policies, also referred to as the Gachathi Report of 1976, directed all matters of school indiscipline, which had recommended that the problem of students’ indiscipline needs to be addressed by teachers in schools and other educational institutions and that education should “assist youth to grow into self-disciplined, self-respecting and law-abiding, mature-minded and creative people” Republic of Kenya (1976).

In the Later period of the 1990s and beyond, a number of task forces have been appointed to investigate and make recommendations on the threat of student unrest in Kenya's high schools. These include; Task Force of 1991 chaired by Dr. Lawrence Sagini, Task Force of 2000 for schools in the then Central Province chaired by Mr. P. M. Macharia, Task Force of 2001 chaired by Naomy Wangai and Task Force of 2008 chaired by Parliamentary Education Committee.

Since this problem was not being witnessed in Kenya alone, at the global scene,

comparable determinations can be seen in view of the fact that, by 2006, at least three international conferences had been held in the United Kingdom with a resolution to set up an international school violence observatory (Munn et al. 2007), all of which attest to the growing concern about the unrest of students not only in Kenya but also at the international level.

Although reviewing reports made by all these task forces is not the primary purpose of this research project, it is important to speedily and critically review three key features that are

applicable to the intention of conducting this study. The features are alluded by Nkinyangi (1981) in his work "The origins of student disturbances" where he discloses that: First, the task forces were always appointed at a time when those occurrences were at their peak, indicating a moment's time for desperation and requiring a quick answer to the problem. Therefore, he noted that, such efforts are fundamentally a quick response to this problem rather than one that stems mainly from an indepth and careful analysis of the current crisis. Secondly, he noted that, the task forces mainly take the shape of ad hoc committees which are appointed to Work within such a specified (always short) period of time, often spanning up to three weeks to conduct national investigations and compile a full report with 'feasible' recommendations.

Thirdly, research methodology frequently embraced through such task forces in their inquiries is routinely experimental in nature. Frequently, it involves visits to the schools impacted to collect data by verbal interviews and short - hasty presentations from the stakeholders identified who include: a few students, school administrators and teachers. The investigators also reviewed media reports and written memoranda from committees that consulted on the issue before it erupted and even from members of the public within the area of the affected school. Based on

these features, this study observes that, the inquiries made on this issue are not comprehensive about the fundamental causes explaining the origin of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Nevertheless, the data collected and analysed by the appointed committees, is achieved with no strenuous efforts to triangulate and seriously reflect on its origins. This study discusses, some of the causes of strikes in high schools as related to drugs and substance abuse, which are sourced from the surrounding villages, Therefore, without careful enquiries, some villagers may obstruct information while being interviewed to hoard their source of income Mwangi, H.G. (2006). Moreover, this study is critical of hastily addressing an issue of such a magnitude ie strikes and violence that has become a problem in Kenyan secondary schools, without examining the fundamental reasons causing it. In particular the approaches previously adopted by the Government of Kenya to get to the fundamental causes of the problem (strikes and violence in high schools) may end up being adherence to duty and just subjective views or intentions that need to be screened within a carefully chosen conceptual paradigms and a philosophical underpinning like existentialism. Subsequently, these previous efforts reveals, lack of methodological rigor and conceptual appropriateness. This is further exacerbated by the lack of real adherence to the complete implementation of these studies ' guidelines, hence the occurrence of strikes in secondary schools still exists in Kenya Njoroge (2005).

The researcher, therefore, uses hermeneutic research method, that has clearly defined the process of initiating the topic, reading through while observing the dialogs in the reports, filtering the data collected in line with the hermeneutic cycle of understanding and coming up with emerging

themes for analysis and interpretation in line with existentialism. Particularly, the researcher analyzed the views or intentions in this data within carefully selected theoretical paradigms that are aligned to existentialism as the philosophical underpinning.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The government of Kenya has tried to eliminate violence in secondary schools through several measures which include the establishment of guidance and counseling programs, banning corporal punishment, and issuing a decree that outlawed students' strikes among others. These efforts have not worked with expected effectiveness. The nature of the students' unrest has taken a striking turn for the worse and there is a need for a changed approach in order to bring a lasting effect. They are not only violent and destructive but also deliberated upon and planned to cause maximum harm to human life. This study employed hermeneutics method of research with existentialism as the preferred philosophical underpinning in handling the issue of students' unrest in secondary schools in Kenya. Using hermeneutic research method and Fanon's theory of violence, the study identified the shortfalls that trigger violent reactions among students by inspecting the causes and the approaches used in mitigating the issue, as captured in earlier reports on the menace of student violence in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were:

- i. to investigate the nature of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools,
- ii. to examine the causes of students strikes and previous mitigating approaches in Kenya and

- iii. to explore ways of overcoming strikes in Kenyan secondary schools through existentialism.

1.4 Research questions

- i. How is violence manifested in Kenyan secondary schools?
- ii. What are the causes of violence and which mitigating approaches have been used in Kenyan secondary schools? and
- iii. How could Student's strikes in Kenyan secondary schools be conquered through existentialism?

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was approached within the broad frame of existential philosophy. Whereas this style of philosophy is too broad, the researcher noticed that it could not practically guide the study by addressing the study topic satisfactorily. Therefore, Frantz Fanon's theory of 'violence as therapy' that essentially operates within existentialism mode of thought Odman (1988), was used to particularly guide the study. The theoretical framework covers Frantz Fanon's theory of 'violence as therapy' through exploring his perspective of violence as formalized. Subsequently, it, therefore, presents the manner in which the theory helps in the examination of violence instigated by secondary school students in Kenyan secondary schools.

Frantz Fanon is a philosopher whose mode of thinking is located within the existential modes of thought and who has theorized on violence. Fanon is relevant to this study through his theory of 'violence as therapy'. This section takes a close examination of his views on violence for purposes of drawing further guidance for this study.

Fanon received French education that aimed at assimilating blacks into French culture and language. However, the French policy of assimilation, in Fanon's case, was countered by the influence of Aime Césaire who was propounding the philosophy of negritude as an intellectual reaction to alienated consciousness experienced by the black people as well as an affirmation of their existence and culture.

He became a supporter of Algerian resistance and an articulate liberal philosopher in addressing the problem of deprivation of the African masses. This type of philosophy was fashioned based on his personal experiences of oppression, exploitation, and discrimination of the blacks faced at the instance of the Europeans. His experiences further gave him a conviction that there was a need for a coordinated, consistent and obvious method of overthrowing the oppressors. He was very unpretentious in his attitude to the white oppressors, which resulted in his advocacy for the use of violence in dismantling the structures of oppression constructed by the white oppressors.

In the course of his duty as a medical doctor in Algeria, Frantz Fanon treated Algerians devastated and alienated by colonial war as well as treating Europeans involved in torture and mistreatment of Algerians. It was at this point that he established that in a colonial territory such as Algeria, the psychiatric disorders that people suffered were the direct result of the social situation. In other words, such socially alienating experiences as economic oppression, political violence, and human degradation had a causal relationship with psychiatric disorders. Notably, it is this emphasis on human experience in understanding their behavior and even nature that Fanon's ideas take phenomenologist proportions.

He then recognized and proposed the fact that it was futile to treat a patient and send him back to the same environment. Rather, what needed to be changed were not the people but the social and political conditions prevailing in Algeria (Poussaint, 1972, Grier and Cobbs 1969). For this

reason, he concluded that the colonial system is destroyed to transform the social situation (Fanon 1964).

Fanon's ideas which are critical to this study are to be found in two of his books namely; *Black Skins White Masks* (1952) and *Wretched of the Earth* (1961). In *Black Skins White Masks* (1952), Fanon provides his view of human nature when he asserts 'No attempt must be made to encase man for it is his destiny to be free'. It is in this book that he re-emphasizes Rousseau's focus on freedom and liberty together with Karl Marx's notion of alienation that occurs when these are separated from each other. By emphasizing notions such as alienation and freedom as well as the fact that the use of violence in response to some violation of freedom and liberty is one of the ways through which human beings reconstruct or restore their altered essences (identity), Fanon identifies with the existentialist model of thinking. His book: *Wretched of the Earth* (1964), is essentially an analysis of the depressing social and psychosocial living conditions of the colonial subjects. It is in this book that Fanon strongly argues for the critical role of violence in the decolonization process. In Fanon (1964) the belief in the primacy of violence in executing a revolutionary program is premised on the logic that since colonialism had been installed by violence, it has to be overcome by violence. Accordingly, violence is a purposeful act.

Speaking from a colonial context, Fanon sees colonization as the act of exerting and exercising control over a given territory or group of people. In this way, decolonization would be understood both as the physical act of freeing a territory from external control of a colonizer and the psychological act of freeing the consciousness of the native or the colonized (or in the language of Freire, the oppressed) from the alienation caused by colonization.

In essence, Fanon implies that the process of freeing oneself whether physically or psychologically necessitates the use of force, physical/psychological injury, aggression, coercion or militancy (all that are manifestations of violence). Violence is regarded here as a necessary tool in the destruction of the alienation meted out on the natives and to liberate their consciousness and restore humanity to them. It is interesting to note that violence is, for that matter, perceived as a purifying agent in the sense that it cleanses the consciousness of the oppressed. In this way, the native or the oppressed get to transform themselves from the 'object or animal' (dehumanized) to 'human' hence a process of restoration of the destroyed humanity on the part of the oppressed. This would then imply specific active attention to the purpose for which human beings resort to the use of force, coercion, militancy, aggression and need to injure both physically and psychologically the symbols and structures of power and authority.

A keen reading of Fanon's theory of violence reveals some kind of 'justification' for violence. This justification is both at the moral and practical levels. In this regard, violence is necessary for situations where there is a need to liberate the consciousness of the oppressed or people feeling oppressed (to restore their humanity) accordingly.

At this level, Fanon sees violence as a natural response to the violence perpetrated by the figures of authority. The practical reasons for violent reactions, on the other hand, include the need to bring down the administrative structures physically (systems of perpetration of violence) as perceived agents or tools of oppression. This also helps in building solidarity in the struggle for freedom. Accordingly, in the light of this moral and practical justification of violence, Fanon notes that the oppressed may engage in mechanisms of avoidance to suppress their violence by way of other things redirecting their aggression, for instance, towards fellow natives/oppressed through tribal warfare and quarrels.

In general, Fanon's view will be very useful at the level of examining the process by which tension (unrest) builds up within the learners who feel aggrieved. As it appears from this theory, this situation leads to violence and aggressive release of such inbuilt tension that often constitutes the popular menace of student violence. In effect, in his account of violence, Fanon has advanced some concrete ideas that the researcher found useful and be used in guiding the analysis of views on the occurrence of violence in our Kenyan secondary schools. Such ideas include the following: Experiences of alienation, oppression, segregation, human degradation and the general mistreatment of people can directly result from the social situation (conditions of existence) within which human beings live. A more reliable approach to addressing such experiences is to aim at the social and political conditions (conditions of existence) within which the human beings in question live. With regard to freedom, it is notable that freedom is a fundamental human entitlement. It therefore follows that, human beings naturally feel alienated when freedom is taken away from them. In the event of perpetually devastating conditions of existence, that are also characterized by such experiences/feelings of alienation and human degradation, violence resort to as one 'possible' way for reversing the situation by those undergoing the experience that is unwelcome to them. In this regard, Fanon appears to be not only supporting student violence but justifying it too. However, it is the argument of this study that, students educated following an existential pedagogue have the freedom to choose among various possibilities.

In general, this entire theory, therefore, enables the researcher to view students as dynamic persons who are constantly negotiating and creating their individualities whether consciously or otherwise. Accordingly, the researcher perceives students' identities (essences) as those that are not fixed but always continually developing according to the different ways in which the

individuals perceive themselves in their encounter with systematic and school cultural norms and expectations. Therefore, students' actions are not predetermined (as in the Platonic idea that 'essence precedes existence) but an expression of the ways in which they are actively producing their self-identities (their essences) within the conditions of their existence.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is set within the broad structure of existentialism philosophy to address student violence in secondary schools. The suggestions given to the study may benefit the stakeholders among them philosophers, teachers, education managers, guardians and the society in general. Such benefits include; applications of existentialist approaches to mitigate student strikes in the Kenyan education system assist in curriculum development, etc.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Limitations are issues in the study that the researcher cannot control. For example, in this study, the researcher would not be able to access some documents that are sensitive hence not publicly available. A good example in this study was the Kirima Report of 1995 on Devil Worship infiltration into secondary schools in Kenya and the Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Education on the wave of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya of 2008 which were never made public. Hence, they were not available for interpretation even though they were very relevant to this study.

The researcher, however, will overcome these limitations by complementing whatever limited information there was regarding such a report with cases of student violence as reported in other sources.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

This study shall discuss only on ways of overcoming the perennial student strikes in Kenyan secondary schools by examining previous approaches in mitigating on student strikes in Kenya with biases to the existentialist rationalistic perspective.

1.9 Assumption of the study

This study assumes that the following statements are true and valid because first, violence is an identity-forming force, both for the individual and for the collective, second, human beings – through their own consciousness– create their own values and determines a meaning to their life and, last that, literature studied accurately, honestly and truthfully identifies the causes of students' unrest and indiscipline in schools.

1.10 Definitions of terms

This section defines terms used in the study that may be understood differently in other contexts. The terms explained include; Existentialism, phenomenon, student unrests, discipline, strike, documentary analysis, to orient, the act of dialogue, the fusion of horizons and the Hermeneutic circle of understanding

Existentialism is a modern philosophy that contents that each person is free to choose to be good or bad, strong or weak, etc. It emerged from the 19th century, inspired by such thinkers as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Unlike traditional philosophy (like rationalism), which focuses on “objective” instances of truth, existentialism is concerned with the subjective, or personal, aspects of existence. Existentialism represents a protest against the rationalism of traditional philosophy, against the bourgeois culture, and the dehumanizing values of industrial civilization.

From this perspective, then, existentialists conceptualize the “strikes or misbehaviors” of students as a form of resistance against the devaluation and dehumanization of the system... It represents students as individuals in a quest for subjective truth, personal identity by constantly making personal choices.

Phenomenon on the other hand is an occurrence as appears to the human experience. It is understood as the way in which secondary school students experience and individually interpret things in their life.

Student unrests are situations of tension among the student community which may result in a violent act as a way of releasing the inbuilt tension or a means of asserting themselves in regard to what they perceive as having been denied to them.

