

**IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL SAFETY STANDARDS MANUAL IN PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KERICHO COUNTY, KENYA-
(COMPARATIVE STUDY)**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this 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 following anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving parents, Joseah Sang and Nancy Sang, my siblings Ken, Diana, Kevin and Debra for their endless support in the areas of finances, prayers and always believing in me. God Bless You!

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSS	Comprehensive School Safety
CWS	Church World Service
GOK	Government of Kenya
MOE	Ministry of Education
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SSC	Safe School Contract
SSM	Safety Standards Manual
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDE	United States of America Department of Education

ABSTRACT

School safety plays an important role in creating a good learning environment. Governments worldwide have come up with policies and programs to improve school safety. The study sought to investigate whether secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County, Kenya, have followed the practices of risk management within the school setting according to the school safety standards manual for schools in Kenya. The study was guided by the following precise objectives: To identify trends in the awareness level of school safety policies among stakeholders, to examine school sociocultural environmental safety practices and adherence to national school safety policy requirements; to check physical infrastructural safety status adherence to national school safety policy requirements; and its effectiveness in the learning process as well as to investigate challenges confronting schools in their attempts to implement the school safety policy in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kenya. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of Needs theory (1943) and Ludwig von Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory (1968) were applied in this study. Descriptive survey design was employed in this study and 61 secondary schools, 61 principals, 470 teachers, 6 county education officers and 1800 learners were targeted. Out of all these, 7 secondary schools, 7 principals, 20 teachers, 1 education officer and 180 learners were sampled. Stratified random sampling was convenient in identifying the secondary schools (private and public), purposive sampling in the selection of the principals in the selected schools and a sub-county education officer and a simple random sampling in sampling teachers and learners from each stratum. The data was collected using questionnaires (teachers and learners), interview guides (principals and the education officer) and a physical environment observation checklist. Quantitative data was represented using descriptive statistics in terms of frequencies, percentages, and numbers whereas qualitative data was examined through content analysis presented as narratives, verbatim quotes, and photographs. Reliability was ensured using the test-retest method, and validity was achieved through expert review of research instruments. Key findings revealed significant gaps in the implementation of safety practices. While awareness of the national school safety policy was generally high among stakeholders, most had not directly accessed the document. There was partial alignment of sociocultural safety practices with policy requirements, and although schools were generally considered socially safe for learners and staff, physical infrastructure fell short of required standards. Many schools lacked proper emergency exits, adequate dormitory spacing, firefighting equipment, and secure school boundaries. A major barrier identified was limited financial resources, which constrained schools' ability to fully implement safety standards. The study recommended that schools develop sustainable, internal income-generating activities to reduce over-reliance on external funding to improve on the safety status of their schools. Moreover, the government should increase direct funding for safety improvements in schools, including infrastructure, training, and disaster preparedness. These findings are relevant for policymakers, education stakeholders, and school leaders both locally and internationally. A safe and secure school environment not only ensures students and instructors but also promotes increased enrollment, improved retention, and graduation success; critical corners in quality education achievement.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the introduction and background to the implementation of the national school safety policies including Safety Standards Manual for schools in Kenya (2008) in the context of secondary schools in Kericho County, Kenya. This is further followed by statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions that guided the study, limitations and delimitations of the study. It also presents the assumptions of the study, significance of the study, theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as operational definition of key terms.

1.2 Background to the Study

Worldwide, student safety is an area of educational policy that has been a key factor in the efforts of governments to deliver quality education. Education has been regarded as an essential human right that ensures national development as it serves as a social vaccine to combat poverty and social mobility (UNESCO, 2015). A nation cannot be considered fully developed when part of its population is prevented from accessing education. Schools cannot expect children to learn unless they are secure, since unsafe schools and environments are responsible for learner focus and performance (Ackah-Jnr & Danso, 2019). Inasmuch as the Education for All policy cannot be adopted unless teaching and learning spaces are secure (Madani, 2019). The Sustainable Development Agenda, embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was adopted by the General Assembly in 2015. SDG 4 deals with Education; Target 4a sets out the construction and rehabilitation of schools in consideration of the different needs of children, youth, and persons with disabilities in order

to ensure a safe, peaceful, inclusive, and stimulating education environment for all (UNESCO, 2015).. It is the responsibility of schools to take keen interest in ensuring that risks are managed well in teaching and learning environments. SDG 4 calls for improving overall safety in teaching and learning environments to encourage learner enrolment, retention and completion rates.

Continents have also developed plans targeted toward achievement of the SDGs. The Africa Agenda 2063 approved in January 2015 in Addis Ababa is a master and strategy plan for the socio-economic development of Africa into a prosperous and integrated continent within 50 years from 2013 to 2063 (African Union, 2016). While the Agenda mentions a wide scope of industries and targets, ensuring all African children have access to adequate education in a safe and secure setup is at the core of its vision (Khasiala et al., 2022). This includes programs that improve school infrastructure and facilities, strengthen child protection policies, and training for disaster risk reduction and response.

Over the past three decades, the CSS policy has also become the industry standard for catastrophe risk reduction. There is not much information that can be found about national-level CSS policies that have been produced and executed globally. In 2017, a total of 68 countries conducted an administration of the CSS Policy Survey. The majority of nations, according to the findings, have emergency management acts that encompass the education system (Paci-Green et al., 2020). Notably, although the majority of such countries have safety measures in place, school and student safety cannot be assured. Creating and ensuring an education facility where learners are safe physically, mentally, and emotionally is defined as school safety (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

[UNESCO], 2011). "Every child has a right to safety, including in education" as per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 2015).

