THE PHENOMENON OF STUDENT VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF
STUDENT UNREST IN KENYAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

BY

FRANCIS LIKOYE MALENYA
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER, 2014
DECLARATION

I confirm that this research thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where text, data, graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other works- including the internet, the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature………………………………. Date………………………………

Francis Likoye Malenya
Department of Educational Foundations

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision as university supervisors.

Signature………………………………. Date………………………………

Prof. Paul K. Wainaina
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

Signature………………………………. Date………………………………

Dr. Jackton O. Ogeno
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
DEDICATION
To my loving wife Sarah, my beloved daughters: Lesley and Waveney, and my son Elvis, who were my continuous sources of inspiration as I worked on this dissertation. Secondly, I dedicate this work to my beloved parents: my father Pius Malenya Andati and mother Josephine Ayieta Malenya for their relentless prayers, and above all, to the Almighty God for His boundless love and mercy to me throughout the entire challenging but wisening academic journey.
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<td>Board of Management</td>
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<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
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<td>KCE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate Education</td>
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<td>KCPE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Primary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCSE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
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<td>KNEC</td>
<td>Kenya National Examinations Council</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MoEST</td>
<td>Ministry of Education Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDE</td>
<td>Provincial Director of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEB</td>
<td>Provincial Education Board</td>
</tr>
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<td>PEV</td>
<td>Post Election Violence (in Kenya)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parents- Teachers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIQET</td>
<td>Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>VAG</td>
<td>Violence Against Girls</td>
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ABSTRACT

There have been perennial occurrences of student unrest often resulting in frequent destruction of school property and loss of life despite the various efforts made to address this phenomenon. This study was designed to investigate the fundamental causes of this phenomenon and make recommendations on how to address it. Using data on student violence from the MoE, media reports and the ‘lived’ experiences of some students, teachers and school administrators in 5 of the former 8 provinces in Kenya, the study carried out critical reflections within an existentialist paradigm. Accordingly, the students were addressed as conscious individuals continually searching for ‘who’ they are through their actions in (school) life and making choices based on their experiences, values and outlook. Using a combination of conceptual analysis, phenomenological/experiential analysis and the dialectical approach, the study established four features which are necessary but not sufficient in fully expressing an act of student violence namely; intentionality, force, resulting in some bodily harm/injury or violation and finally, implication of some moral responsibility on the part of the perpetrators of acts of violence. Experiential analysis traced and located students’ discontent that often leads to violence within the experiences of compromised dignity, fear, anxiety, frustration, intimidation, dread, hopelessness and absurdity on the part of the students. Accordingly, student violence was interpreted as consisting in the actions initiated by students and through which they seek to avoid these unbearable experiences. Viewed from the perspective of existential phenomenologists’ view of human nature, the study deductively identified three fundamental causes of student violence thus: the alienation of the students from their process of self-determination, the absurdity of the students’ conditions of existence and the affront to students’ values and freedom, all which constitute a process of dehumanization. It was therefore argued that the solution to this dehumanization lies in the liberation of not only the students as the oppressed but also the school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders as oppressors, in an effort that engenders a process of humanization. Accordingly, the study recommends that any efforts in addressing student violence in secondary schools in Kenya must necessarily, first; make reference to students’ established ‘lived’ experiences, secondly, entail the resolution of the students’ oppressor-oppressed contradiction and finally, aim at the conscientization of students on the nature of freedom.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The dramatic and often detrimental occurrences of student unrest and violence in Kenya remain one of the most intriguing issues in the education sector. With regard to Kenya, the mention of the words ‘student unrest’ and ‘violence’ evokes profound emotions, debates and controversies as well as raising some fundamental concerns. One of the fundamental questions is: what is/are the cause(s) of student unrest? Another question is: why has student violence as manifested in throwing stones and burning of school structures not been fully addressed? In response to this problem, the Kenyan government has been implementing several recommendations aimed at curbing the various cases of indiscipline in institutions of learning. A case in point was the establishment of guidance and counseling units in secondary schools (MOEST, 2005).

Cases of student unrest and violence have been in existence as far back as the beginning of the 20th century when the first case was reported in Maseno School in 1908 (Republic of Kenya, 2001). In the 1960s and 1970s, the occurrences of student unrest were relatively few and took the form of boycott of classes and mass walkouts as witnessed at Kericho High School in 1961 (Sagini Report, 1991). However, in the 1980s, through the 1990s and the 2000s, school unrest took a new dimension in which it involved wanton destruction of school property, mass rapes and worst of all, loss of human life. In the period between 1980 and
1990, the number of schools experiencing student unrest and violence increased tremendously from 22 (0.9%) to 187 (7.2%). By the year 2001, this had increased to 250 (9.6%) secondary schools (Republic of Kenya 2001, p.6). Glaring cases in this trend include Nyeri High School on 25th March 1991 where students locked up four prefects in their cubicles at night and doused them with petrol and set them on fire, killing them instantly (Republic of Kenya, 2001). Others include St. Kizito Mixed Secondary School on 13th July, 1991 where male students invaded a girls’ dormitory and raped more than seventy girls, leaving at least nineteen dead (Kenya Times, 16 July, 1991 pg. 1 col. 7, pg. 10 col. 2-6).

The occurrence of these violent incidents drew national attention. For instance, upon the occurrence of the St. Kizito tragedy, a committee was appointed in 1991, chaired by Dr. Lawrence Sagini, to investigate and make recommendations on the situation of student unrest in Kenyan secondary schools. This was the first time a committee was formed to specifically probe into the issue of student unrest.

Earlier, the ‘Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Gachathi Report) of 1976 had recommended that the problem of discipline must be dealt with by teachers in schools and other educational authorities. Accordingly, the report noted that education should “assist youth to grow into self-disciplined, self-respecting and law-abiding, mature-minded and creative people (Republic of Kenya, 1976). These traits are further emphasized in the Mackay Report of 1981 and the Report on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (Kamunge Report of 1981) respectively.
In spite of the efforts by the Sagini Committee of 1991, the problem of student unrest and violence in Kenyan secondary schools continued to occur. In fact, there emerged a new dimension to it - linking this student unrest and violence to the practice of devil worship in school. Following such claims, the then President, Daniel Arap Moi, appointed a commission of inquiry, chaired by Archbishop Nicodemus Kirima (hence Kirima Commission of 1995), to probe into the alleged infiltration of devil worship into Kenya and, more so, secondary schools. The resulting report was, however, not published as it was considered by the then President, Mr. Moi, to contain “sensitive” information.

In the meantime, cases of student unrest and violence persisted. Cases in point include Bombolulu Girls Secondary School in May 1997 where 57 students perished in a dormitory as a result of fire which was started by some of the students. At Kyanguli Secondary School on 25th March, 2001, more than sixty five students perished in a fire (Institute for Security Studies, 2008) while at Kabuyefwe Secondary School in Kitale, more than 400 schoolboys went on rampage burning down the administration block, the store and shattering windows of other buildings because of poor Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) results of the year 2004 and what they termed as their teachers’ irregular class attendance, among other grievances (Sunday Nation, October 9, 2005).
This persistence of cases of unrest and violence by secondary school students led to the establishment of the Provincial Education Boards (PEB) for each of the then eight Provinces by the Kenyan Government through Legal Notice No. 17 of 1996 vide the Education Act Cap 211 (1970) (1980). Amongst its terms of reference, the PEB was mandated to address itself to all matters concerning discipline of students at all levels of education in a given Province and come up with remedies. Notable, however, was the fact that Central Province had experienced a rapid increase in the number of occurrences of student unrest and indiscipline from the mid 1990s (MOEST 2000). The first PEB was therefore inaugurated in Central Province, in August 1996. This led to the formation of a committee, ‘The Provincial Students’ Discipline Committee’, which sought to investigate and report on the issues of indiscipline and student unrest at all levels of education in Central Province, chaired by Mr. P. M Macharia, the then PDE Central Province.

Despite the reports from the two task forces, that is, Sagini Report of 1991 and Macharia Report of 2000) and the subsequent implementation of some of their recommendations, cases of student unrest and violence continued as witnessed at Kyanguli Secondary School in Machakos District. This led to the appointment of yet another task force in the year 2001, to brainstorm with various stakeholders at the provincial level, on the nature and causes of the increasing incidents of indiscipline and unrest and come up with substantive recommendations in order to stem the culture of violence and unrest in secondary schools (Republic of Kenya
2001). This task force was chaired by Mrs. Naomy Wangai, who was then a Director of Education. Its recommendations were later implemented, albeit in part.

Just after the post-election violence in Kenya early in the year 2008, violence erupted again in Kenyan secondary schools. Several secondary school dormitories and administration blocks were set on fire by students. During this spate of violence, over three hundred secondary schools were closed down between July and September 2008. The incidences were spread out in such a pattern that within this period, at least 70 schools in Central Province were affected, 55 in Rift Valley, 53 in Eastern, 27 in Nyanza and 24 in the Coastal Region. North Eastern Region was the only one that was not affected. As a result of this wave of student violence, the Speaker of the National Assembly directed the House Committee on Education to investigate the school riots and submit a report in twenty one days. Up to the time of this study, this report had never been released and therefore it was not available for scrutiny. In the meantime, discourse in educational research and media reports has continued raising more and more concerns over the situation, calling for more serious and deeper reflections on the phenomenon of student unrest and violence.

A closer look at the foregoing national efforts (taskforces) reveals two main features that are very relevant to this study. First, the taskforces have always been appointed amidst a wave of incidences of student unrest and violence or at a point in time when the wave of student unrest and violence is at the peak. At such a
moment, there is a desperate need for a quick solution to such a problem. Accordingly, these national efforts can be seen to essentially constitute a quick response to this problem rather than a response that primarily springs from a deep and careful analysis of the crisis.

As a result of such kind of hurried response, carried out within a short period of time of about three weeks notwithstanding the extensive area of coverage and volume of respondents, it is observed that the investigations by the task forces have not been exhaustive to the core issues involved. For instance, in the case of the report by the Parliamentary committee on Education of 2008, the committee was given 21 days within which to investigate and compile a report on the causes and remedies of student unrest and violence in secondary schools in the whole country. Both Macharia and Wangai taskforces also had a working period spanning not more than 3 weeks each. This period is not adequate for sufficient investigation.

Secondly, the methodology usually adopted by these taskforces in their investigations is typically empirical in nature. This method usually involves actual visits to the affected schools gathering information from oral interviews without serious scrutiny of such information. For example, they characteristically listen to oral presentations from the identified stakeholders who include parents, students, teachers, Provincial Education Boards (PEBs), Parents and Teachers Associations (PTAs), Provincial Directors of Education (PDEs), professionals, local leaders, MoE officials and sponsors of schools without much effort to triangulate this
information. Alternatively, the taskforces have reviewed written memoranda from consultative committees and even from members of the public. Such memoranda are, however, reviewed in a way that does not exhibit much scrutiny of their respective authors, particularly their point of view or intentions. The final strategy within the empirical approach is reference to media reports (newspapers) on indiscipline in schools and on topics related to student indiscipline in institutions of learning including previous taskforce reports on student indiscipline. However, reference to such media reports has commonly been done without much scrutiny.

The scenario in which the taskforces are given short period for investigation, coupled with the empirical approach which is limited to information gathering, collating and compiling presentations on discipline from a cross-section of stakeholders is an indication of lack of serious scrutiny of the problem of student violence in secondary schools, hence the statement of the problem.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Violence within the secondary school system in Kenya has been a rising occurrence from 1908 when the first case occurred in Maseno School to-date. Its continued occurrence presents the need for a critical analysis of this phenomenon with a view to establishing its ultimate causes and its subsequent remedies. Previously, taskforces have been appointed to identify and document the root causes of student unrest and violence as well as making viable recommendations for addressing this phenomenon. However, serious reflection on the manner in which these taskforces have operated reveals apparent inadequacies in the
gathering and analysis of the views from the various stakeholders. What is notably evident is some form of haste in collecting the views given the limited time and a mere summary of the views into the causes and the subsequent derivation of recommendations all of which are compiled into a taskforce report on the problem of student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools. It is further notable that even as some of these recommendations have been implemented, student violence still persists. Accordingly, there appears to be some deficiency or lack in the manner in which the foregoing efforts to address the problem of student unrest and violence have operated in their search for its root causes in secondary schools in Kenya hence its persistence.

This study therefore involves the clarification of the phenomenon of student violence, identifying the various forms in which violence in Kenyan secondary schools find expression. It is also about the understanding of the concept of violence, its root causes and the provision of a philosophical reflection and plausible solutions to student unrest and violence in Kenyan secondary schools. This is further expressed in the following purpose and objectives.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to clarify the phenomenon of student violence in terms of the understanding of its root causes and philosophical reflection on the plausible solutions to the problem of student unrest and violence in Kenyan secondary schools.
1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study sought to:

(a) Explicate the concept of student violence,

(b) Analyze some selected specific cases or incidences of violence in secondary schools in Kenya in terms of experiences of those involved in the incidences,

(c) Identify the fundamental causes of conflict (unrest/violence) in the context of secondary schools in Kenya, and

(d) Provide a philosophical reflection and possible solutions to unrest and violence in secondary schools in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

(a) What conditions must obtain for an act to be considered as an act of violence?

(b) What are the experiences of the students, teachers and administrators in the context of the violence and unrest that occur in secondary schools in Kenya?

(c) What are the fundamental causes of conflict in situations of student unrest and violence in the context of secondary schools in Kenya?

(d) What are the alternative modes for addressing issues of unrest and violence in secondary schools in Kenya beyond the empirical pursuit?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are important in a number of ways. First, it is expected that the study will provide information to educators who are involved with school
administration and discipline. Secondly, it will help policy makers such as the Ministry of Education in its endeavour to develop policies for stemming the problem of student unrest in Kenyan secondary schools. Thirdly, the findings of this study will supplement the existing body of literature in the critical area of discipline in schools, especially as relates to Kenyan secondary schools and other educational institutions, including colleges and universities. In brief, it is expected that the deliberations, arguments and recommendations projected in this study will go far in enriching the approaches of the relevant stakeholders in education to avert incidences of student unrest, violence and indiscipline in our educational institutions.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the secondary schools in Kenya. In particular, it focused on the experiences of the secondary school educational stakeholders in relation to the phenomenon of student violence. However, student violence is also experienced at other levels of education such as primary schools, tertiary institutions and even universities. Violence in secondary schools may have certain defining characteristics unique to this level and which contrast with those which occur at other levels such as primary schools or colleges and universities. Accordingly, the findings of this study can only be generalized to be applicable to those other levels with considerable caution.
1.8 Assumptions of the Study

In this study, it is assumed that:

(a) The task forces on the occurrences of student unrest have not fully explored the concept of violence in all its dimensions (including the experiences within which its real genesis can be located).

(b) Students (as human beings) have needs, rights or values that they strive to satisfy, achieve or uphold, either by using the system, acting on the fringes or acting as revolutionaries (or even reactionaries).

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study sought to explore the interplay between the nature and existence of secondary school students) together with the conditions of this existence on the one hand and the occurrence of (student) violence on the other hand. For this reason, a theoretical framework has been used to try and clearly bring out this relationship.

This study is set within the broad frame of existential philosophy. It is thus conceived of within the existential mode of thinking and style of philosophy. Whereas this style of philosophy is too broad to succinctly and practically guide this study, two theories of violence propounded by two thinkers whose ideas essentially operate within this mode of thinking have been used to particularly guide the study. This section therefore begins by presenting an overview of the existentialist style of philosophy in terms of its genesis, tenets and criticism.
Later, the section introduces the two theoreticians or thinkers whose views of violence as formalized in their respective theories have been adopted in this study. Finally, the section presents the manner in which these views form a synergy that helps in the exploration of the phenomenon of student violence as it happens in secondary schools in Kenya.

1.9.1 What is Existentialism?

Existentialism, in the broadest sense, is a twentieth century style of philosophy or movement that is centred 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 of the existentialist thesis is that ‘existence precedes essence’, that is, humans exist first and then each individual spends a lifetime constructing, defining and/or changing their nature and/or identity (Sartre, 1943).

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. Existentialists hold that people are always continually searching to find out ‘who’ and ‘what’ they are throughout life as they make choices based on their experiences, beliefs and outlook. This implies that human beings are never really complete and are hence in a process of flux as they transform themselves to become more and more human (Fatuma, Sifuna and Oanda, 2006 vide Sartre
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.

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.

1.9.2 The Genesis of Existentialism

Existentialism, as a philosophical movement, emerged in the twentieth century. This movement was inspired by the philosophers Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche. The main focus of existentialism was on human experience rather than the objective truth of mathematics and science which 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 were expressed in literary fictional works rather than in the philosophical discourse. This was exemplified by works of Jean-Paul Sartre’s works such as Being and Nothingness (1943), his play No Exist
(1955) and Nausea (1964). 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 deep sense of despair following the great depression and World War II in Europe. The World War II brought destruction of the spirit of optimism and calamities that led to despair amongst people. This despair is what 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, the absurd and freedom as part of the fundamental experiences of students in secondary schools in Kenya.

1.9.3 Tenets of Existentialism

There are certain identifiable basic assumptions associated with existentialism. These constitute what is often called tenets of existentialism. Such are expressed as thus:-

a. Existence precedes essence

In his book Existentialism is a Humanism (1968), Jean-Paul Sartre expresses this idea as ‘man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world and defines himself afterwards’. To the existentialists therefore, there is no such pre-determined essence to be found in human beings, but rather, human beings are conscious subjects who are free to chart their own destiny rather than things to be predicted or manipulated. 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 one can choose to act in a different way, for instance, to be a good person instead of being a cruel person. It is for this reason, so do the existentialists argue, that such a person’s existence precedes his /her essence.

*b. 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. When this happens it can make a person mentally unstable (that is, do certain inexcusable things in the eyes of the public). In other words, the world can turn out to be absurd or unfair to human 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 to find their identity or meaning of their being in the world (Sartre, 1943).

*c. Individual Freedom and Responsibility*

Each individual holds certain values. It is upon the dictates of these values that, individuals often act. Accordingly, it may be argued that in making choices of how to act, an individual is governed by the values he/she holds. At the same time, it is this choice that introduces the aspect of responsibility for the choices
made. For that reason, an individual must be ready to put up with the consequences of his/her freedom (of choice).

In this way, freedom, in existentialism, is related to the limits of responsibility one bears as a result 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, 1943).

1.9.4 Critical Questions on Existentialism

Jean-Paul Sartre stands out as the most well known existentialist. His work *Being and Nothingness* (1943) 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 (1927) 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”, Mercuse notes that existentialism is, in fact, part of the ideology it attacks, thus:

“In so far as existentialism is a philosophical doctrine, it remains an 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” (1972:161).
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 oblivion of the truth of being.

Philosophers commonly referred to as logical positivists such as Rudolf Carnap (1956) and Alfred Ayer (1954) 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’. So, they argue 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, the human experiences considered are those of the secondary school students, especially in the context of unrest and violence. For that reason, it was important to draw some guidance from the foregoing tenets of existentialism.
1.9.5 Existentialist and Phenomenologist Theorists on Violence

There are philosophers whose mode of thinking is located within the existentialist phenomenologist modes of thought and who have theorized on violence. The two philosophers whose views were adopted in this study are; Frantz Fanon and Paulo Freire. Fanon, whose thinking reflects both an existentialist and phenomenologist modes of thinking, has been found relevant to this study through his theory of ‘violence as therapy’. Paulo Freire, whose thinking is mainly within the phenomenological tradition, becomes relevant to this study with reference to his theory of ‘violence as dehumanization’. This section takes a close examination of their views on violence for purposes of drawing further guidance for this study.

(i) Frantz Fanon’s View of Violence

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 which 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 should be destroyed so as to transform the social situation (Fanon 1969:53-54).

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 that ‘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 which 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 to freedom and liberty is one of the ways through which human beings reconstruct or restore their altered essences (identity), Fanon identifies with the existentialist mode of thinking. His book: Wretched of the Earth (1961), is essentially an analysis of the depressing social and psycho-social 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 (1961:118) the belief in the primacy of violence in executing a revolutionary programme 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 which are manifestations of violence). In other words, violence is here regarded 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 a 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 in situations where there is need to liberate the consciousness of those who have been oppressed or feel 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 physically bring down the administrative structures (systems of perpetration of violence) that are perceived as 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 was 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 a violent and aggressive release of such inbuilt tension that often constitutes the popular phenomenon of student violence. In effect, in his account of violence, Fanon has advanced some concrete ideas which the researcher found useful 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 and human beings are bound to feel alienated when it is taken away from them. In the event of perpetual devastating conditions of existence characterized by such experiences as feelings of alienation and human degradation, violence is often resorted to as one ‘possible’ way for reversing the situation by those undergoing the experience of dehumanization. In this regard, Fanon appears to be not only supporting student violence but justifying it too. However, it is the contention of this study that this is just a matter of choice and as such, one can still choose to adopt the other possible and/or alternative ways that may not be necessarily violent.

(ii) Paulo Freire’s View of Violence
According to Freire, violence is defined in terms of dehumanization. Dehumanization consists in any act that physically or mentally injures human beings, turns them into objects or any other process that puts obstacles in people's
path as they attempt to articulate and pursue their own dreams (see Freire, 1972). To him, this dehumanization afflicts both those whose humanity has been compromised as well as those who have compromised it thereby distorting their processes of becoming fully human (see Freire, 1972). Freire further argues that even the very act of alienating people from their own decision making is to change them to objects. In this regard, and by Freire emphasizing the experience e.g. dehumanization, his ideas assume a phenomenological character.

Freire illustrates his understanding of violence using a model of an oppressive situation in which one objectively exploits the other or hinders one’s pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person. He appears to justify this model by the assertion that never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed, granted that they are the products of violence. That is to say, the oppressed only respond to the oppression or exploitation meted out on them by the oppressor. They only try to restore their identity or humanity lost or un-affirmed in the process of exploitation or oppression.

From the above existentialist and phenomenologist positions, it is notable that the two sets of views exist, not in a diametrical opposition to each other, but rather, they form a synergy that provides this study with a more comprehensive analytical framework on violence. Both Fanon and Freire explore certain aspects that constitute humanity (including identity, freedom and power). These are aspects whose violation often leads to acts of violence as a response to that initial
violation. Accordingly, the two sets of thought on violence have found convergence in the search for a comprehensive concept (meaning and nature) of violent acts as executed by students in Kenyan secondary schools.

In general, this entire theoretical framework therefore enabled the researcher to view the students as active individuals always negotiating and producing their identities whether consciously or otherwise. Accordingly, the researcher viewed the 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. Their actions were therefore held as 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.

1.9.6 Existentialist and Phenomenologist Assumptions on Human Nature

This study sought to explain why human beings (for example, students) act violently. This endeavour was pursued from both the existentialist and phenomenologist perspectives. As such, the two perspectives formed a synergy that made it possible to examine, understand and explain acts of violence as often perpetrated by students in Kenyan secondary schools.

From the views of the existential phenomenologists discussed above, human nature appears to consist in four main attributes namely, human beings as
rational/thinking beings, conscious beings who chart their own destiny, beings with values, rights and freedom whose denial makes them feel alienated and the fact that human beings are in a state of continuous self-transcendence as they work towards being more complete beings.

Human beings as ‘conscious beings’ implies that human beings are capable of an internal state of being where, as subjects, they reach out to the objects of their consciousness. In other words, they can get into a relationship of knowledge with other beings or circumstances upon which they, as subjects of consciousness, can act consciously and responsibly.

Acting consciously and responsibly entails the act of human beings rationalizing their conditions of existence and the limitations these conditions impose on their lives. In general, human nature is such that human beings are conscious of the fact that they are incomplete. Hence human life is a process of ‘becoming’ and a continuous search for ‘who’ and ‘what’ they are throughout life through a continuous process of transcending limitedness and incompleteness (Fatuma, Oanda and Sifuna 2006 vide Sartre 1943).

To characterize the self (human beings as capable of perception as well as the initiation of a transformation into a fuller human being) necessarily points to human beings as rational or thinking beings. Accordingly, they feel, deliberate, resolve and finally initiate actions directed outward of themselves but which are
nonetheless aimed at transforming the human situation. Human beings may do this by way of either response or reaction.

While reaction to external and internal stimuli is direct and immediate for both humans and other creatures, response to such stimuli appears to be a uniqueness of human nature. In other words, human beings have a unique tendency to engage deliberately with a complex process of thought and reflection during which they contextualize situations thereby giving meaning to their response to the stimulus as well as the ultimate direction and goal of the entire response. As such, human response to sources of stimulus is influenced both by the factual material essence of the circumstances within which they are responding as well as the mental world of imaginations, emotions, hopes, illusions and disillusions all which are presumed to be uniquely human experiences. Consequently, human response emanates not only from the things they encounter but also from their opinions and fantasies about them.

Unlike other creatures we have certain values, rights and freedom. These values become the basis upon which individuals act. However, while human beings have rights and freedom to choose how to act, they must take responsibility of their choices wherever they lead them. As for rights, human beings feel alienated when these are denied. In such a case, they are bound to pursue them aggressively. In general, students as human beings were viewed as having certain values, rights and freedom which they strive to achieve by using the system.
Self transcendence is another one of the attributes unique to human nature as presented by existential phenomenologists. Self transcendence may simply be described as going beyond a prior form or state of oneself. In the existential phenomenologists’ concept of human nature, there is, within each individual, an inherent inner aspiration and desire for moving a step up and improving their situation. This may be in terms of expanding our consciousness by way of moving beyond prior conceptual or presumptive limitations so as to feel some connection with the rest. It is therefore an innate desire to discover meaning in human life. It consists in the search for an emancipator for a form of knowledge that involves an increasing freedom from biological and social conditioning (Habermas 1971).

Human beings come to know things by observation and experience in such a way that, as human beings, we develop knowledge through our experiential encounter with reality within our circumstances of existence. In other words, we can acquire knowledge of certain happenings by examining how human beings experience that particular event/happening.

### 1.9.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was derived from the foregoing theoretical framework and by Benнааrs (1993) idea of human person. In the conceptual framework, student violence is dependent on the extent to which the human potentials of; *cogito, volo, ago* and *coexistence* are recognized. Student violence is therefore the dependent variable while the human potentials constitute the independent variables as illustrated in figure 1.1 below:
Figure 1.1: The schematic representation of the formation of student violence in Kenyan Secondary Schools.

From the diagram above, it is indicated that that human beings have capacities for reasoning, decision making and acting. Simply put, human beings have the potential to reason, decide and act responsibly. As potentials, they need to be realized and sometimes human beings may fail to realize them (self actualization) and hence become fully human. In other words, human beings are in a continuous process of humanization (or personization) and this forms their basic task
(vocation) in this world. It is this human task that makes human beings move from initial experience, through understanding and judgment, to responsible action in search of their fulfillment within a human society.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

**Phenomenon:** An occurrence as it appears to human experience. It may also be understood as the way in which we experience things.

**Student unrest:** A situation 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.

**Corporal Punishment:** The infliction of physical pain on one’s body as a form of punishment. This may take forms such as pinching, hitting, caning, kicking or even punching. In this study; corporal punishment will be used to refer to the use of any of these methods as a way of seeking to correct the behaviour of students in a given school.

**Discipline:** The controlled, ordered behaviour resulting from 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 a desired behaviour.
**Strike:** A situation of mass indiscipline in which students are involved in forms of indecent behaviour such as boycotts, destruction of property, riots, rape, arson and assault.

**Self-realization:** The liberation of an individual from the sense of limitation brought about by fears, conditioned beliefs, strict rules and regulations, authoritative use of power e.t.c.

The next chapter deals with a review of literature related to the main issues addressed in the study.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is guided by a set of intentions, the main one being: to foreground the concept of violence and its causes. The review follows the objectives of the study hence the chapter is organized in four main sections, namely: a review of the concept and nature of violence, a review of the causes of student violence, an examination of recommendations made by various taskforce reports on student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya and some theories of violence and conflict resolution.

2.2 The Concept of Violence

In Kenya, the term violence has commonly been used to refer to events characterized by fighting which results in destruction, both of property and loss of human life such as what took place in Mount Elgon in the year 2008, in Molo and Kuresoi in the year 2005 (McCrummen, 2008). When preceded by the word ‘political’, thus ‘political violence’, it is almost irresistible to visualize images of 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 into 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 clubs
on anyone within their reach. Such were the images commonly witnessed during the post-election violence of 2007/2008 in Kenya. 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 preceded by the word ‘student’, the resulting notion of ‘student violence’ often evokes immediate mental images of students throwing 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 ‘indisciplined’.

Evidently, the issue of student indiscipline is a recurrent problem in Kenyan schools and even colleges. For this reason, the phenomenon of violence has in the recent past, received considerable focus, especially in educational discourse. Accordingly, the research community, which includes institutions and individuals, has turned their attention to the problem, sometimes at the request of national or international agencies, or sometimes as a direct response to the occurrence of such events. At a national level, taskforces have been set up to investigate such occurrences while the international agencies that have taken interest in the issue include the United Nations through its specialized agencies such as UNICEF and
UNESCO. There is also a corpus of scholarly studies, especially in the academia on the same issue in form of dissertations (including Kyalo 2010, Mbuga 2009, Michemi 2006, Ngumo 2004 and Njiru 1998). However, despite all these efforts, the concept of violence remains unclear particularly in terms of what exactly it entails and its ultimate causes. This partly explains why this study seeks to try and articulate the nature of the concept of violence as often experienced in the context of secondary schools in Kenya. In trying to understand the concept of violence, the following section examines two main theoretical/conceptual approaches to understanding this notion.

The first approach is the essentialist approach as adopted by some scholars like Danielsen (2005). This approach illustrates how, fundamentally, violence consists in the denial of certain entitlements. In reference to the afore-cited source, Danielsen argues that violence essentially consists in the negation of certain fundamental entitlements considered intrinsic and unique to human beings. The United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have also commonly adopted this approach, especially with respect to the aspect of intentionality. The UN, WHO and Danielsen therefore, recognize these intrinsic and unique entitlements as necessary in conceptualizing the notion of violence.

The second approach to the conceptualization of violence is the typological approach. In this approach, violence is understood in terms of its types. Scholars behind this approach include Johan Galtung (1969) and Jamil Salmi (1993).
Galtung, for instance, presents violence as an avoidable impediment to self realization. In so saying, he implies that the concept of violence can be apprehended by considering the impediments (which occur in different forms or types) to self realization. For this reason, if one understood the nature of impediments (in their various forms and types) then one would get to clearly understand the concept of violence.

Within the typological scheme, Chege (2007:53) presents violence as a mechanism by which unequal power relations are maintained through the infliction of physical or emotional pain on one person by another. In this view, violence appears to be a form of influence. This happens because the person being influenced in whatever form (be it politically, emotionally or physically), is not afforded an opportunity to realize an equally powerful position where he/she can also influence certain happenings. A detailed outline of the typological scheme is provided by Jamil Salmi (1993) in his paper entitled Violence and the Democratic Society: New Approaches to Human Rights. In this paper, Salmi outlines four types of violence, namely: direct, indirect, repressive and alienation. The four types of violence are precisely explained below:

The direct type of violence is perhaps the most commonly talked about. It includes deliberate physical acts that result in injury or personal harm on the integrity of a human person. All direct acts of physical injury inflicted upon someone deliberately (not as a result of accident) like homicides are classified as direct violence. This category includes coercive, brutal actions that may result in
physical and psychological sufferings as witnessed in the case of the massive Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kenya in 2007/2008. The list of examples of direct violence includes: deliberate imprisonment of persons, kidnapping, forced labour, torture, rape, maltreatment, unlawful confinement, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child labour.

Indirect violence comprises of harmful and sometimes fatal situations that do not necessarily involve a direct relationship between the victims and the perpetrators. The perpetrators against population groups or individuals responsible for the plight of victims are not easily noticed. This type of violence comprises of two categories: violence by omission and mediated violence. Violence by omission is defined by drawing an analogy of non-assistance for persons in danger. This can be clearly explained and understood in contexts where there is a legal penalty to punish citizens who fail to help victims of, say, accidents and are in need of urgent care. A good example would be the case of neglect where there is an evident failure to prevent the exposure of, for example, a child to danger. It could also be failure to carry out important aspects of care such as medical thus resulting in the significant impairment of someone’s health or development.

Indirect violence can also occur in a case where a worker fails to adequately supervise the safety of other workers thereby exposing them to extreme conditions that constitute the risk of serious injury. It is thus well addressed by the notion of failure to intervene when human dignity, lives, physical or
psychological integrity are threatened by actions or phenomena whose harmful effects are avoidable or controllable by society. It also applies to lack of protection against social violence (for instance, hunger, disease and poverty), against accident, occupational and health hazards and natural catastrophes.

*Mediated violence* refers to the result of deliberate interventions in the natural or social environment and whose harmful effects are felt in an indirect and sometimes delayed way. Accordingly, all acts involving the destruction or damage against the natural environment as in cases where it is intended to destroy crops in enemy territory are examples of this type of violence since they may end up causing genetic malformations among babies in the affected areas. An example that may sound paradoxical is that of embargos against repressive regimes, motivated by the principles of solidarity with populations suffering under a dictatorial regime.

Repressive violence refers to common forms of human rights violation, often documented and monitored by the international NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. This includes violations of civil rights as in the cases where people are denied freedom of thought, religion, movement and even lack of justice before the law and when one is denied the right to a fair trial. There are also violations of social rights such as legal space for forming trade unions and participating in legal strikes.
Alienation, as a type of violence, refers to situations of deprivation of personal higher rights that may not be easily observed. This may take the form of persistent psychological ill treatment, which may result in a severe impact upon one’s behaviour and development. This can be illustrated by situations of ethnocide where there is a move that threatens to destroy the cultural identity of an entire linguistic or religious community. This may include racism and/or any form of prejudicial practice against any particular group in society, for example the elderly, children or the disabled as experienced in many places. It can be exemplified by acts such as selective giving of gifts especially to children, selective recruitment (as in the case of employment or bursary allocation), low status based on gender, religion, ethnic background and/or bullying as a result of unrealistic expectations of others.

A key dimension of the alienating type of violence is fear. People’s lives can be affected by feelings of anxiety, apprehension and dread as observed in situations of war, civil strife and repression. For example, the anxiety that was experienced in many parts of Kenya during the 2007/2008 Post Election Violence (PEV) was also certainly alienating. Similarly, people living in areas with high crime rates such as urban slums and socially unstable areas such as Kuresoi and Mount Elgon areas in Kenya are subject to anxiety and fear. Fear is thus edified by rapid growth in security products and services produced both in industrialized and developing countries.
The typological approach to the understanding of violence provides some useful insights into the nature of violence. It does this by presenting the various manifestations of the concept of violence. Sometimes, it does so by revealing the manner/means of perpetrating violence, that is, directly, indirectly, by repression or alienation. In other cases it gives more information on the perpetrator in terms of whether it is an individual or a group. It also tells us about the purpose of the act of violence, that is, whether as a means of achieving another goal (instrumental) or simply reactive to a given occurrence.

Within the same typological approach, literature on violence also makes a distinction between individual and collective violence. Individual violence includes homicide and related crimes while collective violence is the kind of violence demonstrated in riots and revolutions (Klineberg, 1975). The latter type of violence has been frequently studied by historians, sociologists and political scientists. Another distinction concerning the concept of violence is between instrumental violence (aggression) and reactive violence. Instrumental violence is carried out in an attempt to achieve particular goals as in the case of armed robbery, the threat to kill hostages if demands are not met or the attempt to topple a government (Berkowitz, 1972). Reactive violence is represented by impulsive reactions leading to riots or street demonstrations or resulting from confrontation between students and police (Ibid, p. 3). Certainly, these two approaches to the concept of violence give some useful guidelines in the conceptualization of violence.
The foregoing review has revealed that violence is a multidimensional concept. This certainly requires that one must establish the conditions that ought to prevail for one to characterize a situation as an incidence of violence. In other words, there are various facets that one must keep in mind while talking about the concept of violence. It is therefore part of the task of this study to establish these defining criteria, particularly in the case of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.

2.3 Manifestations of Violence in Secondary Schools in Kenya

As earlier alluded to, violence is one concept that means different things in different contexts. This implies that a clear understanding of the notion of violence is best sought within a given context. Otherwise, it would be rather misleading to see it as a unifying concept. Accordingly, this section provides a summary of incidences reported and recorded at the Ministry of Education as well as those that were reported in collaborative media reports. These are reports in which the phrase ‘student violence’ has notably been used to denote a number of things, including actions and behaviour patterns of students. These actions and behaviour patterns are summarized in Table 2.1 below:
Table 2.1: Summary of the Students’ Reported Acts of Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Students’ Reported Acts of Violence</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Karatina secondary, Kagumo Boys,</td>
<td>Threatening the administrators</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kagumo Boys, Chinga Boys, Giakanja Boys, Nyeri High.</td>
<td>Burning the dining hall, desks, vehicles, window panes</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kenyatta Mahiga Boys</td>
<td>Burning a neighbor</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kiangoma mixed</td>
<td>An attempt at burning newcomers</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kenyatta Mahiga Boys</td>
<td>Beating up prefects</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Giakanja Boys</td>
<td>Boycotting classes</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Giakanja Boys</td>
<td>Pouring food on the compost</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathaithi Secondary.</td>
<td>Bullying to an extent of inflicting bodily harm to other students</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Munyaka Girls’</td>
<td>Booing school principal</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muthua-Ini mixed.</td>
<td>Refusal to attend classes</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nyeri High school</td>
<td>Burning of 4 prefects using petrol to death.</td>
<td>D.Nation 28th May, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Kiangari sec; St. Joseph Githunguri.</td>
<td>Fighting and beating up other people</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kikuyu Day sec.</td>
<td>Refusal to sit for exams</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kihuho Uhuru sec.</td>
<td>Open demonstrations</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Kangema Secondary</td>
<td>Burning down of administration block.</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kiambugi secondary</td>
<td>Breaking window panes and furniture.</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Bongo mixed, Nyahururu Boys, Salient mixed and Leshau Boys.</td>
<td>Destruction of window panes, bedding, doors, telephone sets, security lights, looting of the canteen and the Home science store.</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mwenda-Andu mixed.</td>
<td>Looting food store</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Vihiga</td>
<td>Ebunangwe High</td>
<td>Burnt store, school files and broke windows of over 30 classrooms</td>
<td>D. Nation 14, July 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Kiruri sec; Murang’a High and Kiriti mixed.</td>
<td>Destruction of property e.g. window pane, furniture,</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Njambini Boys, Karatina mixed.</td>
<td>Destruction of school property</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heni, Magumu mixed.</td>
<td>Burning staff house.</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heni mixed.</td>
<td>Vandalism of school generator</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Githiga High school, Uthiru mixed.</td>
<td>Breaking window panes</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kijabe boys, Karuri mixed.</td>
<td>Throwing stones at some teachers houses</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kijabe Boys</td>
<td>Cutting power supply</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Kirinyaga</td>
<td>Nguguni secondary.</td>
<td>Open protest</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karumandi sec, Kiamiciri sec. and Baricho sec.</td>
<td>Physical attack by Stoning</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Baricho sec. Kerugoya Boys, Karia Boys and Kibirigwi sec.</td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Mwarano sec; Githimu High, Kibage sec; Kiriti sec; Mumbu-Ini sec.</td>
<td>Destruction of property</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Kiguoya Secondary</td>
<td>Staging a sit-in and refusing to go to class</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ichaki and Karega Sec</td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Location/Grade</td>
<td>Incident</td>
<td>Location/Grade</td>
<td>Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Thigio secondary school</td>
<td>Vandalism of school facilities e.g. kitchen</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thigio secondary school</td>
<td>Physical engagement of authority and security e.g. police</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Komothai Boys</td>
<td>Throwing stones and breaking facilities e.g. dormitory, laboratory, classrooms, offices, study room, library, window panes and bulbs</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Nakuru Kambala Girls.</td>
<td>Chanting war songs well into the night</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Molo sec; Solai sec; Summerfields sec; Gilgil High and Sabatia sec.</td>
<td>Burning down a store containing mock examinations and some 3 class rooms, burning food store.</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rumuruti Boys and Kalyet secondary.</td>
<td>General destruction of property</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kaptabuk secondary).</td>
<td>Physical attack on the school principal</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mama Ngina sec; Solai sec; Kiboron sec; Loreto sec; Summerfields sec; Afraha High and Kamio Boys sec; schools.</td>
<td>Throwing of stones in anger at school facilities such as buildings.</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Samburu Olongarwa mixed, Maralal High, Ngume, Kapsogut, Boys' and Njorua sec.</td>
<td>Rioting within the school compound</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Machakos Kyanguli secondary</td>
<td>Burning of 69 students to death</td>
<td>Daily Nation, 4th April 2001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tala High School</td>
<td>Burning of deputy principal’s car and administration block, destroyed school property e.g. stationery and furniture.</td>
<td>E. A. standard, 16th July 2004.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>West Pokot Kapenguria Boys</td>
<td>Destruction of school property e.g. T.V and computer, demonstrations by chanting war songs, raiding Matron’s house destroying property and crops in school compound.</td>
<td>Daily Nation, 24th, June 2004.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Makueni District Kasayaru sec. school and Mukka Boys.</td>
<td>Burning facilities and general destruction of school property</td>
<td>MOE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Kiambu Chania Girls sec.</td>
<td>Storming out of school, boycotting food and classes, dismantling power main switch, tying up the watchman.</td>
<td>Kenya Times, 23 May, 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Laikipia Doldol Boys' Secondary</td>
<td>Damaging school property including window panes and solar panels.</td>
<td>The Star, 17 October 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Busia Butula Girls High</td>
<td>Demonstrations and burning buildings</td>
<td>The Standard, 21 March 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education and Media Reports.

On the basis of the above students’ reported acts of violence; it is notable that the nature of violence in secondary schools in Kenya is manifested in a number of ways. First is the use of (excessive) force. This may take different forms including
fighting, beating up others, stoning others or even vehicles and buildings. This leads to physical harm or damage of property. In some cases, it could result into psychological torture. Such cases are well illustrated by the happenings at Kenyatta Mahiga, Kiangoma Mixed in Nyeri County in 1999, Thigio Secondary School and Kijabe Boys in Kiambu County in (2004) and (2000) respectively and Kaptabuk Secondary in Nakuru County in 2004, just but to mention a few. It can thus be generally stated that one of the ways in which student violence has been understood is as ‘use of force’ to achieve whatever goal which, in most cases, involves inflicting physical harm or destroying property. One thing that stands out is that this notion or understanding of violence mainly constitutes the direct type of violence as explained by Salmi (1993) and is the most fore-grounded dimension.

The second observation is that the reported acts of violence are carefully thought and planned to achieve a certain end. In other words, these acts (of violence) are clearly intended. Indeed, in nearly all the occurrences of student violence in Table 2.1, there is a stable basis for one to conclude that the students are agitating for something or seek to block certain things, be it introduction of new school rules or increase in school fees. Accordingly, the kind of course of action they undertake is certainly a carefully planned one and through which they pursue the reversal of the decision by the school administration or even in some cases, harm the originator of the idea that they are opposed to as a way of fighting back. At this point, it may be generally stated that violence in schools occurs when students
consciously or intentionally employ the use of force to get certain things done, inflict pain as a way of fighting back or as a way of protesting something that they perceive as going against their values and interests.

The third feature discernible in the notion of violence as occurs in secondary schools in Kenya is that it is consciously perpetrated by the students towards fellow students or school authorities including prefects, teachers and school administrators who in this case are the objects of violence. It therefore occurs between persons and more so, in a subject-object relationship. It is, however, notable that whereas violence, as occurs in secondary schools in Kenya is interpersonal or relational, in its manifestation, it is directed both to the animate (that is, fellow students, prefects, teachers and administrators) and inanimate objects such as the school library, administration block, dining hall, laboratories, food stores and personal as well as public property. Table 2.1 clearly illustrates these dimensions of violence.

The fourth aspect is that of infringement or violation. Other than the use of force as a manifestation of violence, there are other instances where the reported acts of violence are not forceful as such but are nonetheless employed by students to inflict some harm on the target. These include the use of threats as in the case of Karatina Secondary and Kagumo Boys in Nyeri County in 1999, booing the School principal as happened at Munyaka Girls in Nyeri County in the same year, refusing to sit for exams or go to class as in the cases of Kikuyu Day secondary in
Kiambu County in 1999 as well as Kiguoya Secondary and Githunguri Secondary School both in Murang’a County in 2003. Others include the cutting of power supply as in the case of Kijabe Boys in Kiambu County in 2000. In all these cases, despite not being forceful, the intended result was nevertheless a form of harm (mostly psychological) on the part of the targeted individual or group.