Discipline is a controlled, ordered behavior resulting from the obedience of rules and regulations and self-control. In this study, it has been used to mean the act of using reasonable controls (control mechanisms) to produce the desired behavior.

A strike is a situation of mass indiscipline in which students are involved in forms of indecent behavior such as boycotts, destruction of property, riots, rape, arson, and assault.

Documentary analysis is construed as a technique used to organize requirements for a given inquiry. It entails the review of existing documents to extract pieces of information considered relevant to a study.

To orient, means, finding one's way, getting one's bearings, starting from the Old English: carrying, giving birth to (Hoad 1986/1996).The term is used in the study as the first steps in entering into dialogue with the phenomenon in an hermeneutic research method.The act of dialogue is how the fusion of horizons occurs Gadamer (1997), we engage in a true dialog based on the Socratic-Platonic dialectical art that is, “the art of questioning and of seeking the truth”while

The fusion of horizons refers to the process by which the other's point of view communicates to us and we allow ourselves to be informed by what we know, which means putting out our predictions and then re-examining them in the light of what we have learned. This happens in an Hermeneutic circle of understanding which includes circular motion, a field of perception and meaning that is ever-expanding (Gadamer, 1997).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher expounds the literature relating to the objectives of the study stated in chapter one. The literature is therefore organized in three sub-headings namely: the nature of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools i.e. concepts of violence, its manifestations, and essential characteristics, second, the fundamental causes of student violence and lastly, explores previous approaches in an attempt to mitigate violence in Kenyan secondary schools.

2.2 The Concept of Violence

Violence in schools is a 'Malaise' of international proportions as indicated earlier in the background of the study. Student rebellions against established authority have occurred in practically every country with significant student communities. In fact, with the development of schooling as one of the most dynamic sectors of the modern capitalist enterprise, student protests of one kind or another seem to have become part and parcel of the "knowledge industry" Anyon (1981). This has happened since the 1960s when major student disturbances erupted in a number of advanced capitalist societies, student revolts have gained international status. In the same spirit, the history of student unrest and indiscipline in Kenya is as long as the history of secondary schools in Kenya. The histories of the longest and most recently established schools are interwoven with histories of students' collective actions to improve the quality and justice of their education Kanyinga, K. et al. (2012).

McCrummen (2008) defines the term violence as events characterized by fighting which results in the destruction of property and loss of human life. There are different expressions of violence in Kenya based on the individual activity or cultural connotation of violent activities(s). Violence born out of political agitations is commonly referred to as political violence. An example of such violence are such activities as what took place in Mount Elgon in the year 2008, in Molo and Kuresoi in the year 2005 and the activities witnessed during the post-election violence of 2007/2008 in Kenya Kanyinga, K. et al. (2012). Political violence is shown with groups of charged supporters of one party, possibly armed with crude weapons such as clubs and/or stones charging at the supporters of another political party. This often culminates in some form of physical exchange between the two or more groups of supporters of political parties with different political ideologies. In the ensuing physical confrontation, the police often ‘swing into action’. By way of using force, the police disperse the rowdy crowds by unleashing strokes of club son anyone within their reach. Other popular expressions of violence in Kenya include “ethnic violence” (sometimes referred to in Kenya as ethnic clashes). There is also gender violence (or gender-based violence), domestic violence, gang violence and violence against women and children.

When the term violence is preceded by the word “student”, the resulting notion of “student violence” often evokes immediate mental images of students hurling stones, burning vehicles and destroying institutional facilities such as libraries, administration blocks, and dormitories. It also paints mental pictures of police troops being deployed to the target institution to quell the situation and restore calm (often by use of force). These are some of the occurrences through which students come to be portrayed as “stubborn” and “undisciplined”. From the above expressions of violence by different groups in Kenya, it is, therefore, possible to infer from these

occurrences of violence in the secondary schools in Kenya and deduce a definition of student violence agreeable in this study. In this case, the researcher finds the definition of student violence according to Mwangi (2006) more fitting for this study. He defines student violence as the intentional use of force or other forms of influence by students to inflict harm to another person against the wish of the target.

2.2.1 Manifestation of Student violence in Kenya's secondary school

The number of schools that experienced student's unrest between 1980 and 1990 increased from 122 to 187 (Task Force Report, M.O.E.S.T, 2001). This is an increase of 53 % basing on the number of secondary schools registered by then. According to Ngare (2008), the Ministry of Education reported 254 school strikes in the year 2008 alone (by July). These figures are known and recorded, and maybe the number could be higher.

The views by the (Task Force Report, M.O.E.S.T, 2001) are that incidences of strikes in secondary schools are not new in Kenya, they are on the increase and their proportions are varying. With some students, the influence of drugs and peer pressure is the cause of this violent behavior. Under such influence, the students act under a false sense of greatness and power. This is why the study is in agreement with Ngare (2008) that, "The trend is worrying as the incidence of burning down schools property are now preferred choices of many students in expressing grievances".

2.2.2 The nature of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools

Student violence in Kenyan secondary schools has previously been expressed by the use of force or other forms of influence to inflict harm on others. In the past, rioting students have chosen to move in the surrounding areas chanting songs and hauling stones to unsuspecting individuals in the vicinity. Such acts of violence according to Kindiki, (2009) exhibit the following characteristics: first, they are intentional, second, they are forced or influential to others, third, they could cause destruction on people and property and last the perpetrators normally refuse to own or accept moral obligations while performing the activities. They may disown the damages by projecting to others (named as ‘hooligans’) that joined a peaceful demonstration, rationalize the acts, etc. This section, therefore, explores these features of student violence in the context of secondary schools in Kenya.

As affirmed by Kindiki, (2009), many of the violent activities performed by students in secondary schools in Kenya are purposive. This indicates the intentionality of the activities, however, it varies from one situation/school to the other. While in one school, the violent activities would be meant to force the secondary school management to procure a new school bus, the same activities expended in another school maybe with an intention to force the administrators to withdraw a certain newly introduced set of school rules that are perceived by the learners as restraining in some way. In these situations, such activities are essentially the students’ resolve to act in such a premeditated way to force their will to become a reality. At the same time, students may sometimes just hold a demonstration to draw public attention to their plight and yet in the same process, they cause embarrassment to the school and its administration. Astington (1993) outlined the connections between mental states (desires, beliefs,

and intentions) and actions carried out by an individual in order to reach a goal; these connections are referred to as the 'intentional chain'. The proposed connective chain is that desire causes intention, which causes action, which causes an outcome. The intentional chain maps the linking of a desire to the satisfaction of a goal via the intermediary intention and therefore student's violent acts could be referred to as intentional.

To attest that the violent activities by high school students in Kenya are forced or influenced, it is noted in the reports on their occurrences that, presence of a perpetrator (in this case the students) and the target of violence (who could be a fellow student, teacher, or the school administrators) is specific. In these occurrences, the students employ certain means to inflict some harm on the said targets. Such means may include the use of force. Indeed in many of the situations of violence often reported in secondary schools in Kenya, what is often popularly visualized is the use of physical force by students Kindiki (2009). It is perhaps because of this that certain conceptions of violence portray it as a form of aggression.

However, he points out that, not all aggressive behavior is violent since even some sarcastic comments can be aggressive without being violent. He enumerates cases in which the students may not have necessarily employed the use of such physical force but some psychological means of influence such as booing the school Principal as happened at Munyaka Girls in Nyeri County in 1999, refusal to take meals as happened at Giakanja Boys and refusal to attend classes as happened in Muthua-Ini mixed in Nyeri County in 1999, or even refusing to sit for exams as happened at Kikuyu Day Secondary in Kiambu County in 1999 as well as the nationwide refusal to sit for mock exams in the year 2008 by the KCSE candidates. Either way, the perpetrators will

still achieve their intention or may even choose to use both of these means at different stages of the escalation of the said violence.

The aggressive activities aim to damage the target. Students' acts that are eventually taken as violent are usually considered as such mainly because they are considered as harmful to other people Ndakwa (2006). In other words, whenever it is reported that violence erupted in a given school, it is often assumed that some harm occurred, people were hurt or that some property was damaged and that if neither of these happened, then rapid intervention must have occurred to avert damage.

The students who target to harm or cause injury on others should be held responsible for their actions. Harmful acts of violence are intended or consciously perpetrated, they are preventable or avoidable. These acts are guided in Kenya by Section 388 (1), Subsections (2) and (3) and section 389 of the Penal Code.

The sections clearly indicate that any person who intends to commit an offence and invests in this intention is deemed to attempt to commit the offence. It is also clear that, any person who attempts to commit a crime or offense is culpable of an the crime even when he/she is unable to do it. This is further strengthened by stating that,

It is common to find the perpetrator of violence schools having to answer charges in court this implies an aspect of moral responsibility on the part of the perpetrator. Along this line of arguing, refusing to sit for exams or going to class, for example, are considered as acts of violence because they infringe upon school procedures. In this regard, acts of bullying could therefore rightly be seen as violence both by the students and school administrators. Therefore, the owners of acts of violence in schools have a moral responsibility during and after the act

hence school managers and administrators should be clearly orientated to the law through in-service courses organized.

2.3 Causes of strikes and the approaches used to mitigate them in Kenya

This section scrutinized the causes of student's unrest in Kenyan secondary schools based on previous studies done in Kenya. The review was carried out in two parts: The first part identified the possible causes of strikes and the second part looked at previous approaches used to mitigate the issues in Kenya. The ensuing discussion was under the second objective which sought to establish the causes of strikes and approaches used to mitigate them in Kenya.

Using strikes, students express their individual or group's anger to put pressure on the school administration to attain personal/group goals. Student strikes are of two types, The gentle strike, the aggressive ones. In the gentle strikes, the activities expended by students are nonviolent and can be controlled. They are willing to negotiate their demands with the administration/opposing party. Therefore, such students need dialogue, explanation and advice or guidance and counseling to resolve the issues at hand. Violent strikes, on the other hand, results from buildup of several minor protests and the students are now violently setting up their rage (Ndakwa, 2013). Mwangi and Birgen (2008) reported that the main causes of violent strikes that s hook schools in Kenya and Uganda in the first half of 2008 were peer pressure, parental problems, teaching laxity, the Ministry of Education's sloppiness, and competition among private school holders. Several reports blame student strikes on media, mobile phones in schools, pocket money-related issues, drugs, and substance abuse. According to Mwangi and Birgen (2008), the students causing strikes could be even minors in terms of age. In Uganda for example, research revealed that students as young as 12 confessed to burning their own school because

they did not like the school or vengeance for having been suspended for cheating in examinations for instance. A detailed exploration of these causes is classified as follows: those causes related to school administration and leadership styles, parenting, drugs and substance abuse, impact of non-teachers on the discipline of students and peer pressure related influences.

2.3.1 Causes related to school administration and leadership styles

There is a study on Principals' management styles and students' unrest in public secondary schools in Nairobi County carried out by Cheloti, S., et al. (2014). Its findings revealed that the principal's style of management influences students unrest with 72.5% of principals strongly agreeing, 17.6% agreed, 9.5% disagreed while the remaining 0.4% strongly disagreed. This shows that the majority agreed that indeed the principals' style of management influences student's unrest in public secondary schools. The reasons given included the fact that the headteacher controls all resources in the entire school and his style influences their distribution and utilization and therefore affects the overall behavior of students, teachers and support staff. When the principal is dictatorial, he may not listen to students and for this reason, the students may end up rioting. Another reason they stated that principal's style of management influences unrest given was is that the authoritarian style of management was taunted as breeding hatred between the administration and the students as the later feel that no one can listen to their grievances. They suggested that the kind of management style used in the school translates into the performance of the school and the level of discipline instilled among students. Others pointed out that when the headteachers are democratic, the students can air their views freely hence they feel part of the school. When there is no communication between the administration and the students, conflicts build up and students' unrest becomes inevitable.

Since school administration is the procedural and authoritative art of managing school operations Waihenya (2001), head-teachers must be equipped with the requisite management skills through continuous training and support. This would improve their capacity to be effective in operations, and as administrators to continually choose the best management style fitting their schools in operations. When such kind of support within the system of administering secondary school education lacks, Ndaita, J. S. (2016) observes that, head-teachers are left with choosing leadership styles based on earlier academic training. This live secondary school administrative decisions to chance or trial as individuals may be limited in offering administrative decisions on emotional matters like student strikes. Training of head-teachers on management skills according to (Omote, M. J., Thinguri, R. W., & Moenga, M. E. 2015) is also listed as a factor for minimizing discontent both in teachers and students that cause a buildup of stress and its inevitable outburst like in violence in schools.

Absenteeism among some head-teachers was another secondary school administrative issue revealed as causing students discomfort in schools. This was articulated well when the Secretary-General, Kenya National Parent Association, said that in June 2008, 100 schools in Kenya were forced to close, due to non-attendance of some principals in their respective schools to quell any discomfort in students Mwangi and Birgen (2008). He also purported that;

Today's principles are often away from schools in conferences or run their own businesses in towns and farms. In such cases, the assistants are left to run the secondary schools from the corridors without the authority to make any decision on behalf of the school management.

In a different study conducted in Jyväskylä, Finland, on how students' voices can be heard in the Finnish context, Shatilova,(2014) observed that secondary schools are characterized by a communication breakdown between the students and the school administrators.

She called this ‘mal-administration’ stating that the scenario created a large gap between the students and the school management. Consequently, the students end up claiming that, their views are not listened to, problems are not solved and therefore accuse the administration of not respecting their rights.

Examples of secondary school administrators and students strike-related issues were expressed in a study that focused on Naivasha district in Kenya (Nation Correspondence, 2006). The undisciplined students went on rampage and destroyed valuable school property as a way of protesting against the school administration’s indifference to their various grievances. In July 2006, more than 600 students of Naivasha Mixed Secondary School in Naivasha district were sent home when they went on the rampage and destroyed property worth thousands of shillings. Trouble began at night when some boys demanded disco as part of their entertainment. Four students were picked up by the police for questioning and, angered by their colleagues’ arrest; the rest of the students destroyed several classroom doors and disconnected power to the school (Nation Correspondent, 2006). Such incidences portray the need to put in place strategic means of passing timely information from the students to the school administration and vice versa. Schools in Naivasha district are among very many schools in Kenya that lack clear channels of communication. Communication between the school administration, parents, teachers, and students is either lacking, inadequate or inconsistent. In contemporary Kenyan settings, students are highly influenced by media, Information Technology and friends in making decisions.