As they work towards minimizing risks that occur in learning and teaching environments, nations have implemented policies and procedures to ensure learners' safety. In Spain, Diaz-Vicario and Sallán (2017) explored the institution's perception of safety and assessed how schools are committed to creating safe and healthy learning and teaching environments. They devised organizational and managerial measures that supplement school employees and all users' safety. Promoting safety and health environment was always an aspiration for which schools openly cried out for purposes of enhancing intensified learners' engagement. Despite a number of organizational activities and practices being implemented to ensure physical, emotional, and social security, all the relevant stakeholders contributed towards guaranteeing mutually agreed school security levels that in turn influenced teaching and learning processes within schools. Spain's model emphasizes active stakeholder participation, which is an aspect Kenya can further improve, especially for community-based monitoring.

The United States government created a template that can be used in the schools with an effort to minimize instances of insecurity after a string of school shootings in America. The International Association of Chiefs of Police published a guidebook on preventing and responding to school violence and mitigation practices for securing schools. The publication's goal was to improve the police profession (Sprague & Walker, 2021). Access controls, lockdown and evacuation procedures, quick reaction to incidents at school, and educating school personnel on how to identify, stop, and handle violent individuals in a school setting were all covered. Kingston et.al., (2018) noted that reviewing school

infrastructure to ensure its safety, paired with reform efforts, allowed the integration of academic goals with concrete components of school safety. Freilich et al., (2022) report that school shootings are rare, but remain a significant component issue in American schools. There is room to expand Kenya's safety drills and infrastructure audits, especially in rural schools where safety measures are often under-resourced.

The Indian government has also taken steps to prevent situations that put students in danger by developing a school safety program that teaches students and the school community about disaster preparedness in an effort to create a safe school culture (Gupta & Yadav, 2023). This was after the Indian school fire of 1995 and 2004 that trapped and killed 400 and 90 learners respectively. These school tragedies were blamed on failing to enforce and to fully follow safety norms by Regulatory Authorities. India's experience underscores the importance of monitoring and compliance, especially after Kenya's own history of school fires and building collapses.

About 270 schoolgirls from the Nigerian Borno State town of Chibok were abducted by Boko Haram in April 2014. These schoolgirls were abducted from their boarding school in the middle of the night (Higazi, 2015). This incident highlighted the impact of terrorist attacks on education and civilian life, underlining the importance of enhanced security measures in schools. The abduction disrupted education and increased fear and vulnerability of the girls who were kidnapped and had a broader impact on education in the region, especially on girls. Kenya must strengthen boarding school security, invest in sociocultural support, and develop gender-sensitive protection policies to encourage continued learning, especially for girls.

The South African government has welcomed initiatives towards enhancing the safety of schools through the establishment of a school safety program with national standards of the government, local support materials for school management and school safety committees to meet risks at schools. According to Qwetha-Daza (2022), the Department of Basic Education of South Africa asserts that drug abuse, sexual violence and harassment cannot be seen in schools as they greatly impact learning in a negative way. The agency has also come up with a guide to drug testing in South African schools and a National Strategy for the Prevention and Management of Alcohol and Drug Use among learners. In South Africa, 11% of the school-going children are among the victims of gun deaths. To avoid this, the Firearm Control Act and the South African Schools Act 1996 were passed into law in 2000. The Acts give the Minister of Safety and Security the power to declare schools as gun-free zones. Gender-based violence (GBV), violence and sexual harassment are serious concerns that persist in many South African schools (Singha & Kanna, 2022). However, like South Africa, Kenya has laws and implementation remains inconsistent. There is a need to train school management on rights-based approaches, GBV response, and learner protection.

The countries of Sudan and South Sudan have both experienced prolonged periods of conflict and war, which have significantly impacted learning and education (Shimeles & Verdier-Chouchane, 2016). School buildings are damaged or destroyed, rendering them hazardous. This devastation not only disrupts learning but also produces a shortage of appropriate conditions for learning to take place even in Kenyan schools. This is the same case in Somalia where wars and violence have also caused trauma and psychological stress for both learners and teachers in schools (Abouzeid et.al, 2022).

Uganda has adopted the Safe School Contract (SSC) as one of the acknowledged interventions that strengthens the role of educators, students, and parents, as well as their engagement in children's education and commitment to promoting the safety of all students in their school and at home. Using lessons learned from the 200 sponsored schools, SSC provides a method for enhancing school safety by encouraging student engagement and school-community ties (Gatua, 2015). In Ugandan schools, these approaches have directly increased safety in teaching and learning environments as learners reported positive changes such as more confidence, less stress and harassment on school grounds and fewer assaults (Sekiwu and Kabanda, 2014). Kenya can borrow from Uganda by enhancing the implementation of SSM by incorporating signed safety pledges between parents, teachers, and learners to foster accountability and a culture of safety in school environment.

The protection of all children is emphasized in Kenya's Children's Act (Chapter 586-2001). The 2010 Kenyan Constitution mandates that guardians and parents be on the lookout for any kind of child abuse because it is illegal to discriminate against a child (Musiega, 2021). Schools and other educational institutions should make sure that all students, including those with special needs, can adapt to their learning environment. To ensure that these rights are granted and protected, all pertinent parties should be informed of them as well.

In 2008, Church World Service (CWS) and the Ministry of Education worked together to develop the Safety Standards Manual (SSM), which is currently used in all Kenyan schools. Since there have been multiple reports of insecurity, the manual attempts to ensure that students are in a safe social environment. Following a successful trial program conducted in a few chosen schools in the districts of Kajiado, Murang'a and Nairobi, it was put into effect that same year. The SSM's Chapter 6 has the following essential elements: school safety,

disaster risk reduction, school community relations, safe teaching and learning environments, physical infrastructure safety, health and hygiene safety, school environment safety, food safety, safety against drug and substance abuse, safety against child abuse and transportation safety (MOE, 2008).