2.3.1 Nature of Violence

From the foregoing manifestations of violence, it can therefore be proposed that in the context of secondary schools in Kenya, an act is construed as that of violence with reference to the following features:

(a) The intentional feature

Nearly all the acts of violence presented in Table 2.1 are carried out with a certain purpose in mind. The purpose, however, differs from one situation to the other such that while in one school, the act of throwing stones would be meant to force the school purchase a school bus, the same act done in another school may be intended to make the administrators withdraw certain newly introduced school rules which the learners perceive as restrictive or limiting in some way. In such situations, such acts are essentially the students’ resolve to act in such a way that their premeditated plan becomes 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 the school administrators some embarrassment which results into psychological harm. In metaphysical terms, intention is an expression of the will (one of the activities of the human mind) which is used to
distinguish between intentional and unintentional acts. In other words an act is undertaken willfully or otherwise (accidentally). This is to say, acts of violence do not ‘just happen’ but are always intended and consciously perpetrated.

(b) The force or influence feature

The model of violence so far intimated by most of the occurrences in Table 2.1 is that in which there is a perpetrator (in this case the students) and the target of violence (who could be a fellow student, teacher, or the school administrators). 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 use of physical force by the students. It is perhaps because of this that certain conceptions of violence portray it as a form of aggression.

However, not all aggressive behaviour is violent since even some sarcastic comments can be aggressive without being violent. There are numerous 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.

(c) The harm feature

Students’ acts that are eventually taken as violent are usually considered as such mainly because they are considered as harmful. 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 a rapid intervention must have occurred to avert damage.

(d) The moral responsibility feature

Since such harmful acts of violence are intended or consciously perpetrated, they are preventable or avoidable. But for them to have occurred, this invites an aspect of moral responsibility on the part of the perpetrator. Along this line, refusing to sit for exams or going to class are considered as acts of violence because they infringe upon certain school procedures. In this regard, acts of bullying could therefore rightly be seen as violence both by the students and school administrators.

2.3.2 Definition of Student Violence

Following from the foregoing as deduced from the occurrences of violence in some secondary schools in Kenya, student violence can be defined thus: the intentional use of force or other forms of influence by students to inflict harm to another person against the wish of the target.
2.4 Causes of Student Violence in Secondary Schools in Kenya

This section reviews some of the studies done so far on student violence in Kenya. The review of these studies has been carried out in relation to the third objective of this study which seeks to establish the causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. The reviewed studies fall under two main categories, namely: the taskforce reports on issues of indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya and other studies on issues related to the phenomenon of student violence as carried out by independent scholars in institutions of learning.

2.4.1 The Taskforce Reports

As mentioned in Chapter One, out of the five taskforce reports on student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya, the three taskforce reports that were available for reflection in this study include, The Report of the Presidential Committee of 1991 on Student Unrest and Indiscipline in Kenyan Schools, (Sagini Report of 1991), The Report on Causes, Effects and Remedies of Indiscipline in Secondary Schools in Central Province (Macharia Report of 2000) and The Report of the Task Force on Student Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools of 2001 (Wangai Report of 2001). Alongside with these three reports, an effort was made to compile some media extracts of the Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Education of 2008 (Koech Report of 2008) that was never published to supplement the three that were available.
(i) *The Report of the Presidential Committee of 1991 on Student Unrest and Indiscipline in Kenyan Schools (Sagini Report).*

This committee was appointed by the President of the Republic of Kenya on 23rd July 1991 through a gazette notice Number 30 Vol. XCIII. Its mandate was to investigate the causes of unrest and student indiscipline in Kenya’s secondary schools. It was chaired by Dr. L. G Sagini. Its terms of reference were to investigate, make recommendations and report on the causes of unrest and indiscipline in educational institutions with special reference to secondary schools in relation to academic performance and participation in co-curricular activities of girls in mixed secondary schools vis-à-vis that of boys. The other terms of reference included adequacy of guidance and counselling in mixed secondary schools, physical facilities in mixed secondary schools, discipline of students in schools, and any other recommendations related to the subject and management of secondary schools. This report had a total of 76 recommendations. It constituted the first national effort to address the problem of student unrest and indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools.

In terms of the identified causes of student unrest, the findings of this investigation can be summarized as follows: Lack of role models, Communication breakdown between the students and the administration, Negative impact of western values on traditional values, Mismanagement of schools, Inadequate guidance and counselling services, Inadequate inspection services, Political interference with school affairs, Overloaded school curriculum, Inadequate
teaching/learning facilities and amenities, Lack of adequate welfare services, Teachers’ lack of commitment to their work, Mismanagement of school funds, Poor performance in national examinations and Lack of adequate opportunities for girls’ participation in co-curricular activities (Sagini Report, 1991, pp.vi-vii).

In view of these identified causes, the committee made some recommendations. Some of these recommendations, particularly those considered relevant to the objectives of this study have been reflected upon in Chapter Five.

The identification of these causes has often been followed by recommendations which when adopted would address the problem of student violence. Quite a number of these recommendations have been implemented, though not all. However, in spite of this, student violence has continued to manifest itself in secondary schools in Kenya. The causes so far identified are mere triggers or symptoms. Let us take, for instance a cause like communication breakdown between the students and the administration as identified by the taskforce. It can be argued that this is just a culmination of other issues and processes but is not the basic issue. For instance, communication breakdown may arise from situations where the administrators frustrate students’ efforts to talk to them or where students are supposed to communicate with the school administration through their leaders (prefects) whom they do not trust. This could be because they perceive the prefects to be loyal to the school administrators especially in cases where these are appointed and not elected by the students.
Political interference with school affairs is another one of the causes identified by the Sagini taskforce. One of the ways in which this factor has been played out leading to student violence is by certain school administrators using some political influence to determine their stay in a certain school. Sometimes cases have been reported where political influence has been used to determine who can be a principal in which school. In so doing students may rebel or protest the posting of a certain principal or his/her transfer. Either way, the protest by students, though triggered by the political interference, is essentially founded in their concern and fear for being alienated from their self realization.

In the same way, these other identified causes such as mismanagement of schools, teachers’ lack of commitment to their work, mismanagement of school funds, poor performance in national examinations and even lack of adequate opportunities for girls’ participation in co-curricular activities can be argued to be just triggers or symptoms of the real underlying causes.

Causes such as poor performance in national examinations and even lack of adequate opportunities for girls’ participation in co-curricular activities are factors that tend to impede the students’ self realization. As concerns poor performance, it can be argued that students are essentially protesting at school conditions such as lack of commitment by teachers or by the principal, poor learning facilities and even lack of adequate learning materials, all which lead to lack of success in these examinations which play a determining role in their future lives.

Following the increase in the number and magnitude of indiscipline cases experienced in Central Province from around mid 1990s, the Provincial Education Board occasioned the Provincial Students Discipline Committee (PSDC) to gather relevant information that would assist the PEB subcommittee to come up with future practical solutions to indiscipline. The terms of reference for this committee therefore included the establishment of the nature of unrest, possible causes and/or grievances, effects of the unrest and the remedies to these situations of unrest. This Report brings together the findings from seven districts thus: Nyandarua, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Murang’a, Maragua, Kiambu and Thika districts.

A review of this report reveals the following as ‘Common Causes of student Unrest’: firstly, the school factors which included food in terms of quantity or quality, trying to change some long established school traditions, drug abuse in school, lack of professional ethics on the part of the teachers, fear for examinations and poor results, the prefect factor, school administrative style, punishment, lack of recreation facilities, low supply of amenities such as electricity and water, communication breakdown and strict school rules. The second set of factors include low achievement in class work, forced repetition, theft, inter-class conflicts at school, coupling in school, peer pressure, adolescence as a stage of emotional instability and adventure. The third set of factors is that of external factors including geographical circumstances such as proximity to slums,
the negative influence of the mass media e.g. media programmes that tend to glorify violence, undue political interference e.g. in nomination of BOG members, national culture of violence, the changing society, poor parenting and the general hopelessness and despair caused by the prevailing economic and social hardships.

Reflections on the school factors using the existentialist perspective revealed that they generally symptomize unbearable conditions of existence at school as manifested in administrative styles by the administrators and strict rules, low supply of amenities such as electricity and water and the poor food. There is also the kind of anxiety and disillusionment brought about by the agonizing failure in examination and the denial of the opportunity for the students to participate in their own becoming towards their self realization by the humiliating punishment and lack of recreation facilities. The same can be said of most of the student factors such as forced repetition and low achievement. As for the external factors, the general hopelessness and despair caused by the prevailing economic and social hardships as identified are mere manifestations of the absurdity of the conditions of existence that students seek to emancipate themselves from through their protracted violent acts. In fact, the proximity to the slum is not a cause in itself but as argued in this study, it is essentially reminiscent of the absurdity of life awaiting the students out there after school. This induces in the students some anxiety which is an unbearable experience that they struggle to avoid.

Even as the Provincial Students’ Discipline Committee (PSDC) in central Provincial was grappling with discipline issues in secondary schools within the province the situation elsewhere in the country was not any better. The Ministry of Education formed a taskforce to also brainstorm with the various stakeholders at the provincial level and come up with the causes of these incidents and subsequently make viable and relevant recommendations. This taskforce was therefore appointed on 25\textsuperscript{th} July 2001, and chaired by Dr. Naomi Wangai, a former Director of Education. Comprising of senior officers from the Ministry of Education, the taskforce was mandated to gather views and information from all stakeholders in education on causes of unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya and consequently make recommendations on actions to be taken to address the emerging issues.

This Report with a total of 168 recommendations has been viewed by the public as a very comprehensive one even though it was not fully implemented. The committee gathered information from written memoranda from the preceding consultation committees as well as oral presentations by some stakeholders such as students, politicians and trade unionists. The committee also made reference to previous reports on topics related to student indiscipline in institutions of learning as well as newspaper reports on indiscipline in schools. PDEs and DEOs also provided data on the number of schools in their districts and provinces with cases
of students’ indiscipline and the cost of damaged property within the period 2000-2001. The views and recommendations of this report are organized under management of education, school management and administration and external factors. In a way, the report intimates that these are the areas within which the causes of student unrest and indiscipline are located.

The taskforce report therefore identified a number of causes including cultural conflict which filters into the school, influence of opinion leaders, which, at times, is at variance with the students’ interests, Role of parents which has largely been abdicated, Moral decay that now afflicts the current generation of youths, Nationalism, External school environment which is full of vices and images of violence, Drug and substance abuse, Rejection of head teacher by community around the school, Fear for examinations, Insecurity within and outside the school, Out of school peer group influence, Devil worshiping, which is gradually permeating into schools, Child labour inductive environment, Unauthorized visitors and visiting days, Increased human rights awareness, Bad role models; Role of mass media which in its presentations of violence appear to glorify it and hopelessness of school leavers given the hard economic times and the vivid disparity in resource distribution in the society.

In this taskforce, one sees a repeat of quite a number of causes of student violence and unrest as they appeared in the previous taskforce reports- Sagini Report of 1991 and Macharia Report of 2000. In that case, the arguments about such causes
in the preceding reports would still apply. What perhaps can also be pointed out is that increased human rights awareness may only heighten the possibility of the occurrences of student violence as it sensitizes the students about their values and entitlements that the school may be acting in away to deny them.


Despite all these efforts, student unrest did not cease in secondary schools. Cases of student unrest kept appearing and reappearing. Consequently, in the year 2008 (July-September) during the second term of the secondary school academic calendar, student unrest and violence erupted in Kenyan schools. During this period, secondary schools in the country experienced an outburst of violence. This was just after the spate of violence in the whole country following the disputed 2007 general elections.

In a season spanning not more than two months, more than 300 schools had gone on strike for various reasons and closed down. Several secondary schools' dormitories and administration blocks were set on fire, school property running into millions of Kenyan shillings destroyed, loss of study time and death of at least one student (from Upper Hill Secondary School) as he was trying to save another student. Unlike any other one witnessed before, this unrest spread spontaneously like a bush fire in the dry season. This stint of violence left several students serving suspension orders from their respective schools while others
ended up in police custody awaiting trial. Parents suffered the humiliating experience of having to visit schools seeking readmission for their children expelled elsewhere.

Following these unfortunate occurrences, the speaker of the National Assembly directed the Education Minister to set up a special commission to investigate the causes of school unrest, and violence with a view of identifying the root causes of such incidents and make relevant recommendations. This Commission was chaired by Hon. David Koech, the then Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Education, an effort that constituted what has been referred to in this study as *The Koech Report of 2008*. Whereas this report was never released for public scrutiny, the media reported a number of root causes identified by the taskforce.

The reported causes included: an overloaded curriculum, autocratic school administration, drug and substance abuse, poor living conditions in schools, fear for mock examinations excessive use of corporal punishment, lack of avenues of expressing their grievances, delay by the ministry to disburse funds for free secondary education, lack of an effective school guidance and counselling service, pressure for excellent academic performance, abdication of parental responsibility, incompetent board of governors, culture of impunity in the society, adolescence identity crisis, mass media campaigns, children's Act which outlawed caning in schools, prefect system, misuse of mobile phones, weak institutional management, political influence, poor quality food, harsh rules that impede their
(students) freedom and post election violence that affected the country at the beginning of the year 2008.

Notable in this report is the newly identified cause as the culture of impunity in the society and the (mis)use of mobile phones in schools. But impunity is thus just a symptom of moral breakdown in the society. The issue of mobile phones may be understood to be pointing to a problem with the system of communication within the school. As argued earlier, the problem of communication has, essentially, to do with the nature of relationships between students and school administrators.

It is clear from the foregoing review of the taskforce reports that the issues which have been identified as the causes of student unrest and violence have tended to be the same throughout the years. It is also notable that not all of the recommendations made by these taskforces have been implemented. Yet the few that have been implemented have not effectively solved the problem of student unrest and violence.

2.4.2 Leadership Styles in Schools and Student Unrest

Other than the foregoing taskforce reports, a substantial amount of literature appears to link the occurrence of student unrest and violence to the leadership styles of the school principals in affected schools. In addressing the aspect of
leadership styles, three main styles have been considered. These are authoritarian, democratic and the laissez-faire leadership styles:

(a) **Authoritarian leadership** is a style of leadership in which a leader acts in a way that exhibits authority that he/she wields by virtue of his/her office. The administrator believes that he/she must tell his/her subordinates what to do and how to do it. Accordingly, the administrator determines policies, plans activities as well as establishing division of labour as he/she believes that he/she knows what is best for the organization (in this case, the school). A school principal who adopts this leadership style requires that all persons including teachers, students, parents and all the other people considered to be subordinates be fully aware of the fact that he/she is in control.

(b) **Democratic leadership** is a leadership style founded on the premises of respect for individual persons and confidence in co-workers. Consequently, a school administrator who adopts this style of leadership finds it necessary to motivate staff members to work cooperatively towards the attainment of the jointly set goals. The group also shares labour amongst themselves and evaluation is done against objective standards. In the practical sense, this leadership style works in such a way that the control of the organization (school) is not solely dependent upon the excessive use of rigid (school) rules and regulations but rather, on the ideas shared by representatives of the other stakeholders including parents,
teachers and students. In this way, members of the school community feel encouraged to genuinely participate in school processes that affect their welfare.

(c) *Laissez-faire leadership* is a style where there is virtually no policy to guide the group and there is no strategic planning. Leaders who adopt this style turn out to be indecisive on issues that require immediate action. Consequently, a school under the laissez-faire style of leadership is usually poorly organized and the members of the school community hardly know where they stand with regard to their administrative responsibilities and relationships.

In trying to understand the nature of leadership style as a cause of student unrest in secondary schools, a number of studies have been carried out. For instance, studies such as Kimathi (2009) have established that among the styles used, the democratic style of leadership is ranked by principals, teachers, students, BOG and PTA as the one that helps promote discipline most. It has been further established that the delegation of part of the administrative mandate to prefects is effective in terms of its positive contribution to order and discipline in school (Wanjiku, 2005). Nonetheless, other studies including Njiru (1998) and Mugali (2005) have established a contrary trend.

According to these studies, prefects have always been a group of handpicked students that the administration can work with, but who may not be popular with the other students as they owe their loyalty to the head teacher (Njiru, 1998). At
the same time, ordinary students exhibit dissatisfaction with the role and significance of prefects in secondary school administration. (Mugali, 2005). Consequently, it has been observed that whereas the use of prefects is generally acceptable as an aspect of the democratic leadership style, most of the lapses in their role in secondary school administration have their roots in the behaviour of the school administrators (Ibid. p. 53). Such behaviour ranges from the mode of selection of the prefects to the manner in which head teachers use these prefects, including spying on both teachers and ordinary students. This certainly endangers the position of the prefects.

It is clear from these observations that beyond the leadership style, there are emerging issues which would still make the leadership style adopted unpopular despite being widely preferred by many educational stakeholders. For instance, according to Munyiri and Mwaniki (2008) the 2008 unrest in secondary schools in Kenya was partly due to ‘too much democracy which generated into chaos’.

It is, however, worth noting that quite a substantial amount of literature is increasingly indicating that the democratic leadership style appears more consistent with the fundamentals of discipline in secondary schools in Kenya. Nonetheless, it has been noted that whereas some school principals set out to embrace this leadership style, they further engage in other practices that are inconsistent with the democratic mode of operation. Such practices include non-involvement of prefects in decision making yet they are expected to implement
them (Mbuga, 2009). The administration and teachers at times do not give enough support and guidance to the prefects and the use of prefects to spy on other students often leading to suspicion by other students (Mbuga, 2009 and Mugali 2005). This then culminates into poor social relations amongst the students as well as between the students and the administration. This often results in chaos and indiscipline. When this happens, commentators are quick to point out the failure of the democratic leadership style without a careful analysis of the situation.

One essential aspect of the whole issue of administrative or leadership style is the involvement of students in decision making, especially, in the matters that concern their welfare. A cursory look at the situation of student unrest in secondary schools in Kenya reveals students’ non-participation in the decision making process including the establishment of school rules. Studies such as Adeyemi (1996), Aluede, Jimoh, Agwinede and Omorogie (2005), Kindiki (2009) and Ekombe (2010) have pointed out a trend where the degree of involvement of students in decision making process is inversely related to the frequency of student unrest. The idea here is that if students are involved in formulating certain procedures and policies, they would own them and so they would find it unreasonable to challenge them as they (students) are part of the architects of these policies. Literature has also shown that conflicts over the imposition of decision by authority without due consultation with staff and students have
frequently occurred in many schools (Adeyemi 2009; Oyebade, 2000; and Amason, 1996).

2.4.3 Strategies used in Addressing Student Unrest in Schools

Available literature shows that the strategies that have often been employed include guidance and counselling, rewards, punishment, behaviour modification, adequate communication, and use of school rules (Kagendo, 2009). The use of guidance and counselling as a strategy is consistent with the recommendation of Kamunge Report (1988). This report presents guidance and counselling of the youth in secondary schools as essential in helping the identification of the youths’ individual interests, needs and their correction and assistance to enable them face realities of life. Consequently, each school is required to have a mature teacher responsible for the coordination of guidance and counselling programs being carried out by other teachers (GOK 1988).

According to the study by Kagendo (2009) counselling as a strategy has reportedly worked well in enhancing discipline while manual work and kneeling down were considered as causing less distress hence students did not mind them. This means that these strategies were not effective any more. Nevertheless, the challenge here is that the student has to be willing to go for this counselling service. Further than this, it has been reported that even though guidance and counselling would be an effective measure, its use has not been maximized in schools as teachers tend to be more punishment-oriented rather than counseling-
oriented even though they consider themselves otherwise (Rabong’o, 2008). Literature reviewed also cautions that the more the use of punishment, the more disruptive learners are (Ibid p. 52).

Reviewed literature also shows that, parental involvement in dealing with indiscipline cases has been the most effective strategy. However, some head teachers have also observed that despite this strategy working well, its effectiveness is often compromised by some parents who side with their children making it difficult for the teachers to deal with such students (Kagendo, 2009).

Ensuring availability of learning resources is another strategy that has often been reported as effective. However, these resources can only be made available when and if the government remits funds for the Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) arrangement. Schools have no control over the disbursement of these funds. It is, however, worth noting that according to other studies such as Muchemi (2006) and Kyalo (2010), suspension and caning are among the other strategies established to be effective while physical torture and physical/manual labour are considered relatively effective.

These findings are consistent with those two other separate studies by Muchemi (2006). For instance, according to Muchemi, schools use police intervention, punishment, suspension, expulsion, investigation and sometimes dialogue in varying degrees to resolve student riots in their schools. However, the
involvement of parents in the management of student riots is minimal despite their supposed central role in child development (Ibid p. 46). In his study, Kyalo (2010) emphasized that guidance and counselling worked well in controlling discipline while he concurs with Kagendo (2009) that manual work and kneeling down caused the students less stress hence students did not mind them. Beyond the aforementioned strategies, effective communication with the students and teachers as well as students’ close involvement in the formulation or review of school rules constitute the other approach that has been presented by quite a number of studies as effective (Ekombe 2010).

In most of the reviewed studies, corporal punishment has been found out to be one of the strategies commonly used but which is not effective. For instance, students do not find kneeling down distressing enough and so this does not deter them from indiscipline (Kyalo 2010). According to Kamuganeh (2008), the situation in secondary schools regarding discipline has not improved even after corporal punishment was banned (p. 81). However, other studies such as Ekabu (2008) still maintain that despite numerous shortcomings, corporal punishment is still the best deterrent to indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya in general and Tigania district in particular. But the ban on corporal punishment has encouraged the use of alternatives to caning such as referring students to higher authority for reprimand, students being made to repeat assignments, paying certain kinds of fines, suspension, expulsion, withdrawal of privileges, manual work and guidance and counselling (Ekabu 2008).
Expulsion is another one of the strategies adopted in dealing with discipline of the students. However, suspension and expulsion are often misapplied, unfairly used against students and ineffective at producing better future behaviour (Muthoni 2008). In this study, Muthoni established that, indeed, cases of indiscipline have continued to rise despite the tough measures such as expulsion employed by school administrators to discourage deviance (Ibid p. 59).

From the foregoing review of strategies for addressing student unrest and violence, it is notable that there is still some faith in the use of strategies such as suspension and caning which have, in some instances been considered as ‘effective’ while physical torture and physical/manual labour are considered ‘relatively effective’. Strategies such as corporal punishment are, in some instances, considered to be still the best deterrent to indiscipline’ in some secondary schools.

There is a discernible general thinking that the penalty for engaging in acts of indiscipline should be ‘tough’ enough so as to deter the undesirable behaviour. However, as argued in this study, student violence appears to be fundamentally an expression of their experiences in school. Corporal punishment, for instance, promotes experiences of humiliation just the same way the other methods adopted as alternatives such as making students repeat an assignment as a way of reprimanding them, physical torture and manual labour do. All these strategies seem to promote the same form of experiences on the part of the students and as such, they are essentially not different from the caning that they are meant to
substitute. In other words, if the students can violently protest against the humiliating experience of caning, they can still protest against these ‘alternative’ strategies in equal measure since both sets of strategies promote the same experiences which the students find undesirable.

In general, most of the efforts directed towards incidences of student violence have essentially been focused on immediate general causes and not the underlying causes. The immediate causes are fairly obvious. But much of this student rebellion appears to manifest deeper disaffection that has little to do with these immediate causes. It is for this reason that it has been argued in this study that the strategies that have been used in addressing student violence do not reflect a critical analysis of the incidences and as such, they target, not the fundamental causes, but the general symptoms of the problem of student violence.

2.4.4 Theories of Violence and Conflict Resolution

The theories of violence reviewed in this section include the Frustration-Aggression theory, the social learning theory, the instinct theory, the drive theory, the ecological model theories of violence, the therapeutic theory of violence by Frantz Fanon and the dehumanization theory of violence by Paulo Freire. These theories have been reviewed with respect to their explanation of how violence is generated and how it can be addressed.
(i) The Frustration - Aggression Theory

The Frustration - Aggression theory has often been used to explain the genesis of violent behaviour in human beings. This is a psychological theory which clearly states that aggression is always caused by frustration and that frustration always leads to aggression (Dollard, et al 1939). The term aggression has been the subject of long debates. Nevertheless, there is still no agreement as to its definition. The neurologist Jose Delgado (1971) states that human aggressiveness is a behavioural response characterized by the exercise of force in an attempt to inflict injury or damage to persons or property. It is important to note that this concept of aggression is similar to the popular understanding of the term violence. Nonetheless, those scholars who identify aggression with a “fighting instinct”, universal in animals and human beings, also indicate that it can be sublimated into relatively harmless channels, such as sport, scientific research and humour. This therefore implies that violence may also be redirected against a substitute object if the one the person would like to attack is not available. However, there are those who still maintain that violence cannot be truly sublimated since it remains, in the words of Delgado (1971), an exercise of force in an attempt to inflict injury or damage and which may also take the form of a threat to use violence unless one’s goals are satisfied.

Whereas most social psychologists would agree that frustration does increase the likelihood of violence, there appears to be a number of other factors that help to determine whether violent behaviour will really occur. Again, it is important to
clarify that there are two main terms here, namely: deprivation and frustration. A person is said to be deprived if they lack a goal generally regarded as desirable. They are frustrated only when they have been anticipating some pleasure to be gotten from a given object but then cannot fulfill this expectation (Ibid. p3). One is therefore frustrated to the extent that the expected gratification is not realized. Frustration is such a painful experience and the greater the discomfort, the more likely is violence. Sociologists speak of relative deprivation to describe a phenomenon of one comparing themselves with another group in terms of their failure and success. In that case, the gains in this group certainly increase the potentiality for violence in the rest of the other members of that society.

The Frustration-Aggression hypothesis is very useful particularly in explaining the kind of violence that emanates from non-realization of certain expectations. This theory however seems to suggest that frustration is the only cause of violence. But literature has also shown that there are other factors which determine whether a frustrated person will adopt a violent behaviour or not.

(ii) The Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory of human behaviour can be used to explain many sociological phenomena, but it applies to social violence in a particularly urgent way. With the scholar Albert Bandura (1986) at the forefront of this movement, it holds the view that children and adults are not born to be aggressive. Rather, they acquire certain violent attitudes and emotional response patterns through
modelling. Accordingly, the social learning theory rejects the idea that violence and aggression are natural and thus should be accepted. The theory therefore sees behaviour or misbehaviour being learnt through social interactions that take place within one’s environment. For this reason, the school and peer group as social institutions which give a forum within which the students interact may be seen as part of the origin of violent behaviour. For instance, by using corporal punishment and even verbal rebuke, teachers could actually be modeling such deviant behaviour on the part of their students.

Similar to social learning theory is the ecological model which holds that behaviour is a function of one’s ecological system. Accordingly, behaviour or misbehaviour is therefore a result of the form of interactions that take place within these environments. Guided by this theory, some studies have identified curricula that are divorced from students’ culture and which may make students feel disconnected from the learning process thereby triggering anxiety and rebellion from them. While these two theories may appear to be providing a useful explanatory guideline to how violence is generated, they appear to be too general in their approach by pointing to an amorphous entity called the environment as being responsible for human tendency towards violence.

(iii) The Instinct Theory and the Drive Theory

The two other common alternate theories for the existence of violence are the instinct theory and the drive theory. As popularized by Sigmund Freud, the
instinct theory holds that human beings are automatically equipped with an aggression-generating system, and that such aggression must be periodically discharged. The drive theory states that the aggressive drive is not inherent but instead stems from frustration. In contrast to the social learning theory, one finds, in these theories, a multiplicity of causes and effects of human aggression. Aversive experiences lead to emotional arousal, which leads to many specific types of violent behaviour. However, just as it has been pointed out in the case of the social learning theory, these theories do not clearly state how violence generated in the manner explained can be addressed. In this way, they become rather limited in terms of guiding a study like this one which seeks to establish the ways in which student violence can be addressed in a realistic way.

(iv) Fanon’s Therapeutic and Freire’s Dehumanization Theories

Frantz Fanon (1964) sought to find rational explanations for the seeming absurdities and incongruities of social life. He analyzed the function of violence within the larger range of political actions which could serve various social and psychological ends. In his analysis, he came up with a theory in which violence is seen as serving a therapeutic function.

Fanon’s therapeutic function of violence is captured in the view that as a cleansing force, it frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self respect (Fanon, 1964). To Fanon, the struggle for independence (freeing a people and enabling
them control their own destinies) had to be a violent one as colonization itself was violent. So in order to be eradicated, counter violence was necessary. In other words, violence was inevitable.

Paulo Freire’s (1970) theorization is somehow similar to Fanon’s but takes the position that violence essentially consists of dehumanization. Both Fanon’s and Freire’s theorization of violence are primarily concerned with the ontological vocation of human beings to be subjects hence conscious and always ready to resolve to regain their humanity.

Both Freire and Fanon use the Marxist conception of dialectical interplay of subject and object to explain the genesis of violence through the dialectic of “colonizer” (settler), colonized (native) by Fanon and ‘Oppressor’ (metropolitan), ‘oppressed’ (periphery) by Freire. To Fanon, colonialism is violence in its natural state and it will yield when confronted with greater violence (Fanon, 1964). It can be eradicated only by counter violence. Fanon was concerned with overthrowing the exploitative colonial power by force so that the colonized self achieves liberation and authentic humanity in the process. This is echoed by Freire according to whom, whereas the violence of the oppressors prevents the oppressed from being fully human, the response of the latter to this violence is grounded in the right to be fully human (Freire, 1970). Hence, Freire presents a conceptualization of violence as partly a humanizing force by virtue of it being a
vehicle of liberation from colonialism just in the same way Fanon sees it as a cleansing force.

Despite Fanon’s continual and intensive support for use of violence by the colonized (the oppressed as in the case of Freire), he is aware of the psychological disorders that are caused when people use this tool. If for example, a peasant kills his/her enemy who belongs to another social class, the fact remains that they have killed another human being (Fanon 1964). Killing is, in itself, dehumanizing. This results into strained relationships between two parties with hatred and alienation towards conflict.

Fanon diagnoses the pathologies of colonialism (or oppression). However, he does not provide the methodology of achieving real liberation and overcoming the pitfalls of revolution. Nevertheless, Freire prescribes a methodology of cultural action as the way out, and which is prolonged into ‘cultural revolution’ in which dialogue becomes a necessity of authentic revolution and liberation. This involves interdependent and synergetic participation of leaders as well as the masses in every activity of socio-cultural and economic regeneration of the society. Freire’s method involves conscientization of the oppressed in working towards authentic humanization.
2.5 Synthesis and Gaps in the Literature

In the foregoing Chapter, a review of violence has been carried out. In this regard, two main approaches namely: the essentialist approach and the typological approach have been identified. The essentialist approach focuses on the features considered essential in conceptualizing violence while the typological approach involves using names that either precede or come after the term ‘violence’ as an explanatory strategy as exemplified in cases such as gang violence, domestic violence, emotional violence, sexual violence, ethnic violence, gender violence and student violence.

The Chapter has also reviewed some of the efforts in addressing student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Such efforts include taskforce reports on issues of indiscipline and other studies on aspects related to occurrences of student violence in the institutions of learning including issues of leadership styles and the strategies used in addressing student unrest and violence. Such studies include academic dissertations and studies by other educational stakeholders. Most of these studies and reports have been found to have the tendency to revolve around the immediate causes and that not much of deeper reflection has gone into these specific issues to reveal the underlying causes of student unrest.

2.6 Summary

The theories reviewed in this Chapter include the frustration-Aggression theory, the social learning theory, the instinct theory, the drive theory, the ecological model theories of violence by Frantz Fanon and Paulo Freire. The theories of
violence have been found rather deficient in giving guidelines for an authentic resolution of conflict in schools. However, Freire’s dehumanization theory of violence appeared more articulate in guiding this study in its quest for authentic ways of addressing conflict in schools through the process of humanization. The next chapter is a deliberation on the research methodology that has been employed in this study.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter focuses on the research methods that were applied in this study. The main sections are the research design, study location, target population and sample and sampling procedure, data collection and analysis methods and the ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design, a design often used in exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2008). Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) on the other hand give the purpose of descriptive research as determining and reporting the way things are. As such, the qualitative methodological paradigm was the main approach in generating data using dialogue schedules for various educational stakeholders but also mainly philosophical design which involves philosophical method of conceptual and phenomenological analysis.

Analysis statistical data and other related documents from the Ministry of Education was employed to complement the qualitative methods and offer the basis for triangulation of inquiries, data sources and findings as advocated by Marshall and Rossman (1999). This qualitative approach provided the means of
grounding the study in the lived experiences of students and those of other stakeholders such as teachers and school administrators in Kenyan secondary school in a naturalistic and interpretive manner that is explicitly consistent with respect for the humanity of participants, while remaining ‘emergent and evolving’ (Marshall and Rossman, 1999: 2).

3.3 Study Location

This was a study conducted in the entire country. In particular, it was conducted in schools in five (5) of the former eight (8) provinces of Kenya. The schools visited were purposively selected on the basis of having experienced some student violence and unrest within the recent period of time. In this regard, the study was eventually conducted in Eastern, Central, Western, Nyanza and Coastal regions in Kenya.

3.4 Target Population

Target population is defined as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research study (Borg & Gall, 1989). The study targeted students, teachers and school administrators in selected schools in the entire country especially those that had recently experienced incidences of student violence and unrest. In this selection there was no need to visit schools which had not experienced violence for there would not be any phenomenon to study.
3.5 Sampling and Sample Size

The notion of sampling is often understood as a process of selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population. Accordingly, any statement made about the sample should also be true of the population (Orodho, 2002). In this study, a purposive sample of seven (7) schools was selected from five (5) regions in Kenya, that is, 5 out of 8 former provinces of Kenya, these being the schools that had experienced the phenomenon in the recent past. In these seven regions, the researcher targeted at least 2 schools thus a minimum sample of 10 schools. These are schools that had experienced incidences of student violence and unrest in their recent past (within the year 2012, the year in which this fieldwork was conducted). These are the schools in which the researcher would get informants who had encountered the incidences of violence and unrest in their concrete terms since they were directly involved in the incidences. In the school, a minimum sample of 4 respondents per school (a student, a prefect, a teacher and an administrator) was targeted thus 40 respondents in total.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

As a philosophical investigation, the study proceeded by reflection on both primary and secondary data. The primary data included raw materials obtained from personal experience while secondary data was obtained from various documents and media reports. As such, the study adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. However, it predominantly
adopted a qualitative paradigm in which the information gathered was classified thematically through verbatim expressions, statements, linguistic interpretations and, finally, philosophical reflection.

3.6.1 Document Analysis

Document 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. It is, however, important to point out that documentary analysis is an inquiry method of Social Sciences. However, any researcher, including philosophical researchers, would find this method useful for organizing information that would be required for (philosophical) second order reflection since philosophical reflection does not occur in a vacuum. It is in this sense that documentary analysis found application, in this study, namely, for extracting and organizing information from documents upon which philosophical reflection were undertaken. In this study, documentary analysis has been used to identify the documents that provide views pertaining to student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. The views of students who were involved in the incidences of violence are documented in taskforce and media reports. Some of this information is in statistical reports at the Ministry of Education. The researcher has therefore used this method to organize all the relevant documents needed to provide information for further investigative reflections.
(a) Strengths of Document Analysis

Document analysis used as a research method has certain strengths. In the first place, data or information can be collected for periods occurring in the past especially when analyzing historical materials for documenting trends over time. Secondly, the method provides useful background and historical data on people, groups and organizations which can really aid in creating a context within which a given issue can be investigated. Finally, in document analysis, the documents chosen are unobtrusive and can be used without imposing them on participants and that they (documents) can be checked and re-checked for reliability.

(b) Weaknesses of Document Analysis

Despite the strengths associated with document analysis as a method of carrying out an investigation, the method has been described as one that is purely descriptive, that is, one which seeks to describe what is there (the what), and as such, may not reveal the underlying motives for the observed patterns (the why). In terms of analysis or reflection, the method tends to limit such processes to the availability of materials. It has also been argued that in this method, the observed trends for example, the media reports may not be an accurate reflection of reality. This is so in the sense that certain occurrences such as catastrophic events receive more coverage than less dramatic occurrences. At the same time, some documents may be 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 reflections even though they were very relevant to this study. The researcher, however, tried to overcome this limitation by complementing whatever limited information there was regarding such a report with cases of student violence as reported in other sources.

(c) Application of Document Analysis to the Study

The documents that were considered relevant for reflection in this study and hence applicable are outlined below:


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

- 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 made reference to include: First, the **Ominde Report (1964)**, whose purpose was to review existing systems of education and advise the government on the formulation and implementation of new national policies for education. Second, the **Gachathi Report (1976)** which aimed 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)** that sought to review higher education system in relation to rural development and modifying the education system from 7-4-2-3 to 8-4-4 where each level would be 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 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 were themselves part of the context under investigation and therefore greatly contributed 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.

3.6.2 Interviews

The researcher supplemented the various documents analyzed in the study by the lived experiences of students, prefects, teachers and school administrators in purposively sampled schools. Using a dialogue schedule designed for each type of respondents, views were sought from four categories of stakeholders, namely: the students, prefects, teachers and administrators (Principal/Deputy Principal/Senior Teacher). These are stakeholders who were considered to have firsthand experience in relation to the occurrence of student violence as it happened in their schools. Their narratives of what they felt and how they acted in the given circumstances of violence were voice-recorded by a digital recorder. This only happened with the informed consent by the respondent. The recorded responses were then transcribed, edited and then presented as they appear in the appendices for ease of reference in the course of analysis and reflection. For purposes of ensuring confidentiality, the names of the schools as they appear in the appendices are all pseudonyms.

During the dialogues with the respondents, it was noted that not all the stakeholders were articulate enough to give such descriptive accounts of their
personal experiences in relation to the incidences of violence that occurred in their respective schools. There were those who appeared detached from such occurrences and thus their accounts were devoid of such streams of consciousness of their personal lived experiences. Some were totally uninterested in talking about their experiences regarding the incidences that had occurred in their schools possibly for fear of victimization despite the assurance that the information would be treated confidentially and would be restricted to the purpose of the research.

For this reason, out of the 31 dialogues, only 22 scripts were selected as clear and articulate accounts of personal lived experiences of the respective respondents for analysis as appears in the appendices. Table 3.1 below shows the distribution of the respondents in the five regions visited:

Table 3.1: Distribution of the respondents in the five regions visited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Prefects</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Kasuku</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mbuni</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Korongo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kifaru</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nyanza</td>
<td>Kobe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Ndovu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>Chui</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-totals</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total No. of Respondents</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The details of these interviews are appended in order to separate them from the main text which is a philosophical work. Reference has however been duly made to it (see the introduction to appendix on page 267).
3.7 Data Analysis Methods

In the light of the nature of the problem under investigation, a combination of three main philosophical methods (reflection) was found relevant. These are: conceptual analysis, phenomenological analysis and dialectical method. These methods have been reviewed with respect to the order in which they have been adopted at the various stages of the study. The review also highlights their respective specific procedures of investigation and their philosophical underpinnings, strengths and weaknesses and how they were applied to the study. Conceptual analysis of violence required reference to certain documents to ensure that the analysis did not occur in a vacuum. This necessitated the analysis of relevant documents with information upon which the reflection was based. The phenomenological analysis was also applied to establish the ways in which students experience the actions and practices in their respective schools as executed by their school principals, teachers and even prefects, often culminating into the phenomenon of violence as it often occurs in Kenyan schools. This section begins with the method of conceptual analysis as explained below:

3.7.1 Conceptual Analysis

The word analysis derives from the ancient Greek term *analusis* where the prefix ‘*ana*’ means ‘up’ and ‘*lusis*’ means loosing, ‘release’ or separation. In this way, *analusis* therefore meant ‘loosening up’ or ‘dissolution’. The term was readily extended, in its usage, in solving or dissolving of problems. It was in this sense that it was employed in ancient Greek geometry and philosophy. As a method,
philosophers used it to examine or break down crucial concepts for the purpose of understanding them.

In his ‘Rules for the Direction of the Mind’ (1684), René Descartes maintains that “If one was to perfectly understand a problem, they must abstract it from every superfluous conception, reduce it to its simplest terms and by means of enumeration divide it up into the smallest possible parts”. In practical terms, human experiences are often stored in our minds as ideas/concepts (abstractions from the actual experiences). To understand the nature of such experiences, philosophers must analyze concepts in which they are stored. As a philosophical method of investigation, therefore, conceptual analysis is applied to situations in which there is need for an understanding of problems that are conceptual in nature. These are the problems that have to do with the ways in which concepts have been understood in relation to what they ought to mean. Therefore, to dissolve such problems, one only needs to analyze concepts as they are found embedded in a language. This analysis, therefore, seeks to establish the necessary and sufficient conditions for correct employment of concepts, ideas, and statements. In other words, one of the goals of conceptual analysis is to find a list of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions that correctly classify things as falling under a given concept or not (Fallis, 2008).

(a) The Strength of Conceptual Analysis

Analytic philosophers like Soltis have been instrumental in clarifying such concepts as ‘teaching’, ‘indoctrination’, ‘learning’, ‘training’, ‘aims’ and
‘achievement’. In essence, conceptual analysis is very useful in elucidating and clarifying the main concepts used in education. In this study, the method was very useful in elucidating and clarifying the meaning of the concept of violence as it is one of the objectives of the study.

(b) The Weaknesses of Conceptual Analysis

While the method of conceptual analysis is characteristic of contemporary analytic philosophy, its status continues to be a source of great controversy even among analytic philosophers such as Wittgenstein (1953). For instance, Wittgenstein observes that, the analytic method seems to rely on some sort of definitional structure of concepts, so that one can give necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the concept. In his criticism, he gives the example of the concept of "bachelor" which he observes that it is often analyzed as having the concepts "unmarried" and "male" as its components. Thus, the definition or analysis of "bachelor" is thought to be an unmarried male. However, he notes that one might worry that these so-called necessary and sufficient conditions do not apply in every case. Accordingly, Wittgenstein argues that language (e.g. the word 'bachelor') is used for various purposes and in an indefinite number of ways. His famous thesis states that meaning is determined by use. This means that, in each case, the meaning of 'bachelor' is determined by its use in a context. Consequently, he concludes that if it can be shown that the word means different things across different contexts of use, then cases where its meaning cannot be essentially defined as 'married bachelor' appear to constitute counter-examples to this method of analysis.
According to Noddings (1998), conceptual analysis is too abstract, dry and far removed from the lived human experiences. As such, she observes that at the end of the day, this exercise does not ‘lead people anywhere’ in terms of transforming the world. On the same note, other philosophers have described the proponents and defendants of conceptual analysis as both irresponsible and immoral (Mbae, 2008). To such philosophers, conceptual analysis, no matter how thorough or credible, is of little value unless it leads to positive action.

Another objection to conceptual analysis derives primarily from psychological critiques of the fact that a substantial part of it involves analyzing concepts via "intuition tests". However, the intuitions that philosophers routinely rely upon may not be shared. In other words, given that people disagree about their intuitions, a method that relies on this can hardly be treated as objective data (Cummins, 1998). For this reason, some philosophers such as Stich (1998) and Ramsey (1998) have argued that the method of conceptual analysis is problematic. In so doing, they have expressed skepticism about the viability of conceptual analysis as a philosophical method. Others have called into question the connection between conceptual analysis and definitions (Chalmers & Jackson 2001). There are, however, philosophers who maintain a middle ground by arguing that while conceptual analysis is largely a fruitful method of inquiry, philosophers should not limit themselves to only using this method of analysis.
(c) Application of Conceptual Analysis to the Study

Despite these objections to conceptual analysis, the researcher still considered this method very useful for this study that sought to understand the concept of violence in the context of students’ unrest in secondary schools in Kenya. Accordingly, the investigation proceeded by reflecting on the acts reported as acts of student violence as guided by the procedure outlined earlier. But whereas conceptual analysis has been criticized as being a dry and abstract exercise, the researcher considered it useful, at least in the provision of clarity to the concept of violence as implied by the first objective of this study. For this reason, the researcher adopted a combined use of the analytical strategies as shown in the steps below:

First, examining the different manifestations of cases of violence, for example, direct violence, structural violence as often happens in Kenyan secondary schools. Secondly, establishing the necessary and sufficient features that would necessitate an action to be regarded as an act of violence. This goes together with defining acceptable contexts in which such acts would be meaningfully understood as acts of violence. Thirdly, the researcher tested each and all the features for logical necessity and for sufficiency.