Therefore, school administrators should be in direct contact with students to identify the problems they may face in order to ensure a learning environment that is conducive. Such a move was noted to encourage dialogue between students and school administrators for suitable explanations when problems emerge (Task Force Report, M.O.E.S.T, 2001).

2.3.2 Causes related to parenting

According to Mbiti (2007), both teachers and parents focused more on academic studies than the development of talents and character. This trend is notable in the competition for high grades among students and schools that witnessed across the country, based on national examination performance index. Mbiti continued to expound that, Academic excellence exceeds positive character training in Kenyan high schools. The situation is worsened when parents and other adults contravene ethical values in the company of their children and assume these youngsters to follow the acceptable value system. Ng'ang'a (2008) also noted cases of parents who have given too much freedom to their children in areas where the students could be guided. Such parents are accompanied by children into entertainment joints where they are exposed to adult behavior. In a different study, (Muindi and Ngare, 2008) noted that, in some homes, parents pamper their children without enforcement of standards of behavior acceptable in their society. For their primary education, these students attend the best academies where they are treated with the same behavior as that at home. At the time such children become adolescents and report in respective secondary schools. Some of those students admitted in public high schools find conditions of existence (environment) somewhat different from what they were used to (at home or in previous primary schools). Therefore, the unfamiliar rules and regulations followed in public high schools, become difficult to follow and they become uncomfortable with the

school environment, hence, some of these students are reported in a number of reports as influencers, that is, they influence other students to rebel or participate in an organized strike.

The influence by parents on learner's discipline was found to improve student discipline in a study conducted by Kabiru (2007) who compared between disciplined and less disciplined students. In his investigations, kabiru reported that, parents who discussed in support for disciplined learners including their own children, had fewer indiscipline cases compared with those parents who did not include learners discipline as agenda or engaged in blame game in the meetings. Both parents have a significant role to play in the discipline of learners. This is underlined by Shannon (2008) who conducted a case study to investigate the key roles that dads in the development of children at the early years programs in the U.S.A., where she was a early childhood educator. In her findings, she realized that fathers occasionally interact with children in techniques that are different from those applied by mothers. Thereby, she got devoted to father's participation and involvement in the discipline of their children in school as well as encouraging other teachers to increase father's participation in their children educational matters (Brown and Stone, 2008). Though the study was done in the U.S.A., it was found relevant because the context, age of participants, perception, the social-economic and political background of the respondents have the same characteristics as those studied in Kenya. The Shannons study is significant to this study due to its emphasis on the need to involve both parents (especially male parents) in the educational activities of their children. In emphasizing the contribution of parenting's styles to secondary school strikes, the data presented is as reported below: 50 percent was due to poor parental role models, 37.5 percent was due to parental support for attacks, 37.5 percent due to problems with broken homes and 25 percent due to e

xcessive parental pocket money given to learners. These statistics strengthen the point made in this study that parenting styles contribute to students' discipline in secondary schools.

2.3.3 Causes related to drugs and substance abuse

Abuse of drugs means the Unlawful or harmful use of substances in the form of solid, gas, or liquid. According to Ndakwa (2013), drugs affect people mentally and physically after they inject, swallow or inhale them. Drugs and other substances are abused by secondary school students in many parts of the world. For example, in the United States, Kristin et al. (2007) stated that an Act parliament of 1994 (The goals of 2000: Educate America) declared that by the year 2000 every school in the United States would be free from drugs, alcohol, and violence. However, she observes, when the provisional report for goals 2000 was published in 1995, the use and sale of illegal drugs at school had actually increased. This was documented by Kaufman et al. (2001), saying that, the USA's Department of Justice and Education jointly published indicators of school crime and safety and its survey found that students reported greater accessibility of drugs in 1999 than in 1993 and that, use of marijuana and alcohol was on the rise among 12th graders (equivalent to high school learners in Kenya).

In Kenya, a disturbing number of students have been ensnared by drugs and it's not astonishing that in 2001, the surge of unrest was largely blamed on the contribution of drugs uptake Bundotich,C.C.(2018).A survey conducted by the Drug Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation Center (DAPAR) provided appalling drug and substance abuse statistics in secondary schools in Nairobi, Central and Eastern Kenya. Among the 2080 students sampled in the DAPAR survey,

1082 (52 percent) confessed having taken an illicit drug, one or more times, at one stage of their life.

A number of studies identified non-teachers in school and people neighboring the schools as culprits in drug peddling in many high schools in Kenya. Njeng'a (2008) in his report observed that, some workers in secondary schools are poorly paid and they resent these benefits hence result in drug selling, dishonesty and other vices with intention of earning additional money to improve their little pay. In the same report Ngenga also noted that, accessibility and user-friendliness of the drugs around student's environment are some of the main causes leading to drugs abuse by students. In some cases, the perception that drugs do relief pain in humans is created in children while young. They grow up seeing grownups abusing drugs to run away from physical and emotional pain at home. These learners, as a result, grow with the impression that drugs are a useful solution to troubles. Such a notion contributes to abuse of drugs in high schools and discipline to the negative or counter production. Ngare and Muindi (2008) also noted that some parents overlook antisocial behaviors being engaged in by their children due to drug addiction. This indiscipline behavior explodes in adolescents while in secondary school leading to violence. Studies like those mentioned above, affirm abuse of drugs as major causes of student strikes. It also explains why the commission of inquiry in (Task Force Report, M.O.E.S.T, 2001) listed drugs and substance abuse as one of the major causes of the rebellion of secondary school students that is mainly complemented by the malicious damage of property in the affected institutions.

A good example of the link between drugs, substance abuse and strikes in secondary schools is in a study on psychosocial causes of drugs and substance abuse in all public secondary schools,

Kisii Central District, conducted by Gikungu et al. (2014). Her findings revealed that the selected students do abuse drugs as follows: 36.1% of the students acknowledged abusing drugs of different kinds while 66% revealed friends who abuse drugs (This presented a gap for another study, which would investigate the number of students abusing drugs in secondary schools as the findings could not be generalized the entire students' population in Kenya). The literature generated in her study indicates that drug and substance abuse by secondary school students in Kenya is on the rise. 50% of the heads of the schools confirmed that drug and alcohol abuse were serious causes of indiscipline among secondary school students in their schools. About 38% of the discipline teachers and 7% of the students held a similar view, implying that drug and alcohol abuses are serious causes of indiscipline in secondary schools in the district.

2.3.4 Causes related to influence of non-teaching staff on student's discipline

There are studies linking non-teaching staff and students' lack of discipline in secondary schools in Kenya which have been conducted previously. For example, Njeng'a (2008) reported that the non-teachers in secondary schools are modestly remunerated and overworked and this demoralizes them. KUDHEIHA (Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Education Institutions, Hospital and Allied workers) cited an occurrence in one secondary school in Nyeri, Kenya where a guardsold drugs in school to increase his insufficient income. When the guard was questioned, he argued that his rich boss paid him peanuts (Ksh 3000 per month) to protect his children While his own kids were at home because he was unable to pay school fees.

A report by the research club of the school at Statehouse Girls Nairobi foundthat girls were allowed to sneak out from school at night after they paid twenty Kenya shillings to the school watchmen (Njagi, 2008). In essence, non-teaching staff accept to bring drugs to students after

being given favors. This has a negative impact on the discipline of the students and may cause the students unrests. In other incidences, secondary school drivers were reported having colluded with Mechanics to replace new parts of school vehicles with old parts to cause urgent replacement before breaking down. Consequently, such collusion resulted in inconveniences and dissatisfactions among the users of these vehicles sometimes would contribute to students' strikes according to Njagi (2008).

Ochenge's (2007) research tried to establish the impact of nonteaching staff on the indiscipline of students in public high schools in Kisii District's Masaba Division. The research findings showed that 4 percent of the causes of indiscipline in secondary schools are due to nonteaching staff either being disrespectful or colluding with students or not promoting the school policies.

Ochenge's findings also indicated that, 18.3% of the students agreed that teachers had an impact on the indiscipline of the students, 15.3% and 13.3% suggested that the head teachers and non-teaching staff contributed to the school indiscipline of the students in 2008, respectively.

2.3.5 Causes related influences by peer pressure

The inspiration of students' peers to violence is sited in a *Global Journal of Advanced Research* by Gutuza, R. F., et al (2015) as one of the major causes of the strike in secondary schools worldwide. There are a number of reasons that lead to student peers' influence on violence. Some students get stressed in the learning process, hence start seeing it as a problem to them and end in violent attacks as a tactic to ease this strain Gutuza, R. F., et al (2015). This claim had initially been given by Njeng'a (2008) saying, in Murang'a North District, when some students meet with other students, who are brought up with non-acceptable behaviors, after interacting, they

negatively influence them to cause havoc as a solution to problems. In his study in Murang'a North District, he attempted to find out if there is a relationship between peer influence and students discipline in secondary school.

He verified his concerns as 63 percent of teachers said peer pressure in Murang'a North District is contributing to secondary school unrest. She also argued that the school applied double standards in this case. Based on the above-mentioned studies it is therefore clear that Peer pressure contribute to strikes in Kenya's secondary school.

2.3.6 Approaches applied in mitigating student unrest in secondary schools in Kenya.

The ministry of education noted that, compared to the previous year's, there was increased number of schools experiencing some form of student unrest in 2008 and that was alarming Sang (2009). The disorders were characterized by violence and reckless destruction of school property and therefore urgent resolutions were necessary. This was a hard argument for a study to examine how the school could handle or avoid cases of indiscipline and bring correct strategies into practice to overcome its dilemma. The literature identified several ways of solving such problems as discussed below:

2.3.6.1 Use of civic education to eradicate drug and substance abuse

Drug and substance abuse was cited as one cause of disruption in schools by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2001). The Ministry of Education worked closely with the National Agencies of the Campaign against Drug Abuse (NACADA) and the provincial administration. Both agencies were expected to address the problem of drug abuse in schools. NACADA has been unable to reach the stakeholders on the ground since then.

Ndakwa (2013) says that parents and schools were asked to be watchful in detecting their children who could be drug abusers as they mold them spiritually/morally so that such cases can be referred for professional assistance.

The drug issue was quite important when it was approached by teachers, students and parents.

Some parents according to Ndakwa (2013) mostly deny the truth and this obstructs the proper treatment of victims of drug abuse in schools.

As parents cover up their children even where there is truth, it has become quite difficult. According to Muindi (2008), most parents turned a blind eye even when their children were involved in anti-social behaviors. Previously, he added, schools used to operate on the principals of mutual understanding with the parents and other stakeholders, but of late parents are rushing to courts to seek redress when their child is caught in for a disciplinary case.

2.3.6.2 Provision of guidance and counseling services

Guidance and counseling were considered a method of dealing with the students' indiscipline Kin diki's (2009). Many secondary school learners are in the adolescent stage, defined by identity crisis, rebellion against authority, and an inclination to identify with others; consequently, this

renders them react to peer constraints. Through providing teacher who are also counselors to each public school, encouraging their preparation and providing the necessary services to allow them to perform their duties effectively, the Ministry tried to improve instruction and therapy at both ministry and school level (Republic of Kenya, 2001). Parents have the role of correcting their children through advice and suggestions which is vital for raising their children responsibly. It has been confirmed by Karibu (2007) that in general, children accept the values that their parents know they accept. Though, he continues to say that, this role of parenting has been left with the house girls (who in most cases are adolescents) who spend a lot of time with these children at home.

A study by MingTsui in China and the United States in 2005, explored the relationships among family income, parenting, and home environment and mathematics achievements. The findings were that factors such as parenting and home environment could be more important for children's academic achievement than money. Although the study was done in a different environment and with different objectives, it underlined parenting styles have many effects on learner's behavior. A similar study was carried out in Kenya by Muola,(2010) on the relationship between home environmental factors and academic achievement, motivation. The findings underscored parenting and home environment as key influences of student's behavior both in and out of school. It is therefore the contentment of this study that behavior that result to strikes in secondary schools in Kenya is partly borrowed from home environment of the students. It is the responsibility of parents to assume their responsibility in guiding and counseling their children and when possible seek professional help for them to avert strikes in school.

2.3.6.3 To improve communication between the school administration and the students

Kindiki (2009) defines Communication as the process of giving and receiving information from one source to another. He goes on to underscore the important of communication between any two parties such as students and the school administration. Therefore, indiscipline problems could be noticed and solved before they erupt with good communication between the two parties. In his investigations Gikungu et al. (2014) reported that students have a natural need to be listened to and appreciated like other human beings. For that reason, teachers should have a role to play as foster parents in school and form a close talking link with the students and their parents through suitable communication.

When students feel denied of communication with authorities, they express this suppression of emotion with strikes. It is possible to identify this cause violence because such students constantly quote freedom of expression as a right denied while participating in the strike Odera and Muthiora (2008). They content that, if the administration could open channels of communication with student's in schools, strikes would be averted. To effect these interactive sessions between students and the administration should be encouraged and the students should demand answers to their troubles during those meetings. Those members of staff holding key departments, able to commit resources and those with clear information must be available to the students to give answers. An example of fruits of communication is underscored by Gikungu & Karanja in 2014 who confirms that 50% of the head-teachers and 25% of the teachers indicated that student parliaments/Barazas are used to curb student's unrests in Murang'a North District.

2.3.6.4 To involve the church in reducing students unrest

As a spiritual organization, the church is believed to offer both spiritual and moral guidance to students. In this respect, NCKK (1992) alludes that, the church stands for virtues and denounces vice. In such a case, students ought to be taught and reminded of their duty to God's creation to neighbors, to themselves, and to the entire society. Hence virtues like honesty, obedience, and sincerity are essential and should be inculcated and practiced by all in the whole society.

In a study on effectiveness of the Catholic Church in reinforcing moral formation in Catholic-sponsored secondary schools in Nyeri North District conducted by Ramata (2008), the causes of indiscipline were identified as: adjustments to the adolescents to new roles in the society, the rigorous studies, crime, weakened home and family structures, and violence modeled by the media. He also made it clear that the indiscipline cases did not discriminate any secondary school in the district; this study therefore, attempts to collect these and other causes of the strikes together with the major identified strategies of curbing strikes and make recommendations on a philosophical solution to the problem.