According to earlier studies conducted in Kenya, the majority of schools were not fully implementing the handbook and lacked the emergency response capabilities. Major obstacles were identified by the studies, including a lack of funding, varying perspectives on implementation, a lack of supervision, and a lack of knowledge of the Safety Standards Manual. These led to recommendations like need for improvement of infrastructures in terms of meeting safety standards, frequent inspection visits by quality assurance officer, financial support to enhance disaster preparedness and development of strong policies.

The Ministry of Education's Principal Secretary (PS) announced in a circular dated November 27, 2024, that 26 schools in Kericho County had been ordered to close immediately because they did not meet boarding school standards. Several institutions were found to have flagrantly violated the Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya (2008). Additionally, they failed to follow the guidelines outlined in the Registration Guidelines for Basic Education Institutions (2021). In the aftermath of the Hillside Endarasha Academy fire tragedy, 21 young boys between the ages of 9 and 14 lost their lives when their dormitory caught fire during the night.

As a result, the study was both a proactive step to protect students by making sure all boarding schools strictly adhere to national safety and registration regulations, as well as a reactive measure in the wake of the Hillside tragedy. This investigation directly led to the

government's decision to close Kericho County's non-compliant schools right away, demonstrating its dedication to putting students' safety first in all educational settings.

In Kenyan schools, Kericho included, reports show that the schools are far from achieving safety standards as there are repeated occurrences of fights, bullying, injuries, drug abuse, thefts, strangers found in school compounds, disasters like fires and floods among others. In Kericho county, the number of unsafe incidences in schools as of 2022 reports has increased and this is a worrisome trend. Therefore, this study endeavored to explore whether practices in school environments are aligned to the requirements in the Safety Standards Manual so as to achieve quality education.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Effective teaching and learning require safe and secure school environments. Around the world, governments and those involved in education have realized how important it is to create and implement regulations that protect students' and teachers' physical, mental, and emotional health. In addition to endangering students' and employees' health, unsafe schools also interfere with the teaching and learning process, which lowers academic achievement and performance. A comprehensive national policy outlining minimum standards for school safety was created by the Ministry of Education in Kenya in 2008 and is called the Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya. However, safety issues in Kenyan schools continue to be widespread and extremely worrisome even with the existence of this comprehensive policy framework. From 2016 to the present, incidents such as school fires, student unrest, bullying, drug abuse, poor sanitation, and even fatalities have continued to dominate national headlines. These incidents have caused injury, loss of life, trauma, destruction of property, and disruption to the education system. In Kericho County, the situation reflects a worrying

trend. According to reports from the County Director of Education, schools in the region are experiencing an increase in indiscipline cases, arson attacks, vandalism, strikes, and student protests, often resulting in physical and psychological harm to learners and staff. Reports by the media concerning the unsafe incidences in Kericho County drew the attention for this study as well.

Although the national policy is in place and comprehensive, it is not always translated into efficient, commonplace practices in schools, particularly in Kericho County. This situation demonstrates a glaring policy implementation gap. Some indicators that practices in the school environment do not comply with policy requirements include poorly maintained facilities, irregular safety supervision, a lack of safety training, a high accident rate, a failure to address bullying and harassment, and unclear procedures for handling safety issues. Due to these concerns, this study sought to establish if risk management practices in the teaching and learning environment align with the national school safety policy in Kericho County, Kenya. This is to ensure that the policy put in place is effective and promotes a safe learning environment. It can ultimately lead to identifying areas for improvement in risk management practices and to the development of effective protocols to address potential risks.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether schools observe the risk management practices in teaching and learning environment as indicated in the school safety standards manuals for schools in Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

This study sought to:

- i. Establish trends in the awareness levels of school safety policy among stakeholders in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya.
- ii. Analyze the sociocultural safety practices in school environment and alignment with national school safety policy requirements in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya.
- iii. Evaluate the status of physical infrastructural safety in school environment and alignment with national school safety policy requirements, as well as its influence on learners' participation in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya.
- iv. Analyze challenges that schools face in their quest to implement the school safety policy in teaching and learning environment in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya.

1.5.1 Research Questions

To achieve the objectives stated above, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- i. What are the trends of the levels of awareness among stakeholders on school safety policy in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya?
- ii. Do sociocultural safety practices in school environment align with national school safety policy requirements in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya?
- iii. What is the status of physical infrastructural safety in school environment and their alignment with national school safety policy requirements, as well as their influence

on learners' participation in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya?

- iv. What challenges do schools face in their quest to implement the school safety policy in teaching and learning environment in Bureti Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of Study

The researcher hoped that the results of this study would help school administrators and boards of management make well-informed decisions that will reduce the number of physical accidents caused by, among other things, electrical malfunctions, natural disasters, and outside attacks.

By giving details about the difficulties schools encounter during the implementation process, it hoped to assist policymakers at the MOE to develop and review policy frameworks to fill the existing gaps, that enhance emergency service provisions to reduce risks and occurrence of disasters. The results of this study may also lead to more research insights, enhance existing information, and give researchers references for future investigations.