In general, the study proceeded in its reflections by looking at various reported cases of student violence. The focus was on their characteristics or their various manifestations. In considering what has been reported, the researcher sought to establish whether the features that were reported could be considered, sufficiently
so, as instances of student violence. The next method used in this study is the phenomenological method as explained below:

### 3.7.2 Phenomenological Analysis

Phenomenology is commonly understood either as a discipline of knowledge or as a movement in the history of philosophy. As a historical movement in philosophy, phenomenology is a tradition whose roots can be traced back through the centuries coming to full flower in the first half of the 20th century with scholars like Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) (The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2004). These scholars have contributed to the understanding of the phenomenological analysis in their various ways as expressed below:

Husserl (1931) defines phenomenology as the method of philosophy that deals with the study of essences: a rigorous science in the sense that it investigates the most radical, fundamental and original evidences of conscious experiences. It goes beneath the constructions of science and common sense towards foundations in experience. It studies what particular sciences and what human beings, in their natural everyday attitude take for granted. To Husserl, knowing is always through a state of pure consciousness where the mind is directed towards objects of consciousness that can be reflected upon. This is the main idea behind Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology. It is transcendental in the sense of the position
that one must go beyond the experience to discover meaning. Phenomenology therefore aims at disclosing the real nature of consciousness and that of experience by penetrating deeper into things and learning to see the more profound layers behind what human beings first think that they see. In his treatise, Husserl argues that there is ‘natural attitude’ (our everyday involvement in the world) and ‘phenomenological attitude’ (the philosophical act of pure reflection where one suspends the natural attitude).

Martin Hedegger (1889-1976) disagreed with Husserl’s ‘reduction’ and stressed the effort to ‘get beneath’ the subjective experience and find the genuine objective nature of things, a thinking that came to be known as the hermeneutic phenomenology which is interpretive in orientation. He insisted that the ‘natural attitude’ is integral to knowing and that reduction is impossible. In its operation therefore, hermeneutic phenomenology focuses on the relationship between the event and the person, and how meaning is formed in that relationship as opposed to seeing human relationship with things in a subject/object relationship.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) and Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) joined Heidegger in rejecting Husserl’s belief of transcendence but embraced the human concrete lived experience, a branch that came to be called existential phenomenology. This type of phenomenology seeks to describe everyday experiences as they are perceived by the consciousness of individuals, a return to studying the direct, lived experience of the ‘field worker’ as a source of knowledge about the world thereby rejecting the historical dichotomy of the
inquirer and the social world (subject/object). According to Merleau-Ponty (1952) phenomenology is a method for changing our relation to the world. It is engaged in the task of revealing the mystery of the world and the mystery of reason. For him, phenomenology is the study of essences, and it puts essences back into existence whereas for Heidegger (1962), phenomenology is a method of “showing”, uncovering or laying bare or making explicit that which is hidden in a phenomenon by letting it show itself as it is in itself.

Given these contending views on what phenomenology is or ought to entail, two camps emerged in the 1970s on how best to inquire and understand reality. These are: the descriptivists and the interpretivists. The descriptivists comprised of the followers of Husserl who strongly believed that it is possible to suspend personal opinion to arrive at a single essential. The interpretivists were essentially Heidegger’s followers and according to whom there is an endless number of realities since interpretations are all we have because description is an interpretive process. To the descriptivists however, if there is more than one reality, then that leaves doubt, ignorance and lack of clarity.

As a methodology therefore, phenomenological analysis is focused on the subjective experience of individuals or groups. It is interested in the personal experience, that is, the world as experienced by the individual and not the relationships between people. It therefore attempts to describe, accurately, a phenomenon from the person’s perspective thus understands the meaning of the lived experiences and life from the world in which human beings live. In this way,
phenomenological analysis assumes that the only things one can know are those that are directly observable and experienced. Put in another way, the only reality one can know is the one he/she directly experiences. In this study, both the descriptivists’ and the interpretivists’ understandings of phenomenology have been adopted as explained in the basic characteristics below:

(a) Describing a type of experience just as we find it in our own human experience. It is the pure description of lived experience as expressed by Husserl and Merleau Ponty.

(b) Interpreting a type of experience by relating it to relevant features of context. In this vein, Heidegger and his followers spoke of hermeneutics, that is, the interpretation of experience in context, especially social and linguistic context.

(c) Analysis of experience.

In essence, all phenomenologists practise analysis of experience. A phenomenological analysis of a given type of experience, therefore, features the ways in which human beings experience that form of a conscious activity. In particular, a phenomenologist would be interested in issues and problems of human existence or life as lived or experienced by an individual human being. Consequently, whereas conceptual analytic philosophers target concepts in their bid to unravel philosophical problems that are conceptual in nature, phenomenologists target the ‘lived experiences’ for analysis.
(a) Strength of Phenomenological Analysis

One of the strong points of phenomenological analysis is that it takes cognizance of the nature of both the descriptive approach of the natural and social sciences on the one hand and the abstract and reflective approach of philosophical inquiry on the other hand. In this way, it becomes very useful to a researcher who wants to understand human experiences since it aims at developing a complete accurate, clear and articulate description and understanding of a particular human experience or experiential moment. This approach provides a rich, complete description of human experiences’ meanings and findings that emerge rather than imposed by an investigator.

(b) Weaknesses of Phenomenological Analysis

Despite the strength of the phenomenological analysis, it can be argued that findings generated by this method are difficult to generalize to a larger population. Indeed, critics of phenomenology have argued that one cannot describe unique experiences and make generalizations about the experiences at the same time. The method depends on the articulate skills of the respondents who provide the information and the conditions mainly depend on the particular participants chosen for the study. As such, where a respondent is not adequately articulate, this method may not be useful.

(c) Application of Phenomenological Analysis to the Study

A phenomenological approach to the incidences of student violence involved examining the ways in which students in secondary schools in Kenya experience certain things that happen in their lives when in school. This was an exercise
anchored in the contention that the violence that occurs in these schools often takes the form of a reaction to things that happen in the school. Using the method, the researcher sought to study the nature and the conditions of existence of secondary school students, those of their teachers and those of the administrators within the context of student violence. Their feelings, emotions and reaction of the students here became the main experiences to be analyzed.

As a philosophy of genesis, phenomenological analysis enabled the researcher to explore aspects of the students’ consciousness and experiences and how these lead to student violence and unrest. The researcher ‘bracketed’ presumptions and ‘biases’ about violence in Secondary Schools by holding them in consciousness through the phases of research thereby minimizing their influence on the findings. In effect, this approach sought to raise and address questions concerning the grounds and the ‘coming to be’ of the phenomenon of student violence in relation to the nature of students as human beings. It was therefore, the researchers’ contention that there are certain layers of the phenomenon of student violence that the social science methods so far employed, and even conceptual analysis undertaken in this study have not been able to reveal.

In the course of the analysis of the students’, teachers’ and administrators ‘lived’ experiences as relates to the incidences of student violence, the researcher focused his investigative reflections on the subjective innermost experiences of those involved as conscious beings. Such experiences include the respondents’ feelings
of frustrations, anxiety, hate, humiliation, freedom, alienation, oppression and segregation. Such are examples of experiences that are generated in the social situation (school) in which human beings (students) live. This analysis was guided by the demands of the second and third objectives of this study as outlined in Chapter One and executed in Chapter Four. The next method used in this study is the dialectical method as explained below:

### 3.7.3 The Dialectical Method

The Dialectical Method is a method of philosophical investigation that aims at discovering truth through examining and interrogating competing ideas, perspectives or arguments. As a method of inquiry, the dialectical method was originally conceived of as a dialogue between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject, who wish to establish the truth of the matter by dialogue with reasoned arguments (Plato, 348B.C). It seeks to arrive at the truth by stating a thesis, developing a contradictory antithesis and combining and resolving them into a coherent thesis. It is a process of determining truth by asserting a theory (thesis), its denial (antithesis) and then synthesis of the two to form a new theory.

- **(a) The Strength of the Dialectical Method**

The strength of the dialectical method is the fact that it enables the researcher to identify and challenge initial assumptions about a target. In this study, for instance, it enabled the researcher to critically examine the assumptions built into
the suggested remedies for student violence in the foregoing taskforces. For this reason, the method reduces prejudice and bias from recommendations made for a given issue.

*(b) The Weakness of the Dialectical Method*

The dialectical approach has however been viewed as one that is time consuming and so it cannot cover a wider scope in a context of time constraint. At the same time, it demands very high skills for one to be able to manage the process of argument and counter argument before arriving at the synthesis.

*(c) Application of Dialectical Method to the Study*

There have been quite a number of attempts to address the problem of student violence and unrest yet the occurrences still persist. It is based on this observation that the dialectical method found much of its basis. As used in this study, the dialectical method enabled the researcher to critically examine the commonly suggested causes of unrest and ways of addressing student violence. These causes and the suggested ways of addressing them were held as a hypothesis (thesis). Subsequently, the researcher proceeded by considering situations where the suggested causes may not be useful in mitigating the phenomenon of student violence (antithesis). Finally the researcher worked out a union of the two sets (a set of the suggestions of causes and remedies and their contradiction associated contradictions) into more reflected-upon (fundamental) causes and remedies (synthesis). What finally emerged as a result of serious probing in a dialectical sense is not necessarily a compromise but an enriched and synthesized
explanation (in form of the causes and remedies) for student violence as presented in Chapter Five of this study.

3.8 Validity of Instruments

Validity informs the accuracy of the instruments to measure what they intend to measure (Bell, 1993). In this study, the completed instruments (interview schedule) were reviewed by the researcher and the university supervisors for clarity. This was enhanced by way of removing or revising those questions that were found not focused to the objectives of the study or even ambiguous and/or confusing.

3.9 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Before embarking on the actual fieldwork, the researcher sought a letter of introduction from the department of Educational Foundations. This letter is a key requirement in applying for the research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation [NACOSTI] (see appendix) so as to be allowed to carry out the research in the selected institutions. Once the permit was obtained, the researcher reported to the District commissioner of the districts within which this data was collected. He also made visits to the Ministry of Education headquarters to pay courtesy calls ahead of the real data collection. Upon visiting any institution or any individual respondent, the researcher always produced this permit as part of introduction of the purpose of the visit. The researcher then sought informed consent of each respondent explaining the true nature and purpose of the research. A commitment was always made on the
confidentiality and anonymity of the involved people and the re-assurance that the data collected was only going to be restricted to the stated purpose for which the research was being carried out.

In this regard, voice-recording of the dialogues was only done in cases where informed consent was given and where it was declined, the researcher only took notes.

3.10 Summary

This Chapter has presented four main methods adopted in the study: Document Analysis, Phenomenological Analysis, Conceptual Analysis and the Dialectical Method. Document Analysis was used for extracting and organizing information upon which the philosophical reflections on the subject of student violence were carried out. Conceptual Analysis was used for analyzing, explaining and understanding the basic concept of student violence, thus bringing clarity in the conceptualization of the term violence. This was done in line with the demands of the first objective of the study. However, conceptual analysis was found inadequate in capturing the present, changing or emerging aspects of violence. In other words, it does not capture human experiences and thinking about the phenomenon of violence and as such, it cannot provide a comprehensive view of the notion of student violence. In view of this fact, beyond just analyzing the concept of student violence, the researcher found phenomenological analysis useful for purposes of establishing the underlying causes of student violence. As such, the two philosophical methods complemented each other. Besides, the
researcher used a third philosophical method: the dialectical method. This method was useful in establishing the fundamental causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya and the associated remedies in a thesis-antithesis-synthesis model.

As a whole, the Chapter has presented and explained the procedures involved in the study whose design essentially combines both the qualitative and quantitative approaches in varying proportions. Nevertheless, it essentially uses descriptive, interpretive, analytical and dialectical approaches. The chapter has also outlined the logistical and ethical considerations adhered to in the course of carrying out the study.

The next Chapter presents discussions pertaining to the phenomenon of violence in the context of student unrest in secondary schools in Kenya.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES OF STUDENT VIOLENCE IN KENYAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents an analysis of violence as experienced in Kenyan secondary schools. The people whose experiences are of interest in this Chapter include the students, teachers, the school administrators and other concerned stakeholders. This analysis is informed by two basic assumptions: first, the fundamental causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya are ultimately located in the students’ conditions of existence and second, the methodologies adopted by the antecedent studies on student violence have not delved deep enough into these incidents as to get to the fundamental aspects of it.

Pursuant to the argument based on the human ‘lived’ experiences, the analysis has proceeded by vivid descriptions of incidences of violence followed by reflections based on established insights. The process of reflection was made possible by raising questions seeking to discover who does which act in the scenario of unrest and for what purpose. The Chapter is presented in six main sections, namely: power and authority, the prefect system, school rules and regulations, punishment in schools, rights and freedoms and K.C.S.E examinations in secondary schools in Kenya. These sections essentially comprise the issues that are regularly perceived as the potential areas around which discontent is centered. In the course of the
analysis, the researcher explored the way the six areas are interpreted and expressed by the students from their inner personal experiential perspective.

Hence, the researcher relied on the reports from the media, some selected records of school violence from the Ministry of Education in Kenya and live narratives of experiences by students, teachers and school administrators gathered from the field dialogues. The fieldwork as a source of information was treated as first order data that had been subjected to thorough scrutiny. The fieldwork details are explained in Chapter Three and also presented in the appendices. To ensure confidentiality, the schools visited during fieldwork have been given coded names (pseudonyms) as they appear in the appendices. The data from the records of school violence gathered from the Ministry of Education records between the years 1999 and 2005 for districts in Kenya has been summarized and presented in Table 4.1a below, the names of the districts given in the table are as per the stated period.
Table 4.1a Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest between 1999 and 2005 in Some Districts in Kenya as reported at MoE, Kenya.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grievances</th>
<th>Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-involvement, or non-participation in school Extra Curriculum Activities.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protest against administrators and some support staff’s attributes and styles of administration such as matron, cooks and even prefects e.g. being too harsh, too strict, brutal ‘unreasonable, absenteeism and unfair.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unjustified/harsh punishment e.g. ‘harsh’ or ‘too much’ punishment.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food related problems/issues e.g. ‘poorly cooked’ food, students missing meals ‘little’ food, students denied food.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations – e.g. students’ refusal to sit for examinations protest against perpetual failures in exams.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General negligence of students’ welfare/complaints not addressed.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreements amongst students</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of Solidarity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differential Treatment of other students e.g. Girls over Boys, Prefects over the ordinary students e.t.c.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of an entitlement/right</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats (either by members of the school or the neighboring community).</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra ordinary occurrences in school e.g. claims that students are being harassed by ghosts at night, Devil worshipping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict or tough school rules and regulations</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It is from the data as presented in Table 4.1a above, that the researcher deduced the source of discontent on the part of the students often leading to occurrences of violence and unrest. These, as observed from the table mainly revolve around six
areas earlier mentioned in the beginning of this chapter and which form the substance of the rest of the chapter. While the summary in Table 4.1a does not give sufficient accounts of the occurrences of the phenomenon of violence, it nonetheless identifies the direction along which the fundamental causes of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools have been investigated as follows:

4.2 Exercise of Power and Authority in Secondary School in Kenya

Much of the discontent in Kenyan secondary schools has tended to centre on the manner in which school administrators exercise power and authority bestowed upon them. Various sources have reported on autocratic and hierarchical administration of schools in Kenya. The Macharia Report of 2000 and Wangai Report of 2001 linked the occurrence of student violence (manifested in open protests and destruction of school property) to the exercise of power by school administrators (MoEST 2000 p.13 and MoEST 2001 p.26). School administrators do require some power and authority to be able to execute certain tasks and duties. Power has commonly been understood as the ability to influence or cause a person to perform a certain act. On the other hand, authority is the legitimate ability vested in someone to compel or influence others to do something, for instance, compelling teachers to teach and students to learn. Nevertheless, how an administrator exercises this power or authority may also determine the behaviour patterns of the other stakeholders. Table 4.1 b below summarizes the incidences of student unrest in relation to the exercise of power and authority in some schools:
Table 4.1b: Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to Exercise of Power and Authority in Secondary Schools in Central and Rift Valley Provinces between 1999 and 2005 as reported by MoE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/1/99</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Salient</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>Deputy principal accused of being too harsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/5/99</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Gachika</td>
<td>Mixed Day</td>
<td>Walked out of school and went home</td>
<td>-principal not development conscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1999</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Kahuho Uhuru</td>
<td>Mixed day</td>
<td>Became riotous</td>
<td>High handedness of the discipline master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/6/99</td>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Kangema Secondary</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Violent, burnt down the Administration block</td>
<td>Students wrongly sent home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/7/99</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Kikuyu day</td>
<td>Mixed day</td>
<td>Refused to sit for exams</td>
<td>School administration refused to permit students to go out for sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/1/00</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Njambini</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Walkout</td>
<td>Deputy accused of being too harsh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/2/00</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Karatina</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>Deputy accused of brutality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/6/00</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Heni</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>School matron said to be too harsh. Boys wanted to be allowed to socialize freely with the girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/7/00</td>
<td>Maragua</td>
<td>Njiiri Sec</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>General unrest</td>
<td>Principal was unfair to teachers and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/7/00</td>
<td>Nyandarua</td>
<td>Magumu secondary</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Violent i.e. burnt the interior of the deputy principal’s office after breaking a window valued Kshs. 25,000</td>
<td>Deputy principal too harsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/03/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Afraha High School</td>
<td>Public Mixed Day</td>
<td>General strike Breaking windows. Shouting and marching out of school Drinking alcohol</td>
<td>- Heads high handed administration - Poor library facilities. - Lack of transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/5/04</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Moi Girls Kamangu</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>Girls walked out of school at 10.00 am in nightdresses.</td>
<td>- harsh deputy principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/06/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Simat Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Mass walkout of school</td>
<td>- Parents harassed by principals. - False/empty promises by - Students adequately taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/7/04</td>
<td>Laikipia</td>
<td>Ngume Secondary</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>Students rioted within the school damaging 17 windows panes and the Principal’s car</td>
<td>The principal is too strict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/07/04</td>
<td>Laikipia</td>
<td>Olongarwa Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Students rioted damaging 187 window panes</td>
<td>School administration too strict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The grievances of student unrest and violence related to the exercise of power and authority as documented in these incidences revealed that the main issues of
contention include autocratic style of leadership (high-handedness), constrained channels of communication where administrators are almost unapproachable because of being ‘too harsh’, administrators not playing their role such as provision of basic facilities, for example, learning and transport facilities, and the exercise of power and authority in ways that constrain learners in various ways including social development. Situations of student violence and unrest as a result of the manner in which the school authorities exercise their power and authority have also often been reported in the media. The following are some selected cases of student violence and unrest as reported in some local daily newspapers.

In the year 2004, students of a school in Kangundo woke up at 3.00 am and stormed the deputy principal’s house, baying for his blood (EA Standard, 16 July 2004-pp.2-3). The Deputy Principal fled as the students set ablaze his car reducing it to a shell as well as smashing windows and furniture in 20 classrooms and departmental offices as well laboratories. They also razed four other rooms to the ground causing damages estimated at over 15 million. When interviewed by journalists, the students said they were protesting against the alleged high-handedness by the Deputy Principal and the Boarding Master (Ibid. p.3 col.2). They also stormed the house of the boarding master where they reportedly held his family hostage for about 30 minutes after breaking window panes but were unable to get in.
In the year 2008, students of a girls’ school in Thika stormed out of the school and travelled to their homes (*Kenya Times* 23 May 2008 p.4 col.4). The previous day, the 500 students had attempted to match out of school at 7.00 p.m after declining to take lunch and supper. They also boycotted evening classes. Their actions were, however, intercepted by the School Principal and police officers some 300 metres from the school as they trooped to town. The students then put off power in the classrooms after dismantling the main switch just before a contingent of regular administration police officers led by area police boss and the local chief moved in to contain the situation. But after the police officers left the compound, the students woke up at about 5.00 am and matched to the main gate where they tied the watchman up before most of them took off. Speaking on condition of anonymity, some of the students said they were angered by the Deputy Principal, whom they accused of dictatorship, engineering arbitrary suspensions and meting out ‘harsh punishment’ on them. They also said they were being charged Kshs. 1000/= per term for tuition but were not getting the value for their money and that in spite of contributing Kshs. 7000/= each to purchase their school bus, they were being denied access to the vehicle whenever they sought to go on trips (*Ibid*.p4 col.5).

Despite the apparent difficulty in reconciling the students’ actions with the reasons given, it is possible to deduce a number of issues. The students’ attack on their administrators because of what they termed as ‘high-handedness’ may be interpreted especially from the Fanonian and Freirean perspectives as a reaction to
the oppression resulting from the manner in which the school administrators exercise power and authority. Their actions can thus be construed as a response to the perceived inconsiderate and dehumanizing manner in which the administrators exercise the power and authority vested in them in discharging their administrative duties (Freire, 1972).

In the case of the Girls Secondary school in Thika, the students declined to take lunch, then supper and then refused to attend the subsequent evening classes. These acts can be interpreted as constituting a way of students alerting the administration of their displeasure. It is a clear indication that something is definitely not right. Notably, whether it was the case of food not well cooked or not enough, the administrators seemed to take it for granted that whatever was bothering the students would sooner than later fade away. Unfortunately, the problem escalated and the Principal had to call the police to ‘contain the situation’. This, therefore, introduces another angle to the exercise of power and authority, namely: means of conflict resolution.

It appears that some School Principals choose the use of force in resolving whatever conflict there is with the students. Such cases include Korongo Secondary School as illustrated in appendix (A1: A) and even Kobe Girls’ Secondary School as illustrated in Appendix (E1: A). For this reason, even if the Principal had good reasons for what the students were otherwise reacting to as a bad situation, she never considered the possibility of the students having the
capacity to listen and understand. As such, the Principal made no effort to address the conflict amicably but instead sought to coerce the students into her will.

The recourse to force in resolving conflicts only ended up coercing the learners into some temporary calm but did not address the real issue of discontent. The apparent ineffectiveness in the use of force as a means of conflict resolution was clearly illustrated by the fact that the Principal had to call the police a second time. It therefore appears reasonable to deduce that when this happens, the students felt frustrated, intimidated, humiliated and degraded because their worth had been compromised, dismissed and neglected by the Principal. This is likely to make students act violently with the objective of restoring their lost humanity and self-worth, hence student violence.

Indeed, as part of their acts of violence, the students cut off electricity supply by dismantling the main switch, possibly, to hide their identities. This was an acknowledgement as well as a revelation of the potent, dangerous and vengeful character of their administrator, a danger from which they sought escape or to avoid altogether. In other words, even though the students felt a sense of having broken free from the bondage of what they called ‘dictatorship’, they were still cautious of the Principal’s envisaged exercise of power and authority in ways that would still jeopardize their process of self-realization. Nevertheless, the students
finally found a channel of communicating their grievances, a channel that had otherwise been stifled by the school administration.

As human beings, students have that inner desire and a feeling of freedom to control their destinies. For this reason, they responded to the situation by confronting and overcoming the barriers, real or imagined, to their fulfillment of this desire for freedom. Self-respect and worth are, in this case, some of the values that students (as human beings) strive to have upheld. As such, they are bound to rebel against any attempt to subdue or compromise them. Presumably, they seek to live a life that provides them with the freedom of expression thus a life where they are free to express their sentiments concerning their experiences in school which they feel run counter to their self realization. That is why after tying up the watchman, an act that implies the need to overcome the limitations to their full realization, they immediately opened up to express their experiences of anger and disappointment. These are experiences associated with the Principal’s reign whose autocratic tendencies such as ‘arbitrary’ suspension of students and meting out ‘harsh punishment’ the students perceived as a barrier to their self-realization.

Cases of students reacting violently to the manner in which power and authority is exercised in school were also identifiable in some schools during fieldwork. A case in point is Kobe (pseudonym) Girls’ Secondary School in Kisumu County, who went on rampage in May 2012 protesting the conduct of the Principal whom they alleged was ruling them with a ‘high hand’ as illustrated in Appendix (E1:
B). Such was the case at Kasuku Secondary School where students protested against newly posted Principal whose style of leadership was very unpopular with the students and even teachers in all the schools she had been (Appendix A1: B). Mbuni Secondary School presents a case of administrators who frustrate the students’ efforts to consult over a contentious matter, for example, concerning the cancellation of holiday tuition despite having paid for it (Appendix B4: F) while at Korongo students protested against the school administrators’ decision to keep them in school for a period longer than stipulated by the Minister’s circular (Appendix C1: A).

The case of Kobe Secondary School presented the scenario of a school administrator who exercises authority in such ways that the students perceive as negatively impacting on their image and outlook as Secondary School students. For instance, she declares that there will be no use of beauty products such as the oils for facial applications and perfumes. But these are part of the commodities that secondary school girls perceive as very central to their lifestyle and image especially at their developmental stage. In the modern lifestyle, it is almost a norm, if not a value, for students to have some junk foods such as juice and bites such as biscuits and potato crisps. It also appears from the interview held with teachers and students that this had been happening and it was not necessarily against the school regulations. As aspects of their image, the female secondary school students readily perceive denial of such things as tantamount to an attempt to compromise their identity, thereby curtailing their process of self realization.
Should these students appear before their other counterparts from other schools; they will certainly experience feelings of lowered self-esteem and self-respect before their colleagues. Possibly, their counterparts would see them as less of secondary school students.

Whereas the students are in a conscious process of constructing their image as ‘secondary school girls’ with the associated unique attributes, the administrator, using her power and authority, intercepts their efforts in an adverse way. To these students, this is such a frustrating act that certainly causes them some psychological pain. The weight and bitterness that the Principal’s declaration caused on the part of the students is epitomized in the sentiments by a Form Three student who participated in the study as illustrated below:

And you see, this is very unfair. We felt so bad. Why would she not want us to be like our colleagues in other schools? I mean, how will our fellow high school girls from other schools look at us when we meet them in symposiums and discussions. Surely, a high school girl cannot do without applying those things on her face. By the way, it was very unfair… (Appendix E2: A).

Besides the kind of frustration the actions of the Principal caused the students, there was also the feeling of alienation. At the first level, the Principal exercised her powers in such an autocratic manner that even the teachers were never informed of this move, noble as she may have thought of it. Consequently, the teachers felt sidelined and ignored hence alienated by the Principal. Even when the teachers learnt that there was tension in the school, they rushed to the scene but were ‘sent away’ by the Principal. For this to have happened, in the presence
of the students, it was certainly humiliating, devaluing, embarrassing and frustrating for the teachers. This is because it depicted them as equally helpless and inferior before their own students.

The second level of alienation can be discerned from the fact that when the teachers got to the scene and were sent away, the students felt that ‘they were all alone’ (Appendix E1: A) and that ‘there was no one to help them even by talking to the Principal below:

Now even the teachers were not coming to help talking to the Principal. And those few who came, the Principal shouted at them ‘who called you here? Can you go back I don’t need your help!’ So those teachers who had come just stood there doing nothing (Appendix E2: A).

In this case, the students felt that their belonging to the school appeared not to matter both to the Principal and now to the teachers. Accordingly, they directed their violence to the administrator with the aim of countering the power embodied in her and which she exercised to the students’ disadvantage as supported by one of the student’s view thus:

…it was very unfair and according to me, she (the Principal) is the one who made students behave that way (E2: A).

It appears that the aspect of exercise of power and authority goes hand in hand with the aspect of communication. Hence, an administration which exercises power and authority in ways that stifle communication is likely to encounter rebellion thus student unrest and violence. For this reason, the next section
focuses on the aspect of communication breakdown in the context secondary schools in Kenya.

4.2.1 Communication Breakdown in Secondary Schools in Kenya

In many of the incidences of unrest and violence in Kenyan secondary schools, there are identifiable aspects of communication breakdown. For instance, in the situation of the girls’ school in Thika, the girls boycotted eating and even attendance of evening classes. Later, when they spoke out their painful sentiments after tying the watchman, they were utilizing a rare opportunity to communicate what they had not been able to express possibly due to constrained communication channels. This constraint was further edified by the fact that even as the girls spoke, they did so, on a condition of anonymity. This second section explored the whole notion of communication in terms of its nature and how students reacted to situations where it was constrained. To begin with, data from documents on student unrest in relation to issues of communication breakdown from MoEST was summarized and presented in Table 4.1c below.
Table 4.1c Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to Communication Breakdown in Secondary Schools in Central and Rift Valley Provinces between 1999 and 2005 as reported from MoEST.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29/2/00</td>
<td>Kirinyaga</td>
<td>Mutige Boys</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>All boys walked to district H/Qs to seek audience with the D.C</td>
<td>Sends them home without enough reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/6/00</td>
<td>Kirinyaga</td>
<td>Kiamiciri Sec</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Form 2 and Form 3 pelted the girls’ dorm and principal office with stones.</td>
<td>Forms 2&amp;3 students alleged that the girls were ‘selling’ them to the administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/5/04</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Komothai Boys High School</td>
<td>Boys boarding</td>
<td>- threw objects at each other form 3s chanted war songs and dirges&lt;br&gt;- From 3s armed themselves with handles of forked jembes firewood and stones.</td>
<td>A clash between Form Two’s and Three’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Moi Girls Kamangu</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>Walked out of school</td>
<td>Threatening notes indicating burning the school down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Njoro Girls</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>Students walked out of school and went home without damage to property</td>
<td>General negligence of students welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And 12/07/04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/7/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Kambala Girls</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>Students chanted war songs well into the night</td>
<td>Abusive language from head teacher and support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Loreto Secondary</td>
<td>Private Mixed</td>
<td>Throwing stones window panes broken&lt;br&gt;General difference and student unrest</td>
<td>Poor communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/7/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Mereroni Secondary</td>
<td>Public Mixed</td>
<td>Students walk out&lt;br&gt;General poor students head teacher relationship</td>
<td>Not happy with heads administration style&lt;br&gt;Head differed with board PTA and B.O.G. differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/07/04</td>
<td>Samburu</td>
<td>Maralal Boys High School</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>Form 4 students rioted within the school causing damage</td>
<td>Cancellation of a symposium by the school administration without involving the students concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Gilgil High School</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>Doused the head teacher’s office with petrol and set it on fire.&lt;br&gt;Curtains and sofa set caught fire but the fire was put off in time</td>
<td>Food not sufficient.&lt;br&gt;Lack of teachers&lt;br&gt;Harsh administration&lt;br&gt;Complaints not addressed.&lt;br&gt;Lack of books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the Table, the identifiable issues of communication include misunderstanding amongst students, students and the Principal, the Principal and
the PTA/BOG, failure to address students’ grievances due to constrained channels of communication, relationships between students and other members of staff due to poor communication and non-involvement of students in making decisions which directly affect their welfare. Situations of student violence and unrest have also often been reported in the media.

In the year 2000, students of a school in Mombasa staged a sit-in and boycotted dinner protesting against the evasive behaviour of their headteacher Daily Nation 14 July 2000 p.5 col. 1-2). The students had reportedly been pressing for a meeting with the Principal whom they accused of refusing to meet them over their grievances. The student representative told the Daily Nation team that ‘our intention was not to cause trouble but to underscore our desire to meet him. He has been evading us for the past one week’ (p.5 Col.1). The students also alleged high-handedness on the part of the school authorities and poor diet as part of the grievances they had wanted to discuss with their Principal. Following the general situation of unrest in the school, students were ordered out of the compound and the school shut down by an order from the principal communicated to the students by the head-boy.

In the year 2004, a boys’ secondary school in West Pokot went on rampage destroying property worth Kshs. 500,000 before riot police intervened (Daily Nation 14 November 2004 – Online Edition). Trouble started at midday when the students met at the school hall to discuss the school principal and after the
meeting, the rowdy students broke into the staffroom where they smashed a television set and a computer saying they did not complete the syllabus because some teachers spent too much time watching television and listening to the radio. They pelted school window panes with stones as some raided the matron’s house destroying furniture and crops in the compound. The students alleged that the school administration had failed to address their grievances, some of their colleagues had been unfairly expelled and that they were not being taught computer science yet the school had spent Kshs. 2 million to build classrooms and buy equipment.

In 2012, students of a school in Kilifi District went on rampage destroying property of unknown value demanding the immediate transfer of their Principal (The Star Newspaper 7 June 2012). The County Director of Education confirmed that the students had been complaining that their principal always dismissed them whenever they forwarded their grievances to him and that he always differed with them and even with some teachers about pertinent issues in the school. The students therefore preferred a former Principal who had been sacked, a short while before, by the management. The County Director of Education however explained that since this was a private school with its own private management, his office could do little to help the situation. The principal closed the school indefinitely after consultations with the school management through an announcement conveyed by the head-boy.
The foregoing scenarios are notably evenly spread in time. That is to say, incidences of this nature have been happening through time, that is, from 2000 all the way to 2012. The case of the school in Mombasa depicts a head teacher who is evasive. He does not embrace dialogue and possibly would like a situation where his word goes unchallenged. Refusal to meet the students over their grievances may imply a number of things. For instance, it may imply the authoritarian character of the Principal, his arrogance and his low regard for the students. It may also imply the sheer unwillingness or the guilt of not being able to address the grievances to the students’ satisfaction. Consequently, the students sought an alternative channel of communication as well as an alternative audience to which they narrated their frustrating experiences. Dialogues conducted in various schools also revealed a number of ways in which student violence and unrest in secondary schools in Kenya are related to communication breakdown as presented in Table 4.1d below:
Table 4.1d Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to Communication Breakdown in Secondary Schools Visited During Fieldwork in October 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of school (pseudonym)</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Kasuku                    | Meru   | Girls Boarding | General unrest             | - Inconsistency in communication by the principal and deputy principal with Principal insulting deputy principal  
- Postponement of issues rather than solving them when they occur |
| Mbuni                     | Meru   | Boys Boarding  | Burnt cow-shed             | - Unfulfilled promise of buying school bus.  
- Burnt cowshed as a way of communicating their displeasure because if they openly told the principal, he would suspend them.  
- Walked out of school before closing |
|                           |        |                |                            | - Failure to refund tuition money following banning of holiday tuition by the Minister of Education.  
- Overstaying in school despite circular from minister that schools should close earlier.  
- General poor communication between principal and deputy principal |
| Korongo                   | Kirinyaga | Boys Boarding | Open protest               | - Change in school entertainment programme without involving students  
- Wanted to close as early as the Minister’s circular had directed |
| Kifaru                    | Kirinyaga | Mixed Boarding | General unrest             | - Misunderstanding amongst Form 1 and Forms 2-4 parents  
- Poor communication between parents and teachers |
| Kobe                      | Kisumu | Girls Boarding | - Violent protest, braking of window panes and utensils in the dining hall. | - Poor communication between the principal (administration) and students.  
- Poor communication between the principal and teachers.  
- Principal never listens to students grievances unless they are reporting a teacher. |
| Ndovu                     | Kakamega | Mixed boarding | - Violent protest         | - Poor communication amongst administrators i.e. Senior teacher sides with deputy principal against the principal. |

From the Table, the main issues can be identified as poor communication amongst administrators, between administrators and teachers and between administrators and learners. The communication breakdown between administrators and learners is manifested in the administrators’ evasive tendencies when it comes to listening to students’ grievances. Or at times, the students are not involved in the making of decisions which affect their welfare as in the case of Korongo Secondary School.
where there was a change in the school entertainment programme without involving the students. This situation is comparable to the one of cancellation of a symposium by the school administration without involving the concerned students as happened at Maralal Boys High School in Samburu County (Table 4.1c).

From the two Tables: 4.1c and 4.1c, it is evident that communication is such an issue of an appreciable magnitude in secondary schools in Kenya. The instrumental role played by a breakdown in communication in bringing about a situation of student unrest is further illustrated by a teacher at Mbuni Secondary School thus:

Some of the difficulties we experience in the institution are due to breakdown in communication from administrators to the right people within the institution and I believe proper communication would make a difference (Appendix B3: G).

Essentially, what brings about student unrest and even violence include: general poor communication between stakeholders in a school, inconsistency in communication, denying students the opportunity to express themselves and be heard and, finally, unfulfilled promises due to lack of commitment on communicated issues.

Sometimes there is a breakdown in communication between teachers and parents as well as amongst parents themselves as reported at Kifaru Secondary School (Appendix D2: B). The breakdown could also be between administrators and the teaching staff as illustrated in the scenario at Kobe (pseudonym) Secondary
School where the Principal sent away teachers from the scene where she was embroiled in an encounter with students as recounted in Appendix (E1: A).

Mbuni Secondary School presented a situation of two centres of power issuing communiqués rather than ‘talking with’ each other. They were reading from different scripts. A prefect respondent noted that it was a situation in which the Principal and the deputy acted in a way that, *huyu akisema hivi, huyu anasema hivi* [when this one says this, the other one says this] (Appendix B4: F). At Kasuku Secondary School, the Principal reportedly insulted the Deputy Principal before the students thus:

For instance, recently the deputy principal punished another girl, then the girl went to the principal, and you see, she had done something like that made her look like she had been beaten- a form of tattooing- and so she told the principal but then, somehow, the principal wanted to insult the deputy before the student. In other words, the principal was trying to incite the students because the deputy had punished this girl and the girl goes to report to the principal (Appendix A2: G).

Still on the inconsistency in communication, there is the misuse of the communication itself. In this case, school administrators encourage the kind of communication that serves personal interests and not the common interest of the school stakeholders. One way in which this happens is by giving information that would please a given group of stakeholders so as to win their favour. For instance, there were cases of promising some school workers better returns even when the administrator was not necessarily keen on doing so as illustrated by the situation at Kasuku Secondary School thus:
Then this one, *kama ni* (if it is) non-teaching, *anawaambia 'kwa nini hamkupewa* [she tells them ‘why were you not given] this and this?’ "*mambo yenu itakuwa mzuri*" [your welfare will be okay]. Then without consulting the accountant she tells them, ‘we are going to raise your salary’. In fact time has come where working with few people is the order of the day. Here there is no policy. Even when there is one staff meeting, we can run for a term without even a plan. That one is totally missing. Inconsistency, I am saying this, tomorrow I will say something else (Appendix A1: B).

The situation at Kobe (pseudonym) Secondary School where the Principal reportedly encouraged communication between her and the students particularly when they were reporting on teachers was just another fitting illustration of this misuse of communication. This scenario essentially demonstrated a communication breakdown thus:

> Like our former Principal, she could not listen to our complaints. She could only listen if you were going to tell her that teacher so and so has said this about you (Appendix E2: E).

Denial of opportunity for students to express themselves and to be heard has been the other manifestation of communication breakdown in some secondary schools in Kenya. This happens by way of being evasive of students thereby denying them audience, postponement of such forums or even outright dismissal of the students’ grievances thereby frustrating their efforts of communicating their grievances. This is clearly illustrated in the dialogue with a prefect at Mbuni secondary school thus:

> …we were trying to come up with the idea that let us try to send one of us to represent our grievances but the administration
disagreed with us the students and that was when the students decided to do this (Appendix B4: F).

Indeed, the student unrest that occurred at Kasuku secondary school appears to have mainly resulted from this kind of frustration as illustrated in the dialogue with one of the teachers at the school thus:

However, in my opinion, sometimes we as teachers or even the society have a problem. Like that one, we had already expressed our sentiment then suddenly they went to the DEO’s office from here and then they felt that their grievances cannot be addressed, as they were coming back, already we take them as offenders. We do not even give them an opportunity to express themselves and when they said the truth, we were not ready to listen to the truth and deal with it. And that is the major problem (Appendix A1: C).

The dire consequences of such an opportunity can be clearly seen in the case of Mbuni Secondary School where students resorted to destruction of property:

Sometime back, there was a time they burnt the cowshed as they wanted to register their disappointment about the bus not having been bought. If they had told the headmaster directly, he would suspend them (Appendix B6: A).

The final manifestation of communication breakdown identified from the data collected for this study is non-fulfillment of promises made in school without any explanation. Such promises may include the buying of a school bus as in the case of Mbuni Secondary School as illustrated in Appendix (B6: A), failure to refund students their tuition money as had been promised after the Minister of Education cancelled tuition as illustrated in the same Appendix as that of Mbuni Secondary School. Failure to provide students with adequate information on decisions made
is just the other form that this manifestation takes and which can make a school degenerate into a state of unrest. Following the circular by the Minister of Education, according to which schools were to close earlier than they had initially been scheduled, an attempt by some schools such as Mbuni Secondary School to have students stay in school beyond this date without explaining to them why this was happening, resulted in rebellion of students at Mbuni and Korongo Secondary Schools (Appendices B1: A and C1: A).

One teacher at Korongo Secondary School, however, observed that whereas some school administrators do not enhance communication, students are also sometimes so rigid that they stifle the supposed communication thus:

   And you know our boys are interesting. They knew when they were to close and so they were rigid on that date (Appendix C3: A).

According to this teacher, there was a possibility that if the school administration had decided to close the school earlier than the newly issued date, the students would be very happy. The students’ behaviour indicates their acknowledgement of the absurdity of the conditions of existence in school and which they would wish to break away from. Failure by the administration to release them from such conditions which in their experience are absurd led to a rebellion aimed at either breaking away from them or pointing to the need to have them transformed.

Children (or students for that matter) have ideas, experiences and insights that may enrich adult understanding and make a positive contribution to mature
actions. They have something to say or contribute to the well being of the school as a social institution and thus should be given a chance to be heard however inarticulate they may be. This position is also supported by the view of one of the teacher respondents at Ndovu secondary school thus:

    Secondly, we need to talk to these students since we tend to neglect the fact that they also have something to bring to our notice especially on matters of their own welfare… (Appendix F1: E).

When the students are denied an opportunity to express themselves by way of presenting these grievances to the administration, they begin to perceive the administrators as holding them in low regard thereby frustrating their efforts to communicate their sentiments. This becomes a recipe for rebellion, hence violence, as they find no other diplomatic means after being denied audience by the school administration. Also a situation where students continue going through such experiences awakens some awareness in them, the awareness of the wrongs being committed against them by the school administration. After all, it is in the nature of human beings to be conscious of themselves and the environment within which they live. However, a time comes when the students feel that they can bear this pressure no more. This is the time when they feel they can no longer tolerate humiliation, frustration and oppressive nature of their school authority.

When this point is reached, the students begin to seek alternative audience and ways of communicating their grievances. Unfortunately, one of the alternative ways often adopted by students in Kenyan secondary schools is violence. At such a point in time, these students only need a small trigger, which in the public eye is
a ‘trivial’ or ‘small issue’, but which nonetheless, provides them with a justification to stage a revolt against the school authorities. It is, essentially, a reaction to the authoritarian conditions that form part of the students’ unbearable conditions of existence. It could also be understood as a spontaneous response to the underlying deeply rooted frustrations and feelings of powerlessness.

The foregoing discussion has presented scenarios which indicate that student violence is an expression of a power struggle between the students on the one hand and the established school authority on the other hand. It is a struggle against the dehumanizing ways in which the administrators exercise their power and authority over students. Thus, the analysis of the above incidences revealed the inner feelings of frustration, alienation, humiliation, intimidation and degradation on the part of the students as a result of the way school administrators, teachers and prefects exercise the power vested in them and a general lack of communication channels. Students get frustrated when they perceive the administration as limiting their opportunities for self realization and when administrators use force to intimidate and humiliate them. They suffer alienation when they feel that their existence in the school is taken for granted while they suffer frustration when the school administration curtails their efforts to have their grievances presented so as to be addressed. The next section examines the prefect system as another potential area of discontent in Kenyan secondary schools.
4.3 The Prefect System in Secondary Schools in Kenya

It is a common practice for secondary schools in Kenya to have a prefect system. But this very system has been a source of discontent hence unrest in some schools. Conventionally, prefects are meant to enhance effective communication between the students’ body and the school administration. However, in some secondary schools in Kenya, the function of prefects has been misinterpreted both by the prefects themselves and by some school administrators. From the researcher’s document analysis of the records at MoEST, grievances related to the prefect system are identifiable in a number of schools as indicated in Table 4.2 below:
### Table 4.2 Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to the Prefect System in Secondary Schools in Central and Rift Valley Provinces between 1999 and 2005 as reported at MoEST.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23/3/1999</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Kenyatta Mahiga</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>3 boys beat up some prefects</td>
<td>Did not want prefects to be reporting them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/5/1999</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Karatina Mixed</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>9 boys threatened prefects and destroyed their beds after taking alcohol</td>
<td>Harsh prefects and so the students wanted freedom to do as they wish without constraints by prefects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Abusive language by the matron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Poor toilets and bathrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/9/99</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Nyeri High</td>
<td>Boys boarding</td>
<td>Destruction of property e.g. burning desks</td>
<td>Prefects too stern in meting out discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/6/2000</td>
<td>Maragua</td>
<td>Kiruri Secondary</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>Students went on rampage breaking some windows</td>
<td>Harsh prefects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7/2004</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Solai Mixed Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>Students broke window panes of dormitory, laboratory and some classes. Deputy’s office doused with paraffin fire lit to burn study room but put off.</td>
<td>- Prefects had privileges at the kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Did not want to sit for mock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/7/2004</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Summerfield secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Day and Boarding</td>
<td>Students broke window panes of the dormitories and classrooms. They also attempted to burn boys dormitory.</td>
<td>- Wanted Sunday preps abolished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Complained of poorly cooked and little food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Some prefects being too harsh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Wanted a school bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/7/2004</td>
<td>Laikipia</td>
<td>G.G. Rumuruti Boys secondary</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>Form III students numbering 16 rioted at school and after destroying some property marched out and went home.</td>
<td>Head boy too strict and powerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/7/2005</td>
<td>Kitui</td>
<td>Hitu Secondary School</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>Open protest by some boys</td>
<td>Protesting the dropping of one prefect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


[NB- In the grievances column, in cases where there are more than one grievance, and especially where the other grievances are not prefect related, the grievance that is prefect related has been italicized].