2.3.6.5 Improving teachers-students relationship

According to (Gikungu, J. M., & Karanja, B. W. 2014), teachers can attain a high level of pupil's participation in and out of classroom not through the management of deviance but through their careful planning and design of activities. This can be possible through the institution of standards of behavior for work procedures and classroom, which facilitate activities to be implemented and changed with ease. Thus, teachers must ensure the efficient working of the class, through a number of classroom management skills. Consequently, students should be involved in school

decision-making processes that concern them. This participatory approach is a step forward in improving the relationship between students and teachers and could aid in solving the menace of strikes in Kenyan secondary schools.

A study carried out by Kiruma (2004) on the actions of curbing the students' strikes in the Mukurwe-in Division, formerly in Nyeri District. It targeted high schools in the district, head teachers, head of departments and other teachers. She recommended good relationship between students with their teachers. This could be achieved through guidance and counseling as one of the major measures that should be put in place to curb students' strikes.

It is therefore possible to point out that, there is need for an efficient method wherein access to learning resources by teachers and students is guaranteed. This would ensure knowledge, skills, and strategies for development in a safer school environment. Such approaches will be helpful and realistic and appropriate to the high school environment in Kenya. The present study is concerned that, the above strategies have not born many fruits in terms of stopping the menace in Kenya. It, therefore, argues that incidents of violence in secondary schools should be perceived in a prophetic way in which the schools learn lessons and incorporate this knowledge in curbing any potential incidences or for preparation procedures. This will require a new mitigating approach (s) guided by existential philosophical underpinning.

2.4 The concept of existentialism

This section presents a general idea of the existentialist style of philosophy in terms of its genesis, tenets, and criticism. It captures these ideas of existentialism as linked with the theoretical framework to explore new ways of mitigating the problem of student strike in Kenyan high schools. The section presents the concept of existentialism, its origin, tenet, criticism and application in education.

Existentialism, in the broadest sense, is a twentieth-century style of philosophy or movement that centered upon the analysis of “existence”. It tends to focus on the question of human existence and its conditions. It is concerned with the concrete life of each individual and his/her ways of being in the world or within their environment. The central notion that is shared by a number of existentialist philosophers like (Sartre, 1947) is that ‘existence precedes essence’, that is, human being’s (student’s) existence comes first. Thereafter each individual spends a lifetime creating, establishing and/or changing their personality and/or existence. This is the term that is captured in the existentialist notion as making their (students) essence.

Existentialism, as a movement in philosophy, is concerned with the finding of the self and the meaning of life through free will, choice and personal responsibility. The existentialist's philosophers/educationists content that, students are constantly seeking to find out 'who and what' they are. Students make choices based on their beliefs, outlook, perception, and experiences in life. This implies, therefore, that students are never complete human beings and are in a process of change as they transform to become more and more human (Sartre, 1947). In this view, human nature is that of ‘becoming’ and is therefore characterized by continuous realization and transformation of the self and the world which they (human beings) inhabit (that is, conditions of existence) in their search for complete humanness. Students in secondary schools viewed in this

existentialist perspective are in the process of constructing, defining and shaping student's identities.

Despite their varied backgrounds, Existentialists like Kierkegaard (a religious philosopher) Nietzsche (an anti-Christian) and Sartre and Camus (atheists), are convinced that human beings are free to be or do what they want or desire or be what they choose to be provided they take responsibility of their choices. As such, human freedom is limited by the burden of responsibility.

2.4.1 The origin of Existentialism

Existentialism, as a philosophical movement, emerged in the twentieth century. Such philosophers as Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche inspired this movement. The focus of existentialism was on human experience rather than the objective truth of mathematics and science that they found to be too detached from human experience. The movement also influenced other disciplines as exemplified in the works of literary writers such as Franz Kafka and Fyodor Dostoevsky who described existential themes in their literary works.

When it began, existentialist ideas expressed in literary fictional works rather than in the philosophical discourse. Works of Jean-Paul Sartre's works such as *Being and Nothingness* (1943), his play *No Exit* (1944) and *Nausea* (1938) exemplified this. These works expressed existential themes such as fear, alienation, and pain. Existentialism took an explicit philosophical current in continental Europe philosophy especially through the works of existentialists such as Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Albert Camus, and Simone de Beauvoir.

Such themes were born out of a deep sense of despair following the great depression and World War II in Europe. World War II brought the destruction of the spirit of optimism and calamities that led to despair amongst people. This despair is articulated by earlier existentialist

philosophers and continues to this day as a way of philosophizing. This study domesticates some of these experiences such as alienation, absurdity, and freedom as part of the fundamental experiences of students in secondary schools in Kenya.

2.4.2 Tenets of Existentialism

There are certain identifiable basic conventions associated with existentialism. These constitute the tenets of existentialism.

Thus, they are expressed as, one, existence precedes essence. In his book *Existentialism is Humanism* (1968), Jean-Paul Sartre expresses this idea as ‘man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world and defines himself afterward’. To the existentialists, therefore, there is no such pre-determined essence found in human beings, but rather, human beings are conscious subjects who are free to chart their own destiny rather than things to predict or manipulate. As such, human beings exist as conscious beings and not in accordance with any definition, essence, generalization or system. Perhaps, the more positive aspect implied here is that a person is free to make the choice of acting differently, for instance, to be a virtuous person instead of being an unkind person. This is the reason, so do the existentialists argue that such a person’s existence precedes his /her essence. This is so for secondary school students who have a personal responsibility to determine (by choices) their way forward in their day to day school experiences.

Two, the absurdity of human life. Closely related to human existence and its conditions, existentialists also observe that the world “in-itself” is absurd, that is “not fair” and as such, they argue that a meaningful life can at any point suddenly lose all its meaning (Sartre, 1947). When this happens it can make a person mentally unstable (that is, do certain inexcusable things in the eyes of the public like violence in schools). In other words, the world can turn out to be absurd or

unfair to human (students) existence. But in such circumstances, leaving the situation in the same way (these conditions of existence), without transforming it can make life even worse. Accordingly, when this happens, there always occurs a need to take the initiative to tackle the situation with a view of transforming it. It is in the course of initiating such a transformative action that human beings seek (in education) to find their identity or meaning of their being in the world (Sartre, 1947). This educational perspective is clearly developed in the existentialist pedagogy that is preferred in this study as a mitigating measure to student violent behavior in secondary schools witnessed here in Kenya.

Three, individual freedom and responsibility. Each individual holds certain values. It is upon the dictates of these values that, individuals often act. Accordingly, while making choices of how to act, an individual is directed by the values they hold. At the same time, this choice introduces the aspect of responsibility for the choices made. For that reason, individuals must be ready to put up with the consequences of their freedom (of choice).

In this way, freedom, in existentialism, related to the limits of responsibility one bears because of one's freedom. In other words, while choice is central to human existence and at the same time unavoidable, even the refusal to choose is itself a choice. However, the freedom to choose entails some commitment and responsibility. On this basis, individuals are free to choose their path and at the same time, they must accept the risk of following their commitment to wherever it leads them (Sartre, 1947). Individual freedom and responsibility are therefore central to existentialism. Education-based on this awareness could eliminate such violent activities since students are free to choose their, curriculum, teaching/learning materials and even learning outcomes based on their individual abilities.

2.4.3 Critic on existentialism

Jean-Paul Sartre stands out as the most well-known existentialist. His work *Being and Nothingness* (1992) has greatly contributed to the development and understanding of existentialism. Accordingly, most of the critical questions raised on existentialism tend to target Sartre's work. Herbert Marcuse, for instance, criticized existentialism for projecting anxiety and meaninglessness, which are just but features of modern society as ultimate constituents of existence itself. In his reaction to "Sartre's Existentialism", Marcuse (1972) indicated that existentialism, as propagated by Sartre, is a projection of anxiety in modern society and it does not clearly indicate the purpose of doing so.

Herbert Marcuse in his criticism on existentialism noted that;

"In so far as existentialism is a philosophical doctrine, it remains idealistic; it hypothesizes specific historical conditions of human existence into ontological and metaphysical characteristics. Existentialism thus becomes part of the very ideology which it attacks, and its radicalism is illusionary".

This means that, these existentialist philosophers like Sartre, only projected in a universalized way, particular historical moments and these projections hence created anxiety in the modern society.

Similarly, Heidegger questioned Sartre's existentialism, especially the central tenet that "existence precedes essence". In Heidegger's view, Sartre appears to be taking 'existentia' and "essentia" according to their metaphysical meaning, which, from Plato's time on, has been, "essentia precedes existentia". To Heidegger, Sartre has only reversed this statement and yet the reversal of a metaphysical statement remains at the metaphysical level in the oblivion of the truth of being.

Philosophers commonly referred to as logical positivists for example Rudolf (1956) raised issues against existentialism by pointing out two main conceptual problems in the existentialist account. Firstly, they pointed out that existentialists are often confused about the verb 'to be' in their analyses of 'being'. Therefore, they argued that the verb is transitive and prefixed to a predicate, for example, 'this banana is yellow', and so, without a predicate, the word is meaningless.

Within the existentialist paradigm, there appears to be much emphasis on the experiences of the human being in question. In this study, human experiences considered are those of the secondary school students, especially in the context of the perennial violence experienced in Kenya. For that reason, it will be important to draw some guidance from the foregoing tenets of existentialism.

2.4.4 Application of Existentialism in Education

The purpose of education is to give students the unity of truth... Kusum (2005) in this regard, the existentialists ensures this educational objective is achieved as follows;

First, they set the aim of education as developing consciousness about the freedom to make choices and being responsible for the choices one makes in life. Therefore, the most important kind of knowledge for each person is about the human condition and the choices that each person has to make in life.

This implies that the idea of social norms, authority, and established rational order that articulate dimensions' like; political, social, religious, philosophical and so on are overruled in such education. Existentialism, therefore, recognizes only a few universal standards, customs, traditions, or eternal truths. This means that the perspective is at odds with the universal ideas of realism and idealism.

Secondly, existentialists prefer the development of personality through their education. Any kind of education should capture or target the whole human being. Such education should aim at character formation and self-realization among learners.

According to Kusum (2005), in the existentialist classroom, the subject matter takes second place to aid learners to understand and appreciate themselves as unique individuals who admit mistake by taking responsibility for their feelings, actions, and thoughts. Since emotion is not divorced from reasoning in the decision-making process, it is for this reason, the existentialist stresses the education of the whole person, not just the development of the mental faculties alone.

Perceived from an existentialist perspective, (Malik and Rukhsana, 2012) note that, in the 21st century (age of science) there has been too much objective knowledge compared to a subjective one. This has been so much that the term objective knowledge has come to mean just scientific, unreal, irrelevant non-sense and ignorant. This explains why according to (Malik and Rukhsana, 2012) subjective data is even more preferred than objective data in educational research and designing education curriculums. Since existentialists view truth as subjectivity, therefore, truth is a human value and values are owned by individuals and not necessarily factual. This reduction of values to facts by objectifying truth has created continuous harm to them hence minimizing people's faith in these values. It, therefore, implies that, together with the teaching of science and mathematics subjects in the curriculum, the art, humanities, and literature should also be given a suitable accommodation at every step in education. Since the greatest of the troubles of the man in modern times according to Malik and Rukhsana (2012) is the over-objective approach. Handling of issues that are economic, political and social is by the objective perspective. Therefore, matters that are social (like education) that arise out of negotiating conditions prompted by the environment are treated like entities that are valueless (no say) in such a rational

objective system. According to Malik and Rukhsana (2012), this is one important condition that brings confusion and corruption, tensions and conflicts in a system. Resolving such conflicts is also objectified leading to dissatisfaction and the disgruntled member result in seeking adjudication through strikes and other violent means. In education thus, (this study contents) the voices of all members in that system need a subjectivist adjustment that is guided by existentialist philosophical underpinning. This is because existentialist pedagogy seeks to provide an environment proper to self-development and self-consciousness. Such an environment in the school requires a contribution from all educational disciplines including; humanities, literature, and arts. This educational approach helps in the development of student's individual uniqueness such that, learners cease being submerged in the Universalized curriculum and the only part they can play is seat and study to pass exams. It is what the existentialists refer to as the development of student identities which is also referred to by (Freire, 1972) as developing self-conscious and sensitive individual members of the society.

In line with (Freire, 1972), existentialist education is the best because it is child-centered. Such education is offered in the interest of the child as a major consideration. It, therefore, accords full freedom to the child to participate in choosing even the teaching-learning materials. The teacher's task is helping the child to know himself/herself and recognize his being. Freedom is essential for a child's natural development. Therefore, the goal of education is to convert imperfection into perfection in accordance with the individual's needs and abilities of the child. Through education, the relationship between the child and himself/herself is strengthened.

Existentialists prefer to free learners to choose what to study and also determine what is true and by what criteria to determine these truths. (Freire,1972) further contends that the curriculum would avoid systematic knowledge or structured disciplines, and the students would be free to

select from many available learning situations in the environment. They (learners) would be allowed to choose the knowledge they wish to possess and tremendous emphasis should be given to humanities. These disciplines should be explored as a means of providing students with mediated experiences that will help release their own creativity and self-expression. For instance, instead of emphasizing on historical events, existentialists concentration on the actions of historical persons, each of whom offers possible models for the students' personal behavior.

This existentialist's educational philosophy is almost an inversion of realist educational philosophy. The realists exclusively emphasize science in the field of the curriculum while, the existentialists according to Leif (2010), find out that science and objective education serves our relation with ourselves and science cannot help in inner realization and achievement of peace in all sectors. This, though, does not mean that science education should be disregarded. It only means that, apart from emphasizing science in the curriculum, educationists must include humanities, religion, and ethics. In keeping with this perspective, contemporary engineering colleges have included philosophy, ethics, and social studies, in their curriculum. Deprived of this synthetic approach to curriculum the aim of character formation and personality development will be overpowered.

This study, therefore, applies the existentialist educational approach that is referred to as existentialist pedagogy as the philosophical underpinning in mitigating the issue of strikes in Kenyan secondary schools. The approach is blended with a theory of violence advocated by Frantz Fanon, that is inclined the existentialism, to bring out the fundamental issues to be addressed while mitigating the problem.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three of this study is methodology. The chapter focuses on the research methods applied in the study. It mainly illustrates hermeneutics as the appropriate research method and therefore presents a general picture of how the research design, study location, target population, data analysis, and interpretation methods are captured. The study aims to interpret the issues raised by the national reports on the causes of students' violence in Kenyan secondary schools and formulate a practicable strategy to examine and address the menace in Kenya.