By highlighting the practical gaps, the study shows urgent need for African governments and regional bodies to move beyond policy formulation and focus on effective, inclusive implementation. They may also be useful to teachers, school managers, parents, the community, researchers and learners to add to their existing knowledge of the benefits of enhancing safety in schools. Additionally, it could teach them to take active roles in managing risks so that a favorable learning atmosphere is created. The researcher hoped that the findings would help clarify how to lessen incidents of domestic violence, school fires, strikes, suspensions, and other disruptive behaviors that create distress and anxiety in the educational setting.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Some respondents, including school administrators, were reluctant to divulge crucial information in the questionnaire and during the interview because safety is a delicate subject. The researcher however overcame the challenge by assuring them that their confidentiality would be observed during the report writing process. This study focused solely on how safety policy was being implemented and how it helped to reduce risks from occurring in the teaching and learning environment and not any other factor because safety is necessary for a learner success. In order to gather sufficient data from teachers, education officer and students, a combination of research tools was utilized, including questionnaires, interviews and observation checklists. The results' credibility was increased by using a variety of data sources. The results may not be as broadly applicable to the general population as they could be because of the study's smaller sample size and shorter data collection period.

1.7.1 Delimitations of Study

Since this study was conducted in a sample of secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, generalization was not possible due to the fact that different locations have different contexts and characteristics. This study sought information from the following categories of people: education officers, learners, principals and teachers in secondary schools because they were the main school stakeholders and direct beneficiaries of safety in schools. Other parties not directly associated with matters pertaining to school safety were not taken into consideration.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that the school safety standard manual was known to the school community (teachers, parents, and pertinent MOE stakeholders) in order to facilitate quicker implementation. That a school safety handbook, which directs the provision of safety

measures to students, was available in every school. The extent to which schools follow the safety regulations may differ. Finally, that the respondents, who included education officers, teachers, principals, and students, had enough time to adequately answer the research questions.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1943). According to Maslow, a person's behavior is driven by five needs that they go through in phases. Maslow thought that each stage must be satisfied progressively before moving on to the next stage of need. For example, before love and belonging becomes a priority, personal safety must be met first. And again, when our physiological needs have not been satisfied, it is unlikely that we will be concerned with safety. According to Maslow, motivation comes as a result of unsatisfied needs.

Figure 1.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: Okumbe, (2007)

Safety needs as defined in Maslow's hierarchy refer to the need for security and protection. Safety in schools can manifest itself as safe classrooms, playgrounds, walking paths, dormitories and latrines.

This theory, which explains that safety needs are essential to human well-being and accomplishments (including education), was modified for the current study. By attending to the safety needs of students, schools can establish a solid foundation for their overall development and wellbeing. When they feel safe and secure, they are more likely to be motivated, involved, and able to concentrate on their studies and personal development.

In this approach, Maslow's hierarchy of needs strengthens the case for prioritizing school safety as a critical component of improving learners' overall well-being and success. The theory was applied to investigate how safety policy implementation can help satisfy students' basic needs for security and safety in learning settings, which may then enable them to concentrate on more important needs like learning and development.

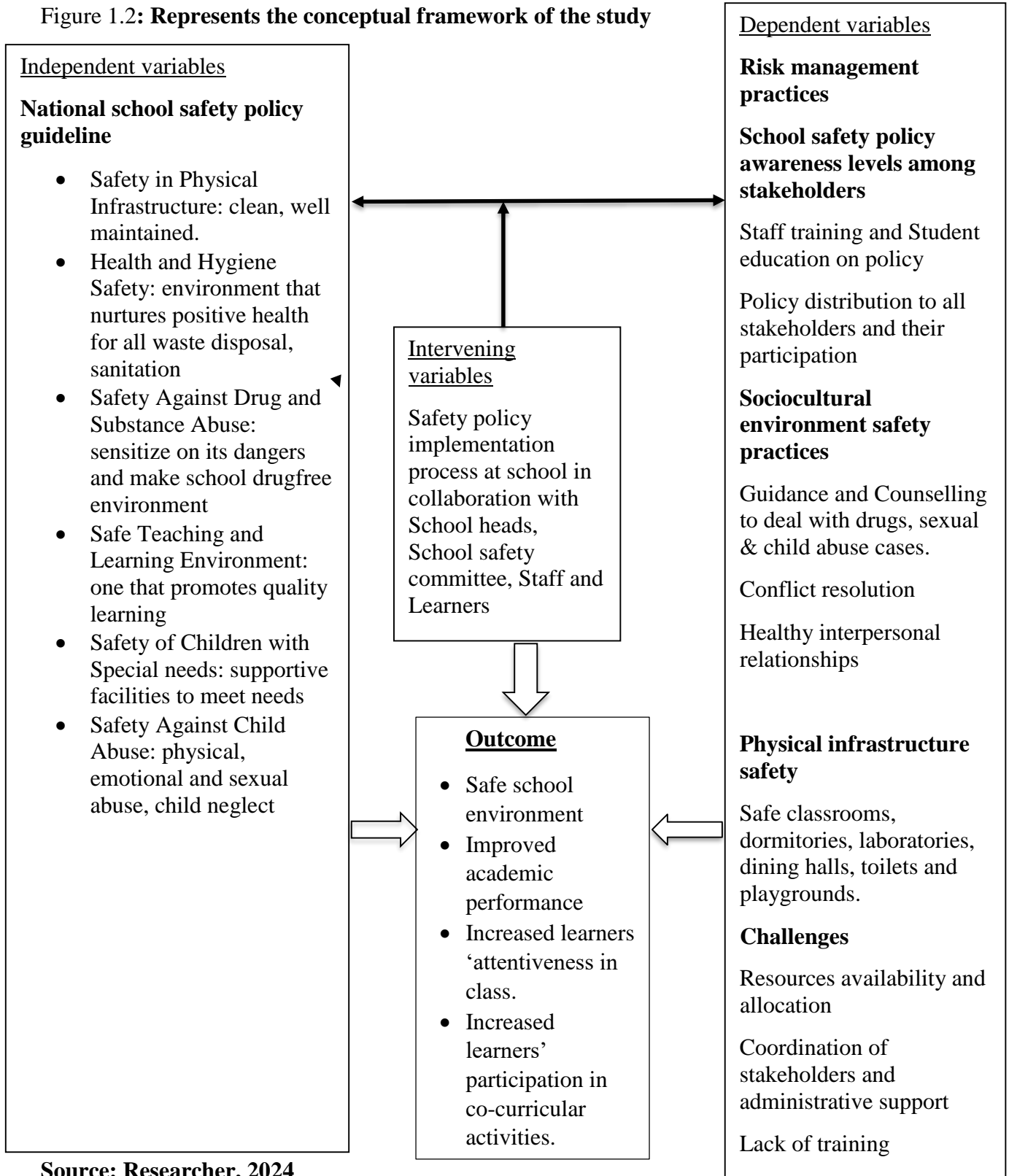
This study also adopted the Systems Theory proposed in the 1940's by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968). This theory is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and analyzing complex systems (Sayama, 2015). Applying systems theory to safety in schools involves understanding schools as complex systems with various interconnected components that influence safety outcomes. In this context, a school can be seen as a system comprising students, teachers, administrators, staff, physical facilities, policies, procedures and the surrounding community. A system's components are logically linked to achieve a common goal. A collection of interrelated and connected parts that work together to accomplish a common goal or purpose is called a system. Because the school is composed of components that are stakeholders, it can be compared to a system (Wanderi, 2018). All