Indeed, from Table 4.2 above, cases of unrest due to the issues related to the prefects system have continued to occur throughout the period within which this
data spans. Some occurrences have also been reported in the media in a more detailed manner. For instance, in 1999, some students in a secondary school in Nyeri locked up four school prefects in their cubicles while they were asleep, killing them by pouring petrol and setting them on fire (Daily Nation 25 May 1999 p.5 col.2-5). The four prefects (their names withheld) served in the positions of school captain, (former) games captain, assistant dormitory captain and library captain. Sources at the school indicated that the prefects had differed with some of the students prior to the attack (Ibid p.5 col.4). Following the brutal act three students linked to the ordeal were consequently charged with the murder of the prefects. Two of them were, however, acquitted for lack of evidence, while the other was convicted and detained but was later acquitted at the President’s mercy since he was below 18 years at the time of the incidence (Ibid p.5 col. 4). In this same article, reference is also made to Karatina Secondary School where nine boys were sent home for threatening prefects and destroying prefects’ beds on grounds that the prefects are ‘harsh’ (Ibid p.5 col. 5).

The prefect system becomes a source of conflict mainly because of certain practices associated with it. Such practices include the appointment of prefects instead of having the students to elect them as in the case of Mbuni Secondary School (Appendix B5: D), cases of handpicking and/or rigging some students into certain positions considered strategic by the school administrators such as the head boy and deputy head girl as reported at Ndovu Secondary School (Appendix F1: D) and the head girl, sanitary and dining hall prefects as reported at Kobe
Secondary School (Appendix E2: D). The case of Kobe Secondary School also presents another angle to the choice of prefects where certain positions, which appear to be strategic, are reserved for appointments by school administrators. This practice is certainly experienced by the students as infringement on their right to choose their leaders bringing about feelings of fear and anxiety for being led by those imposed upon them by the administration.

During the interviews held with some stakeholders in some of the schools the researcher visited, it was established that prefects are not always elected by fellow students but are appointed by the school administration. This is illustrated in the views of a teacher of Ndovu Secondary School in Kakamega County thus:

In terms of policy, and talking about the prefects, what I know is that currently, prefects should be elected, at least by policy. However, there have been, in this school, some instances of rigging some students into the prefecture. For instance, at the moment in this school, the head boy and the deputy head girl are not in good terms with the students’ body since they are not the students’ choice. In any case, the students have always pointed out that the head boy is loyal to the deputy principal probably because he is the one who rigged him into that position and that the deputy head girl was not even on the list of those nominated for prefecture but was just handpicked and rigged into that position. Consequently, these two prefects have always had a hard time controlling the students as the students do not recognize them as their leaders (Appendix F1: D).

On their part, most of the students interviewed in this study preferred choosing their prefects by way of electing them. This is illustrated in the views expressed in
the dialogue held with a Form 3 student at Kobe Secondary School in Kisumu County as illustrated below:

Like for the class prefects, students are the ones who select their prefects in class. But for the other prefects like head girl, sanitary prefect, dining hall prefect, those ones the teachers appoint them. I find it good especially for class prefects. But the other prefects, I think it is good for the school to organize for, let us say voting where the whole school votes for those prefects instead of the teachers appointing them because they can appoint someone who is not even able to perform her duties very well. But sometimes the ones who were chosen by the teachers tend to like reporting other students so much. (Appendix E2: D).

This view is consistent with the view expressed by a form two student at Mbuni Secondary School as illustrated below:

They are appointed by school members such as the students. I think if they are chosen by teachers, there can be conflicts. However, we go on well because we are the ones who choose them. I say there would be conflict because the students will not like these prefects and will not even do what they are told (Appendix B7: D).

One of the reasons given as to why the students need to choose prefects by themselves is that teachers do not know them very well. This was pointed out by a female student during the dialogue in Kasuku Secondary School thus:

The students are the ones who select their prefects. We go to class, we select, and then the teachers compile the list and discuss it. And I think it is good because we select the ones we like because previously they used to select some girls, and you know there are some girls who pose as innocent girls but they are criminals so the teachers will see those girls as very innocent but they are the best criminals in this school. So us we select the girl we know she will rule us very well. Like in the previous one there was the dining prefect who was selected by the teachers but that girl was the best
criminal and so she was expelled from the school because of crimes like going out of school through the fence and without permission. But she was going on well especially with the other students who are culprits because you know birds of the same feathers flock together. She was a favourite of the other indiscipline girls. (Appendix A6: D).

There was however, one contradictory view from a student at Mbuni Secondary School about how prefects should be chosen. According to this student, all is well with the system which the school adopted, that is, the teachers appointing the prefects. In this system, it is believed that whereas the students can choose someone to represent them, the person may represent them in wrong ways, that is, ways that are not in accordance with the social and moral expectations of the school, thus:

Prefects in this school are appointed by teachers. And so far, they are not so bad. Choosing the prefects ourselves can disturb the school since the students can choose a bad person, somebody who will co-operate with them in doing the wrong things. (Appendix B6: D).

While this student’s view may appear reasonable, it may not be tenable considering the context within which this is being done. It is a view that is pre-conscious of current social situation. The current school system, even in Kenya, is operating in a context of globalization characterized by increased democratization of institutions and awareness of issue of rights which the students are too well aware of. Students know, for instance, that they not only have a right to choose their leaders but that they also are entitled to services from these leaders. Such services entail sensitivity to their interests, fears and aspirations. When this is not
forthcoming, the students have also learnt to demand such entitlements in an aggressive manner. In other words, while the appointment of prefects instead of their election may have happened at Mbuni Secondary School, and appears acceptable to some stakeholders, this situation may not last for long. It may soon be resisted once students in that school come to learn from the other competing agents of socialization like the media that to have their leaders chosen for them denies them the opportunity, as human beings, to chart their own destiny as they pursue self realization.

The other practice that has tended to make the prefect system unpopular with students thereby becoming a source of unrest and violence is the preferential treatment of prefects. This may take various manifestations such as the school administration giving offices and special rooms in the dormitories (cubicles) as in the mentioned case of the school in Nyeri and being given special diet while the rest of the students are fed on the usual school diet. In Kasuku Secondary for instance, the prefects would always be served with some soda whenever they held a meeting as was established during the dialogue with one of the student respondents (Appendix A6: D).

It can be argued that the students compare their unfavourable conditions of living with the privileged conditions of living enjoyed by the prefects and eventually experience some form of relative deprivation and even low self-esteem because of the feeling of being in an inferior position as compared to their colleagues. They,
therefore, seek to transform such conditions, sometimes through violent protests hence student violence.

These practices have had their own impact both in terms of the prefects’ own perception and how they discharge their duties and responsibilities and their relationship with the rest of the student body. To begin with, both from documents analyzed and the dialogues with the various stakeholders, the prefects, especially in some of the schools that have been affected by student unrest and violence, perceive themselves to be ‘different’ from the rest of the students and also as a ‘privileged’ lot. This is because of the preferential treatment given to them in cases where this happens as illustrated by a student at Kasuku below:

Remember earlier they were seen to be above the other students but the students started saying if they do this, we too will do this. So for example they were given some allowance to call using their mobile phones, they were bought sodas whenever they had a meeting and so the students started saying if the prefects are bought soda even us we should be bought sodas. So teachers went and said this is not good because it makes students feel bad. You see the other students had started saying that prefects are being bought all these because they are reporters and sometimes even the students would go insulting the prefects, if the prefect comes around you, you insult her because of that thing (Appendix A6: D).

Evidently, such a practice reinforces both the feeling of the prefects that they are more privileged and the students’ perception of themselves as being at a disadvantage as compared to the prefects. In other words, there exists a gap between them and the rest of the students.
The prefects, consciously or unconsciously, entrench this perception further into the other students’ consciousness by their continued loyalty to the administration at the expense of championing the welfare of the students. The other way is by reporting on other students when they break rules, as a student respondent from Kobe and Mbuni Secondary Schools in Kisumu and Meru Counties respectively reported thus: prefects understand their role to be that of ‘reporting other students’ (Appendices E2: D and B4: E). The students see prefects as not facilitating their self realization as a basic human tendency but stifling it. They begin to develop negative feelings towards such prefects. More importantly, they begin to see the prefects essentially not as their representative but rather as representatives of the school administration.

From the foregoing discussion it has emerged that the prefect system in Kenyan schools is still characterized by unilateral appointment of prefects or at least some of the prefects in what is considered as certain strategic positions. Notably, even in schools where the students are allowed to choose their leaders, there are also instances where certain individual students are manoeuvered to occupy the so called strategic positions by the school administration. When this happens, the prefects tend to be loyal to the school administration at the expense of championing the welfare of the students. Consequently, students end up mistrusting the prefects because of perceiving them as ‘spies’ of the school administration. This leads to a hostile approach to the prefects by the students.
hence student unrest and violence. The next section examines student violence whose grievances are associated with school rules and regulations.

4.4 School Rules and Regulations

Data accessed from the Ministry of Education together with data collected from the field dialogues revealed cases of students on rampage protesting against what was described as ‘oppressive rules’, ‘strict rules’ and ‘tough rules and regulations’. Consequently, in this section, the nature of school rules, students’ perceptions and experiences of the school rules and regulations were examined as potential causes for violence and unrest in Kenyan secondary schools.

The legal notice No. 40 (under section 19 of the Education Act 1968) in Kenya stipulates that Education Regulations, among other things, are expected to promote good behaviour and acceptable moral and social conduct. Hence, the school is a site for the development of morally and socially acceptable conduct on the part of the learners. One of the ways in which the school works towards achieving such a goal is by enacting rules and regulations. All students are therefore supposed to be familiar with these rules. In the Kenyan secondary school context, a list of school rules and regulations are the things students are given whenever they join school. These rules and regulations must be observed in order to achieve the desired state of discipline.
From the researcher’s document analysis of the records of student indiscipline and unrest at MoEST, grievances related to school rules and regulations are identifiable as in the cases of Chinga Girls’ Secondary School in Nyeri District who held a protest against what they described as ‘strict rules’ and Kibage Secondary School in Maragua District where student destroyed property worth Kshs. 50,000 protesting against the fact that the new Principal had ‘many rules’ (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3). The violence that broke out at Korongo Secondary School was reportedly due to a change in the regulations governing entertainment without informing the students as explained by teacher respondent in Appendix (C2: B). At Kobe Secondary School, student violence occurred as a response to the Principal’s act of coming up with what the students described as ‘tough rules’. In this respect, the students appeared to have been ambushed by these rules. Besides the Principal not explaining these new rules to the students, she gave a twelve hour ultimatum for the students to reorganize themselves to ensure immediate compliance:

The students were very unhappy with the fact that the principal just woke up and started issuing some very tough rules which do not even make sense and then she gives us one day to have complied (Appendix E2: B).

The lack of involvement of students in the enactment of these rules denies them an opportunity to understand them clearly. Students’ lack of understanding of these rules is evident in the description of them as those that “do not make sense” (Appendix E2: B). The students’ lack of understanding of the context within
which these rules were enacted is well captured in the dialogue with a student respondent thus:

    The principal was not listening to anyone, the teachers could not come and help us and now the principal was really bringing very bad school rules. I think the principal was supposed to tell us why it is wrong to carry juice and applying lotions before she bans them without any explanation (Appendix E2: A).

In other words, this situation demonstrates the lack of communication regarding these newly introduced rules. Nobody undertook to explain to the students why it was important for those rules to be introduced at that particular point in time. Accordingly, the students resorted to violence as ‘there was no other means’ of communication since the Principal did not seem to have well developed channels to communicate with the students (Appendix E2: A).

Possibly, the students perceive such rules as those that compromise their status and image. This is illustrated by the concern by the same student thus:

    Why would she not want us to be like our colleagues in other schools? I mean, how will our fellow high school girls from other schools look at us when we meet them in symposiums and discussions. Surely, a high school girl cannot do without applying those things on her face. By the way, it was very unfair and according to me, she is the one who made students behave that way. (Appendix E2: A).

This concern with the experience of alienation emanating from lack of identity as expressed through status and image or outlook are also identifiable in the case of Kifaru Mixed Secondary School. This school experienced student unrest due to, among other grievances, the students’ desire to be like those in other schools by
having a CD - Changer music system and a school bus and to use the newly built dormitory and kitchen, which according to the school administration, were not yet ready for use (Appendix D3: B). As such, one sees an effort by the students to continuously search for ‘who they are’ hence self realization.

Other than non-involvement of students in the generation or even review of rules and regulations together with the associated lack of understanding of these rules, there is an aspect of inconsistency in the rules operating in a school. This is sometimes brought about by a breakdown in the communication channels within the school or simply lack of coordination on the part of the enforcers of these rules. This was revealed during the field dialogues at Mbuni Secondary School where a student respondent sought to illustrate the inconsistency in both issuing and enforcing rules and regulations by the Principal and the Deputy Principal thus:

In terms of discipline, their rules are different, *huyu aki sema hivi, huyu anasema hivi* [when this one says this, the other one says this] (Appendix B4: F).

The situation at Ndovu Secondary School introduced another angle to the occurrence of student unrest in schools. This was the aspect of misuse of school rules and regulations by the supposed enforcers of the same rules. This is well illustrated in the views of a teacher respondent from Ndovu Secondary School thus:

But of course they also had problems with the watchman about whom they also chanted ‘he must go’ in this same situation of unrest. For the watchman, they said he exploits them so much in a
way that he knows that according to the school rules, the students are not supposed to have phones and since airtime is not sold in school, some students send him and at that point, he threatens to report them and so they have to bribe him (Appendix F1: B).

This scenario presents a case of a supposed enforcer of the rules turning out to help students to break the same rules, for which he is a custodian, for his own interests. Essentially, he exploits the students’ fear for the consequences of breaking school rules by threatening to report them unless they bribe him. In so doing, the rules that are supposed to foster discipline and order in the school end up just being there but not serving the purpose for which they were enacted.

The term discipline is derived from the Latin word ‘disco’, meaning ‘learn’ and implying the submission to rules that structure what has to be learnt. In other words, it is the conformity to the rules that are necessary for learning something, in this case, the acceptable human conduct. In talking about discipline, philosophers of education such as R.S Peters (1981) have insisted on making a distinction between self-imposed discipline and the kind of discipline that is imposed by others. Self-imposed discipline is the type of discipline advocated by progressivism as ideal. The progressivists’ view of discipline is contrasted with the type of discipline advocated by the authoritarian disciplinarians which is associated with the traditional view of education.

However, while discipline generally implies conformity to rules, it is thought to be self-imposed only when it is accepted by the individual for whom these rules
are meant as a means of doing something desirable. This kind of self-discipline is often considered desirable, especially in educational contexts, since the submission to rules springs from the individual’s own decision in which some kind of autonomy is displayed. Nevertheless, this autonomy is either based on or presupposes some knowledge and understanding on the part of the individual.

The dialogues held in various schools during fieldwork revealed lack of involvement of students in the development or even review of school rules in their school routines, especially in some of the schools that had experienced unrest because of issues related to school rules and regulations. But there are cases where the acceptance of rules is expected to spring from other people’s efforts such as those of teachers, boarding teachers, parents and even prefects to get students to follow school rules “to the letter” (Appendix B5: E). This effort is illustrated by the views of a prefect respondent in Mbuni Secondary thus:

And in terms of relationship, we just behave like friends or brothers but when it comes to matters of following rules and regulations, it becomes the opposite. We the prefects make them follow the school rules and regulations to the letter (Appendix B4: E).

Consequently, in all these cited cases, there was a resulting tension or even rebellion by the students. It therefore appears that self-imposed discipline that emanates from following school rules can only result from situations where the students are guided through the school rules in order to understand them while at the same time being allowed to suggest modifications. It also results from situations where learners are involved in the review of the existing rules and
regulations. Evidently, prefects see themselves as having a role of getting the other students to follow the rules ‘to the letter’, but they (prefects) are different, in the sense that these rules do not necessarily apply to them. Apparently, they see themselves as being above these rules and regulations.

In the imposed form of discipline the connection between what the authorities (teachers and administrators) want and submission to rules is artificially created. Accordingly, there are prizes for those who submit as well as the infliction of unpleasantness such as punishment for those who fail to submit to these rules. In the case of Kobe Secondary School, the ‘defiant’ students had their juices and lotions poured out by the Principal (Appendix E1: A). The few students who followed these rules did so not because of their real personal commitment to them, but because of the externally imposed influence by the Principal. In this way, rules may end up encouraging coerced and passive acceptance instead of critical thinking and reflection on the part of students. The case of self-imposed discipline is such that learners get to supervise their own behaviour. As such, learners get to observe rules and regulations as a result of understanding them thereby submitting their desires and actions to the restraints of orderly social conduct in recognition of the rights and desires of others.

Understood from the progressivist perspective, school rules and regulations ensure two main things, namely; one, conformity with the acceptable social/moral standards and two, moral development of the learners. If learners are to exhibit
behaviour that conforms to the moral and social conduct of the society, the school must not just pursue a situation where learners ‘follow the rules to the letter’ but must also endeavour to develop knowledge and understanding of these rules and regulations. As conscious beings, learners must be guided in attaining an awareness of these rules and regulations to the level that they are able to translate this knowledge and understanding to some responsible action.

In the various occurrences cited in this section, it has been observed that a coercive way of enforcing school rules and regulations may never lead students to achieving the discipline they are meant to enhance. Rather, it may, at best, lead to two possible scenarios, namely: first, complying with rules due to the fear for dire consequences like stiff penalties, secondly, acting in ways that seek to reverse the trend by resenting. The former possibility leads to a conformity that lacks conviction while the latter leads to aggression. This is not the kind of response that school rules are meant to achieve. School rules are supposed to achieve self-discipline which results from some internal self conviction that following the given rules is the desirable and reasonable way of doing things. Such a conviction results from a clear understanding of the school rules, an understanding that leads to responsible actions. The next section examines student violence and unrest in the context of punishment in secondary schools in Kenya.
4.5 Punishment in Secondary Schools in Kenya

One of the common causes of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools has been the issue of punishment. In this respect, all the three reports on student violence and unrest examined in this study have recorded punishment as one of the commonly mentioned grievances.

The term ‘punishment’ is commonly stated using adjectives such as ‘harsh’, ‘unjustified’, or ‘too much’. The kinds of punishment that are commonly cited in the commission reports on student unrest and indiscipline such as Sagini Report of 1991, Macharia Report of 2000 and Wangai Report of 2001 as well as data from MoEST include:

Punishment is often confused with discipline for the sole reason that it is a means, a device, which teachers and parents often resort to in their quest to maintain discipline. Conceptually, the notion of punishment has three necessary conditions, namely: one, it involves intentional infliction of pain (unpleasant stimulus); two, it is applied to someone guilty of breach of a rule; three, it must be inflicted by someone in authority (Hirst and Peters 1970:128). Traditionally, punishment has been construed and used as an effective means of effecting discipline in school. But despite it being seemingly acceptable possibly due to the seeming eventual ‘desirable’ outcomes, psychologists and philosophers have been hesitant to accept the position that it (particularly in its retributive sense) has any beneficial effects on the character development of children. For instance, Ogeno (1989) regards
punishment as denial of the learners’ freedom while Beers (2000) condemns it as an abuse of human rights and dignity of the child. Accordingly, while punishment involves infliction of pain, discipline does not. However, the two are conceptually related particularly on the second condition since a breach of rules is essentially a breach of discipline.

The Education Act (Chapter 211), especially before corporal punishment was outlawed through Legal Notice No. 56/2001, stipulated that it was only to be administered by the head teacher and was restricted to a maximum of two strokes. If any other teacher was to administer it, then it had to be with permission from the head teacher and in either case, a record had to be kept detailing what had been administered to a given student. Despite such a provision, incidents of school unrest emanating from issues of punishment continue to occur in secondary schools in Kenya. Table 4.3 contains a summary of such as a response to punishment:
Table 4.3 Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to Punishment in Secondary Schools in Central and Rift Valley Provinces between 1999 and 2005 as reported at MoEST.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 28/6/99 | Nyeri    | Ngorano        | Mixed day      | Whole school walked out and Stole farmer’s sugarcane                                    | - Did not want to be caned  
- Did not want to be called in the staffroom to be questioned in front of the teachers                                               |
| 14/7/99 | Nyeri    | Giakanja       | Boys boarding  | Form 2 to Form 4 became violent breaking windows, stole sugar, burnt dining hall forms | Protesting punishment meted by teacher on teaching practice                                                                              |
| 21/7/99 | Nyandarua| Githungucu     | Mixed          | Violent pelting teachers with stones                                                   | Unjustified punishment by teachers and deputy of being harsh                                                                             |
| 19/9/00 | Kiambu   | Kijabe boys    | Boys boarding  | Threw stones to some teachers’ houses breaking window panes                             | Protested the suspension of Form Four students                                                                                           |
| 20/9/00 | Nyandarua| Tulaga         | Mixed          | Walk out                                                                               | Protest against heavy punishment by teachers. Demand for more time to watch T.V and video                                              |
| 12/2/00 | Nyandarua| Ragia          | Mixed          | Walk out                                                                               | Caning by a teacher                                                                                                                      |
| 17/2/00 | Nyandarua| Karatina       | Mixed          | Violent                                                                                | Deputy accused of brutality                                                                                                             |
| 24/3/2000 | Kirinyaga | Nguguini Sec | Mixed          | Open protest                                                                           | Protested due to suspension of a Form Two caught molesting Form One.                                                                  |
| 15/6/00 | Maragua  | Ndugamano sec  | None           | General unrest                                                                         | Excessive punishment by teachers                                                                                                          |
| 3/7/2000 | Murang’a | Weithaga Secondary School | Boys boarding | All the boys behaved violently                                                          | Harsh punishment Recall students sent away                                                                                               |
| 19/2/04 | Kiambu   | Githiga High School | Mixed          | - Forms 3s and Fours walked out of school to fetch one of the suspended students at Ndumberi market. | - Forms 3s and 4s protest over suspension of one of the Form 4 students                                                                 |
| 18/6/05 | Makueni  | Kasayaru Sec school | Mixed          | Students burnt one dormitory approximately worth Kshs. 3 Million.                      | Students alleged caning by H/M, poor food, burning of civilian clothes.                                                                  |

From the Table above, the protest against punishment has been a continuous one through time since it spans the entire period of the data collected from the Ministry of Education. The forms of punishment that students have protested against include corporal punishment (caning), suspension and even open questioning in the staffroom. In protesting against these kinds of punishment, students have staged open protests, mass walkouts and destruction of property such as burning down dormitories or breaking window panes. This study sought to understand reactions of students upon administration of such forms of punishment. The following media reports were used to give clearer captions of the kinds of punishment which students sought to avoid or resist, either by seeking to have them abolished or rebelling against a system that used them.

In the year 2000, a boys’ school in Vihiga County went on rampage to protest against caning by teachers and lack of food (Daily Nation of 14 July 2000, p.3 col.2). Trouble started when three students who had been suspended sneaked back into the school compound at night with petrol and mobilized their colleagues to burn down the school. The boys set kitchen stores on fire and destroyed several bags of maize and beans and school files. They also smashed windows of 30 classrooms. Ten of the students were arrested. At the Vihiga Police Station and in their recorded statements, they mentioned a host of grievances including the allegations that the teachers had been given too much power and were punishing them at will including caning them on parade. Also, the boarding master was moving around the dormitories at night and caning those who were not asleep as
well as the practice of the school administration suspending them for flimsy reasons such as having to replace every school book lost.

In 2002, students of a mixed school in Homa Bay went on rampage protesting the decision of the school’s management board to reintroduce caning as a way of enhancing discipline (*East African Standard* 25 July 2002 p.5 col.1-2). A school dormitory was torched leading to the arrest of up to 40 students. In their statement, their grievances included the use of corporal punishment by the school despite the government ban on caning. They did not therefore see the reason why their school management had resolved, in the annual general meeting with parents, that caning be reintroduced in school. However, the school’s watchman and other students reportedly moved in fast to save the situation reducing the magnitude of destruction.

In 2004, more than 100 students of a school in Kiambu County marched for over 40 kilometers to the *Standard Newspaper* offices one afternoon protesting the caning of seven of their colleagues by teachers (*East African Standard* 14 November 2004 p.4 col.3). The students alleged that their teachers were used to beating them. They even displayed the whip marks on their backs and limbs, which they claimed had been inflicted by their teachers following a disagreement regarding the best way to be served in the dining hall. One of the teachers who followed them dismissed their claims saying that those who were protesting had been summoned for disciplinary action because of an incident where ‘they bullied
some Form One’s and now they were seeking cheap sympathy to escape punishment’. He was nonetheless booed down by the students upon making this allegation.

Reflecting on the foregoing scenarios, and beginning with the case of the school in Vihiga County, the students were essentially protesting against a number of issues surrounding punishment. For example, one aspect that this study sought to emphasize was that in the case of the school in Vihiga County, the students to whom suspension had been applied felt so much aggrieved that they sneaked back to come and destroy school property. Yet, suspension had been used as a form of punishment. But, instead of maintaining order and discipline, it generated feelings of alienation, hence bitterness amongst the students leading to the witnessed violence. A closer look at the nature of violence reveals wanton destruction of school property and infrastructure. In a way, the scenario is not only a pointer to the ineffectiveness of suspension as a method of achieving discipline but also to the fact that beyond its ineffectiveness, it breeds bitterness and general feelings of alienation amongst the students. In the case of the school in Homa Bay, there was the issue of a resolution by parents and teachers together with the Board of Governors to reintroduce caning as a form of punishment despite the fact that it had already been outlawed.

Nonetheless, students were sharply opposed to its re-introduction. Possibly, they perceived it as an undesirable imposition besides the fact that this constituted a
breach of the ban on corporal punishment by the government. Similarly, in the case of a school in Kiambu, caning seems to have been institutionalized as implied in the students’ allegations that ‘our teachers are used to beating us’ (*East African Standard* 14 November 2004 p.4 col.3) and that their teachers ‘whipped’ them ‘mercilessly’ (*Ibid.* p.4 col.3) after they disagreed about the procedures regarding the best way to be served in the dining hall. Accordingly, this is a situation where teachers use punishment, not necessarily because students have broken a school regulation, but as a last resort when communication is untenable. Incidentally, some students have come to accept suspension as a form of punishment as illustrated by the dialogue with a female student at Kasuku Secondary School thus:

> But in a nutshell, the main ways of addressing student unrest and even violence is through suspension of ring leaders and sometimes students are encouraged not to do this through counselling. All the same, I think suspension and guidance are the best measures. I know the student who is suspended will lose some academic time but since you are the one who has decided to do it, you should not affect the innocent ones (Appendix A6: C).

Whereas this respondent thinks that suspension is an effective form of punishment, it had proved to be counter-productive as illustrated in the case of the school in Vihiga. The possibility of a negative outcome of this method can be contemplated in a situation where suspension involves a relatively higher number of students causing them unbearable experiences of alienation and anger.
Another form of punishment reported in the dialogues with respondents is expulsion. This method was used at one time at Mbuni Secondary School. It was however found out later that the students who were expelled were not directly involved in the indiscipline cases. The other method that was reported to be in use, especially at Kasuku Secondary School, was the use of insults by teachers. Although this method does not inflict any physical harm on the victim, it inflicts harm of a psychological nature and which is equally unbearable. This is illustrated by a student respondent at Kasuku Secondary School in the dialogue below:

Like today, the head teacher came to our class and told another girl a big girl cannot behave like this. But she was only studying and so you see the girl felt embarrassed so much and even the other teachers keep insulting her (Appendix A6: A).

From the foregoing scenarios, it appears that both the physical means of punishment such as corporal punishment and the non-physical ones such as suspension and expulsion are resisted by the students. This indicates that both of these forms result in experiences which the students find unbearable, such as those of intimidation and humiliation which breed bitterness in the students. This often leads to violent counter-attacks either as a way of purging their bitterness according to Fanon (1964) or restoration of their dignity lost in the course of humiliation according to Freire (1972).

Punishment administered as retribution, as observed in the foregoing scenarios, has been associated with abuse or violation of human dignity. In other words, it constitutes a form of violence. For this reason, the foregoing incidences,
particularly those of corporal punishment can be clearly acknowledged when put in a relatively wider context. Kenya is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1990) which states that discipline involving violence is unacceptable. In a move to operationalize this convention, and considering the continued use of corporal punishment in Kenyan schools with all its negative consequences, the Kenyan government banned its use in schools in 2001 thereby enacting the Children’s Act (Government of Kenya, 2001) which entitles children to protection from all forms of abuse and violence. The next section examines incidences of student unrest that have occurred as a result of feelings of denial of rights and freedom of students in secondary schools in Kenya.

4.6 Rights and Freedom of Students in Secondary Schools in Kenya

In this section of the study, the researcher examined awareness of rights and freedom of students beyond the selection of prefects and in relation to student unrest in secondary schools in Kenya as indicated below.
### Table 4.4 Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to Rights and Freedoms in Secondary Schools in Central and Rift Valley Provinces between 1999 and 2005 as reported at MOE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22/2/99</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Gathaithi secondary</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Pupils became unruly</td>
<td>Not given chance to go out for games and educational trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1999</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Karatina secondary</td>
<td>Mixed boarding</td>
<td>- 9 boys Threatened prefects</td>
<td>- Prefects harsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Took alcohol and destroyed prefects ‘bed’</td>
<td>- Wanted freedom to do as they wished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/7/99</td>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>Kikuyu day</td>
<td>Mixed day</td>
<td>Refused to sit for exams</td>
<td>Admin. refused to permit students to go out for sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/5/00</td>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Murang’a High School</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Violent - broke window panes and some furniture</td>
<td>- Harsh discipline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Wanted weekend studies scrapped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/7/00</td>
<td>Maragua</td>
<td>Igikiro Sec</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Open protests</td>
<td>9 boys locked in police custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/06/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Simat Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Day and Boarding</td>
<td>Students left the school on their own will and arranged to come back on 12/7/04.</td>
<td>- Need for outings once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/7/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Kambala Girls</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>Students chanted war songs well into the night</td>
<td>- Some lessons not attended to by some teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Molo Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Day</td>
<td>Students burned down a store containing MOCK examinations and three classrooms</td>
<td>- Need for mid - term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Mama Ngina Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>Students broke windows of school buildings at night</td>
<td>Need for mid – term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Summerfields Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Day and Boarding</td>
<td>Students broke window panes of the dormitories and classrooms.</td>
<td>Wanted Sunday preps abolished</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the Table above, rights and freedoms for students include going for educational trips, be they academic or games as in the case of Gathaithi secondary and Kikuyu day Secondary Schools in Kiambu District respectively and Simat Secondary in Nakuru District. Others include the right to go for mid-term as well as having freedom on weekends as expressed in the demands for having weekend preps scrapped as in the case of Murang’a High School in Murang’a District and Summerfield secondary in Nakuru district. There is also the right to education,
which at school level is manifested in the right to being taught as illustrated by the situation at Kambala Girls in Nakuru District.

Indeed, rapid social and political changes such as democratization have heightened awareness of people’s rights and freedoms. Students are therefore aware that they have rights and that school administrators are under obligation to grant them these rights and freedoms. This is illustrated in the dialogue with a teacher at Kifaru Secondary School thus:

The aspect of constitution; our students feel that they have rights. One of their rights, they are not supposed to be caned and so, if you push him so hard they get out of school, the father rushes to the DEO’s office and you get an injunction… When you tell a child you have rights he/she becomes stubborn, and that’s why they go saying “Haki yetu…” And in Kenya for you to get anything, you must be mad and they have seen it as a trend and thus they are copying the trend (Appendix D2: E).

To reinforce this matter, the teacher went ahead to cite an example of this kind of intimidation of the school administrators by the current policies thus:

The students have a lot of powers. The tendency of parents teaming with their children whenever there is an indiscipline case; they know they can go to the educational offices. For instance, six students were expelled from our neighboring boys’ school and one of the parents went to the court and the students were given an injunction and the principal had to re-instate them. How do you work in such a situation? (Appendix D2: D).

It is not therefore surprising that when the students go on rampage demanding for what they consider to be ‘their right’, they feel justified to do so as implied when they invoke the popular expression ‘haki yetu’ [our right] as decried by a teacher
respondent in appendix (D2: E). Essentially, they are pointing to the right to participation. It should also be noted that the environment within which most of the students in Kenyan secondary schools live, and which is characterized by civil servants and other categories of citizens aggressively demanding for their rights, has exposed these students even more to the extent that they have not only become conscious of the notion of rights but also some of their rights too.

According to a teacher respondent at Mbuni Secondary School, the situation is best illustrated by what he refers to as mob psychology where students think they have a right to do the things they want (Appendix B3: A). Other institutions that are supposed to maintain law and order such as the police have also been caught up in a state of confusion. They cannot use force as it goes against the spirit of respecting other people’s rights and freedoms. As such, before students of Korongo Secondary School went on rampage at night they went to present their grievances to the District Commissioner (DC) and the DC told them: “Whatever it is that you want, you will be given” (Appendix C2: B). But according to a teacher at this school, it is because of this situation that “their students will always want to have their way (Appendix C2: B). And this desperation appears to have been confirmed when the police became reluctant to come to the scene after they were called citing the fact that they could not use force despite the boys being rowdy, thus:

… you know these days of the new constitution, we cannot use force on those students yet they are now very hostile (Appendix C1: A).
According to a teacher respondent at Korongo Secondary School, this cautious approach by the police only worsens matters since after taking the injured Deputy Principal to the hospital, he noted:

We went to the police station and I came with the police in my car. We found the students out. The police were using democracy… until the students became too much (Appendix C2: A).

It however appears that students seem to be taking advantage of this dilemma as illustrated by a teacher respondent at Korongo Secondary School who quoted what a student told the Deputy Principal when she was trying to calm them during the violence thus:

… you know even the police are reluctant to take up this matter, kwa hivyo uta do? [for that reason what will you do?] (Appendix C1: A).

The general scenario that emerges from this situation is that students have developed the feeling that they have a right to do things the way they want, a situation which a teacher respondent at Kifaru Secondary decried thus: ‘I mean, our constitution is giving the child a lot of rights to the detriment of the studies of that child, as illustrated in Appendix (D2: D). Accordingly, the students readily and aggressively demand whatever they feel is their entitlement. This view was also reinforced in the dialogue by one of the teacher respondents at Korongo Secondary School thus:

By the way, looking at this generation, you find they have their own space, they have their rights even when you explain to them that some of the things they are doing or asking them to do are for their own good, they still want to talk of their rights. And I think
generations have changed. If you compare like during our times when there was authority, things were different (Appendix C3: B).

In almost all these scenarios, the students appeared committed to fight for what they considered to be their rights and freedoms as observed by a principal of Kifaru Secondary School thus:

Students act violently because you cannot ignore and infringe on somebody’s rights whether real or perceived and the person remains okay. People always want to fight for their rights whether real or perceived. And it is not just the students only, even adults. You have seen workers going on strike even to reject a given policy (Appendix D1: B).

What appears from the foregoing scenarios is that students have their rights both as human beings and as students and which they are aware of. Indeed, the UN Convention on the rights of the child in Article 12 through to 14 provides for a child’s right to participation. Article 12 protects a child’s right to express his/her opinion freely in all matters affecting him/her and that these views shall be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. In other words, ensuring meaningful participation of these adolescents in matters of the school and which affect their welfare is essential to their growth and development.

Section 80 of the same convention states that: ‘this right shall be restricted in circumstances where it is reasonably required in the interests of defense, public safety, public order, public morality or public health and for the purpose of protecting rights or freedoms of other persons. From this declaration, it might be inferred that, generally, the students have a right to express themselves. A right
gives one the freedom to be something, from something or to do something. However, given that this right is not absolute, there are limits to which the students can exercise it. In other words, the students do not have the freedom to exercise this right in any manner they like without considering the impact this will have on others. In other words, such freedom does not entail just doing anything one wants regardless of the impact it will have on others lest they turn out to be irresponsible. The question one would ask is: if the students have a right to express themselves, does this right grant them the freedom to do so even in such a violent manner? To address this question, an understanding of the three dimensions of the word free (or freedom) has been considered necessary for the subsequent reflections in this section. These are freedom from something, freedom to be and freedom to act or do something.

Freedom from something implies a form of liberation from some undesirable situation or condition in which one finds himself/herself. Such conditions may include domination, indignity, disease and poverty. It would therefore be rightly argued that the students have a right to free themselves from the humiliating and oppressive conditions of their authoritarian school administrators as seen from the foregoing scenarios.

Freedom to act implies the possibility and ability to do something. In its conceptual form, education essentially consists of two related components of knowledge and goodness in a way that knowledge transmitted must be translated
into some (good) action. In this way, students may not be free as such to act in ways that are not acceptable by the society. They must not act in ways that do not promote the good of the society. While students may be free to choose whatever course of action they like, they must do so whilst respecting the freedom of others. The wanton destruction of property and the counter-humiliation of school administrators, teachers and some non-teaching staff such as the school matron, are certainly not for the good of the school community and the society at large. Also, it does not exhibit respect for other people’s freedom. In other words, freedom must be understood, in this dimension, as the liberty of the individual coupled with concern by the liberated individual for the liberties of others.

Freedom to be or to become implies the ability and possibility to create oneself and his/her life and destiny. This further implies that human beings must take control and responsibility for their own development regardless of the surrounding circumstances. With reference to the foregoing scenarios, this would mean that students have a reason to act in ways that ensure that their development into the kind of human beings they would want to become is secured. This is because, as human beings, they feel that they can and should shape their destinies. Accordingly, they should use their abilities and the possibilities at their disposal to shape their destiny, regardless of the external factors.

There is therefore need for the students to display a responsible exercise of this freedom of choice in becoming one character or the other. The scenarios have so
far indicated that the students are increasingly making the choices to become combative and aggressive beings who readily employ violent means to achieve their goals. It can only be left to imagination the kind of society that is or would be made up of people of this nature.

In general, and following from the dimensions of freedom, it is argued in this study that while the students have a right and freedom to express themselves, that is, to air their grievances whenever they feel aggrieved, this freedom is not absolute but limits itself at some point. They must exercise freedom that takes cognizance of the freedom and well being of others. In other words, they are free to do what they choose to do but must take responsibility of what they have chosen to do. Failure to do so will certainly result in a situation where they too turn out to be oppressors or authoritarians or simply pursue their freedom of expression in ways that portray them as equally irresponsible. This is certainly problematic as it compromises the genuineness of their actions while at the same time promoting a vicious cycle of violence. The next section focuses on examinations as one of the aspects of education that has often been associated with student violence and unrest in Kenyan secondary schools.

4.7 KCSE Examinations in Secondary Schools in Kenya

The researcher used reports of incidents of student violence which were related to examinations as reported and documented by the Ministry of Education, media
reports of such incidents as well as those collected during fieldwork. The incidents are summarized and presented in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5 Summary of Incidences of Student Unrest Related to Examinations in Secondary Schools in Central and Rift Valley Provinces between 1999 and 2005 as reported at MOE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Nature of Disturbance</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/3/99</td>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>Kagumo</td>
<td>Boys boarding</td>
<td>Students screamed and threatened administration</td>
<td>Decline KCSE performance. Principal blamed for poor results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/03</td>
<td>Maragua</td>
<td>Githunguri Girls</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>- students left the school leaving only Form 4s remained in school</td>
<td>Did not want to sit for Kandara Divisional Mock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Molo Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Day</td>
<td>Some unidentified students burned down a store containing MOCK examinations and three classrooms</td>
<td>- Didn’t want to sit for mocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Solai Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>Deputy’s office doused with paraffin fire lit to burn study room but put off.</td>
<td>Didn’t want to sit for mocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/07/04</td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Kirobon Secondary</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>Students broke boys’ dormitory window panes. Some were drunk shouting, throwing stones</td>
<td>Some feared mocks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From Table 4.5, it is evident that the examination related grievances ranged from fear of the examinations to protest against poor performance in KCSE examinations. The fear for examinations, for instance, has seen students go on rampage while protests against poor performance have not only been confined to the students alone but the parents too. Other contested issues include: cancellation of examination results of certain students or even all the candidates, the school (principal and the other teachers) not ‘cooperating’ in helping the students to access exam leakages and/or allowing them to cheat in exams so as to pass, and
finally, poor handling of examinations as in the case of the so called ‘computer error’ that plagued the results of the 2006 KCSE results thereby affecting their validity. It was therefore of interest for the researcher to explore such situations to find out why students would resist sitting for examinations or protest against poor performance. Media reports have also occasionally reported such occurrences as contained in the various daily news reports.

In the year 2001, the Nation Newspaper reported an incident where 69 students were burnt to death in a dormitory and several others injured by two students in a Secondary School in Machakos County following the annulment of final examinations results coupled with the demand that the candidates had to pay the outstanding fees before accessing their results (*Daily Nation* 25 March 2001 p.2 col.1-3). Two students were charged with 67 counts of murder for setting the dormitory ablaze, killing their fellow students.

In the year 2007, the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations were reportedly marred by incidents of cheating. In addition to such malpractices, in the course of processing the results, there occurred what was referred to as a ‘computer error’ leading to errors in grading which affected 40,000 candidates (*Daily Nation* 27 July 2008 p.6 col.2-4). This apparent scandal was treated with, among other approaches, evasiveness and blame-shifting which left the situation not fully and amicably addressed. These results were announced in the course of the first term of the following school calendar year (2008).
When this announcement was made, it elicited very strong reactions from both the enraged public and the academia. Without hesitation, some of these stakeholders called for the dissolution and the subsequent reconstitution of the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) over these irregularities. Later in the year in second term, the candidates were supposed to sit for a mock examination during the second half of the term. However, what followed was a country-wide wave of strikes in secondary schools. Notably, even private schools joined into the fray of these destructive protests (*East African Standard* 26 July 2008 p.6 col. 3-4). The gravity of this matter was manifested in a quick reaction by the Speaker of the National Assembly who directed the Parliamentary Committee on Education, Research and Technology to investigate the school riots and complete its task and report in 21 days.

This Committee visited the then eight Provinces gathering views from the various stakeholders in education. One dominant finding by the committee, as per the interim report, was the fear of the mock examinations. This seemed to be the main cause of the strikes in those schools. Students attending the stakeholders’ forums concurred with the Committee on this finding clarifying that the strikes were sparked off by the mock examinations which, according to them, are done at the same time countrywide yet some schools do not complete the syllabus within the stipulated time. Further, one of the students attending the forum reportedly observed that:

> we were told that in the event our national exams were cancelled due to irregularities, then our mock results could be recognized as
a replacement and there is no way we could sit for the trial exams without adequate preparations (Daily Nation, 18 August, 2008 p.4 col.2).

Given their relative levels of unpreparedness, the students became anxious due to the imminent failure in the mock exams because they had heard a rumour that the mock results would be used in place of the KCSE. Further interviews held with some teachers by the Standard Newspaper team were reported to have revealed relatively more insightful views of the occurrence of strikes. According to one teacher:

Students have developed a feeling that mock is their life, they want to maximize on it (The Standard 26 July 2008 p.6 col.3).

As a result of this situation, it was reported that in some areas, teachers had succumbed to pressure from students to allow them to cheat (by allowing them to have their notes and text books as they sat for mock as in the case of one school) in the mock exam to avert more strikes (Ibid p.6 col.3). Cases were thus reported where students in some schools had put principals on notice, that they wanted to access examinations ahead of time or there would be ‘a price to pay’. It was on this basis that the teachers who were interviewed predicted a massive leakage in the KCSE examinations since, according to one of the interviewed teachers, any principal who was not going to steal examination for the candidates was likely to ‘be in trouble’. A case in point, as reported by one of the teachers, was a school in which the students had notified the principal that they would burn the institution because of mock examinations but they would also burn him should he not allow cheating in the main examination (KCSE) later in the year. This in itself piled
pressure on the principals who feared that should they not allow cheating; their careers and lives would be in danger (Ibid. p.6 col.3). In his own words, the teacher who was interviewed observed:

“Students feel we are stressing their lives for nothing with mocks when there are easier ways of getting to pass KCSE” (The Standard Newspaper 26 July, 2008 p.6 col.4).