3.2 Methodology

The preferred research method in this study is hermeneutics. The researcher's preview on the nature of the issue of student violence found that such a study requires an interpretive method other than a descriptive method as in the case of many other studies under experimental designs. Hermeneutics was derived from Hermes, the Greek messenger of legend who bore knowledge and understanding between the gods and mortals Klemm, (1983). In the 17th century, hermeneutics became associated with the interpretation of the text, particularly in the context of biblical studies (Crotty, 1998). Since then, a number of theologians and philosophers argued for, elaborated on, and developed variations of hermeneutic philosophy and subsequent methodologies. Schleiermacher is acknowledged as the founder of modern hermeneutics, moving beyond the illumination of the biblical text to the illumination of human understanding.

Husserl's student Martin Heidegger (1976) introduced hermeneutics into the study of phenomena ; he believed that its capacity to disclose meaning is constrained by mere explanation

(Lavery, 2003). Hermeneutics, therefore, differs from methods that are purely descriptive like phenomenology in significant ways. Hermeneutic thus is a method of seeking a deeper perception of human experience by rediscovery and exposure (Bergum 1997).

In hermeneutics, beyond the description of the phenomenon are discovered meanings, which do not appear instantly (Merleau-Ponty, 1996). Therefore, Instead of holding up (bracketing) our assumptions, Heidegger argued that our preconceptions are an integral part of the comprehension process and that the experience of each person is special, although it is possible to generalize the human conditions. Hermeneutics, consequently, appropriate descriptive phenomenology elements, modify and include them in the hermeneutic comprehension cycle.

HansGeorg Gadamer (1997), while describing both human comprehension and human beliefs, he emphasized the importance of words. In addition to stressing the prominence of language, Gadamer conceptualized three metaphors that describe the hermeneutic experience of understanding: fusion of horizons, dialogue and the hermeneutic circle (Thompson, 1990).

This study applies the hermeneutic method in line with this conception of hermeneutic experience by Gadamer. The researcher initiates it by orienting oneself to the phenomena as advocated by (Van Manen, 1994). To orient, it means finding one's path, getting one's bearings, from the old English *beran*: carrying, giving birth (Hoad, 1996). Orienting to the phenomena of student strikes, the researcher envisages capturing Gadamer's concept of "fusion of horizons". Basically, the researcher carried out a documentary analysis with reports from different sources as mentioned earlier in the study. This is a technique construed as useful in organizing requirements for a given inquiry. It entails the review of existing documents to extract pieces of

information considered relevant to a study. In so doing, he aims to provide the historical and cultural horizons associated with the sources of data. The exercise (orienting oneself to the phenomena) is conducted in order to make explicit the 'researchers horizons' or preconceptions at the initial stage of the study.

The metaphor explained above as the "fusion of horizons" is Gadamer's conception of the hermeneutic experience of understanding. It refers to the process through which the other's point of view communicates to us as we allow ourselves to be affected by what we know, which means putting forth our predictions and then re-examining them in the light of what we have heard. In this way, the researcher attempts to formulate some understanding of the historical and cultural factors that shape the origin, purpose, and terms of references in the life of each of the documents studied. The attempt sought to get a sense of history and culture of different regions in Kenya that registered more strikes than others in the past. This was done by reading, historical, political and biographical accounts (Muchena, 2015; Singoei, 2018; Sang, 2009), viewing films (NTV, Citizen and KTN) and collecting anecdotes on strikes in secondary schools in Kenya. In this way, he sought to formulate an interpretation of the historical and cultural influences that influenced the lives of the participants.

The hermeneutic methodology claims that all research is important because researchers introduce their prejudices, biases, and assumptions to the study, and these light up the results (Taylor, 1987). Gadamer (1997) relates to the components of prejudice and foreboding as the means by which we approach a subject as he states "The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against

one's own fore meanings". The researcher, hence, had to examine his own positioning and scrutinize what had taken him to the subject and what influences his position on the topic.

As envisioned in the "fusion of horizons" the phenomenon stance speaks to the researcher and he allows himself be prejudiced as a result of what he has learned, this means applying his predictions and then reexamining them in the light of what has been learned.

The study aimed at learning more about the experience of a student in a secondary school during and after a strike with a view of coming up with a mitigating approach that works to curb the menace in Kenya. As he undertakes this study, the researcher is cognizant that, studies must usually concentrate on a single aspect of human experience and ignore others in order to make results manageable. Studies on human conditions of livelihood are more complex and multidimensional than any one learning, and research on strikes has been criticized for labeling people (Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. 2012). The researcher being aware of this labeling, choice to subscribe to the notion that people are more than the classes we impose on them, that is, students have the defining characteristic of their identity. Therefore, he underscores causes of mitigating strikes in secondary schools in Kenya as the first priority and thereafter, proposes existentialism philosophical underpinning as a mitigating measure.

In order to capture the act of dialogue in line with Gadamer's conception of the hermeneutic experience of understanding, the researcher incorporates the value of language in the following ways: first, by paying attention to the words used in the writing process and secondly, by investigating their roots and permutations to discover the underlying meanings that enlighten understanding. The data which is used (recorded in the study documents) reflect the gathered experiences from students, parents, teachers, administrators' and researchers that are captured in

the reports. Some of these violence experiences are also captured by the respondents in write-ups presented as primary data (in their original form) in some of the reports, which are also earmarked for examining. The ideas are extracted as presented by the writers of the texts/documents that are used. The researcher reads the texts (those contents in their original form and the contents as paraphrased by the reporter), aiming to capture the act of dialogue. The dialoguing with the contents in the texts are in line with Gadamer (1997) who proposes that in dialogue is how the fusion of horizons occurs, in which we engage in a genuine conversation based on the Socratic-Platonic art of dialectic, i.e. “the art of questioning and of seeking the truth”. The questioner maintains a stance of openness to the topic, and seeks to formulate questions in such a way that the topic is “broken open” and something is allowed to emerge, that is, “the truth that the topic reveals”. The aim is not to understand individual people, but to understand that which they speak.

The study envisions observing keenly the act of dialoguing in the texts, as it forms the foundation of reading and interpreting the contents in all the documents. The documents are presupposed to be accessed completely (ready data) for analysis from their various sources among which include the Ministry of Education and University libraries. The researcher expects much of the data collected to be quantitative and a portion of it qualitative. The information is applied to offer the basis for the triangulation of inquiries, data sources, and findings as advocated by Marshall and Rossman (1999). Therefore the method provides the means of grounding the study in the life experiences of students and those of other stakeholders such as teachers, school administrators and parents in a naturalistic and interpretive manner that is explicitly consistent with respect to humanity of participants, while remaining “emergent and evolving”(Marshall et al., 1999).

The researcher interprets the data within the “hermeneutic circle” of understanding that involves circular movement, an ever-expanding circle of understanding and interpretation (Gadamer, 1997). Therefore, he approaches a topic with some pre-conceptions or projection, and that, those projections are examined and revised in the face of what “the things themselves” revealed to us, then, he returns for further exploration in the light of that new understanding. In addition, the topic is understood by viewing “the whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of the whole”. These dynamic movements of understanding from projection to a topic to new projection, and from whole to part to whole, constitute the hermeneutic circle of understanding and interpretation.

The goal of hermeneutics is to “reveal the totality of meaning in all its relations” (Gadamer, 1997), through a process of interpretation which involve; - making manifest that which was hidden by going “beyond what was directly given” (Spiegelberg, 1982), reading between the lines (Odman, 1988) and paying attention to what has been omitted, to the silences and the assumptions, to that which has been taken for granted, that it had not been questioned.

To correctly capture the hermeneutic circle, the researcher initially writes down the conversations and then check and rechecks the transcriptions against the source document, in order to make sure that the transcripts accurately recorded the conversation. Through the process of transcribing the written conversations, the experiences described are transposed to written text. The transcripts are examined and divided into statements, a process that Creswell (1998) calls “horizontalization”. Those statements are then organized into clusters of meaning, or essential themes by using a cut-and-paste method.

As the researcher moves between the descriptions or narratives in the reports/documents, the information on participants' experience as captured in all its contents/materials and the researchers own reactions/interpretations of those experiences, is expected to fall naturally into a linear progression, mirroring the journey students do experience in violence, the commissions of inquiry into the same, the outcome of successive inquiries and the gaps emanating from those processes. Main themes emerge and through a process of writing, reflecting and rewriting, those themes are explored and refined or organized or grouped under a single theme.

Through hermeneutic, the writer's job is to activate and keep the reader's mind in a positive motion (Gadamer, 1997), while making it clear and evocative is taken great care with the writing.

Direct quotes from participants are examined to illuminate: points, choices, and etymology of words for added insights (the act of dialogue), which they offer in elucidating the themes. The researcher notes that new themes emerge in the course of the study. In addition to organizing the text into themes, close attention is paid to statements that reveal the truth such as those that elicit an emotion that haunts or that show the phenomenon in a new way. They are analyzed as the way to enter the whole. At the same time; the explanations of their encounters by participants illuminate and give the element additional value. Hence, a hermeneutic continuum of perception, from the part to the whole and back to the part, thus helps to deepen the awareness that the particular moment made it possible.

As part of hermeneutic interpretation work, the image that is portrayed profoundly or as truthful is used as a recurring theme during writing that keeps elucidating the whole. Once the materials have been shaped into a coherent whole, a final cycle of interpretation is undertaken in order to uncover more meaning and allow the topic to be metaphorically interpreted. "Metaphor teases

the mind into thinking something new by virtue of seeing a resemblance previously unnoticed and unthought-of? (Klemm, 1983). The image that is portrayed profoundly or as truthful is introduced to the overarching metaphor of crossing thresholds.

The study uses ready data available in different libraries or government offices. Such a design is often known as *ex post facto* research design. It is used in exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2008). It does not include any form of manipulation or measurement before the fact occurs, as is the case in true experimental designs. By this design, the researcher starts with observation and examination of facts that took place naturally and in the case of the hermeneutic method/study, the researcher use reports that had already been done and data is available, in the sense that the researcher does not interrupt, follow afterward the exploration of the causes behind the evidence that is selected for analysis. The ready data is the sore interpretation of the design that, the researcher uses in order to prosecute this study through the hermeneutic circle of understanding. Examines the dependent variable (the factor/effect) retrospectively or the act of dialogue (as it is referred to in this study), in order to identify possible causes of student strike and relationships between the dependent variable and one or more independent variables (Orodho, 2008). After the deconstruction of the causal process responsible, the facts observed are selected for analysis and the researcher eventually adopts a prospective approach, in line with Gadamer's hermeneutic experience of understanding, specifically the hermeneutic circle Van Manen, (1994).

The documents that are considered relevant for interpretation in the study and hence applicable are outlined below: The first set of documents consists of taskforce reports on violence and

indiscipline in Kenyan high schools. The three documents mainly available for reflections in the study include the report of the presidential committee of 1991 on student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya, (Sagini report of 1991). The second one was the report on causes, effects, and remedies of indiscipline in secondary schools in central province (Macharia report of 2000). The third was the report of the taskforce on student discipline and unrest in secondary schools in Kenya (Wangai report of 2001). These reports are specifically introduced and reviewed in the study for interpretation.

The second set of documents is that of the media narratives/reports on incidences of student violence and unrest in secondary schools in Kenya. Those include newspapers, reports on the occurrences of student violence, published and unpublished research documents such as reports and dissertations written on the topic.

The third set is the statistical data and trends exhibited in the occurrences of student violence and unrest as documented by and managed by the Ministry of education.

Other supplementary documents that, the researcher referred to include: First, the Ominde report (1964), whose purpose is to review existing systems of education and advise the government on the formulation and implementation of new national policies for education. The second is the Gachathi report (1976) which aims at examining the impact of education on the economy with the mandate of providing new directions for education to stimulate economic growth. Third, the Mackay report (1981) sought to review the higher education system in relation to rural development and modified the education system from 7-4-2-3 to 8-4-4 where each level was terminal. Fourth, the Kamunge report (1988) which was set up to recommend ways in which education and training could offer the youth skills that lead to self-reliance and self-employment and to work out a cost-sharing plan for financing quality and relevance. Finally, the Koech report

(1999) on totally integrated quality education and training (TIQET) whose mandate was to recommend ways and means of enabling the education system to facilitate national unity, mutual social responsibility, accelerated industrial and technological development, life-long learning and adaptation in response to changing circumstances.

Some of these documents are themselves part of the context under investigation and therefore greatly contribute to the construction of the social context and relationships therein. Others contain rich information concerning various perspectives on the concept of violence including its causes and remedies.

In conclusion, hermeneutics research method reveals the totality of meaning in all its relations especially in exploring students' strikes in secondary schools in Kenya. The method allows through a process of interpretation, seeking a deeper understanding of students' experience by rediscovering it and opening it up. This is why the researcher found it useful in exploring the menace that has refused to go away in Kenyan secondary schools. It also allows the researcher to come up with his approach as a suggestion of reversing/addressing the trend/menace.

CHAPTER FOUR

HERMENEUTICS OF EXISTENTIAL PEDAGOGY

4.1 Introduction

This section presents and analyses data related to students' strike in secondary schools in Kenya and is delivered in line with the hermeneutic research method. This method envisages presentation of ideas in themes that are formed and aligned with Gadama's 'hermeneutic cycle of understanding' explained in chapter three of the study. The researcher pursues themes/ideas generated in the topic applying three cycles that are used in digesting the theme(s) for interpretation as new themes emerge in a series. Each cycle has three parts: part one always begins with the researcher's summary in form of the horizon that presents the unresolved issue(s) in form of theme(s), part two is a whole view of these emanating theme(s), three are the parts of the theme(s) and the last part is the researchers updated horizon that is also captured as part one of the next cycles. The cycles are briefly mentioned as (A) researcher's pre-understandings of the topic of student's strikes in Kenya and the fusion of horizon of understanding with theoretical perspectives of the study, (B) review of the horizon offered by phenomena on causes of strikes, and approaches to prevent violence in secondary schools in Kenya, (C) description of accumulated perspectives on the phenomena, and cycle (D) existential pedagogic approach in mitigating student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.