pertinent stakeholders in education should participate in in order to improve school safety as a whole.

Together, these theories support a more nuanced understanding that bridging the policy-practice gap in school safety requires both meeting fundamental human safety needs and strengthening systemic functionality, including fostering learner participation and ensuring schools operate as responsive, well-coordinated systems. They enable a holistic view of school safety, recognizing that it's not just about individual behavior but also about policies, infrastructure, relationships, and external influences.

1.9.1 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.2: Represents the conceptual framework of the study



Source: Researcher, 2024

When safety regulations are followed, a safe learning environment is created. Figure 1.2 displays the variables that served as the study's conceptual framework. Classrooms, offices, restrooms, dorms, libraries, labs, kitchens, dining halls, playgrounds, and other physical facilities must all be safe in order to provide a safe learning environment (MOE, 2008). There are independent, intervening, and dependent variables in this study. In order to improve safe, secure, and compassionate learning environments, schools should implement the national school safety policy, which is the independent variable. The dependent variable is the risk management practices in the teaching and learning environment whereby the school stakeholders should be aware of so as to ensure that psycho-social environment and physical infrastructures in schools are safe. Schools encounter obstacles when attempting to put school safety policies into practice. Lack of funding, inadequate staff training, and potential opposition to certain policies from students, employees, or the community are some of the difficulties. This study's intervening variable is the school environment where all stakeholders need to embrace and participate in risk management practices to enhance better interactions.

School stakeholders must ensure that schools create and meet the safety standards in a learning environment to foster the development of learner's social and emotional needs, which may also enhance their overall well-being and academic progress. Schools that voluntarily and obediently uphold social and physical environment safety may benefit from favorable outcomes like relaxed learning environments, unrestricted interactions, increased self-confidence, and better learning, which leads to success. Failure to implement increases absenteeism and promotes a hostile environment for teaching and learning processes.

1.10. Operational Definitions of Terms

Alignment: The degree to which schools and activities within learning environment are performed logically to follow what is required in the safety guideline.

Implementation: The act of putting the school safety policy into effect so as to assist in meeting the standards set of how learning environments should be.

Sociocultural: A combination of psychological and social interactional aspects that influence a person's well-being and behavior.

Risk management practices: as employed in this study alludes to educational initiatives like lockdowns, fire drills, evacuation plans, and constructive interpersonal interactions between teachers and students.

Safety standards: Refer to the quality achievement level for a school safety component that Bureti Sub County secondary schools must meet in order to be considered safe.

Safety standard Manual: A document that presents and guides on how schools should ensure a secure learning environment.

School safety: Actions taken by students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to reduce or eliminate hazardous situations or threats that could result in mishaps, physical harm, and psychological and emotional distress in the learning environment.

Teaching and learning environment: A space in which school community including teachers and learners feel motivated to stay within and learn.

Teaching and learning process: refers to the structured activities and interactions between educators and learners within a formal educational setting aimed at achieving specific instructional goals.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a critical review of the literature related to implementation of safety manuals for schools. The review draws on both national and international sources to explore diverse perspectives, frameworks, and practices in school safety. It is structured thematically, aligning with the objectives of the study.

2.2 School Safety Policy Awareness Levels among Stakeholders

School safety standards are generally known by all parties involved in education in Kenya, including parents, teachers, school administrators, government representatives, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To ensure school safety, the Kenyan government has established a number of programs and initiatives. Stakeholders are generally encouraged to familiarize themselves with these policies and ensure their implementation within their respective roles.

China has frequently witnessed earthquakes of severe magnitude due to its seismic location, which has resulted in a substantial number of casualties, including students (UNICEF, 2009). China's lack of safety measures has led to higher death rates among its citizens, highlighting the need to improve disaster readiness both at home and in schools. Chinese individuals were ignorant of safety practices despite safety drills organized by disaster preparedness organizations, indicating that school safety is a global concern. This raises critical questions about how policy is communicated and internalized at the grassroots level, a theme that also resonates in the Kenyan context.