In the light of the rising anxiety amongst candidates and even the public, the Minister for Education hastened to dismiss the allegations of mock examinations being used in place of KCSE blaming the misuse of mobile phones for spreading the rumours that the mock results would be used to determine results of the national examination:

Mock examinations are neither standardized nor sent to the Kenya National Examinations Council and they cannot be used in the final examinations. This cheap rumour has been used to spread damage in our schools (Ibid p.2 col.3).

In the unfolding scenario, the Minister seemed to support the many who were of the view of doing away with mock examinations:

…we are thinking of doing away with district mock examinations as they have outlived their usefulness. They have been hijacked for commercial purposes. The way these mocks are being administered makes some students afraid. They are done as a benchmark for schools in a particular locality but they are not serving the purpose. Some schools are behind in syllabus coverage and students in these institutions feel intimidated… (Saturday Nation, 26 July 2008 p.4 col.2).

Cheating has also been changing in its nature. It now raises many questions on the integrity of examinations in secondary schools in Kenya, particularly when some
university students, teachers and even principals are now reportedly helping the students in various ways to cheat in KCSE examinations with some doing so for their own personal gain. Media reports on the 2013 KCSE examinations reported the prevalence of this new trend in some centres by the KNEC Chief Executive Officer thus:

Some university students had joined the exam cheating cartel, selling one genuine question to candidates for as little as Sh50. The KNEC chief executive accused some teachers of opening exam papers just before the set time and proceeding to coach candidates minutes before they sit them (Daily Nation, 31 October, 2013-Online Edition).

In terms of how this happens and the associated matters of integrity, the media report quoted the KNEC chief executive thus:

We have noted with concern that those most perpetrators the cheating are the teachers, supervisors and invigilators… They sell the questions to the candidates after they get the questions immediately after the exam package has been opened. It is a worrying situation where the custodians of the exam are the ones compromising the integrity of the test (Ibid. Online Edition).

In 2012, the media reported an incident in Garissa County where students staged a protest against the cancellation of KCSE results in 18 out of the 20 secondary schools in the County due to examination irregularities in the 2011 KCSE examinations. The students reportedly chanted anti-government slogans as they demanded for an explanation why their results were cancelled. Around the same time, the media also reported that another secondary school in Mulot division, in Narok County had protested about their school’s poor performance in KCSE. Indeed, in trying to understand these scenarios of student violence and unrest in
relation to examinations in Kenyan secondary schools, the question one would really want to explore is ‘why did it become necessary for students to resort to violence in the foregoing cases?

In a dialogue with a teacher at Kasuku Secondary School, the respondent alluded to an earlier incident of student unrest where they felt that they were not being helped to cheat in KCSE examinations thus:

…in the regime of the former principal, there was rampant cheating and then when the other one came in 2005, she did not want that to happen. She wanted it to get finished and so those students who were there did not like it. I think she resisted the cheating and when the results came out, I think early March, that is when they went on rampage claiming that the principal did not like them to pass. That was their main grievance. And of course the students were saying it openly… that she doesn’t like us, she did not help us… such things (Appendix A1: A).

The fact that students appear so desperate to do well in the KCSE examinations leads them to explore all the possible ways they consider capable of making them pass. These ways go beyond those acceptable ones to those illicit ones but which are naively perceived as effective and these include drug abuse as illustrated by a student at Mbuni Secondary School:

For example, some people use drugs…you know students think those things are very nice like bhang … they think it can help them improve their academic performance (Appendix B6: A).

Students therefore appear to be desperate and in some cases anxious about such examinations. One reason for this anxiety is unpreparedness as revealed by a teacher respondent at Kifaru Mixed Secondary School:
As for the fear of exams, my reasons would be unpreparedness and two, we have weak and lazy students (Appendix D2: G).

However, as it appears, some administrators, especially principals seem to be aware of this experience of anxiety on the part of the students and so, they use it to endear themselves to the student fraternity and for their selfish interests. The case of Kobe (pseudonym) Secondary School in which the principal, desperate to win the favour of students after being interdicted, promises them that she will ‘help’ them:

And by the way, after she had been given the letter, and she knew that we in the school did not know she came and addressed the school on parade inciting the form fours that they will fail exams now that there was a plan to remove her from the school. You see, she was telling that she had organized for a leakage for them but now that she is aware that she may be going, the new headteacher may not help them in that way and so they will fail (Appendix E1: C).

Evidently, the principal was taking advantage of the students’ ‘yearn for high grades’ to get them on her side in the face of an impending transfer. Similarly, Kasuku Secondary School students protested against a sitting principal in preference of a former one who had been ‘helping’ them (in whatever way) to cheat in KCSE examinations. This is yet another sad illustration of how deep this malpractice has permeated into the examination system at the school level in some secondary schools in Kenya.

In some instances, when such school principals help students to cheat, they do not do it for the entire group of candidate but a few. When this is discovered, the
problem becomes two-fold thereby precipitating a crisis. First, the fact that some candidates in the school have been found to be involved in an examination irregularity and second, the fury of the rest of the candidates with regard to the preferential help given to some of the candidates to enable them pass the examination and not others. This was the nature of incident at Ndovu Secondary School in Kakamega County during the 2012 KCSE examinations season as illustrated in Appendix (F1:B). It is therefore partly because of this fear and anxiety as well as the seeming institutionalization of mechanisms of carrying out these examination malpractices that makes the problem of cheating in KCSE examinations widespread and recurrent in the country as illustrated in Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6: Cases of Examination Irregularities in KCSE between the years 2009-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Districts Affected</th>
<th>Number of Candidates Affected</th>
<th>Number of Centres Affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>171(0.35 %)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>54(21.60)</td>
<td>539(0.15%)</td>
<td>69(1.15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>84(31.23)</td>
<td>2,927(0.71%)</td>
<td>154(2.39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>71(26.79%)</td>
<td>1,700(0.39%)</td>
<td>118(1.69%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KNEC - KCSE Examination Essential Statistics (March 2013)

From the foregoing scenarios, candidates tend to invest a considerable amount of effort in finding ways of passing the KCSE examinations, be they acceptable or otherwise. Accordingly, the students engage in various examination malpractices as a way of making sure that they pass these examinations. These include: leakages, collusion of teachers and school administrators with candidates, copying during exams using their class notes, textbooks or, lately; mobile phones,
impersonation. In the case of impersonation cases have been reported where somebody who has already successfully sat for KCSE sits for the examination on behalf of a weak candidate and even cases of some schools making some students to repeat so as to obtain better grades so as to improve the school mean score. Following the chronological occurrence of these incidences, one notable but worrying observation is about the increasing trend despite occasional efforts to address them.

The Kenyan system of education has often been accused of being examination-oriented characterized by the deification of examinations as the end–all of education. However, it is important to understand the character of the examination system in Kenya, particularly the KCSE, if one were to understand why students would resort to massive destruction in response to the conflict generated by examinations. And as argued in this section, one must begin by seeking to understand how students perceive and experience examinations given the premium and the deterministic role the system has put on these examinations.

Evaluation is an inevitable aspect of an educational system. The purpose of evaluation can be appreciated in terms of placement, selection and the establishment of the candidate’s aptitude in a specific area. For each of these functions, an examination can be set that specifically seeks to achieve the particular function being served (Misanchuk 1978). The character of an exam differs from that of the other relative to its intended function. There are therefore
three types of evaluations namely; self referenced, criterion referenced and norm referenced evaluations. Self- referenced evaluation basically shows how the student is progressing with reference to himself/herself (Misanchuk p.28). Criterion referenced evaluation seeks to describe students’ performance according to a specified domain of clearly defined learning tasks. As such, it directly describes the specific performance that was demonstrated in the given task. In other words, it seeks to describe how the student is progressing or what he/she can do, not by making reference to other performances but to the criteria set by the teacher. Norm referenced evaluation describes pupil performance according to his/her relative position in some known group thus provides a measure of performance that is interpretable in terms of individual’s relative standing or how the student is progressing with reference to his/her peer group (Tognolini, 2001).

This being the nature of examination in general, it is observed in this section that the prevailing scenario of evaluation at the Kenyan secondary school level suffers from some defects. For instance, the main purpose(s) of evaluation are to classify students, promote/placement of the students for admission or scholarship and to predict future success in different endeavours. Nonetheless, while each of these functions can be well served by a specific type of evaluation, the Kenyan secondary school education system uses one examination (KCSE) for all these purposes.
Again, the character of KCSE, following from the foregoing typology, is largely norm-referenced, meaning it measures the general candidate population’s cognitive abilities which, at its best, can only help discriminate between the cognitively weak and strong students. It only gives an impression of the achievement of the objectives of secondary education. As such, it is more of a diagnostic tool which is supposed to guide one in selection (using a set cut-off) but not exactly what the candidates’ specific abilities are. In other words, if KCSE was to be used for placement, then it means the candidates selected for a given course would need to be subjected to another evaluation, a criterion-referenced one, to establish the aptitude of the candidate in that particular area. Otherwise, to use KCSE which is a norm referenced type of evaluation to serve all the purposes of evaluation is to put KCSE to the purpose it is not suited to serve. This introduces a major discrepancy in the whole process of examination as done in the secondary school cycle.

Consequent upon this situation, it becomes possible to find candidates who have competencies in other domains such as psychomotor and affective (which are rarely or inadequately examined) feeling wasted and alienated by such an examination system and the whole education system at large. This is often worsened by the fact that this is the one and only examination that determines the rest of the candidates’ lives.
4.7.1 KCSE Examinations and Student Violence

With reference to the plight of students in relation to examinations, it is important to point out some of the salient observations that are notable concerning the students’ (and more so the candidates) experiences in relation to the examinations. First, from the grievances raised by the students, they are conscious of some disparities in the levels of preparedness where some students/schools are disadvantaged while others enjoy undue advantage over others yet a common examination is used as a determinant of their future.

In other words, the candidates perceive the examination as an unfair sorting mechanism that condemns some of them to disillusionment while giving undue advantage to others following the inherent disparities in terms of the differential levels of equipping the schools and syllabus coverage. Secondly, the perceived fading integrity of the examining board (KNEC) as manifested in the incident of the ‘computer error’ introduces mistrust and lack of faith in KNEC on the part of the students thereby inducing anxiety in them. Thirdly, other than the students, examinations appear to traumatize teachers and even principals too. As seen from the foregoing reported experiences, students push teachers and principals to levels where they have to compromise their integrity for the sake of their survival and that of their careers. To these teachers and principals, it is an experience of intimidation, fear and anxiety just as it is for the candidates.
In its conceptual form, an examination is supposedly a passive, standardized, fair and innocuous measurement tool and a procedural way to measure human knowledge ability and certain desirable dispositions (Yu and Suen, 2005 p.7). But when an examination such as KCSE is coupled with a reward system such that much is to be gained by doing well in this examination and much is to be lost when one performs poorly in it, then the function of the examination is fundamentally compromised. Accordingly, it is no longer the simple, innocuous measure but an important social tool in the overall reward-punishment system.

The character of examinations in Kenya has therefore led to some unintended social consequences. For instance, the students now perceive examinations from the point of view of what they can lead to, such as a good grade and hence a good course, prestige and better life thereafter. It is viewed as the main, if not the only, means for upward mobility for many who are in less privileged statuses. Conversely, failure in these examinations leads to feelings of frustration, despair and hopelessness among the candidates. Consequently, a culture has evolved in Kenya where academic excellence is emphasized and celebrated. In such a culture, for as long as one gets high grades, nothing else matters. As a result, teachers in schools are so busy drilling their students to ensure they obtain good grades. And as noted from the foregoing sections, this is partly driven by the fear of the wrath of students and parents as well as the urge to act in compliance with the requirements of KNEC. In other words, because the stakes are very high and
the consequences of doing well in examinations are so important, the focus is no longer on learning but rather, doing well in examinations.

Considering that the places sought for by the students are fewer than the candidate population, there has been a very high competition for these fewer opportunities amongst the students. This cut throat competition that characterizes the examinations frustrates those that are in less advantaged schooling environments due to its selection function to higher institutions of education. This competition has led candidates to devise other peripheral yet counterproductive and even unethical ways that can lead to good performance in KCSE examinations. For instance, instead of leading to greater enthusiasm in education, the exam-oriented system has led to a great deal of effort expended in non-productive or counter-productive practices such as cheating, drilling, test coaching and teaching of the very specific content or style of test questions. To such candidates, therefore, the ends justify the means.

Unfortunately, since not all the candidates can pass KCSE with those high grades, KCSE examinations have been perceived to function as a sorting machine which filters candidates into those who pass and can move upwards in the social stratification with a bright future and those who fail and will have to stay in their existing unfavourable circumstances with a highly uncertain future. The Kenyan society appears to have bolstered this high social prestige for successful candidates even more. Until its recent abandonment and the subsequent adoption
of only highlighting the top 100 candidates and schools nationally and top 10 at County level, ranking of schools in the entire country and their subsequent publishing in the local daily newspapers was a routine practice. Due to this, the glory of getting a high grade in KCSE and taking up a prestigious course at the university is the dream of almost every high school student and family.

The manner in which examinations are administered and results handled ensures their credibility while the use to which the results are put leads to experiences of either hope and optimism or anxiety and hopelessness on the part of the candidates and the student population at large. It should be pointed out that though examinations are an essential part of the educational practice with a recognized important role to play, the way KCSE examinations are conducted makes its results trigger negative perceptions (feelings of an affront to some of their basic human tendencies), hence student violence.

While the education sector in Kenya is rife with talks of reforming the system with a view of changing the current examination system from summative to a continuous assessment or scrapping examinations altogether, the experiences of other countries such as China have revealed that shifting from one examination system to the other does not necessarily address such a fever for success in examinations (Yu and Suen, 2005 p.8). For instance, in China, many methods have been tried to remove the high stakes National College Entrance Exam (NCEE) system (an equivalent of KCSE in Kenya), including expanding
enrolment in colleges and even promoting private colleges (Liu, 1999 p.16). However, such methods have only helped more students to receive higher education but at the same time posing the challenge of quality of higher education, which has been on the decrease as well as job market becoming full (Deng, 2001 p.28).

It is for the above concern that the position assumed in this study that the debate in the Kenyan public domain as to whether the Kenyan education system should continue having these examinations or not does not have the magical solution to that effect. It is not the case of whether or not examinations should be scrapped but rather the case of the clarity of the purpose for which these examinations are administered. When the purpose is clear, justifiable and agreeable, then the kind of evaluation adopted shall be clearly aligned with the purpose that resonates well with students.

Ultimately, we are of the view that changes in the system of examination must start with a shift in the value system, expectations of rewards from alternative routes and a realistic understanding of the value of education. In other words, for as long as the driving force of examinations is still in place, it will be rather difficult to control these undesirable occurrences that follow from the fever for success in exams. More fundamentally, given the emphasis on the cognitive dimension of education that results in the apparent tilt of the educational process towards passing highly in examinations rather than learning the KCSE will
continue having this alienating effect as well as causing anxiety and hopelessness amongst students. The spate of violence witnessed in some Kenyan secondary schools as a result of anxiety brought about by the KCSE examination will still persist.

4.8 The Existential and Phenomenological Explanation of Student Violence in Secondary Schools in Kenya

Following the presentation of the six perceived causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya, we are now in a position to explain them further in terms of the existential and phenomenological philosophy in the next section.

4.8.1 Fundamental Causes of Student Violence in Secondary Schools in Kenya

One of the objectives of this study as outlined in Chapter One is the explication of the fundamental causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Perhaps what has been dealt with are but general causes, which only trigger the affront to the basic human tendencies as articulated by existential phenomenologists. Reflections on this situation alluded to the position that part of the reason why this is the case is that the methodologies often adopted have operated at the empirical level and have not permeated to the underlying layers of the occurrences of student violence so as to get to the underlying fundamental causes and which are directly related to the basic nature of human beings. In other words, these are causes that affect the most important elements that constitute
human nature and action and which exist at a deeper and basic level such that if they are not identified and addressed, student violence is likely to continue.

Using the data from MoEST, media reports and dialogues held with various educational stakeholders during fieldwork, the researcher first identified the general issues of contention as presented so far in this Chapter. These include exercise of power and authority, the prefect system, school rules and regulations, punishment in schools, rights and freedom and KCSE examinations. It is therefore, at this juncture, necessary to demonstrate that the students’ acts of violence and unrest in some secondary schools in Kenya reflect human nature as explained by existential phenomenologists whose ideas formed the theoretical framework of the study. According to the existential phenomenologists for example Jean Paul Sartre, human nature is reflected in four main aspects, namely: human rationality (rational being), human consciousness (seeking) self destiny/determination, human dignity (beings with values and entitlements whose denial alienates them) and finally, human will (beings in a continuous state of seeking self transcendence to become more complete beings). It is therefore against the background of these basic human tendencies (nature) coupled with the phenomenological analysis of the experiences of human condition that necessarily explain the occurrence of student violence. This researcher thus presents the fundamental causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya in the following manner.
(a) Alienation of the Students From their Process of Self Determination

The concept of alienation has been understood differently by different scholars given their different scholarly orientations. For instance, Benjamin (2005) applies the Hegelian-Marxist tradition to understand alienation in terms of numerous forms of separation that prevent a human subject from realizing his or her historically conditioned humanity. Freire equates ‘being’ with a subject who is a conscious social actor with the ability, the desire and the opportunity to participate in social and political life. In other words, being human entails having the reflective and thought-infusing activity as a crucial aspect of what he terms as the ‘ontological vocation’ of being human. Alienation is therefore estrangement or separation of the subject from his or her ontological vocation of active human participation in the world. As such, alienation is the dialectical negation of subjectivity.

The findings of this study have revealed situations of school administrators exercising power and authority vested in them in ways that students perceive as oppressive, dictatorial and limiting. This implies that some school administrators exercise power and authority in ways that deny students the opportunity to participate in activities through which they can pursue self realization. The denial of this form of participation is manifested in different school practices such as non-involvement of students in the development or review of school rules and regulations as in the case of Kobe (pseudonym) Secondary School and Ndovu Secondary Schools as well as selection of their leaders (prefects) as evidenced in
the cases of Kasuku Secondary School. Such a coercive approach in the exercise of power and authority is sometimes manifested in constrained communication channels which the students would have otherwise used to communicate their contributions on the various school routine processes and practices as in the cases of Mbuni and Kobe Secondary Schools as well as the aforementioned schools in Mombasa, West Pokot and Kilifi as reported by the media.

All these practices have a negative potential character of turning students from potentially active subjects to passive objects, from reflective actors who meaningfully participate in school processes, some of which concern the students' own welfare, to passive objects of authoritarian control of their respective school administrators. The practices therefore promote feelings and experiences of alienation (alienated objects) hence feelings of dehumanization on the part of the students. Some acts of student violence are essentially associated and consist in the students’ recognition and attempts to transcend the alienation through their conscious and revolutionary actions of protests.

(b) The Absurdity of the Students’ Existential Conditions

The notion of ‘absurd’ consists in the existentialist view that there is no order, value and purpose in human life in this world. It is the existentialist view that conceptualizes the world as being without design and predictability or as being; irrational and meaningless. The absurd condition is therefore born out of the confrontation between human need for order, value in life and the unreasonable
absence of the same in the world. The absurdity is also to be interpreted as the outcome of human attempt to live a meaningful and purposeful life in an indifferent and uncaring world. The devastating awareness of the absence of meaning in life is what changes any sense of reasonable living to hopelessness in life. When confronted with such awareness one may adopt either to accept the absurd thereby setting one to be as free as it is humanly possible (copying) or to continue searching for meaning in life despite the revelation of the absurdity.

Conditions of existence in schools are perceived as constituting an absurdity such as the cases of Mbuni Secondary School where students protested against poor food to the extent of equating the school to a prison in their description, poor facilities such as toilet and lack of entertainment services all of which made them rebel against the extended period of staying in school. Sometimes communication could be used in a way that promotes bad relations among school stakeholders thereby promoting poor conditions of existence as evidenced at Kobe Secondary School where the students were told to report their teachers’ conduct to the Principal, thereby damaging the atmosphere that could enhance good and meaningful stay in the school.

The KCSE examinations that have has afflicted many schools including the mentioned school in Machakos County in 1991, the 2008 countrywide strikes witnessed in secondary schools, protests against sitting for KCSE mock examinations and the Garissa County schools whose 2011 KCSE examination
results were cancelled, has a lot to do with absurdity either in school or in the society. Given the deterministic character of KCSE examinations, failure or even the very possibility of it, introduces the students to the imminent absurd conditions of existence after school. This leads to feelings of alienation, despair and hopelessness amongst candidates and students at large. Accordingly, the absurdity of life in the case of KCSE examinations is seen in the unfairness of society characterized by polarization of its members into those who have excelled in examinations hence have a bright future, and failures (in examinations) and who become a condemned lot as failures in life.

(c) Affront to Students’ Values and Freedom

Existentialists like Jean Paul Sartre hold that ‘existence precedes essence’, meaning that before we come alive, life is nothing and it is up to us (human beings) to give it a meaning and that value is nothing else but the meaning we choose (Sartre, 1947). Hence, each individual holds some values and perceptions whether personal or collective. Sartre appears to be making two points here, namely: first, human beings have values which are defined by themselves; secondly, they choose and consciously make themselves what they want to be. In terms of making choices, from an existential perspective, human beings have the freedom to make such choices, which freedom, existentialists perceive, ontologically, as an inseparable tendency of human nature. As such, human beings are always free, within their situation, to choose the meaning in their life, free to reconstruct their interpretation of experience, free to reassess then alter
them if they choose to. It is in this sense that existentialists depict freedom as a transitory opportunity for self evolution (self-making in situation) which enables human beings to both acknowledge and transcend the web of life limitations. An affront to this freedom is essentially an affront to a basic human tendency hence a compromise on the humanness of an individual. This is likely to be resisted aggressively or violently by the individual.

This Chapter has identified incidents in which students protested against an affront to what they hold as values as well as entitlements which include rights and freedoms. One such value is their image or outlook as secondary students as evidenced in the unrest and protests that rocked Kifaru and Mbuni Secondary Schools with students demanding to have a school bus as well as Kobe (pseudonym) Secondary School where the Principal banned the use of all beauty products and junk foods by the girls within the school. Yet these are some of the things that students value as part of what makes them be what they have chosen to be. Some forms of punishment such as corporal punishment are used in secondary schools but are perceived by students as humiliating. Such cases are illustrated by a school in Homa Bay where students protested against the unanimous decision by BOG/PTA to reintroduce corporal punishment and a school in Kiambu County where students, in protest, displayed whip marks allegedly inflicted on them by their teachers. Such practices tend to frustrate the development of the image that the students have chosen to pursue.
There are also cases of students’ violence which is caused by the affront to things they consider as rights. For example, self-expression, going for educational trips, weekend off, and many more. These fundamentally constitute students’ image as students. As such, any act which negates these entitlements is fundamentally treated as an affront to their ontological vocation of pursuing self realization. In other words they cannot attain self-realization through self-determination as part of their human ontological vocation when their right and freedom to do so is curtailed.

4.9 Summary

Reflections on the various incidences presented as part of the data revealed cases of administrators often invoking the power and authority vested in them in addressing dissenting views in ways that are perceived to be oppressive. This provokes feelings of frustration, humiliation and intimidation on the part of students, thereby breeding feelings of resentment and rebellion among them. This ensuing rebellion is understood as a form of power struggle between the students and the authority where students display open revolt against their perceived oppressors. Part of this section also addresses the aspect of communication breakdown. The segment on communication breakdown has generally observed that administrators in some schools have a habit of ignoring grievances if and when they are raised by the students, leaving them to pile up. Such a scenario leads to students’ perceptions of the administrators as contemptuous and insensitive to their welfare and vulnerability. Students then begin seeking ways of
not only presenting their grievances through alternative channels but also resort to acting in ways that would free them from such humiliating experiences. Such ways include attempts to demolish the structures of oppression - the schools - through violent protests.

It has also been argued that while the prefect system is supposed to enhance communication between the administration and the students, in some cases, the prefects are the very hindrance to this function considering the unprocedural processes through which some of them get to those positions and the privileges given to them by the administration, hence a sense of mistrust. As a result, students see them as spies and loyalists to administration thus developing mistrust in these prefects. This leads to students approaching them with hostility and violence.

The section on school rules and regulations has presented the argument that while school rules and regulations are supposed to be a means to discipline, the ways in which they have been enacted and enforced in some schools have not enhanced the attainment of this goal. There is a tendency for some administrators to exclude students from the process of making these rules. Other administrators do not make much effort to explain these rules to the students regarding their interpretation and implications. As a result, students do not appreciate the rules and, more so, they perceive the rules as undesirable impositions from without and which they must resist to secure their self realization.
In the section on punishment, it has been established that in some schools, this is meted in ways that students perceive as disproportionate. It is meted out not only to correct/deter but for retributive purposes too. Consequently, this promotes, in the students, experiences of humiliation and dehumanization thereby sending signals that violence is acceptable especially to the defenseless and subordinate.

Finally, examinations, and the KCSE in particular, are often put to the wrong functions other than being characterized by cut-throat competition for high grades which promise a better future. As such, it elicits experiences of anxiety, fear and hopelessness amongst the candidates and the entire student population. Students’ academic vocation has therefore always consisted in looking for the shortest ways of excelling in examinations and removing all the barriers to success in them by all means, be they violent or otherwise.

From these causes of student unrest which the study considered in general, the understanding of human nature from the existential phenomenologists has been applied to locate three fundamental causes of student violence, namely: the alienation of students from their process of self determination, the absurdity of the students’ existential conditions and the affront to students’ values and freedom.

The next Chapter focuses on the phenomenological response to student violence in Kenyan secondary schools.
CHAPTER FIVE

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO STUDENT VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Two of this study highlighted the phenomenon of violence in secondary schools in Kenya in terms of the substantial number of inquiries by task forces that were formed to deal with the menace. Some of the task forces, as already shown, generated a wide range of causes and recommendations to effectively address the problem. Wangai taskforce of 2001, for example, was convinced that the implementation of the recommendations of its report would provide an insight and solution to the disturbances that were then being experienced in Kenyan schools (Wangai Report Preliminaries p.ii). However, such recommendations and the attempted implementation of the same have not sorted out the problem. The occurrence of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya has continued unabated.

Chapter Four of this study traced the phenomenon of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya from its antecedent causes. This Chapter has therefore attempted two things: First, an explanation of why the previous efforts of taskforces have not provided long-lasting solutions. Second, it has provided the alternative approach to the phenomenon of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya as indicated by its title, namely: a phenomenological response to student violence in Kenya secondary schools.
This Chapter has thus attempted an examination of the task forces, showing why they have not addressed the problem of student violence adequately. This has been done by way of analysis of the key recommendations. Finally, the Chapter has come up with an explanation of student violence which shows not only how student violence occurs but also the alternative approaches to the understanding and resolution of the same. The Chapter is presented under four main headings, namely: Taskforce reports’ recommendations on student violence, reflection on the taskforce recommendations, addressing student violence in Kenyan secondary schools and towards a phenomenological response to student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.

5.2 Taskforce Reports’ Recommendations on Student Violence

In Chapter one, it was noted that there have been up to five task forces set up to investigate and make recommendations on the phenomenon of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. However, two of these reports namely: Kirima Report of 1995 and the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Education of 2008 were never made public hence were not available for analysis and reflections as noted in this study. Consequently, this section presents reflections on some of the recommendations given as solutions by three of the task forces which had have been appointed to inquire into the nature and causes of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools, namely:
The task forces mentioned above were formed by the government at strategic moments following protracted incidents of violent protests in schools within a given period of time leading to vast destruction of property, rape and loss of human life. Whereas each of these committees had its specific terms of reference as indicated in Chapter Two, their main terms of reference revolved around determining the causes of such incidents of unrest and indiscipline (which in most cases would be characterized by violence) and to make recommendations on actions to be taken to address the same. A close examination of the three reports reveals three main issues:

First, the issues that have triggered strikes and cases of student violence in most schools have essentially been similar. In this regard, the Sagini Report of 1991 raised similar concerns with reference to the antecedent occurrences of student violence and general indiscipline cases in secondary schools in Kenya. Secondly, the way the incidences of student violence and unrest have been addressed has
tended to be the same through time. Finally, most of the recommendations made by the three task forces have been repeated time and again in the three reports:

The three task force recommendations derived from these three reports are as follows:

- In response to the exercise of power and authority, the Macharia taskforce recommended that the administration should be well informed, should know what the students like and what they hate and in many situations, the administrators should be able to judge fairly and realistically (Ibid. 51).

- On the issue of the prefect system, the Macharia task force recommended that the appointment of prefects should be cautiously done and that those appointed should be supported and encouraged to maturely handle issues by themselves. It further recommended that the prefects should be trained in leadership so as to form a link between students, staff and administration (Ibid, p.44).

- With regard to school rules and regulations, it was recommended that students should be given clearly stated rules whose value in obeying them should be appreciated (Macharia Report, p.16). Further, the rules should be meaningful and easily understood (Macharia Report, p.34).

- Concerning punishment, the Sagini task force of 1991 sought to eliminate the errant elements from the students’ fraternity completely. It therefore recommended that indisciplined students should be expelled from the
school and should be dealt with seriously by the laws of the land and that the Ministry of Education should ensure that once indisciplined students have been expelled, they should not be admitted in other public schools in the Republic. Later, Macharia task force recommended consistency in meting out punishment and that the punishment should be commensurate with the offences. On this same issue, Wangai task force recommended that the decision to punish lies with the Deputy Head Teacher, Duty Teacher, House Teacher, Class Teacher depending on the nature of misdemeanor and where it has occurred and that all punishments must be recorded in the ‘punishment book’.

- In reference to student violence due to increased rights awareness, the Macharia task force recommended that the freedom of the students should be left to the decision of the Principal because he/she knows his/her students (Macharia Report of 2000, p. 51). Later in 2001, Wangai taskforce recommended that the headteacher and the school management should solicit positive support and establish a strong link with all stakeholders within the immediate community where the school is located and that guidance and counseling as well as pastoral care be strengthened in order to provide a strong foundation on moral values and spiritual growth (Wangai Report of 2001, p.67).

- With reference to the KCSE examinations and in particular, the aspect of competition, all the three reports have been equivocal in advocating the practice where KNEC publishes the results without ranking schools in
their order of merit so as to de-emphasize the aspect of competition. Secondly, concerning the alienating effect of the final examination, the task forces, especially the Sagini Report, recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) should work out strategies for incorporating continuous assessment grades in the final KCSE examinations in order to emphasize the important character of other non-cognitive abilities of the students (Sagini Report of 1991, p.170) as had earlier been recommended by the National Committee on Educational Policies and Objectives (1976) and the Presidential Working Party on Education, Training and Manpower in the Next Decade and Beyond (1988).

- Concerning the general indiscipline expressed in the violent behaviour of students, members of the public and leaders should take moral values seriously to assist the youth in leading upright and disciplined lives. They should be role models for the youth to emulate. Also, parents should spend some time with their children for guidance and, counseling and for socializing them into responsible adulthood.

5.2.1 Reflection on the Taskforce Recommendations

To begin with, the exercise of power and authority in secondary schools in Kenya by school administrators has generated quite some level of discontent. Consequently, a number of incidences of student violence have occurred reportedly due to the manner in which school administrators, teachers and even prefects exercise the power and authority bestowed upon them. However, the taskforces appear to be a bit silent on this particular matter in terms of making
some recommendations to address the issue. The two identified recommendations above are the ones that seem closest to this issue.

From the findings as presented in Chapter Four, it has emerged that some secondary school leaders have a coercive tendency. This tendency, together with the communication breakdown from the administrators, is interpreted by the students as being ‘too harsh’, and irresponsible. A coercive tendency of the administrators was reported from Korongo and Kobe Secondary Schools (A1: A and E1: A). At Mbuni Secondary School, the school administrators curtailed the students efforts to seek dialogue on the fate of the money paid for holiday tuition and which was later cancelled, leaving students feeling frustrated (B4: F). At Kobe Secondary School, the Principal exercised her power and authority in such ways that curtailed the students’ freedom to choose or determine their identities and outlook (E1: A).

In brief, the fundamental issue concerning the student violence that is associated with the exercise of power and authority by school administrators is that it leads to students’ feelings of frustration and alienation. Feelings of frustration abound as a result of curtailed efforts to have the school administrators address their concerns while alienation abounds when the students experience the ways in which their school administrators exercise power and authority as those that separate them from their ontological vocation of becoming subjects, full conscious human beings with the freedom to chart their destiny, hence self realization. As such, recommendations for addressing student violence in
secondary schools in Kenya therefore ought to make particular reference to these issues which are fundamental to human (students) nature.

Seen from this perspective, the recommendations made especially by Macharia taskforce on this aspect that the administration should be well informed, should have a deep understanding of what the students like and what they hate and in many situations, the administrators should be able to judge fairly and be realistic and that the mode of fashion (in a school) be strictly at the discretion of the principals (Ibid. 51) are certainly deficient in this respect in some ways. First, they focus on general issues that the administrators need to know including what the students like and what they hate but later again counter this by stating that those likes and dislikes (for example, mode of fashion) be strictly at the discretion of the school principals. Yet in so doing, the taskforce seems to contradict itself since at one point it appears to be advocating sensitivity to students’ values and interests only to come later to impose limits by depicting these as only acceptable as seen through the eyes of the respective school principals. Secondly, the recommendations do not seem to be informed by the idea of what is fundamental to human (students) nature with a view of having it given priority if the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya is to be addressed successfully.

The prefect system is yet another area that has often generated discontent among students often leading to incidences of student violence. Accordingly, it has been recommended that the appointment of prefects should be cautiously done and the appointed prefects be supported and encouraged to maturely handle issues by
themselves (Macharia Report of 2000 p.5). In another section of the same report, it is recommended that the prefects should be trained in leadership so as to form a link between students, staff and administration (Ibid. p.44).

The observations in Chapter Four have revealed that the real underlying issues with regard to the prefect system and the associated student violence in secondary schools in Kenya is the perceived alienation of students. The perceptions of alienation are brought about by the dynamics of unilateral appointment of prefects in schools as revealed in cases like Kasuku, Mbuni and Ndovu (pseudonyms) secondary schools (A6: D, B5: D, and F1: D). The unilateral appointment denies students the opportunity, as human beings, to determine their own destiny in pursuit of self realization. There has been an increased awareness on human rights as a result of which students of this generation do know that they have a right, for instance, to choose their leaders. Any affront to this freedom of choice is therefore bound to be resisted as it is perceived as a barrier to their quest for becoming complete human beings. This resistance is what is outwardly expressed as student violence. It is, however, regrettable that while the contentious issue in relation to the prefect system is the alienation of students from participating in the exercise of choosing prefects, the task force recommendation appears to suggest the very unilateral appointment of prefects- that which has been at the centre of discontent among students.
The other issue of discontent that emerged in the course of the interpretation of the data collected in this study is the manner in which prefects exercise the power delegated to them by the school administration. In this regard, it was realized that some prefects understand their role as that of ‘reporting other students’ (E2: D and B4: E). This gives rise to perceptions of prefects system by the rest of the students as punitive. The recommendation that the appointment of prefects should continue and that they should be trained on leadership certainly fails to recognize this aspect of students’ development towards self realization. As such, it may not be effective in addressing student violence in Kenyan secondary schools.

The three task force reports also made some recommendations on the issue of school rules and regulations. The issue of school rules was addressed in Chapter Four as one of the areas of contention that often lead to student violence. What emerged as most crucial included: students’ understanding of the rules, students’ experience of the rules and finally, their participation in the formulation of these rules and regulations.

A close examination of the task force recommendations on this issue of school rules reveals that there is sufficient reference to the aspect of understanding of the rules. Students ought to find the rules ‘meaningful’. The appreciation of the value of obeying these rules is a further expression of the need for a critical understanding of the rules and regulations. In its statement, however, the recommendation essentially tends to overemphasize the aspect of understanding
over the aspect of students’ experience of the rules and their participation in their formulation.

In Chapter Four it emerged that student violence is, in some instances, an expression of how students experience these school rules and regulations. For instance, Chinga Girls’ secondary school in Nyeri District held a protest against what they described as ‘strict rules’ while at Kobe secondary school, students reacted violently to school rules which they described as ‘bad rules’ (E2: A). It appears therefore that the students’ negative response is influenced not only by the factual essence of the rules and regulations but also by their mental imaginations, emotions, hopes, fears, disillusions, memories, dreams and even fantasies. In the end, their response towards these rules, whether practical or attitudinal, emanates not only from their awareness (or lack of it) of the rules but also their opinions and fantasies about them. So, by missing out on the recognition on the students’ experiences of the rules and regulations, this recommendation falls short of the capacity to address a fundamental dimension of the students’ inner feelings emanating from the way the school rules and regulations have been arrived at and enforced.

With regard to students’ participation in the formulation of school rules, the recommendation above states, in part, that students should be given [my own emphasis] clearly stated rules… (Macharia Report of 2000, p.16). Indeed the reflections done in Chapter Four have revealed that one of the causes of student
violence is alienation of the students from their process of self determination. Alienation is the separation of the students, as subjects, from their ontological vocation of active human participation in their world.

The failure of the recommendation to clearly articulate this crucial aspect makes it ineffective as it does not address this fundamental cause of student violence as relates to school rules and regulations. The recommendation does not recognize the students’ human aspiration to be conscious social actors with the ability, desire and of seeking for opportunity to participate in their social and political life in shaping their destiny. This human tendency is part of human nature which is well articulated from the existential phenomenological perspective. A recommendation that fails to recognize it cannot address the ultimate basis of the problem of human violence emanating from a perceived alienation.

Punishment was acknowledged in Chapter Four as one of the areas around which there has been contention often leading to student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. For this reason, some recommendations have been made. For example, even as early as 1991, Sagini task force had recommended that indisciplined students should be expelled from the school and should be dealt with seriously by the laws of the land (Sagini Report p. 181) and that the Ministry of Education should ensure that once indisciplined students have been expelled, they should not be admitted in other public schools in the Republic (Sagini Report p. 155). This was not only thought to be a sure way of eliminating such errant students from the students’ fraternity completely but also as a way of protecting the rest of the
students from bad influence. And indeed, the practice of expelling students found guilty of participating in incidences of indiscipline such as student violence has been in place for some time both before and even after this recommendation was made.

A close examination of these recommendations, especially the part that advocates for expulsion, reveals that it contemplates a situation where such expelled students should never get admission in any other public school in Kenya. However, from the evidence given in this study, it appears that this has not been possible for the simple reason that students who have been expelled have ended up getting admission in other schools, especially private ones, thus making it difficult for this recommendation to work. This is well illustrated in the dialogue with a teacher at Kifaru Secondary School thus:

… a student can burn a dormitory and the only punishment is being expelled from this school yet will be admitted in another school. So, if they can set a rule whereby if you are expelled because of a case like arson, that you can never be admitted in any other school and that there will be punishment equivalent to that act and that you can be jailed and they see their colleagues being jailed. If it is damage, that the ring leaders will not just be excluded and then transferred to other schools and that there is a follow up that goes with indiscipline cases (Appendix D2: E).

The views expressed in the dialogue above imply that there is need to expel indisciplined students from school completely. The respondent is even suggesting that there should be a follow-up to ensure they do not join any other school. This view appears to be both acceptable and supported by other teachers such as one teacher respondent at Korongo Secondary School according to whom ‘it is really
a question of sieving the bad lot by suspending them or expelling them altogether’ (C3: E).

There were however, others who felt that expelling is not deterrent enough and students are bound not to change their behaviour just because some of their colleagues have been expelled, as indicated in the views of a teacher at Kifaru Secondary School:

Maybe the expulsion is taken lightly because what happens we look for ring-leaders nothing more and so they will always say; *Hawajatu funza* [they have not taught us a] lesson, *si wamefukuza tu wanafunzi wawili* [they have only expelled two students]… it’s not deterring enough. So it has reached a point we are wondering how we will run schools (Appendix D2: C).

There is even the feeling, on the part of the school administrators that expulsion is not effective particularly considering the bureaucracy involved. There is therefore some sense of apathy and even frustration in the use of this method. This view was held by one of the principals who participated in this study:

In fact, to talk the truth, I think the government has left to the teachers so much work that the teachers, more so, the head teachers have been left confused. For instance, look at the student, he is told you cannot be expelled by the school or by the principal and so that is what they know, so we have only to recommend to the Board which must also wait for the directive to come from the Director of Education or the Permanent Secretary. So you see we are crippled and the students know this (Appendix D1: D).

However, following the discussions in Chapter Four, it was established that addressing this problem must entail a humanizing process, that is, a process that
helps the students as human beings to feel that they still have opportunities for self determination as well as the freedom to make choices of their desire. More importantly, they should choose with the knowledge that there are consequences for the choices they make.

The negative character of the evasive nature of the recommendation on expulsion and its ineffectiveness can be alluded to the scenario of a school in Vihiga County where some students who had been suspended sneaked back into the school and started burning it down (Daily Nation 14, July 2000). A viable recommendation must therefore target the fundamental issues of alienation, the perceived unfairness to students (as human beings) conditions of existence both in schools and in the wider society and their values and freedom. Student violence may still persist despite the recommendations and implementation of the same. Even if there was consistency in meting out punishment so that it is commensurate with the offences, there would still be need to resonate well with students’ grievances regarding the nature of punishment. The kind of punishment described by the students as ‘harsh’ and ‘heavy’ like the case of Tulaga and Oljoro-Orok Mixed Secondary Schools and the ‘excessive’ punishment as described in the case of Ndugamano secondary school (Table 4.3) cannot lead to positive behaviour change. As such, the recommendations that focus on the magnitude of punishment tend to give no recognition to the damage such punishment can cause to the development of students’ personality.
In Chapter Four, caning as a form of punishment was depicted as fundamentally inhuman unless for a justified course. This is because of the way in which students are treated as objects for manipulation. Such punishment is associated with a dehumanizing process. Students do perceive it as a drawback to their quest for self realization and as such, they become violent as a way of resisting what they consider to be retrogressive practice(s).

Another area of contention highlighted in Chapter Four is the rise in students’ awareness of their rights and freedom in secondary schools in Kenya. As a response to this, Macharia task force had recommended that the freedom of the students should be left to be decided by the principals because it is them who know their students (Macharia Report 2000, p. 51). The Wangai taskforce commented later that the level of human rights awareness in Kenya had increased and was often being misused by students who agitated for unreasonable demands for the same (Wangai Report of 2001, p.67). Unlike the Macharia Report, the Wangai taskforce recommended that the headteacher and the school management should solicit positive support and establish strong links with all stakeholders within the immediate community where the school is located, and that guidance and counseling as well as pastoral care be strengthened in order to provide a strong foundation for moral values and spiritual growth (Ibid, p.67). Unfortunately, the recommendations from the two reports have not been successful in stopping students from demanding what they perceived to be their rights.
This study has established that students have remained intolerant and often resist an affront to their perceived rights and freedom (Table 4.5). The rights and freedom whose affront has brought contention and hence conflict include educational trips, mid-term vacation and weekend leisure. The view of these as entitlements is echoed by a Principal of Kifaru Secondary School:

Students act violently because you cannot ignore and infringe on somebody’s rights whether real or perceived and the person remains okay. People always want to fight for their rights whether real or perceived. And it is not just the students only, even adults (Appendix D1: B).

From the discussions in Chapter Four, students (as human beings) feel alienated when such rights are denied. By feeling alienated it means that they feel separated from the very things that they need as part of their quest for self realization. Students need some free time away from school academic work during which time they can realize their potentials in other dimensions of education other than academics. Since being free to choose and even having this opportunity to exercise their freedom to choose the vector to humanness is a fundamental human attribute, students (as humans) are bound to pursue it aggressively especially when they discern any adverse effort. In pursuing self realization, students as human beings are viewed as having certain values, rights and freedom through which they can achieve self realization. They therefore strive to achieve these rights and freedoms by using the system, acting on the fringes or ostensibly acting as revolutionaries especially when the system does not provide an opportunity for students to secure them.
It is in this regard that the recommendation that the rights and freedom of students be left to be decided by the principal, as stipulated in Macharia Report, is found to be deficient and inconsistent with the contemporary reality. This is because the issue is about students’ quest to exercise their own freedom of choice and not for the principal to exercise this freedom of choice on their behalf. In fact, it has already been demonstrated in this study that this very denial of the opportunity to exercise freedom of choice forms part of the basis of student violence. The recommendation by Wangai taskforce, similarly, does not address this fundamental cause either, despite its identification and recognition of the fact that the rise in the level of human rights awareness in the country has led to misuse and agitation for unreasonable demands by students to the school administration (Wangai Report of 2001, p.67). This is because this recommendation tends to emphasize the need for good relations between the school and other stakeholders within the community within which the school is located at the expense of focusing attention on the students as human beings and how their violent behaviour is related to their nature and living conditions. Fortunately, Chapter Four on the Bill of Rights of the Kenya Constitution, 2010, clearly stipulates how rights and fundamental freedoms issues should be approached.