4.2 Cycle A: Theoretical perspectives on the fusion of horizon on understanding strikes in Kenya

This cycle presents the researcher's orientation to the research topic. It, therefore, deals with the researcher's pre-understandings on the topic of student strikes in Kenya, modulated by his effective historical consciousness, prejudices, etc. The topic of violence is reviewed as represented in the research literature and the parts are appraised in the form of theories, concepts, themes and findings as reflected in the literature review of this study. This is done in major streams of literature on violence such as the therapeutic theory of violence by Frantz Fanon and the dehumanization theory of violence by Paulo Freire. The effort yields an improved understanding of the research topic that is "new horizon" which leads the researcher into transition through cycle (A) to cycle (B), to tackle some of the major themes arising from the first cycle.

The study is conceived and developed under an existentialist mode of thought. In this mode of thought, many theories were briefly considered to bring out the formation of tendencies to violence within the persons of students at the level of secondary school in Kenya. The theory reviewed in this study is the therapeutic theory of violence by Frantz Fanon and also ideas of other theories like the dehumanization theory of violence by Paulo Freire have been incorporated. The explanations given on how violence is generated and can be addressed are captured in an illustration shown below.

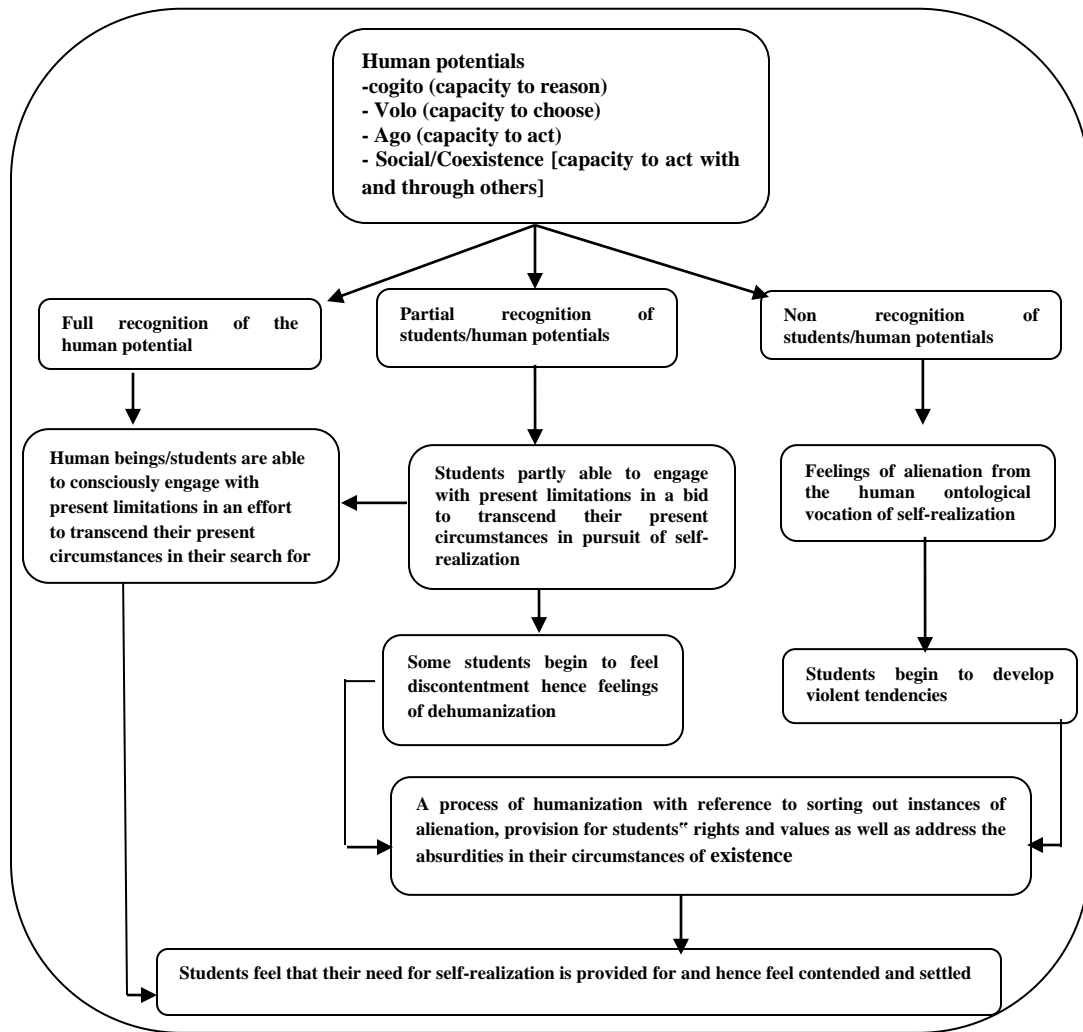


Fig 1: schematic representation of the formation of tendencies of violence within the persons of students’ adapted from Sawamura et al (2008)

As of the illustration depicted in the diagram, human beings are presented as having the potentials to reason, to make own choices, to act with and through others. This potential in humans (students) could be fully, partially or not recognized/realized. When it is fully recognized, students are able to consciously engage with present limitations in an effort to transcend their circumstances in their search for self-realization. In the case of partial recognition

of potentials, students are partially able to engage with present limitations in a bid to transcend their circumstances in pursuit of self-realization. If they succeed to address the limitations/challenges presented in this pursuit, students develop to realize full potential. On the other hand, those students who fail to achieve self-realization develop a feeling of self-alienation from the human ontological vocation of self-realization just like those students who do not recognize human potential at all. As illustrated in the diagram, some students who partially achieve self-realization and do not negotiate challenges successfully begin to feel discontented hence the experience of dehumanization chips in. Those students who fail totally to achieve their potential to develop violent tendencies and engage in a process of humanization in efforts of sorting out instances of alienation (Malenya, 2016). Such learners address issues as well as absurdities in their circumstances of existence violently. While craving for provision of their rights they exhibit violence as means of achieving the end.

Fanon (2007) contends that there is some kind of ‘justification’ for violence in humans (students’) and that violence is necessary for two situations. The first is where there is a need to liberate consciousness (to restore humanity) of the oppressed or people who feel oppressed. In the diagram, students use reasoning to create personal or social goals. The means to achieve these goals are facilitated in the family, school system, religion, state or through their peers. When this doesn’t happen, they feel oppressed by the very systems that should facilitate the achievement of their dreams. In such situations, students’ conscience is stirred and they find other means of actualizing (seeking self-realization) their perceived goals through initiating or participating in a strike. The second situation is when students respond naturally to violence perpetrated by the figures of authority. Students tend to return violence with violence in situations where school authorities choose violent means of deterring them from striking

activities Sandhu (2000). These students start burning the school and hauling stones at administration in response as the police attempt to quell/stop destruction of property by the striking students. From the student's viewpoint, violence (bringing down schools administrative structures physically) is the practical way/reaction among secondary school students to have their grievances addressed (Eisenbraun, 2007). After going through this stage, students feel that their needs for self-realization are provided for and are contented and settled like peers whose potential had been fully recognized.

The foregoing illustration of violence is very useful at the level of examining the process by which tension (unrest) builds up within the learners who feel aggrieved or when the process of self-realization is blocked. As it appears from this theory, this situation leads to violence and aggressive release of inbuilt tension that often constitutes the popular menace of student violence. In effect to Fanon's theory of violence, the researcher found some ideas useful in guiding the occurrence and analysis of violence in Kenyan secondary schools. Such ideas include the following: Experiences of alienation, oppression, segregation, human degradation and the general mistreatment of people. These may directly result from the social situation (conditions of existence) within which human beings live (Griffin, 1994). A more reliable approach to addressing such experiences is to aim at the social and political conditions (conditions of existence) within which the human persons in question live.

With regard to freedom, it is notable that freedom is a fundamental human entitlement. Human beings are bound to feel alienated when freedom is taken away (Andrew, 1985). In the event of perpetual devastating conditions of existence characterized by experiences or feelings of alienation and human degradation, resort to violence is one's possible way of reversing the

situation by making perceived perpetrators undergo unwelcomed experiences. In this regard, Fanon appears to be not only supporting student violence but also justifying it.

In conclusion, the analysis of parts in this cycle, therefore, enables the researcher to view students as dynamic persons who are constantly negotiating and creating their individualities whether consciously or otherwise. This theoretical perspective draws a map on the formation/tendencies of violence within the persons of students. Now the emanating theme emanating after this cycle for the researcher are: to investigate the concrete reasons for/causes of violence in Kenyan secondary schools with all measures put to mitigate but to no avail. With new insights, the researcher's horizon is improved in his understanding of issues of student strikes in Kenya. At this point, the first cycle is complete but the issue has not been resolved.

4.3 Cycle B: Review of the horizon offered by mitigation measures

In this second cycle, the researcher starts from the horizon of understanding as constituted by a fusion of theoretical/conceptual perspectives in the literature amassed through the cycle (A). To explore themes that emanated, he briefly analyses the main causes of strikes, and approaches to prevent violence and related activities in secondary schools from previous studies on the issue in Kenya. Consequently, he presents the parts simplified under each theme also compiled from previous studies on the topic of interest.

4.3.1 Causes of strikes, and approaches to prevent violence in high schools

The second objective of the study had sought to determine the causes and strategies to avert violence in secondary schools. Five main causes and approaches were identified. They include causes related to school administration and leadership styles; drugs and substance abuse;

examinations; communication among the students, teachers parents and others in the school administration, and/or; impact the behavior of non-teaching staff on student’s discipline and emerging issues. Subsequently, the second part of this objective of the study had sought to determine the mechanisms applied in the resolution of conflicts. The findings are presented in Table 1. The findings indicate that, the most popular approaches to conflict management amongst students include: easy and free / fast flow of information in the schools’ hierarchical structure; use of civic education to eradicate drug and substance abuse; continuous guidance and counseling by professionals and other social institutions such as the churches to strengthen the kinship; improved integrity measures in examinations; constant and effective communication; improving teachers-students relationship and never leaving students unattended. These reasons for violence and approaches for mitigation of violence in Kenyan secondary schools are tabulated below:

Table 1. Causes of and strategies to avert violence in Kenyan secondary schools collected from recommendations of various reports on the issue

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC REASONS OF STRIKES IN HIGH SCHOOLS	GENERAL AND SPECIFIC APPROACHES APPLIED TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN KENYAN HIGH SCHOOLS
1. Causes related to school administration and leadership styles	1. Effective communication within the school administrative (hierarchical) structure.
When the authorities abuse powers vested on them. Such as those given to the BOM, principal, deputy principal, teachers, support staff and/or student leaders.	Maximum co-operation among stakeholders such as the sponsors, BOM and roles and responsibilities assigned clearly to all staff in high schools
Mismanagement of school funds leading to staff (teachers and / or support staff) boycotting classes due to nonpayment of salaries while students remain unattended to leading to strikes	.Accountable/openness in school expenditure. .routine inspection of all educational institutions to ensure good management practice .Those found guilty of mismanaging public funds disciplinary actions be taken against them
Withdrawal of essential services and/or facilities such as food, certain teachers, consultation channels etc.	

Change in headship or teachers or prefects	All transfers be effected at the end of year/term to minimize disruption of services.
Harsh Prefect system	-There should be clear selection procedures in choosing student leaders that ensure responsible students' leadership. .Schools should inculcate friendly and effective students' leadership
Harsh/unreasonable punishments from school principals, their deputies, head of departments, teachers, and students' leaders.	. Student offenders should be met with fair retribution that is commensurate with the offence. .This should be consistently equal for all student offenders. .School policies shall clearly stipulate student punishments and for what offense
Sidelining of members in management of school activities, such as; parents, sponsors, students, teachers, or any other stakeholder.	Secondary school principals to instill acceptable and affordable institutional culture
Transfer of popular teachers or head teacher	-Any staff transfer to be fairly justified and with full consultation on both sides.
Rigid rules / dictatorial rules	-All learners and staff should participate in formulation of school rules and regulations. -Proper orientation on rule and regulations be done to students. .The school rules and regulations shall be precise and clear to all
Poor leadership styles	.There should be continuous training on administration and educational management that is compulsory for all managers of high schools.
Lack of teaching/learning, sanitary facilities, and poor management /administrative skills	-Teaching and learning should be prioritized by all secondary school management/administration to provide and improve essential services Appointment of school management should be democratized -Involvement of school management and parents on any crisis in schools before student's strike. .There shall be clear guidelines for payment of school fees and any issues resolved amicably
Reduced food ration and poor nutrition in secondary schools	-Dietary needs should be met in high schools.
Unfairness in the application of rules and regulations, distribution of resources and involvement in the key school activities	.Ensure fairness in the distribution of school related activities among all students based on talent and other capabilities.Administrators

	should facilitate healthy competitions for fairness.
2. Causes related to drugs and substance abuse	2. Use of civic education to eradicate drug and substance abuse
Boredom / Idleness	.Students be kept busy all the time with various activities to improve their knowledge and skills.
Lack of motivation among students.	.All secondary schools to inspire co-curricular activities and facilitate their implementation.
The age difference between students and teachers/parents.	-Provision of guidance and counseling services for motivation and improvement of morale in school activities
3. Causes related to parenting	3. Continuous guidance and counseling by professionals and other social institutions.
Lack of a strong spiritual foundation/base that may lead to occult and cultism	-Provision of spiritual/pastoral guidance in schools
Indiscipline or poor discipline/truancy and permissiveness	. School policies that don't encourage bad behavior . Motivate learners all the time .Resolute disciplinary actions
4. Causes related to examinations	4. Improve integrity in examinations
Dishonest in the administration of national examinations, at times resulting to their cancellation.	. Truthfulness in writing examinations ought to be instilled from early childhood.
Poor examination results / mass failure leading to frustration on the part of teachers, pupils/students, and low /poor performers	-Schools improve performance of students. .learners should be motivated to ensure gainful and healthy competitions among themselves.
Fear of (mock) examinations / failure	-proper preparation for all examinations .All secondary schools to follow the national examination guidelines strictly and domesticate them in their institutional policies.
Untrained guidance and counseling teachers, therefore students seeking help do not get assisted.	.Schools to source for trained guidance and counseling personnel
Too much work load, hence students are pressurised in school as they want to pass in examinations.	-Stakeholders involvement in curriculum development and implementation
Unattained and/or unmet goals/needs	. Appointment of qualified Guidance & Counseling (G & C) teachers - Comprehensive guidance and counseling services in high schools should be put in place
Lack of good role models in schools	All teachers and parents should act as good role models for learners
5. Failure of Communication between the learners and other stakeholder such as; school	5. Constant and effective communication