The safety of students is a worry because the Philippines experiences 20 typhoons on average annually (ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative [ASSI], 2018). Schools are required to set up a School Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) team, which is led by a designated coordinator. This model demonstrates the value of clear institutional frameworks and mandated roles in promoting school safety awareness. This offers a useful comparative model for Kenya to consider, particularly in counties like Kericho where natural calamities are prevalent.

According to the common law principle of *loco parentis*, the institutions in Malaysia are legally obligated to guarantee the security and protection of all students (Ismail, Shukri, Badzis & Abdallah, 2016). Circular letters, in particular, “*Ikhtisas*” are used to communicate directives to all schools, offices and 15 Educational Departments around the country that they should be committed to conduct safety education, training and campaign at schools. This approach reflects a policy-driven awareness mechanism that holds schools accountable, which was important to investigate in Kenyan secondary schools where policy implementation often depends on the discretion of individual school leaders.

Sekiwu and Kabanda (2014) used a cross-sectional survey approach in their study on creating safer secondary schools in Uganda by fostering a group commitment to observing health and safety regulations. The Safe School Contract (SSC) guidelines that were introduced in Ugandan schools increased communication and involvement between teachers, pupils and parents on children’s safety in schools. They also inform staff and learners about the significance of health and safety in schools. It is the direct responsibility of managers to make sure that students understand health and safety concerns and avoid taking unnecessary risks (Weiner, Francois, Stone-Johnson & Childs, 2021). This study

benefitted from the findings of Sekiwu and Kabanda (2014) as it also sought to look at the extent to which stakeholders know and involve themselves in matters concerning safety of schools. To obtain up-to-date information on the topic being studied, the researcher used a descriptive survey design.

Udali's (2020) study on learners and staff understanding of school safety measures in Trans-Nzoia County found that teachers, learners and security personnel all had a poor degree of awareness of school safety protocols. Majority of learners and employees had not participated in security drills to prepare for security threats and crises. Teachers, learners and security personnel were unprepared to cope with any security issues since they hadn't seen or studied the Ministry of Education School Safety manual. Security drills had not been conducted for learners and staff to prepare them to deal with security threats and emergencies. This study selected schools from both private and public, boarding and day secondary schools unlike the study carried out by Udali (2020) which selected a category of only public boarding secondary schools. This made it possible for the researcher to compare and contrast the safety policy awareness levels of the stakeholders in the two categories of schools.

A study by Ng'ang'a (2013) in Nyeri Central district, found out that staff members were unaware of the safety standards manual's contents. He recommends that for quick response when a threat arises, the school needs to make sure that everyone involved knows how to utilize safety gear, such as fire extinguishers, correctly. The first stage in planning should be to raise awareness of the school safety policies. No training was provided to the learners on safety and first aid administration as per the majority (72%) of the learners. While Ng'ang'a's study did not explicitly state a specific theory and only implicitly referenced

theories related to compliance and organizational behavior, this study specifically employed Maslow's and Systems theory.

Keeping schools safe requires staff to be aware of safety strategies for managing disaster. Schools should be prepared to face disaster management which will lessen the effect that calamities have on educational institutions (Omari, 2021). The study, conducted in Nyeri County secondary schools, found that ensuring that staff are aware of safety is remarkable. The results showed a substantial connection between employee awareness and risk management procedures. The study recommended that frequent disaster control sensitization is necessary to make sure school stakeholders understand how crucial disaster prevention is to promoting safe learning. The current study went on to examine the relationship between awareness of school safety policies and its impact on lowering risk incidents in school environments in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County.

Udali (2020) also in her study established that 45% of the teachers said the school principal keeps the school safety manual in their office, 40% were unaware of the location of the school safety manual while 15% said that the safety manual was stored in the deputy principal's office. This reveals that teachers are ignorant and have no commitment to reading the manual. Most principals interviewed said they kept the manual in their offices. There's a high chance that respondents aren't aware of its contents and hence aren't prepared to take the necessary safety precautions. According to MOE (2008), all students and teachers must have access to the safety handbook, and all stakeholders in the school must be able to understand its contents in order to be ready for any security threat. Determining whether the people involved in the secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County had access to and read the School Safety Manual was therefore necessary because there were insufficient reports on the

situation in Kericho County. In order to establish a baseline for comparison, the current study sampled both public and private secondary schools, both boarding and day, whereas Udali's study was conducted in public boarding secondary schools.

The reviewed literature reveals that school safety awareness levels are highly variable across countries and are shaped by the presence or absence of structured policy communication, stakeholder involvement, legal mandates, and training initiatives. The goal of the current Bureti Sub-County study is to investigate this connection in more detail.

2.3 Sociocultural Environmental Safety

A safe school social environment improves academic achievement, gender sensitivity, and child friendliness. By 2030, UNICEF and WHO pledge to help governments and other interested parties make major strides in school safety. Review research shows that a clean, well-maintained classroom with caring teachers is a prerequisite for a safe school social environment (Wanderi, 2018).

Student safety in schools has been found to be improved by utilizing closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras. Galligan et al. (2020), in their study on public school safety and discipline in the United States, emphasize the importance of using CCTV cameras. Regrettably, most Kenyan secondary schools do not use this equipment (Ndonga, 2018), particularly in the current study area. Children feel more physically and psychologically secure in environments equipped with surveillance devices because they are constantly aware that someone is watching out for their safety at school. On the same line, Ndonga (2018) contends that boarding schools should have mandated security elements such as CCTV camera installation in order to eliminate student sexual molestation. The current study investigates the extent to which physical security measures such as CCTV have been implemented in

Bureti Sub-County. It also assesses whether stakeholders perceive these measures as effective and what gaps exist in policy compliance and enforcement.