The second part of the recommendation on violence brings in the idea of guidance and counselling and pastoral care. However, it is too general and not clear with regard to what the focus of this guidance and counselling should be. In fact, the recommendation appears to attribute the violence situation to lack of foundation
for moral values and spiritual growth. Following the view that having certain values and rights and freedom to choose are fundamental attributes of human nature, recommendations meant to address student violence emanating from perceived affront of these aspects must seek to address the aggression in such a way that in the final analysis these attributes are upheld. For instance, the recommendations must seek to address the tendency to misuse freedom by foregrounding the fact that while the students are free to choose what or how to be, they must be prepared to take responsibility of the choices they make rather than denial of the same as stipulated in Chapter Four on the Bill of Rights in the Kenya Constitution (2010).

The recommendation of publishing KCSE results without ranking as well as working out strategies for incorporating continuous assessment grades in the final KCSE examination in order to emphasize the importance of the other non-cognitive abilities of the students has repeatedly been made in the three reports. Indeed, ranking of individual students has been argued to be a formidable force behind the pressure not only on candidates but on every school going child thereby promoting unhealthy competition among schools (Standard Media, 1 March 2011). The Kenya Secondary School Heads Association dismissed the ranking system stating that it has narrowed down education to a grading affair whose consequence is the cut-throat competition at the expense of a holistic development of education standards (Ibid, 2009- Online version). While ranking has always been used as a way of determining how a school is performing, it was argued by the KNEC chief officer that it was not the only way of gauging the
performance of the school. Schools can still determine whether they are improving by just looking at their mean scores (Ibid. Online version).

Both Sagini taskforce (1991) and Wangai taskforce (2001) recommended that KNEC should stop ranking schools (Sagini Report of 1991 p.171 and Wangai Report of 2001 p. 17). Following the recommendations, ranking was abolished in the year 2009 and yet the incidents of violence emanating from examination related issues have continued to occur. At the same time, Wangai task force recommended that district mocks be discontinued and instead school-based continuous assessment tests be instituted to reduce stress to students and costs to parents (Wangai Report of 2001 p. 55).

Abolition of ranking was ostensibly recommended as a way of discouraging students from competitive attitudes. However, data from MoEST on incidences of student violence due to KCSE examinations does not indicate anywhere that there was any school that reportedly went on rampage because of being outperformed by another school. Nevertheless, there is evidence of schools such as Kagumo High School in Nyeri County which protested general poor performance in KCSE examinations (see Table 4.6).

The resulting violence was therefore not because of competition with other schools per se but just poor performance as per the KNEC criteria. In fact, the abolition of the said ranking of schools has not eliminated the anxiety due to KCSE examinations. There have even been increasing levels of cheating as reported during the 2013 KCSE examinations where some university students,
supervisors and teachers were allegedly involved in helping students (Daily Nation, 11 November 2013 p.3 col. 1-3). Findings of this study have also revealed such occurrences of student unrest due to examination fever in schools such as Kasuku and Ndovu Secondary Schools. Notably, these occurrences happened in 2011 and 2012 respectively, while reported cases of sophisticated networks of examination cheating happened during the 2013 KCSE examinations (Daily Nation, 11 November 2013 p.3 col. 1-3) after the said abolition of ranking. This is, in itself, a testimony that the recommendation did not target KCSE examinations as the fundamental source of the problem of violence and unrest in secondary schools in Kenya.

Ranking of schools by performance in examinations may have its own pitfalls such as operating on the assumption that all schools have the same physical facilities and resources and teachers with equal qualifications. This is certainly not the case. As such, it depicts the whole ranking exercise as lacking a clear benchmark. However, while ranking of schools may promote competition amongst students, it is not necessarily this that fundamentally accounts for the occurrence of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya but other factors. Competition as such, and as already pointed out, is not the problem. Rather, the problem is the high stakes in the sense that examinations have been made to determine the rest of the entire life of the students. This deterministic role ascribed to KCSE has led to a situation where the consequences of doing well are of significance given the few opportunities based on examination results. This is
perhaps where the competition comes in. It is the competition for the few chances for success in life that brings the hopelessness, anxiety, meaninglessness and the general absurdity of life when one fails to perform well in the KCSE examinations. KCSE has thus come to be associated with hopelessness, meaninglessness and the unfairness of life to those students who are not sure of performing well. It presents them with an occasion and a moment of reckon that polarizes the student population into those who will succeed and those destined for failure in life.

To make it worse, both the government and the private sectors are keen on a person’s good examination results as a condition for employment. This has led to the sharpening of ‘the edge of competition’ which the task forces emphatically were against. The absurdity of KCSE is heightened by the reality that even the educated ones are now not able to access such employment opportunities.

There is also the recommendation that members of the public and leaders should embrace moral values seriously to assist the youth in leading upright and disciplined lives. This was to be achieved by providing role models for youth to emulate as well as parents having to spend some time with their children guiding, counselling and socializing them into responsible adulthood. This recommendation also runs through these three reports on student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya. The first part of this recommendation appears to be based on the idea that students’ deviant behaviour is learnt from the
environment, a view firmly supported by Bandura (1986) in his social learning theory. As such, this recommendation was meant to make the environment of the children free from bad influence lest the students emulate and subsequently exhibit it in their behaviour. If the members of the public were made to realize the importance of the virtues of integrity and discipline and act accordingly, then the Kenyan society was going to be such an enabling environment for the youth to learn acceptable codes of behaviour from their senior members of the society.

The youth, including students, have curiously watched their leaders lead demonstrations on the streets and even joining the public in ‘taking the law in their hands’ by stoning those perceived to be acting out of step. They have seen their teachers go on strike demanding certain rights and entitlements which they perceive to have been denied saying that ‘strike is the only language the leadership in this country understands’ (Daily Nation, 11 September 2011 and KNUT website accessed on 15 November 2013). They have also keenly watched workers, some of whom are their parents, openly defy the rule of law during such protests as they press for better salaries as has become a common phenomenon in Kenya.

While this may be the case, this study argues that this does not seem to adequately account for the incidences of violence witnessed in secondary schools in Kenya. For instance, while most of the students in secondary schools can be said to be exposed to violent episodes whether in life such as those strikes mentioned above
or even by watching violent television shows, not all the students in Kenyan secondary schools have exhibited this violence, meaning not all of them copy it.

Indeed, data collected in this study indicates that almost all the incidences of student violence did occur due to some stated grievances. The only incidences of student violence that appear to have occurred as a result of other students in other schools having been violent, at least according to the data collected in this study, is the situation of second term in 2008 when Form Four candidates in about three hundred schools refused to sit for mock examinations. Also, in 2012, there was a wave of protests following a change in closure dates and the abolition of holiday tuition.

In all these, there are clearly identifiable grievances such as demands for refund of the already paid tuition fee as in the case of Mbuni Secondary School and the demand that the school follows the Minister’s circular on closure dates as in the case of Korongo and Kifaru Secondary Schools. Such instances could instead be understood as cases of peer pressure or a sense of collegiality that depicts students as a group bound together with common interests and experiences in such a way that what affects one school is also likely to affect the next school. In such a case, the next school may go on rampage not necessarily because of copying their colleagues but as way of expressing their empathy for their colleagues as well as protesting against the possibility of it happening to them in their school. The spread of student violence in this case is an expression of the fact that students in
a given school identify with the interests and experiences of those affected in other schools.

The second part of this recommendation requires parents to spend some time with their children for guidance and counselling and for socializing them into becoming responsible adults. However, while this recommendation may appear appealing, there are two main issues which make it rather inadequate. First, the general living conditions in Kenya are underestimated by the recommendation. The reality is that today, most parents are increasingly spending less time with their children. Instead, most parents have totally delegated parenting duties to schools. While a teacher at school is busy rushing against time to complete the syllabus in preparing the students for better grades, other agents of socialization such as the mass media and the internet, with all its other manifestations such as the social media coupled with the present day knowledge explosion, have taken over the socialization role of parents and teachers. Secondly, the recommendation does not make any reference to human nature and action yet as has been argued in this study, the problem of student violence is founded on the nature of their being, essence and existence.

Viewed from this angle, members of the public and leaders as well as the implied thinking that parents must take the initiative to guide their children constitutes a recommendation that has failed to solve the problem of violence in secondary schools in Kenya. It has failed because the recommendation is targeted to the
people (leaders and parents) and not directly linked to the students themselves. Such recommendations put students at the second level such that changes in the adults and leaders behaviour and actions are assumed to have a trickle-down effect to them and thereafter change their violent behaviour. In this way, the recommendation misses the ultimate target. More fundamentally is its failure to recognize the place of the ontological nature of students as human beings in the whole phenomenon of student violence. This is because, if as argued in this study, student violence emanates from experiences that make it difficult for them to achieve self realization, and if it is in their (students) ontological vocation to pursue self realization hence full humanity, then the associated recommendation must target the human person (in this case the students) and in particular, this vocation.

5.3 Addressing Student Violence in Kenyan Secondary Schools

The foregoing reflection on the taskforce reports on student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya has been directed to the recommendations in order to demonstrate the extent to which some have not taken into account the fundamental nature of students as human beings. This is because almost all the cases of student violence, as revealed by the analyses done in Chapter Four have been ultimately explicated in terms of the dehumanizing experiences on the part of the students. Student violence has been shown as a protracted protest against dehumanizing experiences that run counter to their (students) quest for self realization (full humanity). It has also revealed that the
antecedent taskforces do not seem to have rightly diagnosed and analyzed the incidences of student violence critically to identify the fundamental causes. As a result, the recommendations provided by these taskforces are limited in their capacity to address the fundamental issues of the phenomenon of violence. This section presents alternative ways of approaching student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. The alternative attempts begin with the explanation of the process of humanization and dehumanization:

### 5.3.1 Humanization and Dehumanization

The basic assumption in the process of humanization is that human beings, by nature are conscious of their incompleteness. Both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities for a human person. Dehumanization is the distortion of the ontological vocation of becoming more fully human. Essentially, most of the incidences of student violence have been interpreted as sheer rebellion against perceived dehumanization. These incidences are, in fact, manifestations of reflections by the students on the objectified position they have been made to occupy, as expressed in their incessant struggle, for instance, to denounce bureaucracies in their respective schools. They usually demand for the transformation of the rigid nature of the relationship structures in their schools in order to achieve the transformation of reality itself. All these are attempts to affirm human beings (students) as the subjects of decision in pursuit of humanization.
However, while both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities in human life, only humanization is the positive vocation of human beings. The reflections and discussions on incidences of student violence, in Chapter Four, have demonstrated the ways in which students’ pursuit of full humanness is occasionally thwarted by experiences of alienation, the absurdity (unfairness) of their conditions of existence in their respective schools, and how affront to their values and freedom by their school administrators, teachers and prefects as their perceived oppressors lead to hopelessness.

In this regard, the need for humanization is affirmed by the yearning of the students for the transformation of their conditions of existence in their respective schools and demand for their freedom to determine themselves, all which are done as part of their struggle to recover their perceived lost humanity. In other words, the struggle for humanization, overcoming of alienation, and the affirmation of students as human beings is possible only because dehumanization, although a common practice in schools, is not a given destiny but an obstacle brought about by some insensitive and inconsiderate school administrators.

In Paulo Freire’s (1972) view, dehumanization is an obstacle that students have to struggle against whenever they seek to regain their lost humanity. Unfortunately, they in turn become oppressors of their school administrators, teachers, prefects and other relevant stakeholders (perceived to be their oppressors). In Freire’s view, which is shared in this study, it would be a noble thing if the students’ task
was to liberate themselves and their perceived oppressors as well rather than turning out to be oppressors in their struggle for liberation. This can be achieved by empowering the students through the process of conscientization, aiming at getting them to see their actions as equally oppressive hence worthy of avoiding if really they stand in pursuit of authentic liberation.

Most cases of the incidences of student violence reported in this study revealed that instead of striving for liberation, the students tend themselves to become oppressors by involving themselves in hitting back in the same oppressive manner as their perceived oppressors who happen to be the school administrators, teachers and prefects as well as other associated stakeholders. This, to Freire however, is only characteristic of the initial stage of the struggle towards humanization and which students must seek to transcend. It would appear, at this point, that the structure of their thought has been conditioned by the dialectical conflict between them and their school authorities including the circumstances within which their thought has been shaped. In this regard, although the students would be understood to be pursuing a state of being human beings, it appears that for them, their model of humanity is one where to be human is to be an oppressor. This is essentially the perceived necessity of oppression as a condition for recognition as often adopted as a pattern in most of the incidences of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya.
However, this misconceptualization of humanity from the point of view of the students, at a certain moment of their existential experience in school is understandable. At this point in life, students tend to wish to be in the position of power, just the same way the school authorities such as administrators, teachers and prefects are, so that they can use the power to treat the authorities the same way the authorities are doing to them. At this level, their perception of themselves as opposites of the oppressors, though right, does not yet signify readiness for engagement in an authentic struggle to overcome the dialectical conflict between them and their school authorities and stakeholders.

Given their lethal acts such as arson and extensive destruction of property as presented in Chapter Four, it is a situation that illustrates how more oppressive than even their perceived oppressors (school administrators, teachers, prefects and other educational stakeholders) the students can be when they get this power and freedom that they have, supposedly, been denied. That is why a programme for the process of humanization of students is advocated as one of the alternatives for dealing with student violence in secondary schools in Kenya as expressed below:

### 5.3.2 Humanization in Secondary Schools in Kenya

Essentially, the above argument depicts students as people whose desire is not for freedom but, rather, for power over others, especially their perceived oppressors. To overcome the situation of oppression, students (who are the oppressed) must first critically recognize its causes, so that through an authentic transforming
action they can lead the struggle aimed at creating a new situation. This new situation is one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity. This implies some form of conscientization on the part of the students. On their part, school administrators and teachers have to adopt various ways of addressing the problem of student violence through the use of policy guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education. These are guidelines that are meant to facilitate humanization of students. It therefore became important to examine the school administrators and teachers’ awareness of these policy guidelines and also do the same to the policy guidelines in terms of their contents.

The findings on this aspect indicated that 30.8% confessed that they were not aware of any policy guidelines for addressing student violence. Those who were aware of their existence mentioned a number of guidelines such as: policy on banning of corporal punishment and its subsequent replacement with guidance and counselling; the Children’s Bill of Rights (Children’s Act) and policy guidelines on the expulsion and the election of prefects by the students. However, half of those who cited these guidelines raised salient issues which have an adverse effect on their effectiveness. Such issues included lack of focus in the guidelines, unnecessarily long procedures involved in executing some of them and the general lack of capacity and positive attitude to the guidelines. This is illustrated in the views of a teacher from Kasuku Secondary School (A2: D).
The lack of focus in some educational policy guidelines is an issue that was identified and corroborated by another teacher who expressed it as below:

They (policies) are there although they are general. It would be better if there were specific guidelines on how to handle specific crimes. The penal code is rather general. There is another one that talks about the involvement of students but they don’t talk to what level because in as much as you want to involve the students, we also need to ask ourselves ‘to what extent?’ because the more you liberalize everything (the more the effectiveness goes down) and so sometimes the teacher is left in a dilemma sometimes you have to do what you think is right and I think that is where we are getting trouble. The directions are not clear (Appendix B2: D).

The above cited expression of a teacher respondent does not find authenticity in an approach that entails liberation of the learners. Instead, he is pessimistic as to whether the guidelines in their present state can lead to any meaningful liberation without compromising the authenticity of such an approach. The parent contradiction in this thinking is that a true process of humanization ultimately entails and aims at the liberation of both the oppressed and the oppressor. If that be the case then, school administrators and teachers certainly require some capacity building sessions and conceptual clarity in relation to the process of humanization. If this was done, then the ambivalent expressions cited so far by some teachers would not arise.

The alleged lack of focus in some of the policy guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education is what perhaps led to dismal appreciation of them by some teachers. A dialogue with a deputy principal revealed that:
At the ministry level, there is the Children’s Bill. However, there is need for induction of teachers on how to interpret and implement this bill e.g. the use of guidance and counselling versus the use of corporal punishment and even the usual consultations but you see some teachers do not appreciate this and so when you try to implement some of these things they think you are at crossroads with their welfare. … However, what is really needed is capacity building on the part of the teachers and school administrators regarding the implementation of these policies (Appendix C1: D).

This revelation demonstrates and supports the need for capacity building of teachers. The experience and dilemma of the school administrators in relation to policy guidelines for addressing student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya appears to be a complex matter. This complexity is captured in one Principal’s view about some policy guidelines:

In fact, to say the truth, I think the government has left to the teachers so much work that the teachers, more so, the head teachers have been left confused. For instance, look at the student, he is told you cannot be expelled by the school or by the principal and so that is what they know, so we have only to recommend to the Board which must also wait for the directive to come from the Director of Education or the Permanent Secretary… However, I must say that what the government has done is to develop policies for us and heap all the responsibility to the teachers, and more so, the principals even when we have already been made toothless (Appendix C1: D).

Some school administrators feel frustrated by some of the policy guidelines which have been provided by the Ministry of Education. By perceiving themselves to be ‘toothless’ they appear to be sending the message that they have been disempowered and, possibly, left vulnerable. This may explain why some of the
teachers who responded to the interview are even calling for the reinstatement of caning as illustrated below:

Yes, there are policies like the issue of corporal punishment which was outlawed. In my view, corporal punishment made the students to be hardened…But there are some mistakes which just require instant punishment and so one would still consider using corporal punishment (Appendix B1: D).

In Chapter Four, it was argued that the use of corporal punishment, besides the fact that it was banned in Kenyan schools, is a humiliating experience which makes students feel objectified, hence alienated. The students experience it as a distortion of their process of humanization. It is a dehumanizing experience. This is partly the reason why such an approach generates more discontent. In that same Chapter, a similar situation was presented where an attempt to reintroduce caning in a school in Homa Bay resulted in a violent protest in which a dormitory was burnt down (E. A. Standard 25 July 2002 p.5 col.1-2). It is therefore surprising for some teachers to believe in and suggest the reintroduction of caning. This shows how such teachers still do not appreciate the fundamental causes of the rebellion that emanates from their use of the inhuman approach. If the use of the cane is to be understood as a form of oppression, then such calls depict such school administrators and teachers as those who are experiencing the fear of losing the freedom to oppress. This confirms their feeling of disempowerment as expressed by some of the teachers cited above.

Consequently, it would appear that some school administrators and teachers have never embraced the policy guidelines as an authentic document to apply when
addressing the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. It can equally be argued that, besides the pitfalls of the taskforce recommendations exposed earlier in this Chapter, some policy guidelines on student violence have not been exhaustively clarified to the understanding of some school administrators and teachers. Other than the lack of clarity, some of the school administrators do not take these guidelines seriously as effective means of addressing student violence. Moreover, they similarly appear to have some misgiving concerning the place of some of the policy guidelines in the process of humanization of students. In such a situation, the way forward is to engage in deliberate effort to sensitize them by targeting a more expanded awareness of the processes of dehumanization and humanization. However, any meaningful liberation of school administrators must start with concerted efforts focusing on the liberation of the individual human consciousness on the subject of humanization and dehumanization.

5.4 Towards a Phenomenological Response to Student Violence in Secondary Schools in Kenya

Student violence in Kenyan secondary schools is an enduring problem that has perpetually disturbed educationists. Various efforts, both national (as seen through the work of task forces on student unrest and indiscipline) and individual efforts (as seen in individual academic studies), are testimonies to the appreciation of the magnitude of this phenomenon. Such efforts have attempted to examine the nature and possible causes of student violence and unrest in Kenyan secondary schools. It has therefore been argued in Chapter Four of this study that this is due
to two main reasons. Firstly, the causes of student violence identified by the antecedent efforts are more or less the triggers rather than the root causes. Secondly, the solutions provided for addressing student violence by these efforts are limited in one way or the other. Predominantly, the suggested solutions fall short of targeting the fundamental nature of students as human beings. This presents a dire need for a guiding framework that can provide the contours along which the inquiries into this phenomenon can transcend the triggers of student violence to the more underlying root causes, thereby formulating meaningful solutions to the perennial problem.

Reflections on the various incidences of student violence have revealed that most of it consists in a response to the sources of stimulus which causes these undesirable experiences. It is this students’ interpretation of the stimulus that essentially informs the kind of aggressive and violent response that is physically exhibited as student violence. Besides this pattern, further reflections on incidences of student violence introduce the aspect of the students’ rationalization of their actions in response to the various stimuli, for example, prefects, teachers and school administrators’ actions) and more so, the implications of these actions. Finally, there is the moral aspect which is illustrated by the kinds of decisions and choices students make especially about the course of action through which they seek to come to terms with the reality of the stimulus.
It can therefore be concluded from the foregoing considerations that there are some basic criteria the phenomenon of student violence ought to meet. These are the criteria in terms of which student violence ought to be understood and they include: first, the students’ interpretation of the actions of their teachers, school administrators, prefects and the general school environment; secondly, the nature of response to these actions as experiences after interpretations; thirdly, their relative levels of awareness of their actions and the implications of these actions and fourthly, the fact that they perceive themselves as incomplete yet able to identify the possibilities of transforming and transcending their limitations.

It is the position of this study that these criteria can be formalized into one common view that may provide an explanation of student violence precisely stated as; **students act violently because they are not yet fully human.** The fact that they are not yet fully human finds expression in three ways: Firstly, their actions which depict an apparent deficiency in humanity (dehumanizing acts) as exemplified by wanton destruction of property and even loss of human life all in search of their denied or compromised humanity. Secondly, their protracted quest to become complete with all the freedom, power and knowledge through continuous transformation of any limiting situation and conditions they encounter, real or perceived. Thirdly, the fact that in most of the cases, this desire for completeness by students is often frustrated by the school system hence making it difficult for them to attain either the freedom, knowledge or the power they wish to wield explains the perennial occurrence of the phenomenon of student violence.
Given that the respondents, especially the school administrators and teachers had some misgiving concerning the authenticity of the identified policy guidelines, the researcher sought their views together with those of the students with regard to what ways they thought would be realistic in addressing the phenomenon of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Their views are summarized in Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1 Ways of Addressing Student violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue between students, prefects, teachers and school administrators</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension and Guidance and Counseling</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of corporal punishment (caning)</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing the weaknesses of the education system</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School administrators to be friendly to students</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking legal action against cases such as arsonists</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfillment of promises made to students</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Table above, dialogue as a way of addressing the incidences of student violence appears to be the most preferred both by the students and the school administrators including the teachers. From their qualitative responses, this dialogue was between students and teachers, students and school administrators through their prefects, teachers or a student appointed by the aggrieved students. Despite this preference, some student respondents felt that this was rarely embraced as illustrated in the dialogue with one of them thus;
Also sometimes they can organize a meeting with the administration and then students contribute and say what they would like done. But this only happens on very few occasions (Appendix B5: C).

Some students, particularly those who preferred dialogue and in whose schools it was happening though occasionally, felt that for it to be effective, this dialogue should involve parents as the teachers do not take the students seriously:

For me, to some problems, this approach (dialogue) would work but for others it may not work. But in all the situations, they should involve parents. And it is good to involve parents because otherwise these teachers may not take us serious (Appendix B7: C).

This implies that there are instances where some dialogue is adopted in some of the schools just as a formality and not because of its affirmed authenticity. It could also be the case of a dialogue where one party does not perceive the other one as a subject that has an equally meaningful contribution, and encounter of subjects, but rather an encounter between subjects and objects. This is not dialogue in its true spirit. A true spirit of dialogue enlists the contribution of both parties in equal merit. The more one party, in this case the school administrators, mistrusts the contribution of the other party, the students, the more the students will withdraw their commitment to the dialogue and the entire process degenerates into a mere meeting as a matter of formality. There is therefore need to affirm the fundamentals of dialogue and its place in addressing the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya, since, as it appears, most educational stakeholders are committed to its authenticity.
Suspension and guidance and counselling came second in the respondents’ order of preference. These two, though different in orientation, were put together by the respondents, possibly due to the manner in which they are often applied in such a way that indisciplined students are often first suspended and then on coming back, they are taken through a process of guidance and counselling. A close examination of the qualitative responses on this aspect reveals that the suspension has been mainly recommended for ring leaders particularly in instances of mass action. Nonetheless, there were sentiments to the effect that the effectiveness of guidance and counselling has been compromised by the fact that, in using it, there is always waste of time (Appendix B6: C) as well as the fact that it is hampered by managerial styles of some school administrators:

You see now in our case, the guidance and counselling is hampered by the type of headteacher we have been having. However, if used very well, this can be an effective method to deal with problems of student behaviour (Appendix E1: D).

This view was made in the light of the fact that some school Principals, like in the case of Kobe secondary school, had constrained communication channels in the school thereby fostering tension between students and the teachers. This is exacerbated particularly by using students to spy and report on the teachers thereby making it untenable for the same students to seek guidance and counselling services from these same teachers (See Appendix E1). This situation certainly points to the need to liberate the administrators as part of the humanization process.
This humanization can be pursued in various ways. In the approach proposed in this study, one of its aspects is the conscientization of school administrators on the fundamentals of dialogue and its place in addressing the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. The general situation of the school administrators, teachers and students in relation to addressing the phenomenon of student violence reveals certain aspects that require attention. It is evident that most school administrators prefer dialogue even though some of them have misgiving and misunderstanding about its authenticity in facilitating the process of humanization of students, but administrators and teachers. Dialogue is therefore reportedly preferred though seldom employed. The school administrators therefore have a naïve type of awareness about this approach, a situation that certainly points to the need to liberate them too as part of the humanization process.

The gaps in the school administrators’ knowledge of the authenticity of dialogue need to be bridged if they are to utilize it fully and meaningfully. They therefore require a more expanded awareness on the processes of dehumanization and humanization. For instance, there is need to recognize that dialogue requires mutual trust and recognition of all the parties involved as opposed to some parties not taking others seriously. Further, this dialogue should involve all the parties deemed necessary and relevant such as parents, the teachers, BOM and the PTA members. This can be achieved through some organized seminars for school
administrators and subsequent follow ups during quality assurance and standards visits or even visits by the teachers advisory centre (TAC) tutors.

The second aspect of the proposed approach is by way of resolving the Oppressor-Oppressed contradiction on the part of the students. Indeed, a particular problem that has been established on the part of the students in the foregoing discussion and which must be resolved is that of the oppressor-oppressed duality on the part of the students. As long as the students live in this duality, humanization is impossible. Accordingly, this study proposes a programme or even sessions that can be made part of Life Skills sessions in secondary schools with a specific focus on the students perceived situations of oppression. These sessions can be conducted in two stages:

In the first stage, the sessions should provide a forum for the learners to examine both their consciousness (as the oppressed) and that of their administrators, teachers and prefects (as the oppressors). This initial stage must lay special emphasis on the problem of authorities and systems that are perceived as oppressive in school and on students who suffer this oppression. The sessions must take into account the students’ behaviour, their view of the world, and their values.

At the second stage, these sessions can now be taken a notch higher in more inclusive forums that bring together the students (or their representatives), their
prefects, teachers, administrators and other associated stakeholders in the school. This is a stage that requires dialogue between students and all these stakeholders. This is primarily for mutual authentication of the thoughts of the various stakeholders. The dialogue should have much to do with how to sustain the resolution of the duality on the part of the students as well as the transformation identified structures that support and perpetuate the perceived alienation, absurdity and those that pose an affront to students’ values and freedom to determine themselves. Such a session can probably be moderated by the Area Education Officer (AEO) or any other relevant officer from the County or District Education Office.

The third aspect of the proposed approach is the conscientization of students on the nature of freedom. From the findings of this study, a number of incidences of student violence occurred because of perceived affront to students’ values and freedom. Freedom as used in existential discourse implies openness, readiness to grow, flexibility, and changing in pursuit of greater human values. It entails human capacity to take part in their own development and underlies the human ability to choose. As such, human beings are free to choose among alternatives and therefore have a large role in shaping their destinies. However, with freedom, comes the responsibility for directing human lives and for which human beings must be prepared to take responsibility. In such instances, as mentioned in Chapter Four, students felt aggrieved as they, as human beings, regarded freedom as an indispensable condition for the quest for human completion.
It is in the nature of students as human beings to feel aggrieved because the freedom to make choices is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Article 12-14, it appears from the reflections on the incidences of student violence associated with rights and freedom that the students’ awareness is not adequate, at least in terms of fundamental freedom. Hence, the above suggested forums; there is need for a whole session on interrogating the notion of freedom.

The students should then be encouraged to reflect on their reactions to the alleged denial of freedoms and the associated consequences of such actions. Essentially, as the students increase their awareness of the choices available to them; they also increase their awareness of the consequences (desirable or undesirable) of these choices. As such, they should be challenged to take responsibility for how they choose to live in their world (in this instance, the school). They must be invited to realize that all choices affect others, physically and emotionally or otherwise and to understand that social responsibility results from the interdependencies of individuals. Such sessions must therefore awaken their awareness of the pitfalls of their supposed liberating actions which end up portraying them as oppressors too. The sessions must necessarily aim at helping the students face the anxiety of choosing for themselves and accepting the reality that they are more than mere victims of deterministic forces outside themselves.

The last aspect of the proposed approach is the reconsideration of the purpose of KCSE examinations. A number of incidences of student violence in secondary
schools in Kenya have revolved around the issue of KCSE examinations. KCSE is viewed as the main, if not the only, means that determines the fate of many less privileged students. Failure in KCSE promotes feelings of frustration, anxiety, despair and hopelessness among the candidates. Further, despite KCSE being norm referenced, it has often been used for placement, a purpose it is not suited to serve.

Since it only focuses on the cognitive domain at the expense of the other domains, KCSE candidates with competencies in those other domains such as psychomotor and affective end up feeling wasted and alienated by such an examination system and the whole education system at large. This is often worsened by the fact that this is the single determinant of the rest of the candidates’ lives. In this way, KCSE limits the candidates’ freedom of choice of what to become to only one – to pass or else they will be condemned as failures. The resultant student unrest and violence is essentially a manifestation of the human tendency to seek to transform their world (conditions of existence particularly after their secondary education) and transcend the limitations therein in their search for complete humanness. It is an expression of the students’ search for their place, identity and meaning of their being in the society later after their secondary schooling. Accordingly, to address the problem of student unrest that is associated with KCSE examinations this study recommends that:
While it is time enough to initiate changes in the system of examinations, KNEC must start with a shift in the value system (which is characterized by typologies such as successful and failures), expectations of rewards from alternative routes and a realistic understanding of the value of education. This can be done by lowering the stakes for KCSE examinations. Still on the question of values, the integrity with which examinations are conducted must be upheld since lack of it, as illustrated by the unfortunate incidences such as computer errors in grading the candidates, cancellations of KCSE results and leakages in some centres, only heightens such anxiety hence the absurdity that students protest through their protracted incidences of violence.

Contrary to calls for scraping KCSE examinations, the purpose for which they are administered should be clarified, that is, whether it is for selection or placement or mere evaluation of how far the objectives of secondary education have been achieved. When the purpose is clear, justifiable and agreeable, then the kind of evaluation adopted shall be clearly aligned with the purpose that resonates with students’ lives. Consequently, KCSE must be conducted for purposes that make it to be seen as an occasion for students to establish what one is capable of, good at, worthy of and what one’s achievements are in all domains rather than what they cannot do. It must be conducted in a manner that helps the students to discover the opportunities at their disposal rather than the hopelessness of life after school. It must place the students accordingly other than condemning them to failures in life. Most of all, it must allow the students not only to exercise their freedom of
choice to be what they wish to be but also point to a variety of opportunities aligned to the choices they make to avoid anxiety and hopelessness looming in their lives.

5.5 Summary
The incidences of student violence reflected upon in this study portray students as beings who are able to plan, organize and execute their activities through which they seek full recognition. By so doing, they project their image as agents of their own process of becoming human. So, all efforts must aim at enabling students become subjects who can participate in their own development and make responsible choices as they explore possibilities within their environment that would help them overcome limitations and actualize themselves through the process of humanization. This process should also seek to liberate the school administrators, teachers and other relevant stakeholders of their dehumanizing consciousness too so that mutual harmony within respective school environments is achieved and sustained.

The next chapter summarizes and concludes and makes recommendations following this study.
CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The preceding Chapter has presented a phenomenological perspective of the kind of violence experienced and witnessed in Kenyan secondary schools. Further, the Chapter provided a theoretical guide to inquiry into the phenomenon of student violence. This Chapter provides a summary of the entire study beginning with the outline of Chapter one to Chapter Five on the phenomenological responses to student violence. From this summary, conclusions have been drawn. Finally, recommendations have been made in connection to the study findings and for further research.

6.2 Summary of the Study

Chapter One presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, purpose and significance, limitations and assumptions of the study, the theoretical framework and the operational definitions of some basic terms used in the study. In the background to 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 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 from 1960s and 1970s. Within this period, the occurrences of student violence were relatively peaceful and fewer, to the 1980s. However, in the 1990s to the 2000s, student violence took a new dimension involving wanton destruction of school property, mass rapes and worst of all, loss of human life. It is therefore against this background that the study sought to interrogate this phenomenon as well as the nature and character of the antecedent 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 targeted in this study is essentially both conceptual and ontological in nature. It is conceptual in nature because of the apparent lack of clarity on the concept of student violence while at the same time, a problem of students’ behaviour in relation to the nature of their essence and existence in secondary schools in a bid to establish its underlying foundations. Stated as a hypothesis, the problem assumes that the antecedent efforts have neither provided a clear understanding of the concept of violence nor have they gotten to the root cause of the problem. Accordingly, the problem assumes that a clear understanding of the concept of violence and seeking to go beyond the causes identified by the antecedent efforts can lead to the more underlying root causes. 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 the concept 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 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 to mitigate the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya and, if possible, in other institutions of learning by enabling students, to adopt more humane ways in conflict resolutions. Nevertheless, it is noted that the study is limited to violence as occurs in secondary schools in Kenya. As such, any generalization to the kind of student violence occurring at other levels such as primary schools, middle level colleges and universities should be approached with considerable caution.

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. Existentialist themes, namely: existence and essence, the absurdity of human life as well as individual freedom and responsibility are discussed here as the basic tools for understanding human experiences in terms of which the experiences of students have been interpreted. 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 in 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
phenomenologists 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 conceptual review and a general review outlining some
empirical studies carried out on student violence has been done. With regard to
the concept of violence, two main approaches have been identified. These are the
essentialist approach and the typological approach. The essentialist approach
focuses on the features considered essential in conceptualizing violence. The
typological approach uses names that seek to reveal the nature of violence as an
explanatory strategy: for example, domestic violence, ethnic violence, gender
violence and student violence. With regard to the empirical studies carried out so
far on student violence, an outline on issues of indiscipline in schools in Kenya
has been drawn. The Chapter has come up with the observation 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 this study sought
to bridge.
With regard to the causes identified in many of these studies, the Chapter has noted that these causes are mere triggers rather than the fundamental causes, hence, the justification for a deeper examination of the nature of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. Studies carried out on specific aspects related to student violence and unrest including issues of leadership or management styles. Causes of student violence and unrest and the strategies used in addressing the problem in secondary schools in Kenya have also been reviewed. In most of these studies, there is the apparent lack of deeper reflection on these specific issues to reveal the underlying causes of student unrest. The Chapter has also reviewed the theories that explain violence in terms of how it is generated as well as theories of conflict resolution including the Frustration-Aggression theory, the Social Learning theory, the Instinct theory, the Drive theory, and the theories of violence as therapy by Frantz Fanon and Paulo Frere’s dehumanization theory of violence.

Chapter Three presents the philosophical methods of investigation namely: the conceptual analysis, the phenomenological analysis and the dialectical method. These methods have been described and justified showing their relevance to the study and how they have been applied. The documentary analysis, though not a philosophical method (in a strict sense), has been described showing its purpose for sorting out and identifying the documents that were found critical to this study. These include taskforce reports, media reports on student violence and statistical reports the same from the Ministry of Education Resource Centre. It has been shown that it was necessary to use a combination of these methods due to the complex nature of the problem of student violence. This combination has
proved that each of the methods was complementary rather than contradictory to the purpose of the study.

Chapter Four presents the analysis of ‘lived’ experiences of the students, the teachers, Principals of some secondary schools as well as other relevant educational stakeholders who have been in the search for the root causes of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. This analysis was premised on the basic assumption that the fundamental causes are ultimately located in the students’ experiences and living conditions in school. Yet, antecedent efforts have not delved deep enough into these incidences as to get to the fundamental causes. This analysis flows along six main sections, namely: power and authority, the prefect system, school rules and regulations, punishment in schools, rights and freedom and K.C.S.E examinations. 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 identification of three main 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.

Chapter Five presents the phenomenological response to student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. It begins with some critical reflections on the
selected taskforce reports on student unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya thus: the Sagini Taskforce Report of 1991, the Macharia Taskforce Report of 2000 and the Wangai Taskforce Report of 2001. Two other reports - the Kirima Taskforce Report of 1995 and the Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Education of 2008 were never published and so were not available for scrutiny. Reference was however made to extracts from the unpublished Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Education of 2008. These reflections aimed at establishing why recommendations made by these taskforces have not been able to mitigate this problem. The reflections then revealed some weaknesses in these reports including the fact that most of the recommendations fell short of targeting the fundamental causes of student violence. Instead, they just focused on mere triggers.

This Chapter generally depicts student violence as essentially consisting in dehumanization by foregrounding the experiences of this as the root cause of student violence. Consequently, humanization has been argued to be the 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 some suggestions. These include: conscientization of school administrators on the fundamentals of dialogue and its place in addressing the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya, resolution of the oppressor-oppressed contradiction on the part of the
students, conscientization of students on the nature of freedom and the reconsideration of the purpose of KCSE examinations.

6.3 Conclusions of the Study

This study sought to attain four main objectives, namely: to explicate the concept of student violence; to analyze some selected specific cases or incidences of violence in Kenyan secondary schools in terms of experiences of those involved; to identify the fundamental causes of conflict (unrest/violence) and to provide a philosophical reflection and solution to unrest and violence in Kenyan secondary schools. Based on these four objectives and the associated findings, this study drew the following conclusions:

On the concept of student violence, this study concludes that student acts are construed as constituting student violence when:

(a) they are intended/purposed;
(b) involve the use of force or other (psychological) forms of influence;
(c) result in some harm, infringement or violation and;
(d) there is recognition of some moral responsibility of the undertaken acts.

Arising from these conditions, student violence can therefore be defined thus: the intentional use of force or other forms of influence by students to inflict harm to another person against the wish of the target.
As earlier mentioned, the study sought to take an alternative approach from the conventional ones adopted in taskforces on student violence and unrest by analyzing the incidences of violence in Kenyan secondary schools in terms of ‘lived’ experiences of the students, involved in the incidences. The students’ experiences vis-a-vis, the acts of the school principals, teachers and prefects were analyzed. It was then noted that the students experience humiliation, oppression, alienation, disempowerment, denial of rights and freedom, anxiety, hopelessness and disillusionment (absurdity), all of which engender dehumanization. In this regard, the study concludes that these are the fundamental experiences that account for the occurrences of student violence. They must therefore be targeted in addressing the problem of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools. Otherwise, it is bound to recur.

From the reflections on the general causes of student unrest and violence that was done within the framework of the existential phenomenologists’ concept of human nature, this 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. Essentially, the reflections
carried out on the phenomenon of student violence attributed it to the experience of dehumanization on the part of the students. 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.

6.4 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.

6.4.1 Recommendations from the Study

This study was conceptualized as a contribution to the strengthening of the existing policy guidelines for addressing the phenomenon of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools. In line with the objectives of the study the following recommendations have been made:

(a) Analyses of incidents of violence reflected upon in this study have revealed that the concept of student violence, especially as an instance of dehumanization, is such that it afflicts both the students and the school administrators (including the Principals and the teachers) as well as other school stakeholders. In this regard, while advocating for conscientization of students in relation to matters of their violent actions, authentic policy
guidelines should also target the school administrators and the teachers in this process. This is because, and as seen in Chapter Two, while some of the types of violence may appear to be abstract, they nonetheless promote experiences of dehumanization and as such, the school administrators may perpetrate them without knowing or appreciating their dehumanizing effect on students.

(b) The guiding principle in this study has been that the students’ actions, as human beings, are greatly influenced by their ‘lived’ experiences. With regard to this study, experiences such as humiliation, oppression, alienation, disempowerment, denial of rights and freedom, anxiety, hopelessness and disillusionment (absurdity) engender dehumanization. Hence, it is recommended in this study that efforts to address the problem of student violence must be based on the students’ established ‘lived’ experiences. At the same time, such efforts must seek fundamentally to address these experiences as they are the ones that ultimately account for the occurrences of student violence. Otherwise, this phenomenon is bound to recur.

(c) The problem of student violence has persisted on the Kenyan educational scene despite various national efforts to address it. Reflections on the previous taskforce efforts have revealed that the causes of student unrest and violence commonly identified are the general ones and not the root causes. Subsequently, the recommendations made tend to target these general causes and not the root causes. In this regard, it is recommended that an authentic analysis of student violence and unrest must be done within the framework of human nature. It is by so doing that the causes identified will reflect the
fundamental nature of students as human beings and the associated recommendations will equally recognize this significant fact.

(d) The fundamental cause of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya was identified as the experience of dehumanization on the part of the students. The solution to this was found to be the process of humanization. This essentially consists in the liberation of not only the students as the oppressed (in the context of this study) but also the school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders, as oppressors. To realize this, this study recommends that the efforts (which would include policy guidelines) for addressing the phenomenon of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools must entail:

(i) the conscientization of school administrators on the fundamentals of dialogue and its place in addressing the problem of student violence in secondary schools in Kenya;

(ii) the resolution of the oppressor-oppressed contradiction on the part of the students before bringing them into dialogue with the other stakeholders in education such as the schools administrators and teachers;

(iii) the conscientization of students on the nature of freedom; and

(iv) the reconsideration of the purpose of KCSE examination (or education for that matter).

(e) Dehumanization appears to be a problem that afflicts many people. For instance, whenever secondary school students feel aggrieved (hence
dehumanized), it appears that the immediate reaction is to seek retribution, possibly and, as Fanon (1964) would justify, purge themselves of their bitter feelings and emotions. This they do, by disregarding the fact that they compromise the dignity and self-respect of the very people they are targeting (or dehumanizing). Dehumanization through violence has therefore become a cyclical problem. It has therefore been recommended in this study that the aims of education must be reviewed to revitalize the place of certain fundamental values such as respect for human dignity such that they become part of the students’ consciousness for the rest of their lives.

6.4.2 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. These areas include the following:

(a) This study sought to explain the notion, causes and the ways of addressing student violence in Kenyan secondary schools. The study was however limited to a few schools selected from at least five out of the eight of the previous provinces of Kenya and backed up by media reports and data from the Ministry of Education. This implies that the findings, though reflecting fundamental aspects of human nature, can be generalized only with considerable caution, to all the other secondary schools in Kenya where the phenomenon of student violence has occurred or will occur. In this regard, this
study recommends that more studies of this nature be carried out on a larger scale, if possible at a national level, so as to further reinforce the applicability of the approach used together with the conclusions so far made.

(b) This study has explored the causes of student violence within the framework of the existential phenomenologists’ concept of human nature. However, in their reflections on the same phenomenon, other scholars, including Chege (2006) and Kariuki (2001) have alluded to the fact that the violent struggles witnessed in secondary schools in Kenya are in fact rooted in gender relations and, more so, in the gender notion of masculinity as an essential aspect of the patriarchal order. However, not much scholarly attention has been focused on this position particularly with regard to student violence in secondary schools in Kenya. It is therefore recommended in this study that more detailed studies be carried out within this suggested framework to explore the certainty with which this position can be viewed as complementing the existing acceptable explanatory frameworks for understanding the phenomenon of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools.
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APPENDIX: I

DIALOGUE SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Introduction
My name is Francis Likoye a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on student indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools. This school was selected for me because of the recent happenings in relation to indiscipline. So I kindly request that you share with me your experiences on the issue of indiscipline. What about you?