administrators, teachers and parents.	
The poor relationship between pupils/students and the head teacher, their assistants and parents	-Principals ought to be accessible and available to the pupils /students .Students'grievances should be sorted out immediately.
Inaccurate information including rumors	-To improve communication between the school administration and the students through dialogue and other tools such as suggestion boxes and student assemblies -Constant and effective communication and the school notice board
6. The impact behavior of non-teaching staff on student's discipline	6. Improving the teacher-student relationship
7. Culture of violence and abuse of drugs in the society.	7.Use of civic education to eradicate violence and abuse drugs
Unresolved conflicts between staff working in secondary schools and their employers leading to constant stoppage of service delivery in those schools.	-Violence related activities should be highly discourage in secondary schools. -A non- acceptance policies ought to be adopted to curb bullying and other violent acts in School -Employee grievances should be addressed by concerned ministry amicably. .All stakeholders to participate in ensuring good discipline in secondary schools.
Supremacy battles among secondary school stakeholders.	
Simulation of antagonistic activities witnessed in the society during election and other social events.	-Media ought to be censored to suppress violence . leadership should encourage good role modeling
Provocation arising from the political class and other members of the society.	-Participation of all stakeholder in running school affairs ought to be encouraged. .Community friendship must be encouraged
8. Causes related influences by peer pressure	8. Use counseling
Dictatorial/autocratic leadership	All learners must sign and adhere to the rules ad regulations of their respective schools.
The rivalry between learners in the same school.	Organizers of school activities should involve all students through their representatives and they must ensure fairness in competition always
Following the footsteps of other striking schools in the country	- Media ought not highlight strikes and other violent related activities to strengthen the culture of peace in the society
9. Emerging issues	9. Students should never be left unattended
Strikes in secondary schools have also been borne out of accurences such as: food that is perceived to be undercooked or not enough since it lacked an item like meat or bread in it,	-All secondary schools ought to implement the requisite guidelines issued by the ministry of education in their management procedures.

reported immoral acts among students or staff such as homosexuality / lesbianism, it could be a missed opportunities like, the television set may be spoiled at a time when students want to watch a big football match,or power blackout occurs, it could be an incitement after losing in a match, acts of hooliganism learned from other schools and other unforeseen issues and circumstances that keep on emerging.	
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4.3.2 Existential analysis of critical causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya

The above table presents the causes and strategies previously used to avert violence in secondary schools that were explained in chapter two of the study. Such strategies are mentioned in many reports and recommendations by commissions of inquiry into the issue. This study contents that even after these strategies are put in place, violence has persisted in Kenyan high schools. As of the analyses and reflections on these causes of strikes in Kenyan secondary schools, it can be argued that the previous efforts have not permeated the fundamental layers of the theoretical framework of aggression by students and this is why violence still persists (Wilson et al., 1998). The researcher attempts to analyze with intention to expose these persisting gaps in the search of root causes of violence in secondary schools with close relation to human nature as presented in the frame work in circle one of chapter four of this study. This may clarify in part why their proposals have not been able to address this issue entirely. The underlying causes of violence in secondary schools are captured by different authors including Kiboiy (2019), Arnett (2018), Newmann (1981), Sandhu (2000), Nkinyangi (1981). Violent protests or otherwise are used by students to represent a mechanism through which they attempt to rebuild themselves as persons who are aware of their destiny and thus aim to turn any

circumstance that seems to alienate them from their ontological calling to follow total humanity (Malenya, 2016). In his work, *Students, Violent Protests and the Process of Self-Realization in Kenyan Secondary Schools*, (Malenya, 2016) attempted to trace and find the source of this aggression in the 'lived' experiences of learners in their schools inside the existentialist framework in which humanity comprises of four main elements, namely: human reason (logical being); consciousness (desiring) egodestiny / determination; dignity (beings with values and rights that alienate them); and eventually, human will (continuously looking for ego-transcendence to become more full beings) (Baumeister, 2008). The study found out that, the root causes of school violence would be considered as follows: the alienation of the students from their ego-determination process; the absurdity of the existential circumstances of the learners throughout their educational experience and the affront to the ideals selected by the students, their rights and liberties, all felt by the students as comprising their dehumanisation. Therefore, violence is used by students as a self-realization process.

The researcher has reviewed the approaches used in accordance with what has been documented in reports and critical causes of strikes. He examined each transcription of recommendations, causes, and strategies used to avert violence in tandem with the hermeneutic research method, to generate theme(s) that are examined in the next cycle. He underscores ideas that seem to add voices to the discussion on strikes in secondary schools. He, therefore, concurs that violence is used by students as a process of self-realization (Malenya, 2016). With the theme of self-realization, the researcher, now, advances to the next cycle seeking to reveal more details on the phenomena.

4.4 Cycle C: Description of phenomena on causes and mitigation strategies

In line with the accumulated research data of this study, it can be contended that the ultimate cause of high school unrest and violence in Kenya is the dehumanization experience, blocking or distorting the intent of the learners to become completely human (humanisation).

Prior parts have demonstrated how the quest of complete humanity by students is sometimes intercepted by experiences of alienation, the absurdity (injustice) of their living conditions in their respective schools, and an affront to their values and liberty in their school experience

(Kiboiy, 2019).Correspondingly, the fight for humanization is only feasible because of

dehumanization, even though usual practice in schools is not a fate, a barrier introduced by some insensitive and unconsidered school administrators and school regular practices (Arnett, 2018).

Moreover, since dehumanization affects both the aggressor and the repressed, in line with Freire, it is a genuine fight.It is clear from the occurrences of school violence analyzed in this report that as they aim for emancipation, students end up being aggressors through their retaliatory acts toward their school administrators, teachers and prefects, thus dehumanizing both themselves and these players in education.

As per Freire's conception of dehumanization, these learners are only at the initial phase of the fight for humanization and they have to try and overcome it (Roberts, 2000). That's because

Whereas the learners would be understood to undertake their humanity's wholeness, it seems that for them humanity comprises of repressing an aggressor. Evidently, the learners undertake their personal fulfillment so that they can use the power to humiliate the officials. At this point, but they seem to be right, their understanding about themselves as aggressors,although apparently correct, the readiness to participate in an accurate struggle to overcome the dialectical confrontation between them and their school authorities does not yet indicate.That's because

using violence as a weapon to combat their injustice is both threatening and coercive to those from whom a positive response is expected to be elicited.

Although this misuse violence may seem fulfilling as long as it lasts, it can only result in those in authority using more oppressive ways to adapt to the students' violence.

The learners are thus caught in a duality aggressor|oppressed, a conflict they need to be willing to help overcome. A equally damaging and divisive acts of violent protest show how they can be more authoritarian than a supposed oppressors when they have been rejected this freedom and choice. In this sense, they are forced to become (self-realization) human beings with impulses that run contrary to the essential trends described in the existentialist essay. It would thus be recommended that the learners strive to free themselves, as well as their apparent aggressors, instead of becoming aggressors in their fight for deliverance and humanisation. This could be accomplished by encouraging learners to see their acts as similarly coercive and therefore deserving of avoidance if they are truly in the search of truth (Nkinyangi, 1981).

The researcher therefore, after interrogating the explanations provided by the texts and exploring themes, descriptions, arguments, graphical mechanisms, tables, descriptive matrices contained in various chapters/sections etc. of the texts, realize that, the discussions and conclusions made coalesce to describe and explain the whole picture of the phenomenon in details. As he completes the review and description of the phenomenon of violence in schools, this leads to new themes questioning the previous approaches used to mitigate the changing target of strikes in secondary schools. These themes represent the critical issues to be addressed with a different approach. They are identifiable as phenomena, that require interpretation by its audience and so the movement through the cycle continues under existential pedagogy. At the end of this cycle,

the new horizons would show the characteristics of the phenomena with their own identity that require to be explored further.

4.5 Cycle D: Existential pedagogic approach in mitigating student violence

The hermeneutic method requires that all identified/emanating themes be subjected to interpretation. Themes that point to causes of strikes in secondary schools according to this study have the following characteristics: blocked students potential such that students express a feeling of being disadvantaged in national examinations that produce winners and failures hence doomed when they don't achieve the required pass mark, feeling of self-alienation instead of self-realization, provision of student's rights and values as well as blocked channels of addressing student's absurdities in their circumstances of existence, and a feeling of dehumanization. The details of the phenomena were explored together with previous mitigating approaches to the conclusion that the critical causes of violence in secondary schools require interrogating new approaches/interpretations and the researcher identifies existentialist philosophical underpinning that applies to pedagogy in mitigating the menace in Kenyan secondary schools.

The idea of re-examining the causes and previous strategies is common in entrepreneurship. An example is the above preliminary model of entrepreneurial failure that is used to illustrate a strategy that could be adopted to fulfill a vision (shown as "A" in the model). This strategy in five instances resulted in failure (shown as "B" in the model). Despite this failure, the entrepreneur unwaveringly maintained the strength of his vision and used learning from failure to revise his vision and strategies (shown as "C" in the model). This revised execution strategy ultimately resulted in a successful outcome (shown as "D" in the model).

A hermeneutical approach to understanding failure

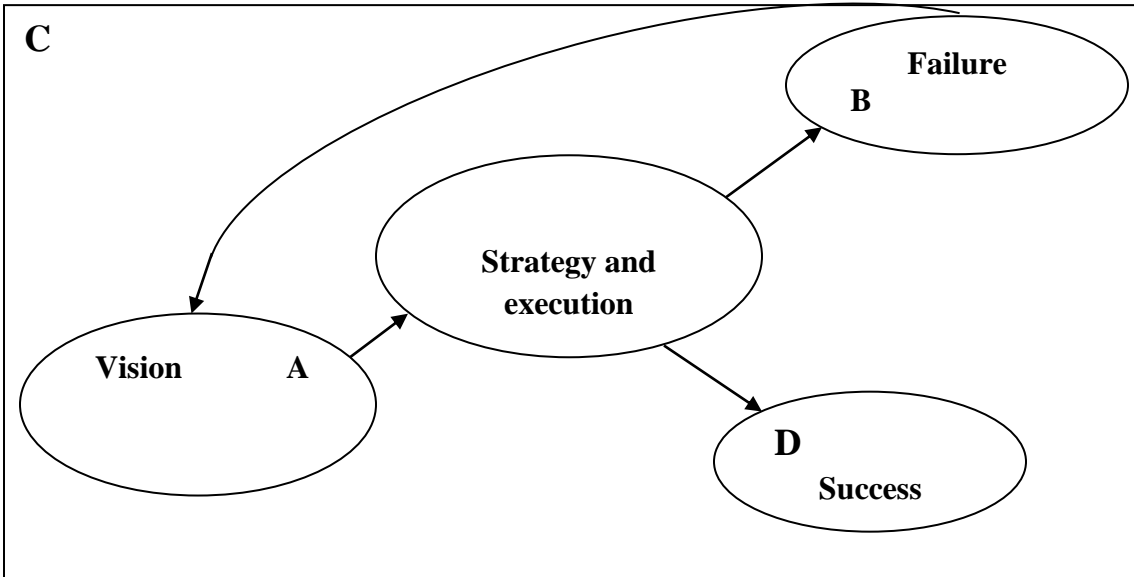


Fig 2. The rational model is adopted from success stories by new ventures McKenzie (2008)

The model suggested an underlying highly rational behavior on the part of the executor in a process that involves the renewal of the nature of strategy and vision to overcome challenges. According to McKenzie (2008), the model describes an economic activity undertaken by social individuals in meeting the challenges of a venture. The researcher adopts the theoretical strength of this model, in revisiting previous strategies that failed in mitigating student strikes in Kenya and designing a new one. The model suggests ways of reexamining failure with new insights/philosophy until success is achieved. The approach in this study is based on existentialism, a new philosophical underpinning that redefines the vision, purpose, and goals of education as a strategy in averting strikes in secondary schools in Kenya.

4.5.1 Benefits and challenges of Existential Education

The existentialist way of the good life does not go through social traditions, customs and social reform (Malik et al., 2013). The way of authentic life begins by realizing oneself by asserting

individuality and making own choices instead of being stamped into the choices of collectivity. Hence students in the school should not be encouraged to criticize or to reform the social customs but they should choose their field of action and full responsibility should be borne by the students (Malik et al., 2013). For this reason, if each student would realize full responsibility for their actions, there would not be anti-social behavior like initiating or participating in a strike or any organized crime in society. They would choose the path of individual improvement for social improvement. In the existentialist view (Malik et al., 2013), no choice is demonstrably better than any other because there is no external standard like proposed universal rules and regulations or standardized ethics and morals to measure the value and validity as alluded by Berman et al (2006). The man himself measures the validity of various choices; he is the judge of all the things. He should not look to history, culture or social institutions for any guidance in decision making (Kusum, 2005). The study therefore underscores this existentialist position as useful in averting strikes in secondary schools in Kenya.

Existential pedagogy is an educational approach that applies to all secondary school learners in all learning environments (Biesta, 2015). The approach equips learners with education to overcome issues relating to self-realization, achieve goals, overcome confusion and define their identities. If students don't attain self-realization, as eluded earlier in Figure A of this chapter, it becomes some of the critical causes of strikes in secondary schools. Leif (2010) argues that secondary school learners are intrinsically motivated in educational matters rather than extrinsically. It is only children who tend to be motivated extrinsically, however, philosophical or existential learning activities can be effective in the development of children, and children seem to enjoy such activities. The conclusion is when secondary school students are not facilitated to design their teaching-learning activities and objectives, they feel treated like

children and therefore exhibit boredom and frustration that are mentioned in chapter two as some of the causes of strikes.

In an existential pedagogy, students are recognized in their individuality and personal freedoms and therefore allowed to develop their learning objectives, source and create the teaching-learning materials with the teacher as a facilitator. The pedagogical challenge is for individual students to become aware of the inner force and harness it to influence decisions that positively develop personal meaning and identity. To explain further, Leif (2010) indicates that Education can empower an individual to be free to choose his or her own destiny, rather than being confined and defined by others or by circumstances. In such an educational environment, students have no reason to blame others for blocked ambitions because they are allowed to be part of organizing their own education, therefore will not organize/participate in a strike.