Ikegbusi, Eziamaka and Iheanacho (2021) conducted research on how the school environment affects the academic development of preschoolers in Lagos State. All of the public and private preschools in Lagos State's Eti Osa Local Government Area were surveyed using a questionnaire and a descriptive research design. The study recommended that all primary education stakeholders create a welcoming and pleasurable learning environment. The study discovered, among other things, that the physical and social form of a school has a major influence on students' learning interests. The current study attempted to look at the status of social environment safety and how it influences learning processes in secondary school level in Kericho County unlike Ikegbusi's et. al (2021) study which was done at preschool level. This current study also used questionnaires, interview schedules and physical environment observation checklist to allow the researcher gather wide range of data and enhance the depth of findings unlike Ikegbusi's which used questionnaire only.

In Limpopo province, South Africa, Mojapelo (2018) involved teacher-librarians and found that libraries and information service for all schools must be sufficient to allow the number of students to move through without becoming congested. Congestion endangers learner safety because of the possibility that students would trip over each other, suffocate younger children, and do bodily harm to themselves. The library should not be excessively long and wide to inconvenience learners from accessing diverse sections of the block. The current study sought to find out how ensuring spacious libraries improved access and reduces overcrowding to lessen accidents. This study did not involve librarians in Bureti Sub-County schools.

A study conducted by Nshekenabo (2018) in Tanzania revealed that drug and substance misuse posed a serious risk in most secondary schools regarding the safety of the learners. The findings showed that, in the case of the majority of the secondary schools, drug and substance addiction was one of the main threats to the safety of students. According to the study, drug abuse among learners is associated with negative effects on mental impairment, inattention, health problems and violence. Nshekenabo's (2018) study was guided by Social Learning Theory while the current study by Maslow's and Systems theory. This present study sought to explore how schools in Kericho County dealt with drugs and substance threats in their schools and whether guidance and counselling sessions assist in curbing such cases.

Apio (2018) in a study on domestic violence and children's academic performance in Uganda found that having a comfortable place to stay gives learners great opportunity for learning and socializing with other learners from different social backgrounds. Anybody can be affected by domestic violence (DV), regardless of color gender, age, religion or tribe. Nonetheless, the common victims of DV are women and children. According to the study's findings, DV primarily impacts learner's academic performance. While the sample size was determined using Slovene's formula, the current study used Mugenda and Mugenda's.

The Safety Standards Manual (2008), there should be a dedicated School Safety Sub-Committee with members who have varying roles and responsibilities to assume direct responsibility for managing school safety. According to the Manual, the school safety committee specific tasks should be first and foremost to identify the school's safety needs and take the required action by engaging and analyzing incident reports with fellow stakeholders so as to get valuable insights into safety concerns they may have noticed or

experienced. Subsequently, the school must mobilize resources to ensure that students, staff and parents are in a safe, secure and caring environment by appropriately allocating finances to the identified safety needs. After that is to maintain and improve school safety, create enduring networks with all relevant parties. This will provide support and a feeling of shared responsibility. Keeping learners, parents, and other interested parties updated on school safety regulations and initiatives that support the creation of safety enhancement plans comes next. Finally, monitor and assess the many aspects of school safety with a view to improving school safety. By regularly assessing the effectiveness of safety measures and identifying areas of improvement, schools can enhance their safety protocols and respond promptly to emerging issues. There was need to establish whether schools in the study locale have the safety committees and if they have specific roles in implementation process.

In another research, Wanyama (2011) investigated secondary schools in Sabatia District, Vihiga County, Kenya, to determine the extent to which health and safety regulations were being followed for emergency response. The percentage of schools that installed lightning arrestors on buildings was less than 20%. Regarding hygienic practices, more than 80% of schools complied with the requirement that non-teaching staff wear uniforms and undergo medical examinations before handling food. Wanyama (2011) also observed that majority of schools lacked security management training for their instructors and had not established safety committees. This was crucial for the current study as the researcher found out the extent to which stakeholders in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County were trained and prepared to handle disasters and risks.

Most Kenyan educational institutions have gradually developed a reputation as breeding grounds for bad behavior. According to Kvarme et.al. (2020), guidelines had been launched

from 2018 to curb bullying and to improve the overall quality of the service in schools. Instructors must take action against bullies and establish a secure learning environment. It has also been recommended that parents cultivate stronger bonds with their kids at home. The guidelines which were drawn up by the Ministry of Education (2008) urges that to ensure that learning is effective, elementary school leaders should incorporate the local community and stakeholders in their operations. Additionally, the manual makes clear that a child's achievement is not always shown by passing a written exam. It means appreciating the diversity of the manner in which kids acquire knowledge. In order to improve the quality of instruction in the school environment in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, the current study asked respondents for recommendations on safety precautions.

From a study conducted by Nderitu (2009), there were areas of disagreement between the teachers and head teachers. Specifically, 82% of head teachers and teachers believed that schools did not have formal school security committees, and 55% of head teachers and 62% of teachers believed that school walls were not strong enough to keep unauthorized access out. In addition, 73 percent of head teachers and 76% of teachers noted that school inspections occur infrequently. This study will also seek to explore the state of school fence and the impact they have in promoting a safe learning environment. This study involved only teachers and head teachers as their target population and so the current researcher filled the gap by seeking information from teachers, principals, learners and Sub-County Education officer. New investigations were appropriate to check whether the situation in school grounds have changed compared to a study which was done 14years ago.