1. Please give a brief account of your school (your experiences about the school e.g. for how long have you been in this school in this current position, school academic performance, job satisfaction on the part of the teachers, student discipline e.t.c).
2. Have you ever experienced any indiscipline problems in this school? Please specify.
3. What was the last time you experienced student unrest (probe: what their grievances were, how they acted and how the issue was addressed).
4. What according to you brings about student unrest and unrest?
5. How do you think students should act in situations where they feel they are aggrieved?
6. How have you been addressing such situations of unrest and violence if and when they occur? (Probe for what has worked/not worked).
7. What approach/strategies do you think are viable in addressing issues of student violence unrest and violence in secondary schools in Kenya even for the future?
8. Are you aware of some of the policies the government has put in place to address the problems of student unrest and indiscipline like the ones in this school? (Probe for which specific ones, their view about them i.e. whether effective or otherwise).
9. How do you feel when your students go on strike/rampage?

Thank you.
APPENDIX: II

DIALOGUE SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

Introduction
My name is Francis Likoye a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on student indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools. This school was selected for me because of the recent happenings in relation to indiscipline. So I kindly request that you share with me your experiences on the issue of indiscipline. What about you?

1. For how long have you been in this school?
2. Apart from this school, have you been teaching elsewhere? (Please explain).
3. Has there been any problem of student unrest and indiscipline in this school (probe for when last it occurred and how it occurred).
4. How have you been addressing such situations of unrest and violence if and when they occur in this school (probe on his/her opinion of whether or not the ways of addressing it have been effective)?
5. Are you aware of any government policies for addressing the problems of student unrest and indiscipline like the ones in this school? (Probe for which specific ones, their view about them i.e. whether effective or otherwise).
6. What recommendations do you make concerning how well to deal with this problem of student unrest and violence?
7. How do you feel when your students go on strike/rampage?

Thank you.
APPENDIX: III

DIALOGUE SCHEDULE FOR PREFECTS

Introduction
My name is Francis Likoye a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on student indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools. This school was selected for me because of the recent happenings in relation to indiscipline. So I kindly request that you share with me your experiences on the issue of indiscipline. What about you?

1. When were you appointed as a prefect in this school

2. How do you find your work as a prefect?

3. How are prefects chosen in this school? Were you also chosen in the same way?

4. What is your role as a prefect in this school? (Probe for specifics e.g. if discipline, then what is their role concerning discipline?)

5. What is your experience in playing this role?

6. How have students been responding to the challenges they face here in school?

7. How should students address their problems in this school whenever they occur?

8. As a prefect, how do you feel when students go on rampage?

Thank you.
APPENDIX: IV

DIALOGUE SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

Introduction
My name is Francis Likoye a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on student indiscipline in Kenyan secondary schools. This school was selected for me because of the recent happenings in relation to indiscipline. So I kindly request that you share with me your experiences on the issue of indiscipline. What about you?

1. When were you admitted in this school?
2. As a student, how do you find this school?
3. What are some of the problems you encounter in this school?
4. Whenever you encounter these problems, how do you address them?
5. How do you find the prefect system in this school? (Probe for how they are appointed to their respective positions and the student’s view of whether the prefect system is good or otherwise).
6. Has your school experienced any case of mass indiscipline? (Probe for its nature and the kinds of actions exhibited by the students. If violent, probe for why they found violence necessary).
7. How do you feel about using violence to solve your problems?
8. What are some of the measures the school employs when dealing with school unrest?
9. How do you feel about the measures taken when you (as students) go on rampage?

Thank you.
### APPENDIX: V - TIME PLAN

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## APPENDIX: VI - RESEARCH BUDGET

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<td>Data Collection</td>
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APPENDIX: VI - RESEARCH PERMIT

NCST/RCD/14/012/1121

Likoye Malenya Francis
Kenyatta University
P.O Box 43844-00100
Nairobi

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application dated 6th February 2012 for authority to carry out research on “The phenomenon of student violence in the context of student unrest in Kenyan secondary schools”, I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in selected public schools for a period of ending 31st December 2012.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioners and the District Education Officers of the selected provinces before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf of the research/thesis to our office.

Said Hussein
For: Secretary/CEO

Copy to:

The District Commissioners
The District Education Officers
Selected Provinces

“The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development.”
Introduction to Appendices

In the year 2012 October to November, I conducted a study in 5 main regions in Kenya. These are the Central region, Eastern region, Nyanza region, Western region and Coastal region. In these regions, I visited at least two schools which had experienced some student unrest or student violence within the year or the previous one. The study utilized dialogue schedules and in each of the schools visited; views were sought from three main stakeholders namely, the students, prefects, teachers and administrators (Principal/Deputy principal/Senior teacher). These are stakeholders who had first-hand experience in relation to the occurrence of student violence as opposed to reporting on other people’s experiences and actions.

However, not all the stakeholders interviewed were articulate enough to give such descriptive accounts of their own lived experiences of student violence. There were those who appeared detached from such occurrences and thus their accounts devoid of such streams of consciousness of their personal lived experiences. Some were totally uninterested in talking about their experiences regarding the incidences that had occurred in their schools possibly for fear of victimization despite the assurance that the information would be treated confidentially and will be restricted to the purpose of the research.

Accordingly, only, 22 texts were selected as clear accounts of personal lived experiences in the context of student violence from those stakeholders the researcher interviewed. These texts which were voice-recorded using a digital recorder, particularly in cases where informed consent was given, were therefore transcribed, edited and then presented as they appear in the appendices for ease of reference in the course of reflections. Each set of appendices (A or B or C…) has brief background information of the school and its general context within which student violence occurred. For purposes of ensuring confidentiality, the names of the schools as they appear in the appendices are all pseudonyms.
Appendix A1 (Kasuku Secondary School teacher 1)

Background
Whereas this school had been experiencing some student unrest, the most recent one relative to the time I visited the school was about resisting a newly posted principal. Students in this school had heard some information concerning the incoming principal painting a very negative picture of her. And so the students tried to resist both the going away of their sitting principal and the incoming of the new principal culminating into a situation of unrest for which the students were sent home for one week before reporting back for interrogation and the subsequent disciplinary measures.

This respondent was a male teacher in the school at the time the researcher visited it. At that time he had been teaching in the school for five years. He is a teacher of History and Kiswahili. Before coming to this school, he had taught in two other schools; one in Imenti South and another one in Machakos. He had been teaching for nine years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

In the year 2008, there was a strike that erupted but it is over. I understand that sometimes students would match out of class then again things cool down. I understand that it was the issue of the student complaining that the principal who had just come to the school had assisted the students in passing because in the regime of the former principal, there was rampant cheating and then when the other one came in 2005, she did not want that to happen. She wanted it to get finished and so those students who were there did not like it. I think she resisted the cheating and when the results came out, I think early March that is when they went on rampage claiming that the principal did not like them to pass. That was their main grievance. And of course the students were saying it openly... that she doesn't like us, she did not help us... such things. Those other things were just minor.

This year there has been such. When the current principal was coming, you know the former one was transferred. The main reason was local politics. They did not like the way she was operating, anyway. For instance, they complained that she was not giving out money and she was strict on teaching. You know people are used to money. Kama ni wakubwa wakija hapa lazima wapewe kitu. And this is school money. So they were complaining that she does not give tenders to the locals, while the locals do not apply. So they expect her to just give them favours they do not want to pay just... is it 1000 or 2000 shillings so that they get it the competitive way. They wanted it freely and yet those who applied did not meet the requirements. It is only a few and they started complaining that they do not get tenders and such things.

Indeed, there was a student who said that she was in Maua. She then left in unclear circumstances ... it is like she was ejected out of school. She went to Marsabit. In fact the way she was ejected out of Marsabit,
I understand even her things were thrown onto the road. Then she went to… she had just gone to a school in Tigania and she went for a term and then that is when she came here. Remember, they expressed their grievances and I think from there, they felt their grievances had not been addressed. So, as they left they were told to come back to school. So, the DEO’s officials came as we were having a meeting, collected their belongings and left. I understand that they said ‘ikiwa wameshindwa kumfukuza wacha sisi twende, tumuache.’ So, that is what happened. After a week, they were a strike again. The same issues are what they said… the problem. ‘we don’t want her’. Hey said she is not a performer. She sends students for fees, the immorality issue; they said she is a drunkard.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

I think they were right. Actually, her administrative style is a crooked way… nitatumia Kiswahili… kugonganisha vichwa… that is how it started. Then this one, kama ni non-teaching, anawaambia ‘kwa nini hamkupewa this and this?’ “mambo yenu itakuwa mzuri”. Then without consulting the accountant she tells them, ‘we are going to raise your salary’. In fact time has come where working with few people is the order of the day. Here there is no policy. Even when there is one staff meeting, we can run for a term without even a plan. That one is totally missing. Inconsistency, I am saying this, tomorrow I will say something else. That is what is causing all this. Sometimes mimi I am a HOD but we differ and I tell her ‘how do we work this way… and it is not only me. In fact it is just now that we are learning that the students were right.

C. Addressing Student Violence

To address this problem, I understand that the students were sent away for some time and when they came back, they were screened and the ring leaders were suspended. I think most of those that were suspended were form fours and so they just came back after a full term to do their exams. In this later instance the students started going home, so that when we were in a meeting and we came out we realized our students were gone... there were less than 100 students that was when the DEO came and officially put the school on suspension for a week.

Remember, the students expressed their grievances and I think from there, they felt their grievances had not been addressed. So, as they left they were told to come back to school. So, the DEO’s officials came as we were having a meeting, collected their belongings and left. I understand that they said ‘ikiwa wameshindwa kumfukuza wacha sisi twende, tumuache.’ So, that is what happened. After a week, they went on strike again. The same issues are what they said... the problem. ‘we don’t want her’. Hey said she is not a performer. She sends students for fees, the immorality issue; they said she is a drunkard.
However, in my opinion, sometimes we as teachers or even the society have a problem. Like that one, we had already expressed our sentiment then suddenly they went to the DEO’s office from here and then they felt that their grievances cannot be addressed, as they were coming back, already we take them as offenders. We do not even give them an opportunity to express themselves and when they said the truth, we were not ready to listen to the truth and deal with it. And that is the major problem. I think, people, in fact, everybody needs to be listened to, although there are elements that portray lack of reason but they are few. But where it is involving a large group it means there is a problem somewhere and then when you listen to it, you should take time understand what is causing all this. So, that one was not an adequate way. We should have listened to them. According to teachers and all that was analyzed in the whole thing, there was nothing serious to punish the students about. They were expressing themselves. Do you punish them when they are expressing themselves? But then, I was there and I recommended that we needed to talk to them.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

In terms of policies, the best one, you know, the ones that they are saying ... I would not advocate... we are Africans. We are yet to get to that level. We have situations and we have children here... child does not even respect the parent. He is mischievous and so we may need some corporal punishment although kuna some caning ambayo ni ya kuumiza although there are some issues that call for caning...

There is also counselling. This one works, but other times it doesn’t work. Here it works to a very low extent. I am talking now as a counsellor. When the former principal was here, I think that is the method that she employed mpaka nilikuwa ninamuenjoy 'you talk and talk and talk mpaka we are used to it. Ni kuongea tu.' In fact, that is the method she used and tried and tried until you felt what she was doing nothing... but kuna wale watasikia... but hapa it doesn’t work.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

As I had indicated earlier, the best way to deal with a problem like the one we had, I recommend that we just talk to them.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students go on rampage, the general feeling is that there is misbehaviour. Well, I have never had a situation where there is destruction but where the students are just expressing themselves. And I think that is where I agree with them. If you have nowhere to address your grievances you look for another forum but where there is destruction of property, I think I have not had that but it is not good.
G. Any Further Comments

I would like to say this issue of involving some politicians into schools I think it is not working. This issue of ‘our own’ instead of looking at the competence of a person is ruining our schools. The issue of recycling, in fact now, things are becoming worse. The sponsor is also a problem because they want things done their way.
Appendix A2 (Kasuku Secondary School teacher 2)

**Background**
This respondent was a female teacher in the school. At the time the researcher visited it this teacher had been teaching in the school for five years. She is a teacher of Biology and Chemistry. Before coming to this school, she had taught in at St. Paul’s here in Maua even though it is no longer there because it has been turned into a college, a P1 college.

A. **Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline**

Well where I was there wasn’t many problems but here there have been some problems at least 3-4 times. But in most cases what we have heard here are just about something small but not addressed. The students were resisting the principal, that is, this one here, they were protesting that they don’t want her and that is why they went on strike and there was unrest. But what the students did is that they screamed the whole night and in the morning, threw stones although never broke anything. They walked out of the school and went to the DEO’s office to present their complaints. Ideally, the students never knew the principle but they relied on hearsay from people who knew her land they were saying how she performs, she is like this, she is like that and so on. Remember the relationship between the students and the former principal was good and even though academically we were just there but sometimes improving because the previous year we had improved from 5.3 to 6.0

B. **Grievances and their Genuineness**

Of course, the issue was that these students had heard a lot of bad things about this principal, generally how she is a bad administrator. But in my view, I do not think the students’ grievances were genuine. You see now they were reacting about someone they do not know or never seen, not given her time to work with you and see whether what you were told is true or otherwise. In fact, some of the things were things which cannot even be true, like you could see some girls writing that she is a devil worshipper, mwingine anasema ni mchawi (another one says she is a witch) and things like those. Actually, we felt that this was just the fear of that change of leadership. They were actually just resisting change and that was it.

C. **Addressing Student Violence**

They were sent home for about 14 days or so. And when they came back, they were given a questionnaire to outline their grievances, why they went on strike and then we discussed the questionnaires including all the responses to each question they were asked and that was it.

D. **Policies on Student Indiscipline**

I think there are some policies but I have not taken time to go through it. I know there is even though it does not happen here in that big way but at least we do group counselling, sometimes individual
counselling and things like that. However, guidance and counselling is very poor here and I think it is mainly because of lack of expertise.

E. Recommendations on how to Address Student Violence

According to me, there is only one solution to this problem, that is, the leaders, that is teachers and the leaders in education sector must learn to listen to students’ problems and solve them once and for all. Usually, problems of students are never listened to, they are never addressed even when they have a point nobody listens to them. In fact no one has ever listened to a student here. Always what normally happens in most of the schools is that they are threatened a few are sent home because I have seen in other cases, not necessarily in our school where students are right, they have been give bad food, they tolerate it for, let us say, a term, then they react. After reacting, instead of addressing the issue of bad food, they are threatened and the situation is even never even corrected, it is corrected for a short while and it comes back again.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

Whenever students go on rampage, I feel bad and sad. You don’t feel good. Of course there is that anger especially when students are going on strike for no reason. Well, it is not always that the students are right, in most cases they are wrong. Sometimes when there are mocks, like there was a rumour that the mocks will be converted into KCSE results and they did everything to disrupt the mocks, that was in 2008 and even now that notion is still there in the students. They believe their results in mock determine what they get in KCSE. So I feel bad. And so I feel like best thing is to strengthen the guidance and counselling of the students. It is the only solution rather than punishment being sent home and things like those.

G. Any Further Comments

I wish to observe that unfortunately, some teachers do not relate well with the head teacher. For instance, recently the deputy head teacher punished another girl, then the girl went to the head teacher and you see she had done something like he had been beaten, a form of tattooing, so she told the head teacher then somehow the principal wanted to insult the deputy before the students. In other words, the head teacher was trying to incite the students because the deputy had punished this girl and the girl goes to report to the head teacher. But about relationship between teachers and students, according to me it is very ok. I don’t see any problem.
Appendix A3 (Kasuku Secondary School prefect 1)

Background
This respondent was a female prefect in the school, the Computer library prefect. At the time the researcher visited this school, this prefect was in Form 3. She was appointed as the Computer library prefect in the year 2012.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

There was some incidence of unrest early this year when the principal was changed; I mean when the current principal came in, there was a strike because the students were opposing the coming of this new principal. So the students screamed throughout the night. You see when they heard the rumour that the former principal was leaving, they went and surrounded her house to stop her from going then later she came to the assembly to say that she was leaving that week and that the new principal came on parade and said ‘good morning’ then the students started screaming and walking away to the DC’s office to take their complaints and after that they went home.

Before the day they were going to the DCs office, they had talked to the people in that office, they had talked to them that the new principal will not come. But on Friday when the students went there they were still claiming that the new principal had not come and yet the property of the new principal had been brought to the principal’s house. So they could not listen to the case any longer so they told us to go back to school and you see they had adapted to telling us to go back to school and the case will be solved. However, we decided otherwise to go home because their grievances had not been addressed. We stayed home for one week and then we were recalled over the radio.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

According to some students in this school coming from her locality and some who know the school she was teaching before coming here, she is a devil worshipper. And students who come from where she comes from are the ones who came to tell others that way. But again remember even when the students went to the DC’s office, the officers there could not listen to the case any longer so they told us to go back to school and you see they had adapted to telling us to go back to school and the case will be solved. However, concerning the genuineness of these allegations, I would say these claims were not genuine because you cannot prove, even when you are told to prove, you cannot.

C. Addressing Student Violence

We were accompanied by our parents then given a questionnaire and we were to answer all those questions. The questions were like ‘who started the strike? What made you strike, what were the grievances that led you to strike?’ then the questionnaires were analyzed by the administration. But now
they did not get anything because we were asked who started the strike and we said ‘Nobody’, what were the grievances? We said ‘nothing’. And we said so because it is obvious that if you say anything you will be victimized. Because if you know somebody who started the strike, you write a name of a girl, she will be given expulsion. As for the reasons why we went on strike, we had said we did not want the new principal but nobody listened to us. Eventually, nobody was suspended.

D. Selection of Prefects

In this school, prefects are chosen by the students in such a way that the class teacher comes with a paper written on the entire prefect positions in the school then there is a way which every student is asked who they want in what position. So the one who becomes popular on a given position is the one who is chosen. In choosing among the suggested names the teachers consider discipline of those mentioned and discuss the discipline of those candidates. However, if you have ever been given a suspension or you have ever been caught in crime at school or fighting, interfering with school property, you cannot be given an opportunity to be a prefect in the school.

E. Role and General Experience as a Prefect in Maintaining Discipline

My role as a prefect is to manage and control the activities that go on in the computer room and the general discipline of the students in this school. And I have to supervise everything like cleaning which is going on in the school, the meals teachers are being served from the kitchen. I am the one to control the students in everything that they do. For example, in the dining hall, I am supposed to make sure that after every meal there is a class that will clean the dining hall after everything and it is usually one week per class and so they must ensure that all the dishes have been washed, the tables have been cleaned and the whole dining hall is washed. So as a prefect, I am supposed to report all the indiscipline cases to the teachers and not to cover up any and so one should inform the teachers of as all the cases that occur when they are not around. These may include fighting over just small things such as home affairs; others fight over school affairs, like that. You see some start their discussions at home, then they go and discuss them with other students from other communities and when the owner of that issue hears it from another student, it becomes a problem. They start insulting each other calling each other a rumour monger hence leading to a fight.

But being a prefect is tough. This is because it takes a lot of time to correct people who don’t care about you or understand you. There are some who will hear the correction and correct but others will hear and just ignore. Most of them are ones who will hear, take it just for a short time and then they ignore it again. Actually, they just ignore you and take you for granted. There are some who will listen to you like
Form ones and Form twos but when it comes to your classmates, they take you just as usual - for granted. Like the classmates, they are very much used to me, as in we started form one with them, they understand me and I understand them so everything I tell them they take it as a joke.

Another challenge is that sometimes when a girl is sleeping in class, the principal gives you the role to wake that girl up. But you see it is like she does not know why she came to school. So when the principal comes she asks you why the girl is sleeping. So you see when somebody makes a mistake I am the one who should answer. Therefore, most of my reading time is taken up. Sometimes you find that all the students are walking when they are supposed to be running so when the principal comes, she asks you for the list of those who are walking and she does not even make a point of punishing the students but she wants you to tell her who is walking.

F. Recommendations on how to Address Student Violence

I would say, if it is a problem with the kitchen, they need to talk to the cateress, if it’s a problem with the school compound then you need to address it with the prefects then the prefects take it to the teachers who will address them. Again like in the dining hall, if the cateress does not talk to the students or the prefects to address it then we will get the opportunity to take the matter to the principal and the principal will handle that case.

G. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students are involved in a situation of mass indiscipline, of course we as the prefects will be asked so many questions like, you are the one to answer most of the cases and you are held responsible for so many things. And because you are the one to be blamed, you feel that you are the one who did not take good care of the situation.
Appendix A4 (Kasuku Secondary School prefect 2)

Background
This respondent was a female prefect in the school. She was the school time keeper. At the time the researcher visited this school, this prefect was in Form 3. She was appointed as the school time keeper in the year 2012.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

There was one incidence of student unrest in first term. The issue was that they did not like the principal who had been brought in. The students knew many bad things about her. You know they heard that when she comes she will be behaving like she did in the other schools she had been to. So when she came the students resisted and now the prefects together with the teacher were trying to calm down the students.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The students did not like the principal who had been brought since they had heard some negative things about her giving them the impression that she was a bad administrator. But you see they were just reacting to what they had been told and yet they had not seen the principal do those things. Sometimes there is unrest because of lack of water and when there is lack of water meals delay and you are in class, you are hungry; you cannot read... sometimes like when you want to ask for something you are not allowed to enter the staffroom. You ask from outside, I don’t see anything wrong ... they can even allow students to get in.

C. Addressing Student Violence

It got to a time where even the DC and other leaders were called to talk to the students, they talked to them and the students were just like they don’t want to hear about it... then we waited for like a week and then when the new principal came to the assembly, I don’t know, and the students were just running helter skelter and we just got out of the school and went to the DC’s place but at least the teachers and the students were encouraged not to damage anything. So we went and talked to the DC of this place and then they were like they just wanted to go home and the matter be settled while at home. And I think the way the matter was addressed was right because I don’t see anything bad about her for the last time she has been here... I think the students had it wrong.

D. Selection of Prefects

The teachers will sit with the other Board of prefects. We discuss maybe if the prefect say they have the potential to be prefects, then they are listed then the teachers sit down and look at those with the potential to become prefects maybe they have good morals, courageous and such things. In general, they go in classes asking students about their views. The ones they want to appoint. So, in general, teachers...
ask the students to propose theirs and then the teachers discuss the list. But they involve the head girl, the class prefects and other various prefects.

**E. Role and General Experience as a Prefect in Maintaining Discipline**

As a time keeper, I make sure that classes are well attended. When it rings, maybe they will be there in five or six minutes after. And for the school in general, when a student is on the wrong or maybe I find a place is not cleaned, I call the prefect concerned and... like if it is the compound we just collect the litter or something like that... you just go and help the students when they are doing their cleaning.

However, working as a prefect in this school is challenging. You may tell a student to do something and then she retorts back at you... you know you do not have to get annoyed though it is a bit challenging. Sometimes when you are the prefect on duty, you get a hell of time because the teacher is always coming to you that cleaning has not been done in this place and such...

**F. Recommendations on how to Address Student Violence**

In my view, when there is a problem, we can call a meeting then maybe, because we are meeting at the principal’s then maybe at the administration block then we discuss together as students or maybe the issue is given to the prefects and we hand it to administration.

**G. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence**

Personally and even as a prefect, we are also students like others. Now if it is something that needs us to intervene, to tell the students ‘let us do this, maybe the teachers will hear us out’. Maybe we can, as a prefect can take that chance to tell them, we can present to the teachers. I also feel as a failure because maybe something bad has happened and you couldn’t control, you know you feel like you didn’t perform as expected.
Appendix A5 (Kasuku Secondary School student 1)

Background
This respondent was a female student at this school. She was admitted in this school in 2011. At the time the researcher visited this school, this student was in Form 2.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

In this school, students, they behave well at times but at times they lose their mind and start behaving like I don’t know what. But I think these students, we are very good students. With the help of our teachers, when they punish us we see it like they are doing very good. They are trying to make us disciplined students. But we are indiscipline at times. For example, when we go for lunch, supper or for break, now you see the cateress telling the students ‘please make a good line here’. But some students come booing the cateress and disorganizing the line and they start picking food anyhow even making the cateress sick. And the form four students are really giving each one of us a hell of time. For example, they make too much noise in the school.

Now, early this year, there was a strike. During the strike, I think when I was in my first term of form two when this principal came; I think the students did not like her. You see there were some students who came and told us ‘Ah, this principal, we know all about her. She is a bad principal, she will make us even fail the more. And so we believed them and when she came to parade we booed her and said ‘we need our principal back’. Then we left to go to the DC to complain. Actually, we wanted our former principal, to come and continue and this one to go back to where she had been told, by the way I don’t come from this area, but the way they make it sound, it is like ‘this principal, you know, she is a very bad woman’ so when we see her we think she is a very bad woman.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

As I said, the students did not like this principal because of what they had heard about her. But again they found it necessary to act violently so that the DC can take in mind that these students are serious and they seriously want the principal out of the school. Also, you see you may fear but when you are a crowd you get courage. You know the head teacher cannot suspend the whole school to go at home and so you say ‘Ah, gosh! You are with me, come along!’ you know you are not worried when you are a crowd but when you are alone; you cannot go to the principal’s office and start booing at her. But by bad luck, it did not work their way and so she is still in the school. All the same, we have started to like her and we are generally trying to cope up with her.
C. Addressing Student Violence

For that one, we were suspended, went home for two weeks and when we came back, we were given papers with some questions to answer like ‘who started the strike’ but you know we cannot say that so and so is the one who started the strike, no. But we apologized and said we won’t repeat it. But I must say that we were not satisfied with the way this matter was addressed. You see the first few weeks after the suspension, we still were like ‘no, these teachers are not serious. They can’t take this for granted’. Actually we were not satisfied.

D. Selection of Prefects

We choose ourselves, the teachers organize a meeting so that they can, you see, can choose the people you like but they are not appealing to the eyes of the teachers, so they gather so that they can say, if it is me, they say: ‘no, Angel is not a good girl’. But you see we should choose prefects that can manage our school well.

E. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

I think students when students go on strike; they lose a lot of time which they would be using to read as they prepare for their future life. So I think they are supposed to just talk to teachers and solve their problems and teachers should listen to them.
Appendix A6 (Kasuku Secondary School student 2)

Background
This respondent was a female student at this school. She was admitted in this school in 2010. At the time the researcher visited this school, this student was in Form 3.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

In this school, the students are not very highly disciplined and in some cases they try to conduct themselves well. In the past our school has been performing low but they have now started emerging in the district and now we are calling ourselves the stars of the North. Sometimes students experience unrest due to some problems that we face in this school. The problems include lack of enough water and some teachers don't give students maximum respect they deserve and even the head teacher also, some students go out of the school through the fence. Like today, the head teacher came to our class and told another girl a big girl cannot behave like this. But she was only studying and so you see the girl felt embarrassed so much and even the other teachers keep insulting her. But other than these small issues there was at least a case of mass indiscipline early this year. When this new principal came, the students started screaming, refusing to take supper, forcing the watchman to open the gate and they went out.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

Of course the students did not like the new principal just from what they had heard that she is a bad administrator. In fact we stayed with that violence for a whole week. The principal was going for some selection so we were told that when she comes something will be done. So students decided to do that so that teachers would take some action. Because the students are always cheated and threatened that if you strike then action would be taken. You see if you do it on your own, you can be victimized.

C. Addressing Student Violence/Unrest

When there is some unrest or even violence because a certain problem, we just try telling the one who has been insulted or has been embarrassed ‘don’t worry’. Also some students go as far as calling their parents to come; like that girl has just called her parent to come already, even though I don’t know where she got the mobile phone. And I think it will be another issue because she will have to explain where she got the mobile. But for the incidence of protesting against the new principal, we went to the DC’s office then we were told to go back to school and issue will be addressed. So the students decided they would not go back to school but instead go home. So, after one week we were called then the teachers that the principal is here and what you have been told is correct then we will take another step to address it. But in a nutshell, the main ways of addressing student unrest and even violence is through suspension of ring leaders and sometimes students are encouraged not to do this through counselling. All the same, I think suspension and guidance are the best measures. I know the student who is suspended will lose
some academic time but since you are the one who has decided to do it, you should not affect the innocent ones.

D. Selection of Prefects

The students are the ones who select their prefects. We go to class, we select, and then the teachers compile the list and discuss it. And I think it is good because we select the ones we like because previously they used to select some girls, and you know there are some girls who pose as innocent girls but they are criminals so the teachers will see those girls as very innocent but they are the best criminals in this school. So us we select the girl we know she will rule us very well. Like in the previous one there was the dining prefect who was selected by the teachers but that girl was the best criminal and so she was expelled from the school because of crimes like going out of school through the fence and without permission. But she was going on well especially with the other students who are culprits because you know birds of the same feathers flock together. She was a favourite of the other indiscipline girls.

Unfortunately, in this school, we take the prefects as normal if it is cleaning, they assist us in doing cleaning and so we take them as normal students. The relationship is very normal. Remember earlier they were seen to be above the other students but the students started saying if they do this, we too will do this. So for example they were given some allowance to call using their mobile phones, they were bought sodas when they have a meeting and so the students started saying if the prefects are bought soda even us we should be bought sodas. So teachers went and said this is not good because it makes students feel bad. You see the other students had started saying that prefects are being bought all these because they are reporters and sometimes even the students would go insulting the prefects, if the prefect comes around you, you insult her because of that thing.

E. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When we as students become violent, I feel like it is not the right way because the good way is just to talk and resolve the thing well. Because like the time we went we wasted a whole week. So I think if another one comes I would just advise that we talk about and resolve the thing well.
Appendix B1 (Mbuni Secondary School Deputy Principal)

Background
This school had experienced some student unrest, first due to an unfulfilled promise of a school bus to be bought and secondly, failure to refund forms 3 and 4 the tuition money they had paid following the banning of tuition by the minister of Education. The students also complained that they had been made to stay in school longer than had been directed by the Minister and so they wanted to close the school. The boys became rowdy and violent and were therefore sent home and asked to come back with their parents after about a week so that the matter can be resolved with the contribution from their parents.

The respondent was a male teacher and the Deputy Principal of the school at the time the researcher visited it. At that time he had been teaching in the school for four years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

There are several cases of disobedience from teachers and other students. There is also another one of mass indiscipline where they all agree to do something that is contrary to school rules. For mass indiscipline, last term we delayed some of the students to go home and so some of them walked out of school before the closure. Two, the issue of tuition, when it was cancelled, there was some money which was left and so the students started demanding it and when they saw that they were not being given this money they also walked out of school and went. Actually, they wanted to be refunded their money for tuition because they had not been taught for the time they were supposed to be taught.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

Ideally, the students had two main grievances. The first one where they felt they had been delayed in school, they were not genuine because most of them come from around and they should have been patient. But for the other one concerning tuition, I would say they were more or less genuine even though their approach of walking out was not good. Earlier there was also unrest because of school bus. And for that one, I can say that their grievances were not genuine because we had agreed with the parents to pay 2000/- . But you know for them they expected the bus to be here next year which is this year yet this is a bus which is supposed to be 5 or 6 million shillings, so we told them if we multiply 2000 by 400, we get 800,000 and that alone is not enough even for deposit of the school bus.

C. Addressing Student Violence

For the tuition issue, what we did is that, because most of them had not paid the fees, we told them they should go home and clear the fees and once they clear the fee balances, they can claim for a refund. For
the bus issue we clarified with them how the money we had collected was not even enough for deposit. Of course in my own experience, what really makes students act violently is a situation when they request for something, they wait for response, and the response does not come so when they are not given the response, now they act violently to force things to happen their way. For example, because in all of the terms we used to close at around 10th but this time we delayed and so they became impatient and when they did not get a response that would convince them otherwise, they acted that way.

The other ways we have used to address student violence is by talking, not to the whole group but each group on its own, e.g. form ones or form fours as a group away from others and when others see some have gone to class, they are obliged to go to class and then from there you talk to the whole group. The other one is guidance and counselling. Finally, if students are more inclined to the spiritual way, in most cases the issue of indiscipline would be reduced. We have also had to use suspension, especially when they wanted to burn down the cowshed. That time we got those who were on the forefront in bringing petrol to school and suspended them.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

Yes, there are policies like the issue of corporal punishment which was outlawed. In my view, corporal punishment made the students to be hardened. There is also guidance and counselling whereby as a deputy principal, I am not supposed to do but it is the way that the policy recommends. But there are some mistakes which just require instant punishment and so one would still consider using corporal punishment.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

In my experience, I would say, of all these ways, talking to students (discussion) is the one way that has proved to be workable because the other methods such as corporal punishment tend to leave the student bitter while suspending them sometimes makes them even feel heroic. Also, imparting morals into these students would certainly work well. I also think that one other way is to encourage students to send their teacher. And if it is not possible, they can send one of the students, not necessarily a prefect because the prefect anaogopa ataambiwa you are now inciting the students. So, occasionally, they have called me on some issues and we end up solving some of these issues.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

Whenever students go on rampage, I feel I have failed in my duty. If students go on rampage, it means that something is wrong and in most cases, even if sometimes we say that some of the reasons are not genuine, I don’t see a situation where students can go on strike without a genuine reason.
G. Any Further Comments

In most cases, the issue of discipline is supposed to be the responsibility of all teachers and not just the deputy principal such that even if a student makes a mistake in class, they are forwarded to the deputy instead of them dealing with the problem there and then. This is not supposed to be the case.
Appendix B2 (Mbuni Secondary School Teacher 1)

Background
The respondent was a male teacher in the school at the time the researcher visited it. At that time he had been teaching in the school for two years. However, he had taught in another school for seven years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

There are quite a number. For instance, like, the Form fours were sent home because of tuition money... they wanted the money to be refunded in cash. Also the minister’s directive about school term dates.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The two issues here are refund for money paid yet services not rendered and the issue of term dates. And so for me, yes, they were genuine up to their level of knowhow because the students felt that this is what had happened. But there needed to be someone to tell them what really it was. The problem began when the administration kept off and the students felt that the coordinators were on their own. They received conflicting information and that is when the problem began. When we tabled the data and passed forward to them, when they went to the principal, the principal told them that ‘your money will be refunded’ and that was where the problem began. There was miscommunication and mis-coordination.

C. Addressing Student Violence

They initially informed the prefects who talked to the coordinators. So the coordinators talked to the students about what was to happen and they agreed at the time of closure that whatever would be refunded would be calculated from the expenses we already had incurred but when news came of the teachers’ strike, it happened that the students were either incited against the coordinators because the language that they had talked at the time of closing was totally different they were demanding total money and they were consulted by the deputy coordinators severally but it reached a point where they became unruly and they were sent home.

When they came back, they filled questionnaires and all that, then pay school fees then write a letter of apology and commitment. It happened that parents thought that that was very primitive and they pointed out another approach. So it became a tussle between parents and the administration. At that point, the students thought that the administrators were not being fair to them and that the teachers have decided to fleece them. Parents felt that planning was very minimal and they were shouldering the burden of all the staff and the students. So at the end of the day, the principal and the deputy talked with parents away from the students. In fact some of the parents were more indiscipline than their children. So then we told
them that each student would answer for their crimes. It therefore happened that some of these parents who were loud about the issue had very huge balances and so when that was revealed, it came out that even their guardians were not very keen on their balances. In other words indiscipline started from home. Actually some of them could not rule their children. Finally some of the parents agreed that the students must be disciplined and when the students came and we told them of the verdict, some of them were very sorry but still there are those who felt that ‘we can go and come’ I discovered that in this school, the discipline orientation was actually lacking because students are not aware of what they should do. And perhaps, this is because of the surrounding.

However, in my own view, I think this wasn’t the best way to address this matter because after that, there were more condemnations The students themselves felt that something was lacking in what we had done but all the same they had a get together to tell teachers that ‘we are sorry’.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

They are there although they are general. It would be better if there were specific guidelines on how to handle specific crimes. The penal code is rather general. There is another one that talks about the involvement of students but they don’t talk to what level because in as much as you want to involve the students, we also need to ask ourselves ‘to what extent?’ because the more you liberalize everything (the more the effectiveness goes down) and so sometimes the teacher is left in a dilemma sometimes you have to do what you think is right and I think that is where we are getting trouble. The directions are not clear.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

In the school I was teaching before, we had three levels of dealing with indiscipline. There is minor discipline which can be handled by a teacher, there is an indiscipline that necessitates some punishment and then there is serious offense. I felt that the students themselves need to have a council just as we have peer counselors. We should also have peer disciplinary committee whose composition includes children who will hear from students and from the teachers so that when the administration comes in, it is not like one body. Sending them home will not solve the problem. Also we need strong class meetings where teachers, parents will talk to the students effectively and lastly, there is the religious group - the CU, the YCS and the Muslim group because they also help to contain the students.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students go on rampage, I personally I feel very bad. Number two, it also shows that you are not very effective because any tutor would want to see that virtues that are being imparted into the younger generation are being taken seriously. You also feel as if you are not doing enough and then you may feel that you are doing the wrong thing because why are they not listening to you. Indeed this is an
opportunity for you to also know about their attitude towards you because you can only know how they
think about you from the way they behave towards you. Lastly, when you see them behave that way, the
behaviour is a reaction to something and so you are supposed to go back to the drawing board but mostly
we don’t go back while that happens, we are bent on punishing the students and when they have
conceded we think that we have solved the problem. The problem may actually be far from being solved.
Appendix B3 (Mbuni Secondary School teacher 2)

Background
The respondent was a male teacher in the school at the time the researcher visited it. He teaches Biology and he was the HOD Curriculum in the school. At that time he had been teaching in the school for five years. This was however, his second work station as he had been teaching in a day school before.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

We had some indiscipline cases but they were not that much and we dealt with them. There were such cases especially, student stealing from each other. This year, we experienced some unrest concerning tuition. There was some confusion about whether schools should go on with tuition while others felt that they should not go on with the tuition as per Ministry of Education guidelines. And so, before the ministry’s guidelines, there was the case where students contributed for their upkeep and for the allowance of their teachers but when the tuition was cut short and so there was a feeling that they needed to be refunded their money in totality. I think there is the mob psychology where students think they can force their thought out especially at the age of adolescence where the students think that they have a right to do the things they want.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The students’ grievances were just the fact that they had paid for tuition and which was later cancelled and so they wanted to be refunded back their money. So as far as genuineness of the grievances is concerned, I would say somehow, yes because some of them reported late for the tuition and more so, when the week was ending and they had only been taught for one day or two.

C. Addressing Student Violence

When this happened, and as you will realize, already some of the money had been spent on food. In that case we calculated a percentage because the tuition was to run for two weeks and so we were to refund half of the money. So the parents came and the administration talked to the parents so that they could see the sense that the food was purchased, some was left in the store... they agreed that the school should come in and do the calculations so that the money could be accounted for in the fess. However, there was some friction because the students felt that they didn’t utilize their money so they wanted to be refunded the full amount.

So basically, like for the situation that I have just told you, we identified some culprits through questioning and therefore some of the culprits were expelled from the school but we later came to realize that some
were not directly involved with the act. So still on the aspect of expulsion was not good because some students who were rather innocent suffered innocently.

But I would like to observe that the way we have dealt with this problem has not been that effective and I thought maybe in case there is failure to provide for proper diet as a result of maybe shortage of that particular food and so forth, they should be informed in advance so that they know. I know that sometimes we have had to suspend some students but I think this is not the best way because when the student is on suspension, some of them do not tell their parents. They fear to go to their parents and as a result may go out there and engage in more funny activities. If the student is to be suspended, the school should call their parent to come and pick them.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

I am not aware of any regulations in the Ministry of Education about how such cases of student indiscipline should be dealt with.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

I would recommend guidance and counselling as the best way since the removal of the rod.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students become violent and destructive, I get discouraged because there is a lot of time wastage in terms of syllabus coverage. The pressure on covering syllabus becomes enormous and the teacher is disoriented. Time wastage leads to poor performance and some parents may not understand all these.

G. Any Further Comments

Some of the difficulties we experience in the institution are due to communication breakdown from administrators to the right people within the institution and I believe proper communication would make a difference.
Appendix B4 (Mbuni Secondary School prefect 1)

Background
The respondent was a male student. At the time the researcher visited the school, he the respondent was the sanitary prefect and he had been a student in that school for two years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

For example, there was a time when the students were denied their money - tuition money, we were paying 2000/- tuition money, so we came here for 4 days and we were sent home due to the banning of tuition. Now according to the teachers, the money would be forwarded to the fees so the form fours decided to come up with something like a conflict with the principal. They came and stood at the principal's office and the principal told them to go and come with their parents. When the parents came, the parents agreed that the money be forwarded to the fees or else the students be given that money. Up to now, the form three students have not received their money and still we were sent home for fees for four to five days.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The main issue was the refund of tuition money and I think this was genuine because it was clear that tuition was not going to take place yet most of the students had paid.

C. Addressing Student Violence

They came back with their parents and the parents said the money be put on fees. However, some questions arose. There were some who had cleared their fees and they were not expecting their money to go to the fees but be given in cash but up to now they have not been given. However, I must say that the students were not satisfied at all. And it is like it may come up any time although I have not heard about this likelihood. But according to what I have seen, I think the administration has always adopted sending the students away as their preferred way of addressing cases of indiscipline. But in my view, this is not the best way and has not worked well either. And by the way, there is this issue; when we opened school, after 3 or 4 days, you hear we have been sent home for fees, when they come back, after 2 to 3 days, they are sent home again so you find that more than one week is wasted. Now even the community is not happy.

And for the students, I think if they have a problem they should try sending one of their class prefects or the captain and on the other hand the administration should listen to the grievances of the students.

D. Selection of Prefect

They look at performance and discipline but mostly, for some posts they do not look at the performance. For example the DH captain they look at size, they don’t mind the academics in that area but for others
they look at the academics and the behaviour. For me, I think, it is because of performance and discipline. By the way I don’t behave badly. Since I came here I always happen to be position two and above. As for me, I was selected as a prefect last year when I came into this school.

E. Role and General Experience as a Prefect in Maintaining Discipline

My role as a prefect is reporting those who misbehave. But in doing this, I meet challenges such as; you see we are expected to report students who misbehave. But if you report a student to a teacher the student is given a punishment that you did not expect. Again, when I report those who misbehave, due to the respect that I give them, some respect me but others don’t. And in terms of our relationship with the rest of the students, we just behave like friends or brothers but when it comes to matters of following rules and regulations, it becomes the opposite. We the prefects make them follow the school rules and regulations to the letter.

Actually, being a prefect is not bad but at the same time it is not good. When it comes to being in class at the right time, the teacher on duty may come in class and ask you why the compound is not clean, you go and find out those who were assigned there did not do their job well and you are supposed to stay there supervising them. And in so doing, you are wasting those minutes before the lesson and in most cases I am not happy about it.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students become violent in addressing their issues, I feel bad that things are not going on well. I also feel that as a prefect, I have not represented my fellow students the way they would have liked. In fact, for the case of the tuition money, we were trying to come up with the idea that let us try to send one of us to represent our grievances but the administration disagreed with us the students and that was when the students decided to do this.

But my final comment is that in this school, there used to be rice and ndengu, but I don’t know what happened with it. Now you wonder if this is a school or a prison. This is what makes most students want to go home. The diet here is not so good. Again, in terms of behaviour, the discipline is not very high. In the first place, according to me, the principal and the deputy do not cooperate. In some cases you find the principal sends a student on suspension, the deputy suggests expulsion. In terms of discipline, their rules are different, huyu akisema hivi, huyu anasema hivi (when this one says this, the other one says this).
Appendix B5 (Mbuni Secondary School prefect 2)

Background
The respondent was a form 3 male student. At the time the researcher visited the school, the respondent was the staff prefect and he had been selected as a prefect that same year.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Well, students in this school face a number of problems. For example, let’s say about sanitary matters, those students who work there (in the toilets) they complain the school should employ someone the work is so dirty. But there was just some misunderstanding recently when the form fours and threes wanted to be refunded their tuition money since tuition had been cancelled by the minister. So students were not given that money and so they went out of school and were told to come back with their parents. But this was addressed and now some calm has come back.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The students wanted to be given back the money they had paid for tuition now that it had been cancelled.

C. Addressing Student Violence

There is a suggestion box and if any student has any issue, they write on the foolscap and put it in the suggestion box. Also sometimes they can organize a meeting with the administration and then students contribute and say what they would like done. But this has only happens on very few occasions.

D. Selection of Prefects

Personally, I was selected to be a prefect by the members of the teaching staff but some prefects, like captain and assistant they were selected by us students.