An existential pedagogy promotes self-worth and takes into account the needs and aims of individual learners as opposed to a prescribed curriculum that is designed by experts in boardrooms with a consultation with industry players with the aim of improving the labor market (Malik et al., 2013). It encourages/empowers independent learning by use of technology, for example, where a secondary school student takes great pride and ownership of a PowerPoint presentation he/she creates about a topic he chooses, just as a graduate student takes pride and ownership of the online research he conducts to write a paper, create a website, or compose a presentation about a topic that is personally meaningful. Either student may have the additional freedom of earning credit online, which further promotes freedom and flexibility for independent self-directed learning.

The aid of education under existential pedagogy is to give man the unity of truth in averting strikes in secondary schools when the approach is applied. It would help in developing

consciousness about the freedom to choose. Students require this kind of freedom in decision making hence are unlikely to query decisions that they have participated in making (Gilbert, 1989). Existential pedagogy also ensures the total development of personality through education. Education should aim at developing the whole man in character formation and self-realization. In the existentialist classroom, subject matter takes second place to help the students understand and appreciate themselves as unique individuals who accept complete responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Since feeling is not divorced from reason in decision making, the existentialist demands the education of the whole person, not just the mind.

Existential pedagogy improves the relationship between the teacher and the learner. Historically, the predominant relationship between teacher and student in instrumental instruction has been described as a master-apprentice relationship, where the master usually is looked at as a role model and a source of identification for the student, and where the dominating mode of student learning is an imitation. Questions arise in this relationship: is the student given the opportunity to develop his independence and active initiative in learning, or are they restricted to develop their ability to receive, absorb and transform teacher influences? It, therefore, improves the relationship between the teacher and the student. This relationship was suggested in the three task force reports and many inquiries as a solution to the menace of secondary school strike in Kenya.

Existentialists prefer child-centered education. It gives full freedom to the child. The teacher should help the child to know himself and recognize his being. Freedom is required for natural development. Education should convert imperfection into perfection. Education should be according to the individual's needs and abilities of the child. The relation of the child to himself

should be strengthened by education. Therefore, students whose concerns have been taken care of will not feel alienated in any way as to strike.

Existentialists prefer to free learners to choose what to study and also determine what is true and by what criteria to determine these truths. The curriculum would avoid systematic knowledge or structured disciplines, and the students would be free to select from many available learning situations. The learners would choose the knowledge they wish to possess. The humanities are commonly given tremendous emphasis. They are explored as a means of providing students with vicarious experiences that will help unleash their own creativity and self-expression. For example, rather than emphasizing historical events, existentialists focus upon the actions of historical individuals, each of whom provides possible models for the students' own behavior.

Existentialist's approach to education advocate that, besides science, the curriculum must include humanities, ethics, and religion. This is because, without this synthetic approach to curriculum, the aim of character formation and personality development will be defeated. The curriculum would consist of experiences and subjects that lend themselves to philosophical dialogue and acts of choice making. Because the choice is personal and subjective, subjects that are emotional, aesthetic and philosophical are appropriate. Other subjects include literature, drama, film-making, art, and so on. These are important, because, they portray the human condition and choice-making conditions. The curriculum would stress self-expressive activities, experimentation, and media that illustrate emotions, feelings, and insights.

The classroom would be rich in materials that lend themselves to self-expression, and the school would be a place in which the teacher and students could pursue dialogue and discussion about their lives and choices. According to the existentialists, the teacher creates an educational situation in which the student may establish contact with himself, become conscious of it and

achieve self-realization. This requires an existential approach in the teacher himself. He should also have an experience of self – realization so that he may be capable of guiding the students in this process. The teacher's role is to help students define their own essence by exposing them to various paths they may take in life and creating an environment in which they may freely choose their preferred way.

The researcher observes that since existentialist methods focus on the individual and Learning is self-paced, self-directed, therefore it includes a great deal of individual contact with the teacher, who relates to each student openly and honestly. The student should feel completely free for realizing his 'self'. Under the guidance of the teacher, the student should try to realize his 'self' through introversion. The student accepts the discipline prescribed by the teacher and does not become irresponsible. The purpose of freedom given to him should be to enable him to effect the full development of his individuality.

The existentialists particularly lay emphasis upon religion and moral education. Religion allows a person to develop himself. Religious education gives him an understanding of his existence in the cosmos. It shows the religious path of self-realization. It also makes him capable of utilizing faith in self-development. Moral education is closely related to religious education. Both develop the inner self and help in the realization of the infinite within the finite. In conclusion, the existentialist perspective, according to the researcher is specified as a model that depicts ways of overcoming students' strikes in Kenyan secondary schools.

However, there are challenges in applying existential pedagogy. The main one is acquisition and maintenance of educational resources which is expensive. Even though, for self actualization of learner, finding meaning in life and exploring new opportunities, it is worthy the investments

which in turn would lead to satisfaction of students and avert reservation, strikes and violence in secondary schools in Kenya

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the whole study starting with the outline of chapter one to chapter four on the menace of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. From this summary, conclusion, and recommendations have been made in connection with the study findings and for further research.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter one presents the background information to the study, problem statement, and objectives of the study, research questions, assumptions, significance, limitations, and delimitations of the study, the theoretical framework and the operational definitions of some basic terms used in the study.

In the background of the study, the phenomenon of student violence has been introduced by tracing its development to intolerable levels as well as its impact on education, all of which have attracted national attention. Various national efforts, particularly, through appointed taskforces, have been made to address this problem. Nevertheless, this Chapter foregrounds the paradox that despite such efforts, student violence continues to be experienced in Kenyan secondary schools unabated. In fact, there appears to have been a change in the nature and magnitude of these occurrences in the whole country. It is therefore against this background that the study sought to interrogate this phenomenon as well as nature, cause and the efforts meant to address it in a bid to transcend the current state of affairs by seeking more authentic solutions to this phenomenon.

The problem beleaguered in this study is essentially examining the nature of the students' unrest while observing that it has taken a striking turn for the worse and there is a need for a changed approach in order to bring a lasting effect. The researcher underscores as part of solving this problem, the study needs to explore its nature and existence in secondary schools in a bid to establish its underlying foundations. In line with the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study and the research questions, as well as the purpose of the study, have been expressed in terms of their intentions to create a better understanding of student violence as well as establishing its fundamental causes. This intention has been realized through a rigorous analysis of both the occurrence of student violence in study reports as well as a critical evaluation of the recommendations of the taskforces formed to address this phenomenon. The significance of the study has been expressed in terms of its anticipated contributions to the efforts by changing the approach to mitigate the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.

However, the study is limited in that access to some documents was not possible due to their sensitivity but the researcher used data as reported in other sources. Prior to the last aspect of Chapter One is the theoretical framework. The ideas of the existentialist paradigm have been discussed relative to how they have guided the reflections and deliberations on the phenomenon of student violence.

The ideas of some philosophers whose styles of philosophizing are located within the existentialist mode of thought have been applied to theorize on student violence. These include Frantz Fanon's (1964) theory of violence as therapy and Paulo Freire's (1972) dehumanization theory of violence. Apparently, Fanon's view maintains that people use violence against whatever injustices, perceived or real because it purges them of their painful emotions. Freire's

view depicts an act of violence as consisting of dehumanization in the sense that when one employs violence, both the person who employs it and its target are dehumanized as a result of the process. An attempt has therefore been made to explain the concept of human nature from the existentialists and phenomenologist's' perspective whose ideas have been discussed in the theoretical framework. The introductory chapter ends up with a list of terms and concepts that are very essential to the understanding of the arguments that characterize the study.

In chapter two, a review regarding the concept and nature of violence, the main approaches have been explained. The chapter has come up with the observations that despite such efforts together with the fact that some of the recommendations have been implemented, incidences of student violence have persisted. As such, the recommendations have not been totally useful in stopping violence in secondary schools in Kenya. The chapter has, therefore, pointed out the gap in the appropriate approach this study sought to bridge.

With regard to the cases identified in many of these studies, the chapter has noted that these causes are mere triggers rather than the fundamental causes, hence, this justifies the need for a deeper examination of the ultimate causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Also, the approaches used in mitigating the same are not successful since their occurrences are on increase hence a change in the mitigating approach is required.

Chapter three presents the hermeneutic method of investigation. It mainly illustrates hermeneutics as the appropriate research method and therefore gives a general picture of how the research design, study location, target population, data analysis, and interpretation methods were captured hermeneutically. The researcher's goal is to interpret the issues raised by the national

reports on causes of students' violence in Kenyan secondary schools with the view formulated; a practicable strategy examined and addressed the menace in Kenya.

Chapter four presents and analyses data related to students' strike in secondary schools in Kenya and is delivered in line with the hermeneutic research method. The method envisages the presentation of ideas in themes as aligned with Gadama's 'hermeneutic cycle of understanding' explained in chapter three of the study. The researcher pursues themes/ideas generated in the topic applying three cycles that are used in digesting the theme(s) for interpretation as new themes emerge in a series. Each cycle has three parts: part one always begins with the researcher's summary in form of the horizon that presents the unresolved issue(s) in form of theme(s), part two is a whole view of these emanating theme(s), three are the parts of the theme(s) and the last part is the researchers updated horizon that is also captured as part one of the next cycles.

These sections essentially denote the general issues that are regularly perceived as the areas which generate discontent on the part of students, thereby leading to violence. Further reflections on these general causes of student violence culminated into the description of the fundamental causes, namely: alienation of the students from their process of self determination, the absurdity (unfairness) of the students 'conditions of existence and the affront to students' values and freedom all of which the students, as human beings, perceive as those that interfere with their ontological vocation of actively participating, as agents, in their own process of becoming fully human.

The chapter finally presents the existential response to student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. It begins with depicting student violence as essentially consisting of dehumanization by

foregrounding the experiences of this as the root cause of student violence. Consequently, humanization has been argued to be an authentic solution to the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.

In view of the ultimate cause and the proposed authentic solution to student violence as well as the identified pitfalls of the taskforce recommendations in addressing the problem, this Chapter presents the suggestions of existential pedagogy approach, that applies to all secondary school learners in all learning environments. This educational approach equips learners with necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to overcome issues related to self-realization, achievement of goals, overcoming of confusion and defining their identities.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that student violence in secondary schools in Kenya occurs due to three fundamental causes. These are: (a) alienation of the students from their process of self-determination, (b) experience of conditions of existence by the students as absurd (unfair); and (c) an affront (real or imagined) to students' values, rights and freedom.

In a bid to adequately address student violence in secondary schools in Kenya, this study worked towards a philosophical solution. Therefore, it has been concluded that the solution to this dehumanization lies in the liberation of not only the students as the oppressed (in this instance) but also the school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders, as the oppressors in an effort that consists of humanization. This liberation can only be possible through the existential approach that ensures participation of all stakeholders in secondary school education. Therefore, the issues that trigger student strikes are addressed before they start and students feel having

same mandate to maintain good and working conditions of education just like the administrators and other stakeholders.

5.4 Recommendations

This study provides two sets of recommendations. The first set consists of recommendations that seek to address the phenomenon of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. The second set provides recommendations on the areas that may require further academic inquiry.

5.4.1 Recommendations to address the phenomenon

In line with the objectives of the study the researcher has come up with the following recommendations, first, existential mitigating approach must target all stakeholders. They includes, students who engage in violent activities in an attempt to liberate themselves from the perceived oppressors. To this end, students end up being oppressors themselves by violating the rights of other Kenyans. On the other end, the devised system of education must engage school administrators, teachers, and others since they have the responsibility of stopping strikes, managing school resources and conducting teaching and learning in secondary schools. To this end, this group is targeted (as oppressed) by students during a strike in many occurrences. While engaging these stakeholders in secondary school education, dialogue is therefore recommended to resolve the oppressor-oppressed contradiction in secondary schools.

Second, theoretical framework in the study eluded that student's violent actions are greatly influenced by the unmet goals within their experiences. Some of these goals that students complain about arise from family discords, poor resource management while students witness parents striving to pay for their upkeep and experience of former students with no jobs after

passing their final examinations in secondary schools. These are few issues/ complains deduced/ mentioned in the study that make students lose sight of the future and feel their goals are blocked in a way they don't know how to unlock their potential. Hence, existential pedagogy is recommended as the mitigating approach to unlock student's potential in secondary schools. This is because the approach brings students on board in designing the teaching-learning outcomes and implementing them.

In line with the existential pedagogy recommended in the study, educational policy is necessary to revitalize the place of certain fundamental values such as respect for human dignity. These values must be internalized in student's consciousness and be applicable to all. Finally, such a policy must address the fear of labeling after an examination by reconsidering the purpose of student evaluations in secondary schools.

Third, the study presented that previous mitigating approaches are general and do not address the root causes of strikes in secondary schools in Kenya. It is therefore recommended that a philosophical analysis of student violence and unrest be done within the framework of existentialism to reveal the real causes of violence in secondary schools. This is because these real causes are vested in society and to a larger extent in human nature. Therefore student violence reflects the fundamental nature of students as human beings and through a philosophical analysis it will reveal why students react with violence (by a small trigger) anytime they feel they may not meet their expectations in life.

5.4.2 Recommendations for further research

In the course of the reflections and analyses done in this study, the researcher identified certain areas that require further academic inquiry as relates to the phenomenon of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools.

First, this study sought to explore hermeneutically the menace of strikes in secondary schools in Kenya with the aim of devising a better mitigating approach. The study, however, was able to analyze data from previous reports on the issue and from the Ministry of Education. Many of these reports target a section of the country where student violence had been witnessed. This implies that the findings can be generalized to all secondary schools in Kenya with considerable caution. In this regard, this study recommends that more studies on the phenomenon be carried out on a larger scale with the applicability of existential pedagogy in mitigating violence in secondary schools.

Second, this study has explored the phenomenon of strikes in secondary schools in Kenya within the existential conception of human nature. However, the researcher recognizes the existence of other philosophies of education like idealism, rationalism, and pragmatism that may pose different outlooks on human nature and impact research on the phenomenon of strikes in secondary schools in Kenya differently. It is therefore recommended in this study that more detailed studies be carried out with existentialism suggested as the philosophical framework. These studies may explore to certainty or complement the existing acceptable explanatory frameworks for understanding the phenomenon of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools.

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