E. Role and General Experience as a Prefect in Maintaining Discipline

Well my first role is to supervise the cleaning of the staffroom and generally organizing the staff. Am also supposed to supervise other students not to speak in a language that is not accepted in school, ensuring order during meal times and just the general discipline. Generally, I am supposed to be ensuring that the school routine is followed to the letter. And because of that not everyone will like you. You may advise someone and he takes the advice and like you for that but others may ignore and may not like you.
F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

Actually, when students engage in mass indiscipline, I feel bad because the time you are to be in school, you are not and this affects us especially maybe when you are doing exams.
Appendix B6 (Mbuni Secondary School student 1)

Background
The respondent was a male student. At the time the researcher visited the school, he in form 3 having been admitted in the school in 2010.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

In school there are so many things. For example there are some people who use drugs, others don’t follow school rules and if one is not careful, you may get yourself into them. You know students think that those things are very nice like bhang... they think it can help them improve their academic performance. But early this year, there was the problem of having paid tuition money but the tuition was later cancelled. However, they did not even return the money. So students tried to force things but the principal sent the form fours home for almost 3 days and when they came with their parents they were told that the tuition money would be put on fees and so they were not given the money. The students felt bad because they wanted to be given the cash but they were not given but were sent away instead. Sometime back, there was a time they burnt the cowshed as they wanted to register their disappointment about the bus not having been bought. If they had told the headmaster directly, he would suspend them.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The students wanted to be paid back their money now that tuition had been cancelled. And I think this was a genuine reason for them to have their money back.

C. Addressing Student Violence

Whenever there is a problem, teachers tell the captain to investigate the matter and report what they find out. Sometimes there is also guidance and counselling. But on the matter of the refund, we were not satisfied at all. We actually wanted a refund. But all the same, our parents came and they talked about this matter and the problem was somehow solved. They said the money should be put on fees. Even though, I also think that if you had not paid fees the money should be put to fees. And even suspending the students, I do not feel it is good because there is always waste of time.

D. Selection of Prefects

Prefects in this school are appointed by teachers. And so far, they are not so bad. Choosing the prefects ourselves can disturb the school since the students can choose a bad person, somebody who will cooperate with them in doing the wrong things.
Appendix B7 (Mbuni Secondary School student 2)

The respondent was a male student. At the time the researcher visited the school, he in form 2 having been admitted in the school in 2011.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Some students sneak out of school and in the course of doing this, they are sent away. And I remember last year when there was a case where the students with these electric gadgets, I think students were charging those gadgets and so our dorm was about to burn and this brought about some unrest but the teachers came in quickly and so no harm was done. And then, in second term this year, that is, last term the students, especially those in form 3 and 4 said they were forced by other students to refuse to go to class and shout because they wanted a refund of their money they had paid for tuition because it had been cancelled.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

For me I can say, like for the situation of being refunded their money, they used that kind of approach of being violent since they know they may not be given the money they wanted. Therefore, they decided to do it together to avoid being victimized. And I think they were justified to demand for their money.

C. Addressing Student Violence

Some of the students who were found to be the ring leaders were suspended and then they came with parents and they talked with teachers and the matter was somehow resolved. And I think it was solved completely because I haven’t heard any complain even though not all of them were given their money back. So this school adopts the method of students coming with their parents and discussing the problem. For me to some problems, this approach would work but for others it may not work. But in all the situations, they should involve parents. And it is good to involve parents because otherwise these teachers may not take us serious.

D. Selection of Prefects

They are appointed by school members such as the students. I think if they are chosen by teachers, there can be conflicts. However, we go on well because we are the ones who choose them. I say there would be conflict because the students will not like these prefects and will not even do what they are told.

E. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

Actually, we have been living well and even though some matters often come up, they have been solved.
Appendix C1 (Korongo Secondary Deputy Principal)

Background
This school experienced student violence and unrest on two main accounts; firstly the students felt the school administrators were keeping them in school for unnecessarily long yet the Minister of education had issued a deadline which was long overdue. Secondly the form 4 students (candidates) wanted to be in school alone while sitting for KCSE. As a result, students especially form fours became violent to their counterparts in the lower forms as well as destroying school property. Consequently, they were told to go home except the candidates.
The respondent was a male teacher and the Deputy Principal of the school at the time the researcher visited it. At that time he had been teaching in the school for 2 years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

When it comes to, let us say, issues related to the social fabric which has really broken down, especially when it comes to households tracking of their children, you find like we talk about the household issues and when you call a parent about his boy’s drinking habit, the parent tells you “... mwalimu unajua huyu anakunywanga tu”. Secondly, the boy acts like a mad person in school, after all that is what he does even at home, and if you look at it keenly unaona huyo kijana vile anabehave, something must be very wrong hata kule ametoka. Politics also come in when you have a school in a certain community and the principal comes from a different community, so you hear in those barazas “does it mean we do not have one of our own to head our schools in this area?” And in some instances, you find the boys are misguided by the very parents or the people from the community around the school because even when students riot and you call the parents, it is common to hear a parents saying “I was here na tuligoma sana (and we rioted so much) so there is nothing new they have called us for. Concerning the drugs, in fact do not get surprised to hear that these boys take drugs, especially those used and also sold by Indians. A good example is what is called KUBERR which is a sweet coffee-like substance put in tea as an energizer. And again, this being a tea zone, substance abuse is common since one can grow drug plants e.g. bhang in between the lines of tea. You see such drugs have surely found their way into this generation and most of our boys in this school abuse them so much because these drugs make them feel that all is well and also gives them more energy.

Last week. You see, there is a school these sides (pointing to the western side of the school) called Kianyaga secondary. The students of this school just passed around here and shouted that (our) students were cowards (you see them they had rioted on a Friday and sent home) then by Saturday daytime they were around this compound. This started by them telling a certain boy to go and put off the lights. So the
other teachers started calling me to tell me that the students had put off the lights. When I got near the switch area, the boy who had put off the lights was still there. I held the boy, that is, his blazer. The friend, in an attempt to help him he picked a stone then hit me here on the eye (removed his spectacles and showed me a swollen eye which was also injured). I felt this was the height of indiscipline, I mean for me to be wrestling with students at night like this. This was so humiliating. I was, however able to identify the boy but you see the boys told me ‘you know even the police are reluctant to take up this matter kwa hivyo uta do? Remember, the form fours were happy to have the rest of the school out during the entire KCSE period as directed by the Minister for Education and at the same time even the forms 1-3 wanted to go home.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

In fact, according to me, that was the only grievance, that is they wanted to close earlier than the form fours. And in any case, this was a reason enough to lead to all these. If anything, it was until our boys were insulted by their Kianyaga counterparts that they started this aggression.

Their reason is not genuine especially looking at it from the perspective of the loss or the extent of damage. There appears to be a lot of unsaid issues. In fact in my own networking I tried talking to even the gatekeeper, the grounds people and even the cooks as well as the messenger and I was saying “if the problem is me, just tell me. Vijana wanawasema nini? What haven’t we done so that we do and the school moves on? Why couldn’t they say what they needed to say during the day? Honestly, I keep on wondering what is happening in our society, You see, among these young people, if one does a weird thing, he’s a hero… peer heroism is also now becoming a problem and you see them envy people like ‘Sonko’*

For me, I think the political environment that tends to provide some elements of role models some of which are surely unacceptable. You look at some people like this Sonko, he’s like a ‘celeb’(celebrity). He occasionally joins his electorates and the common citizen on the streets when they are protesting about a perceived injustice. He has shown and many of our children have learnt from him that violence is the way to go, so this idea trickles down to our students. Accordingly, you touch a boy in Form Two; it goes to the whole class. It stops being ‘I’ but ‘we’… So if you send a student out of class or home it becomes “mwalimu kwa nini umetuma watoto nyumbani?” And so it is like a vicious cycle that has no end.

C. Addressing Student Violence

For this occurrence that we have just talked about, we reported the matter to the police but as already alluded to, so they were also very reluctant and were saying ‘you know in these days of the new constitution, we cannot use force on those students and yet they are now very hostile.” But they later
came and tried to restore some calm even though there was already a lot of tension within the compound and in the neighboring villages. Later, we had to let the rest of the students go home as they had demanded and as you can see, we only have form fours remaining on the compound. However, we have some students who came to face the principal to tell him that the form 1-3 needed to be away during KCSE. But in our routine practice, we always bring in the student council to deliberate on such matters that affect their welfare. We also have class representatives and peer counselors, and as usual, we have the prefects. We also have the open door policy which when well used it becomes very simple to address such matters but we tend to mis-apply it by involving emotions.

In terms of how these approaches to addressing issues of student unrest, I would say occasionally, they are able to give their grievances so we do not write anywhere that these are the grievances and these are the ways of addressing these problems. The class meetings held under the chairmanship of the class teacher and peer counselling have so far been effective. We also have family units in which we try mainstreaming social issues affecting our students into our discussions especially by giving them a fatherly touch and which has also worked well. However, the “he/she must go syndrome” whenever a teacher is perceived by students as bad has tended to override these attempts that call for tolerance and readiness to accommodate each other. The other strategy that we have adopted is benchmarking whereby we take our students to visit other schools and exchange positive experiences. However, this has also posed a challenge because we took our students to Alliance High school and when they came back, our students started demanding that they want things to happen and be provided the way it happens at Alliance e.g. the freedom, extended hours of watching TV, improved quality and quantity of food, modern buildings (and in fact due to this pressure, we had to paint all the buildings in the school as you can see. Unfortunately, we could not provide all these and so it led to a strike).

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

At the ministry level, there is the Children’s Bill. However, there is need for induction of teachers on how to interpret and implement this bill e.g. the use of guidance and counselling versus the use of corporal punishment and even the usual consultations but you see some teachers do not appreciate this and so when you try to implement some of these things they think you are at crossroads with their welfare. And concerning counselling as opposed to the others, we are talking about consultation to try and chart a way forward so when you do that they don’t understand. There is also the policy of confidentiality especially on matters of HIV and AIDS integration into the syllabus, there is also life skills, which, to many teachers has no meaning since it is not even examinable hence need to be capacity built on this, and the whole policy on professional ethics especially now that we are getting some half baked teachers from some
training institutions. However, what is really needed is capacity building on the part of the teachers and school administrators regarding the implementation of these policies.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

For me it is all an issue students being encouraged to be open about the problems they face in school and also there being some limits to the students’ so called rights.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When these students riot like they did recently, I feel so disheartened. I feel humiliated and embarrassed. You see I always say when the students are sent away because of whatever indiscipline issues, a part of me goes with them. When things happen as they have happened this term, every day I wake up and I want to go to school, another mind tells me don’t go but I ask myself why? It is my environment and this is where I am supposed to be, if it is a matter of socializing, I don’t know any other social place I can go. My social place is here. So, denying me my social place is to destroy me and so every day I am in a rush to go to school and see if things are working the way they are supposed to work. And that is why whenever I am talking to these students I always tell them that when they go, a part of me goes with them.

* This is a nickname given to one of the members of parliament (the then MP for Makadara in the 10th parliament) who largely identified with the young generation in terms of his lifestyle and is also associated with, at least from the connotations of the name, wealth.
Appendix C2 (Korongo Secondary Teacher 1)

Background
The respondent was a male teacher in the school at the time the researcher visited it. He teaches French and Linguistics in the school. At that time he had been teaching in the school for three years. This was his second work station as he had been teaching in a girls’ school from 2003.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Yes, there was a problem concerning the closure of schools for the rest of the students as the form fours sit for their examinations leading to some unrest and even violence here in school. So the form 3 and 4 students started harassing the lower classes, putting off the lights and breaking window panes. There is heavy security surveillance here. We have teachers before and after preps. So this day was Wednesday and so they went to one of the dormitories and they started making noise and breaking the window panes. Even our deputy was hit and so the wife came and told me ‘let us take the deputy to the hospital’ so I went out and we went to the police station and I came with the police using my car. We found the students out. The police were using democracy... until the students became too much.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The issue was about the directive of the minister whereby the time was prolonged and they were also told that they were going to do the exams while in school alone. Also, the principal wanted to introduce the entertainment during regular hours but the students did not like that. So they went to the DC’s office and the DC akawaambia, whatever mnataka you will be given. So, our students will always want to have their way any time. The way I see it, it was a mixture of issues. But I think it is basically the strictness of the head teacher and sometimes and the prefects. Concerning the genuineness of their grievances, I think students have got a free mind. However, on some occasions, students just want to be rebellious. They sometimes refuse to understand the situation on the ground.

C. Addressing Student Violence

Whenever there is such a matter and incase it is too weighty a matter, we call for a brief staff meeting to discuss it and see how it can be addressed. Sometimes they use the students’ council and sometimes you cannot tell if this is their voice or the voice of just a few with discontentment.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

Personally, I think I don’t know of such documents. I can only think of children rights and the banning of corporal punishment.
E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

For me, I think dialogue, where the students and administration engage in an open and mature way where there is no amnesty of a similar type. The students should be taught to believe in what they have and present it in an open discussion without necessarily hiding.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

For those who are performance oriented you imagine what would happen with that backlog that is generated when they miss classes and so you feel for the students. In fact, some of them are just caught in that wave and you helplessly watch sharp minds going to waste.
Appendix C3 (Korongo Secondary Teacher 2)

Background
The respondent was a female teacher in the school at the time the researcher visited it. At that time she had been teaching in the school since 2009. This was her second work station as she had been teaching in a girls’ school.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Such a case happened about two weeks ago. This was just after the teachers’ strike and the subsequent minister’s directive that the rest of the students should be home and leave the form fours in the school to complete their examinations. And you know our boys are interesting. They knew when they were to close and so they were rigid on that date. Then comes the form fours who had heard that the rest of the students were to be away when they were doing exams and so worked with the other lower forms and forced their way out by flushing them out especially when they realized that we were not releasing them. So the form fours started beating up the other students asking them what they were still doing on the compound when they were supposed to be at home. This happened to the extent that some were even hospitalized. However, even though not much damage of school facilities was done, they broke some window panes and also cut the barbed wire on the school fence.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The incident happened because form 4 students wanted to be in school alone during their KCSE exams and the rest of the students also wanted to close early. In my view, this was not logical. By the way looking at this generation, you find they have their own space, they have their rights even when you explain to them that some of the things they are doing or asking them to do are for their own good, they still want to talk of their rights. And I think generations have changed. If you compare like during our times when there was authority, things were different. These days, students want to be felt. They want their recognition to be upheld.

C. Addressing Student Violence

Well, whenever such an incidence has taken place, we have used a variety of methods. For instance, we have used student forums and even encouraged free interaction between students and teachers, we have used guidance and counselling, we have even put in place suggestion boxes where they can put in writing what they feel is affecting their welfare and remember this ensures anonymity such that the student will not be victimized and also, we reach out to them through class teachers, dormitory masters, Teachers on duty and in some extreme cases we use suspension. And these methods have been complementing one
another. There is not one particular one I can say that has singly worked well in isolation. As for the suspension, it is in some cases good because you remove the rotting crop and remain with the good one.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

Those policies are not everywhere, they are only restricted to guidance and counselling yet when the situations occur, you expect all teachers to respond to them and yet these teachers may not be well equipped.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

For me, it is really a question of sieving the bad lot by suspending them or expelling them altogether. We can also use peer counselling which should be intensified.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students go on rampage I feel I have lost. You see you still have your coursework, there is the syllabus to complete you still have your schemes of work, I mean, it is quite damaging.

G. Any Further Comments

Some of these issues are never addressed. For instance, there is a lot of congestion and the kids are overburdened with too many subjects. You see, the Kenyan education system has a lot of theory. There is wide coverage and students pass examinations but indeed they are not bright. And, you know, so, am saying the weaknesses in the system of education have to be dealt with first. As a nation, we should stop shying away from our weaknesses and begin to address the real issues.
Appendix D1 (Kifaru Mixed Day and Boarding Secondary School Principal)

Background
This school has experienced unrest severally. In the recent past, it experienced unrest because the students wanted to occupy a new dormitory which had not been fitted with electricity applications and on another occasion, the boys woke up and went to raid a nearby girls’ school. They also had held a demonstration, on another occasion, protesting the fact that their food was being prepared in an old kitchen yet a new kitchen had been constructed and left unused. On all these occasions, the students did some minimal property destruction and were sent home to bring their parents after a period of one week.

The respondent was a male teacher and the Principal of the school at the time the researcher visited it. At that time he had been teaching in the school for 3 years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Yes, we have had several of such cases. Historically, this is an indisciplined school. But when I came here, I did not want to consider that but I decided to assume that all is well. The only problem was that there was no unity then, that is, the unity between parents and teachers. There was some case of unrest or general indiscipline in March 2011 when students torched a dormitory because they wanted to inhabit the new dormitories. So we decided to take them to the new dormitories to forestall further unrest. That time, much as I was not in this school, I was the Chairman of Kirinyaga County Heads Association. So it is after that that I was transferred to this school. Later in 2011, following the kind of unrest that the school was experiencing, I expelled up to 7 students. This brought a controversy since the board of governors wanted to increase the enrolment but I insisted that we had better have 100 well behaved students than many that are indisciplined.

This year (2012) around March, in fact March 17th at around 8.45 pm, another dormitory was torched again. Around this time, the watchman sensed some smoke and when he went round to find out what was happening, he realized that there was some fire. By the time he got to the scene, it was clear that one dormitory was burnt down. However, on further inquiry, he was not able to establish any grievance to that effect. Again, on 31st July this year (2012) at 10.55 pm there was another awkward occurrence. Usually, the junior classes end their preps earlier than the senior classes. But on this day we realized that the senior classes had gone to bed early, that is, at around 10.30pm. So the school watchman kept vigil and came to learn later that there was some sinister plan; they wanted to raid a neighboring girl’s school, St. Francis Girls’ High School. And so it surely happened but fortunately they were scuttled before doing any significant harm.
The other indiscipline cases were not the ones you would talk of as serious indiscipline because it was just as a result of laxity in enforcing school rules especially on the part of the teachers. However, remember, for the 2011 occurrence even for the candidates there is no candidate who did their exam from outside. They were all allowed to be in school and do their exams as usual. Then this year, I feel that things can be rough because there was amalgamation of students. What I mean is that because of looking for more students to raise the enrolment of the school, we have tended to enroll from anywhere without even considering the students’ past discipline history in the schools he or she has been attending. You see, you invite somebody to this school and yet you don’t know how they left that other school.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

In most cases there are no grievances at all. However, in a few cases, some of them are very genuine like if they say food is little, it is genuine so we find a way of looking into it. Honestly some of them are very genuine. Actually, in my experience and observation, in all these happenings, you cannot rule out the use of drugs. For instance, at a time when these students burnt down a dormitory, we caught form 1 student smoking bhang. It was so surprising and even controversial to find out that this student’s education was even being sponsored by the church. I also think that for those cases where the grievances have been genuine, students act violently because you cannot ignore and infringe on somebody’s rights whether real or perceived and the person remains okay. People always want to fight for their rights whether real or perceived. And it is not just the students only, even adults. You have seen workers going on strike even to reject a given policy. But of course in other cases you can just see that these are people who do not have a genuine grievance.

C. Addressing Student Violence

We have quite a number: we have Barazas, we have dorm and class meetings which we call public meetings and we also have suggestion boxes. We also have advocated for some good interpersonal relationships since our population is not so big. And when there is such a case of mass indiscipline, we sometimes send them home for some time and then they come back for screening before they resume their classes. For example, this one of walking out I said, wataenda na wakae na warudi na wazazi then when they came back, we did some screening. But even before their coming, parents would call “mwalimu, what happened” and I would tell them ‘you are better placed to know because you have your son with you there and you can talk to him. So, there has also been the sending away as a form of suspension and then there is expulsion.

Sending the students home for some time after which they come with their parents is one of the ways that have worked well. You see when they come, they are taken for screening and there we are able to
interact more closely with the student. Parental involvement in school matters has also proved to be effective in dealing with discipline matters. Another thing, being close and friendly to the students can be very effective. Sometimes I get information about the internal ongoing without having to move around inquiring. For example, when the students burnt down the dormitory, as I was just moving around mingling with the students, a student came and put a paper in my pocket and on this paper he had written the name of the ring leader who even bought the petrol that was used to burn down the dormitory, but of course he pleaded that I should never reveal this. Luckily, when the students came back and were given the questionnaires to fill, quite a number of the questionnaires confirmed this. So the boy was one of those that we expelled. Guidance and Counselling is there but you see sometimes you try talking to a student and they totally refuse to talk. If you wait for them to volunteer to come, they will never come.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

In fact, to talk the truth, I think the government has left to the teachers so much work that the teachers, more so, the head teachers have been left confused. For instance, look at the student, he is told you cannot be expelled by the school or by the principal and so that is what they know, so we have only to recommend to the Board which must also wait for the directive to come from the Director of Education or the Permanent Secretary. So you see we are crippled and the students know this. Look at what is in the guidance and counselling, do you know that there are some students who when they have a problem they insist on talking to me so when they come to me I say this is supposed to be handled by the HOD Guidance and counselling but at the same time they are not ready to listen to me. However, I must say that what the government has done is to develop policies for us and heap all the responsibility to the teachers, and more so, the principals even when we have already been made toothless.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

For me, the best thing is just to be as close and friendly to the students as possible without necessarily undermining your responsibilities.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

Look at the case where you have tried your level best to maintain the students and all of a sudden, they walk away in protest. I am looking at a particular case of walking out when my main objective is to show that we are a family. In such a case, to me, it is quite demoralizing to find the boys behaving in such a manner.
Appendix D2 (Kifaru Secondary School teacher 1)

Background
The respondent was a male teacher and the HOD languages and Dean of Students in the school. He had been holding this position for 3 years by the time the researcher visited the school. He had been Dean of students for 6 years. At the time of this visit to the school, he had been teaching in the school for 8 years. He had taught in other schools for 3 years.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

We have had several cases of mass indiscipline. The latest is the student walk out. It has become a very general thing in our community of schools. This happened like last week but one. They walked out on Monday morning but the good thing is that they did not do any destruction but what happened is that there was a lot of counselling especially that Monday and even on the assembly to a point whereby we told them if it reaches that point that they have to go then they should not destroy anything. They should just pick their things and go. We have had our own shares of dorm fires. One time they had planned to burn the library. We have had around 3 cases of dorm fires. In fact one room was burnt to ashes completely but with the help of other students and other teachers we were able to put the fire off. In other cases, well, we have rare cases of existing drug abuse, that one you cannot miss one or two cases that had started from far and what we do sometimes there is a lot of counselling inside the school we also refer to psychiatrists and sometimes advice for them to be taken for counselling.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The students’ grievances were: one, it is not a grievance as such, but one is that they have been sending messages to each other from one school and whenever there has been a general message that has been circulated even on this face book thing for example, the idea that by fourth, most students shouldn’t be in school because they knew they were supposed to close on 3rd and bearing in mind that teachers were on general strike for 3 weeks they said that they are not the ones who were on strike so their term should justifiably end by 4th. So, some out of excitement, decided to go early. So like us, just around that time but a little bit early so there was no genuine reason as such. Two, we give examinations. So mine, and I did sense, because they were to start their examinations on 5th that is the following month and in fact I didn’t know the students would postpone they were to start that Thursday. They walked out on Tuesday and remember they would have started on Thursday. So I really know that one of the reasons is that they fear examinations and any time we announce exams and even the timetable is out there is that excitement and anxiety.
But when one considers the grievances often given by the students, sometimes they are genuine. But, the other problem is the kind of parents we have. We have a tug of war between parents in F1 and the parents in F2, 3 and 4 and I have told you why. The kinds of parents we have are those from around, with moderate background and those who have problems in paying school fees. For instance, like the issue of bread during breakfast, we called an AGM and called parents. The majority refused because it would have financial impacts. The fees would have been increased by one thousand. So, student demands are high. Like this kitchen is incomplete. However, they wrote notes saying we will burn the wooden thing if you don’t cook in the new kitchen. They forced the principal to allow them to move to the new dorms even when there was no electricity and that is why they burnt the wooden dorm. So when you look at some of these grievances, you’ll find that... it is not something that is real... but I think, what we have is a general case of indiscipline all over Kenya such that to them, once you are through with this they will always look for another. They have been looking for a reason to go home.

C. Addressing Student Violence

One, we call the parents, we talk to them about their children, we give them the grievances that the students have but one thing was obvious from parents, that maybe we are too soft on these students or maybe there are some teachers (and that one is a fact) some teachers are tough and others are just there... that lack of continuity. I do know that we have a tough principal so they want to hit back at him hard... they think he’s too harsh but he’s being seen to be harsh because there is someone who is supposed to be harsh but he’s not harsh so they compare so to show the anger that is why they resort to violence. Two, maybe the expulsion is taken lightly because what happens we look for ring leaders nothing more and so they will always say; Hawajatufunza lesson, si wamefukuza tu wanafunzi wawili... it’s not deterring enough. So it has reached a point we are wondering how we will run schools. We either will keep hiring policemen to keep discipline and order. Like now, in Kerugoya Boys there are policemen... because they are promising to damage the school. The steps we take to deter them do not act on them.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

One is guidance and counselling. We have that department and we involve externals but it seems it is not working. The issue is that they have not given us proper guidelines on what should be done on what indiscipline case. Then the student powers, the question of student powers is that the students have a lot of powers. The tendency of parents teaming with their children whenever there is an indiscipline case; they know they can go to the educational offices. For instance, six students were expelled from our neighboring Boys school and one of the parents went to the court and the students were given an injunction and the principal had to re-instate them. How do you work in such a situation? Plus, the powers of the students should be minimized. They should not have these titles that make them feel superior like president, chairman of the counsel, like here they don’t want to be called prefects, they want to be called
Captains not prefects, I mean, our constitution is giving the child a lot of rights to the detriment of the studies of that child.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

My personal view is that the ministry first and I think we have a problem right away from the ministry. The aspect of constitution; our students feel that they have a right. One of their rights, they are not supposed to be caned and so, if you push him so hard they get out of school, the father rushes to the DEO’s office and you get an injunction. So the ministry must come up with steps, and proper steps, of dealing with this. When you tell a child you have rights, he/she becomes stubborn and that’s why they go saying “Haki yetu...” and in Kenya for you to get anything, you must be mad and they have seen it as a trend and thus they are copying the trend. Secondly, a student can burn a dormitory and the only punishment is being expelled from this school yet will be admitted in another school. So, if they can set a rule whereby if you are expelled because of a case like arson, that you can never be admitted in any other school and that there will be punishment equivalent to that act and that you can be jailed and they see their colleagues being jailed. If it is damage, that the ring leaders will not just be excluded and then transferred to other schools and that there is a follow up that goes with that indiscipline cases. I think, the education Act especially that concerns with the discipline of the students and ways of disciplining students is something that needs to be looked into. Another thing, there have to be proper procedures to be followed. The ministry should come up with a manual that states the indiscipline case and its consequences and the consequences should be substantive enough to deter the students from engaging in the indiscipline cases. We have weak laws. Thirdly, the students have been given many powers by the ministry such that if you tell the student to kneel down and he defies, if the case goes up to the DEO’s office, the teacher will be reprimanded. If you slap or cane, which we do but secretly, they know that if they go to the DEO’s office the teacher will be interdicted. We are not saying that the cane is the only thing that can work but sometimes, there is no other. Then, if the cane is not there, let them not be like... you see everything is like the indiscipline cases we are told to refer to counselors. All the same, we pay 15000 for some external counselors for 3 hours a week but it still seems not to work. These policies have not worked and cannot work.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When students go on rampage, the first thing, like now if I come and I find a dormitory on fire, there is the parental touch first. There is an innocent student whose belonging have been burnt. Now as a surrogate parent, I feel I am going to give up because we have done a lot of talking... but we don’t despair. We keep re-energizing. Sometimes we bring somebody as close as you can bring your own son or your daughter. Some have changed, but some have not. Remember that in a community, challenges will always be there.
G. Any Further Comments

And in my view, the fear for exams is just unpreparedness. They are often caught unawares. Two, the kind of students that we admit here according to the standards of our school, it is only that we can see some buildings rise, the way it was before we have just been a simple district secondary school so our entry behaviour is usually 200-250 such that maybe the highest mark you can get on average is 250. So this is a calibre of students who obviously do not like to read. These are people who are being pushed to read and let me say this year we made a blunder; we admitted students from Nairobi and you know students from Nairobi are from academies and if a student from an academy can score 200 or 230, it tells you what kind of student they are. This is certainly a student who has been spoon-fed and when they come here you don’t expect good results. Two, we did not have this culture of student demands like now when they came in they have been taking porridge in the morning but there have been demands like ‘we want bread’ and which they are given, they have now been demanding for an extra day of meat. Demands have become too much because of this growth. You know, previously, our catchment area was that of students who come from around and they are poor so they are contended with what they eat in school but now when we get students from academies they may not eat porridge and whatever else we are used to eating here. To me that is also a big challenge. As for the fear of exams, my reasons would be unpreparedness and two we have weak and lazy students.
Appendix D3 (Kifaru Secondary School teacher 2)

Background
The respondent was a female teacher in the school. She started her teaching career in 1989. By the time the researcher visited the school; this teacher had taught in the school for 4 years but had also taught two other schools.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Well, I don’t reside around and so I just get these reports. Nevertheless, they tried to burn the dormitory, then they broke window panes and so even at times you don’t understand why they want to destroy the property that serves them. They give the picture that whenever there is a problem they must destroy some property so you wonder why.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

Once, they talked of having been short-changed. That time they were talking of the school buying them a music system – a CD changer, having a school bus, then, last year, they wanted to go to the new dormitories so they abandoned the old ones for those new dormitories. Now talking about the genuineness, look at what they want, a CD changer, a bus but when you look at their payment of fees, it is so poor, so you wonder, if there is a bus to be bought and it is the parents to buy yet they have not cleared their fees. You see they want to be like other schools. They think when they start paying for it there will be that other problem “How are we going to leave the school without seeing the bus?” In most cases they are not genuine.

C. Addressing Student Violence

When students have a problem, we talk to them. If there are any grievances, they are going to forward their grievances. For example, this time, before they left, they had said that they would leave. They had said that they would leave around 4th but then it happened earlier than this.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

Talking about policies, even if there are these indiscipline cases, the ministry does not want you to take the students away. They are to be treated as if they were part of you and so you wonder if this person is crazy in fact is introducing others into the same; you wonder how you can keep containing the person. And then if there is indiscipline they don’t want you to send the student away, at times, you feel that they are giving you a load you cannot carry because keeping them will mean that this is something that they will also give to other students so instead of feeling for them, this student should just go so that we just remain with good ones.
E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

I know there are some disciplinary cases that we can solve from within while there are others that we cannot. For me, I sympathize with a parent who is controlled by the child. Like these arsonists, it’s the law that should take its course.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When these students engage in acts of indiscipline such as violence, I feel demoralized. It is like seeing my son doing it. I see my student in this case, even though this is something that is done by the mob, but what if he is implicated? I tell them, that experience is the best teacher, when you experience something yourself, you learn better.
Appendix E1 (Kobe secondary school teacher)

Background
This school had experienced student unrest following a scenario where the principal introduced some school rules, albeit abruptly, prohibiting students to have juice and bodily applications such as creams and lotions. The principal gave them a 12-hour ultimatum to have complied. Students resisted violently and went destroying school property and even beating up the principal. This led to students being sent home for some days and the subsequent demotion and the subsequent transfer and further interdiction of the principal.

The respondent was a male teacher in the school. By the time the researcher visited the school; this teacher had taught in the school for 3 years. This was his first school to be posted to by the TSC.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline
Yes, there was one situation for the time I have been here where the principal who was there that time was not a good administrator. I say so because she would discuss the teacher when she is with the students telling them this teacher is this and that but you see the same students would come and tell us. In fact, her relationship with the teachers was not good. As a result, teachers even gave up on teaching with commitment. She would just wake up and come up with her own policies without even involving the teachers yet she expects the teachers to help her implement these policies. So one day, that was in May this year (2012), she just woke up and decided that there will be no more sprays and mafuta (oil) used by the students, no quencher (juices). You know, she gave an ultimatum of 12 hours so that the students should have drunk all the juices they had. But again, you can imagine she had put off the water system so that they do not dilute the juice because then its quantity will increase and yet she wants them to finish it quickly. Now, after the 12 hours, and that was now at about 9.00 p.m, she went checking box after box pouring any remaining juice. And you see even as she was doing this she did not involve the teachers. So the students started screaming loudly and so we went there to see what was happening. But again, you cannot believe, she actually sent us away. Now the students felt that they were alone now that we as the teachers were not helping them by talking to the head teacher. So the students became rowdy, shouting and screaming all over, started throwing stones breaking windows on the dormitories, they also broke windows of the dining hall, and inside the dining hall they beat up some sufurias and of course they beat up the principal.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness
The grievances were mainly the principal’s high-handedness and tough rules. I also feel that the students were genuine in their grievances because even we as teachers witnessed it.
C. Addressing Student Violence

First, no teacher dared to speak to the students for fear of being victimized. So when this had happened, officers from the divisional education office came twice but she bribed the officers so that it appears like it’s the teachers who had incited the students but when students came back after the school closure period elapsed, they wrote saying it was clearly the head teacher. But since the principal felt targeted, she decided that no teacher will receive these students and so, she went ahead to receive them herself. In fact, her target was that the students should speak about their teachers portraying them as the main course of the problem. On filling the questionnaires, most of the students maintained that the principal was the problem. In fact, she was later demoted back to just a mere teacher and told to another girl’s school just as a mere teacher but she resisted. Now when she resisted, she was interdicted and so now as we speak she is not in any station but on interdiction. But since she left, the school is calm now. And by the way, after she had been given the letter, and she knew that we in the school did not know she came and addressed the school on parade inciting the form fours that they will fail exams now that there was a plan to remove her from the school. You see, she was telling that she had organized for a leakage for them but now that she is aware that she may be going, the new headteacher may not help them in that way and so they will fail. We also discovered that she was using the secretary to get any information on what is going on in the school and use it to incite the students. You see, her home is near the school and she goes to the same church which the students go to and so she could meet them there. In fact, she even used to incite the students telling them that she knows the incoming headteacher very well and the incoming headteacher is in fact a devil worshipper and she will obviously make them fail exams.

But the way I see it, this was not the best way of addressing this matter. You see we tended to close out on the students but I believe there needs to be some dialogue whenever the students have a problem and feel that wamekosewa (have been aggrieved).

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

There is the guidance and counselling. Corporal punishment has now been outlawed. In fact the implementation of these policies is the problem. You see now in our case, the guidance and counselling is hampered by the type of headteacher we have been having. However, if used very well, this can be an effective method to deal with problems of student behaviour.
E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

In my view, we need to be sensitive to the needs of the students. We need to listen to them when they have a problem and try to put ourselves in their shoes. We need to talk to them and more so we need not to ignore their problems or belittle them because that is when they pile and explode in a situation of strike.

F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

When such a problem occurs we feel demoralized as teachers. We feel we have failed in our duty as advisors, arbitrators and even as teachers. You see when they go on rampage, they are telling the public that all is not well here yet we as teacher are there. So we are seen as failures. We get embarrassed and sometimes we do not know how to react or explain to the public.
Appendix E2 (Kobe Secondary School student)

Background
The respondent was a female student in the school. The school is a girls’ school. By the time the researcher visited the school; this student was in form 3. She joined the school in February 2010.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

In this school we are not so badly off and about discipline of students, the students are not bad but sometimes like the head teacher who was here could make them behave in a bad way. The principal would sometimes tell us about our teachers, how they are bad, how we should be careful with them and even when we are with them and they say something bad about her we should go and tell her. It is like she did not like the teachers but the teachers were just teaching us very well.

But for a case of indiscipline affecting the whole school, I can say, in second term this year when the principal who was here came up with very tough rules. She came up with the idea that we should not have quencher, that is juice in our boxes and we should not even have perfumes and oil for applying on our body. So she told us that after some 12 hours we should have finished all the juice and we should throw away all those lotions and sprays.

So on the expiry of her deadline in the evening at 9.00p.m she started checking our boxes and if she finds those things, she pours them out. We started screaming and making noise because this was not fair. You see we have always been having these juices and there was no problem. We always apply these lotions and sprays and there has never been any problem. In fact we don’t know why she just decided all this when there was no problem with these things at all. Now even the teachers were not coming to help talking to the principal. And those few who came the principal shouted at them ‘who called you here? Can you go back I don’t need your help!’ So those teachers who had come just stood there doing nothing. Some students started throwing stones breaking some windows and others went to the dining hall and broke some utensils. Some students even threw some stones at the principal. But after some time, the Educational Officers came and talked to us and we stopped behaving that way. The DEO and other officers of education came again in the morning and we were sent home for three weeks then we came back and filled questionnaires and many of us said it was the principal who made us behave that way.

And you see, this is very unfair. We felt so bad. Why would she not want us to be like our colleagues in other schools? I mean, how will our fellow high school girls from other schools look at us when we meet them in symposiums and discussions. Surely, a high school girl cannot do without applying those things on her face. By the way, it was very unfair and according to me, she is the one who made students behave that way. So even if the students became violent, it is because there was no other means. The principal
was not listening to anyone, the teachers could not come and help us and now the principal was really bringing very bad school rules. I think the principal needed to tell us why it is wrong to carry juice and applying lotions before she bans them without any explanation.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

The students were very unhappy with the fact that the principal just woke up and started issuing some very tough rules which do not even make sense and then she gives us one day to have complied.

C. Addressing Student Violence

We were sent home for three weeks and when we came back we were asked to write in those questionnaires what happened and what brought about the whole problem. So many students were saying it is the principal with her tough rules and also because she refused to listen to anybody. No one was suspended but later it as the principal herself who was removed from the principalship and taken to another school.

D. Selection of Prefects

Like for the class prefects, students are the ones who select their prefects in class. But for the other prefects like head girl, sanitary prefect, dining hall prefect, those ones the teachers appoint them. And I find it good especially for class prefects. But the other prefects, I think it is good for the school to organize for, let us say voting where the whole school votes for those prefects instead of the teachers appointing them because they can appoint someone who is not even able to perform her duties very well. Otherwise, we get along well. But sometimes the ones who were chosen by the teachers tend to like reporting other students so much.

E. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

Students don’t just like becoming violent but sometimes they are pushed to the wall. Like our former principal, she could not listen to our complaints. She could only listen if you are going to tell her that teacher so and so has said this about you. So it is not good to use violence but if the teachers listen to students problems, students cannot use violence.
Appendix F1 (Ndovu Secondary School teacher)

Background
This school had several experiences of student unrest for various reasons such as an alleged immoral lady teacher, protesting against eating cow-peas vegetables (Kunde) and some examination issues where a candidate had been found committing an examination irregularity during the 2012 KCSE examinations. Some of the situations were resolved in school while in others; the school had to suspend some of the students that were thought to bear the greatest responsibility.

The respondent was a male teacher in the school. He was the boarding Master in the school and had been holding that position for 4 years by the time the researcher visited the school. This teacher had taught in the school for more than 7 years. This was a boys Boarding school.

A. Nature of Incidences of Indiscipline

Cases of indiscipline and student unrest have been a common occurrence in this school. First, in the year 2008, the students were opposed to the idea of a certain madam who was on staff and who was perceived as the ‘principal’s project’. According to the students, the lady was also befriending some teachers but she was mishandling students knowing that the principal would protect her. This same feeling was shared by some teachers. Consequently, the students staged a protest which they called ‘operation madam out’. So they did this is the evening, smashing some window panes of the offices and creating a general situation of tension in the school compound and even to the neighbouring villages.

The second instance was early this year, 2012 when the school introduced kunde (cow peas) as the green vegetables and so the students were like ‘we thought we paid fees again they know very well that we are not used to kunde but sukuma wiki (kales). So the students wrote a note and pushed it under the deputy principal’s office door.

The third case of indiscipline happened again this year (2012) during the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). In this case, as the examination was going on, one student was caught with a ‘mwakenya’ copying. ‘Mwakenya’ is a word used to refer to any material a candidate prepares and goes with it to an exam room with an intention of copying from it in case he/she finds a question whose answer can be found from the material he/she carried to the exam room. But you see, the school administrators, that is, the principal and his deputy read some ill-motives in the whole affair. They felt that someone was behind the whole thing and was out to tarnish the name of the school administrators and eventually the name of the entire school so the head teacher appeared to be so affected by this occurrence that later that day, in particular at night, he started sending messages to people including some teachers on staff that he is done with Namulungu and that they may not see him again. In fact, he
sent the message to the deputy principal, who in turn forwarded them to other members of the staff. So, at 3 a.m., some members of staff went to see him and in the mean time, word had gotten into the students about these developments. In that case, some students started chanting slogans of ‘he must go’. We (teachers) talked to the students to restore some calm and in the morning, the County Director of Education and addressed the students assuring them that everything was under control. But what I also remember is that when we escorted the principal to his house that night, the wife was very hostile even to us and at this point we started thinking that the problem was partly domestic. At the same time, the senior teacher has also sided with the deputy principal and they tend to work against the principal or simply to frustrate the efforts of the principal in running the school smoothly.

B. Grievances and their Genuineness

It is very difficult to tell whether these were the grievances or allegations were right or wrong. For the first and second incidences, one would say they were somehow genuine e.g. everyone could see how the madam was dressing but still, this does not give them a right to be as destructive as they were. The situation of kunde was genuine but the one for examination is not clear. You see, KNEC in conjunction with PTA sends some people from the national office to also survey the circumstances with which examinations are being done. So they just came. And they are in fact the ones who caught this candidate with this mwakenya. And you see, this candidate had a format of writing a C.V. and minutes but it was in the locker and perhaps this is why there was the feeling that someone was behind all these. But remember earlier on, but still within the examination season, it had been rumored that the principal’s subject- Biology- had been leaked.

But looking at it again, it looks like these students had a different agenda. Remember, earlier on I had told you that the students were not in good terms with the principal because he used to protect the madam who left. So this was another opportunity for them to get him (the principal) out. But of course they also had problems with the watchman about whom they also chanted ‘he must go’ in this same situation of unrest. For the watchman, they said he exploits them so much in a way that he knows that according to the school rules, the students are not supposed to have phones and since airtime is not sold in school, some students send him and at that point, he threatens to report them and so they have to bribe him. They also claimed a sort of competition to the boys and for these reasons, they also wanted him out.

Generally, in some cases I feel they are genuine. For example in the earlier situation where the students resented the introduction of kunde, I feel they were genuine. Sometimes they become violent because of unfulfilled promises and at that point I would say they are genuine. This is because it is failure on our part to give promises and not fulfill them. However, I do not agree with them on the part of the gatekeeper because they are in the first place breaking a rule.
C. Addressing Student Violence

For the first incidence, the BOG met to discuss both the conduct of the madam and also the reaction of the students. But the principal really defended the madam. But for the students, some were suspended while others were expelled following this occurrence. At last, the madam also left the school since the situation was also not very calm for her, she was experiencing some unrest.

The deputy principal discussed this matter with the principal and so the principal came to parade and made it clear that due to some expenditure that the school had encountered coupled with the fact that not all the students had cleared their fees, the school did not have enough money to sustain the usual menu. But even after this announcement, the tension subsided not immediately but gradually since some students felt that that was not a good reason enough to feed them on kunde which they sort of disregard so much. Maybe we can say it subsided since the students had been promised that this was a temporary measure and that in a short while the school will resume its usual menu.

D. Policies on Student Indiscipline

In terms of policies, and talking about the prefects, what I know is that currently, prefects should be elected, at least by policy. However, there have been, in this school, some instances of rigging some students into the prefecture. For instance, at the moment in this school, the head boy and the deputy head girl are not in good terms with the students’ body since they are not the students’ choice. In any case, the students have always pointed out that the head boy is loyal to the deputy principal probably because he is the one who rigged him into that position and that the deputy head girl was not even on the list of those nominated for prefecture but was just handpicked and rigged into that position. Consequently, these two prefects always have a hard time controlling the students as the students do not recognize them as their leaders.

E. Recommendations on how to Address student Violence

In my view, three things are viable. One, we need to fulfill promises that we make to these students. Secondly, we need to talk to these students since we tend to neglect the fact that they also have something to bring to our notice especially on matters of their own welfare and finally, we must guide them where we feel they are going wrong by explaining to them why we feel they are going wrong. The only problem however is that while guidance and counselling is supposed to be voluntary; students rarely come for this service even when it is evident that their academic performance is on the decline.
F. Respondent’s Personal View of Student Violence

As a teacher I am not happy about students staging violent protests. You see we are their counselors and guides and so we feel we have failed one way or the other. If anything, it should not get to this level if all systems were working well. However, in our situation here, I can say it is because there is a lot of laxity on the part of the senior teacher’s office and to some extent, he is partisan. You see he comes from around and sometimes he brings home affairs between his family and families where some of the students come from to school. This greatly comprises his effectiveness as a senior teacher in whose docket issues of indiscipline squarely lie.

G. Any Further Comments

In my view, we have also been bad role models because we are the ones who have shown these children that this is the way to go. They see lecturers, teachers, nurses and all the other workers often resorting to strikes paralyzing operations in their respective sectors whenever there is a disagreement with their employers.