2.4 School Physical Infrastructure Safety and influence on learner's participation

Buildings including kitchen, libraries, playground equipment, classrooms, offices, washrooms, dorms and laboratories are examples of physical infrastructure. An effective school building should provide an environment that is visually beautiful, well-ventilated, well-lit, safe and pleasant to be in. According to SSM 2008, such physical buildings ought to be suitable, sufficient and positioned appropriately, free from any hazards to users or those nearby. They should also abide by the safety regulations and guidelines of that particular nation. According to international studies, learner safety and academic achievement were impacted by dilapidated school buildings and outdated infrastructure (Elie & Andala, 2021).

According to research, several countries, including Nigeria (Kabiru & Arshad, 2016) and Tanzania (Lawrent, 2020), lack basic school facilities such as laboratories, libraries, restrooms, classrooms, playgrounds, water stations, and electricity. Proper and adequate school facilities improve student enrolment and learning experience.

According to reviewed studies, safe school buildings are necessary to ensure risk reduction in the teaching and learning environment. For example, in their research on Chicago Public Schools in the United States of America, Steinberg et al. (2018) noted that windows in classrooms and dormitories should allow appropriate ventilation and sunlight so that learners may participate in a range of activities. From the findings of their study, the school structures were adequate hence there is no congestion. However, if not properly used, the layout and placement of those windows can present a security risk. It was important to determine whether schools in Bureti Sub-County followed this crucial directive of adequacy and appropriateness of physical infrastructures from the Safety Standards guideline.

A classroom is one of the primary places where learners in the United States of America spend the most of their schooldays while pursuing their education (Grover, 2015). The classroom needs to meet a number of safety requirements in order to guarantee the security of both students and instructors. It should be possible for learners to walk freely in this setting. To reduce injuries and to enable movement easy, desks and other equipment in the classroom should be well organized. Other crucial parts of classroom design are making sure there are no exposed electrical wires, spills on the floor and uneven tiles that could cause learners to trip and hurt themselves. However, there was little information available in Bureti Sub-County regarding how secondary school learning is impacted by the condition of classrooms and dorms; therefore, the goal of this study was to close this knowledge gap. The purpose of this study was to determine whether school practices adhere to the guidelines found in the school safety standards manual (2008).

In their study on school safety assessment in India, Gautham et al. (2020) employed a mixed-methods approach based on primary data collection and selection of sample via stratified random sampling. Examining the condition of windows, electrical outlets, lighting, ventilation and other features in classrooms and public spaces like balconies, hallways, and lobby areas was part of the assessment process. Compared to public schools, private schools had much better infrastructure, with safe classrooms (69% versus 54%) and safe hallways (86% versus 67%). According to observations, 84% and 83% of schools' windows and balconies, respectively, had three-quarters of them secure. Likewise, in 66% of the schools, three-quarters of the classrooms were secure. This informed the present study as it looked at both private and public schools with aim of making comparison and to determine which school category in Kenya, a third-world nation, is doing better in terms of the safety

measures put in place. To determine the sample size for the current study, the researcher employed stratified, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques.

In Hoseini & Azhdarpoor's (2016) study, the environmental health and safety status of Shiraz City's public and private schools was assessed. The purpose of this cross-sectional study was to evaluate public and private schools' environmental health and safety conditions. The findings indicated that 43% of public schools and 65% of private schools lacked an adequate health buffet. Furthermore, the percentage of schools with a hygiene instructor was just 17%. Ninety percent of public schools and ninety-six percent of private schools have proper conditions for equipment and tools. Of the public and private schools, 71% and 73%, respectively, had adequate security and safety measures in place. This study sought to establish the state of safety between the public and private schools in Bureti Sub-County and to know which one has better performance in terms of safety measures. Further, in order to fill the methodological gap, the present study employed a mixed-method study.

In Philadelphia, Bevans et al. (2018) looked into classroom management, physical education resources and student physical activity levels. According to the study, learners will have more opportunities for healthy physical exercise if they have access to well-maintained, secure, and suitable sport facilities as well as sufficient number of physical educators. Otherwise, insufficient and unsafe facilities in schools jeopardized students' safety. There is a need for research in a third-world nation like Kenya because their study was concentrated in developed nations with far more advanced physical infrastructure so as to examine and make a comparison of the state of physical infrastructure safety.

Xaba (2014) discovered that in South Africa, bed conditions significantly affected students' safety. The condition of the beds should be structurally sound in such a way that learners

cannot damage themselves when moving from one spot to another. The stability of the bed's structure implies that learners are not at risk of sliding off it while they are sleeping. To prevent rusting and structural damage, the beds must be well coated. Whereas Xaba's study collected only qualitative data, the present study utilized both qualitative and quantitative data. There was need for this study to be done so as to explore how the state of physical infrastructure in dormitories affects learners' safety in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County.

Sekiwu and Kabanda (2014) recommend that students should be taught how to use the flush doors in Ugandan dorms. There should be unobstructed access to the doors, without any objects or beds blocking their path. This makes sure the learners are not in any way prevented from moving freely in the event that they need to exit the dorm. According to SSM (2008), the doors should also extend outwards to avoid pupils becoming stranded at the threshold during a rush. It's also advisable to lock the doors from the inside rather than the outside. This is to keep trespassers out of the dorms when students are asleep. This is essential to guarantee that students can quickly flee in the case of a disaster like a fire. To aid in the ease of exit in the event of a tragedy, the windows should not have grills. The current study used a descriptive survey research design and sought to establish the architectural designs of dormitories and classrooms and how these infrastructures influenced learning in Kericho County.

According to Wayong'o (2018), most secondary schools in Kenya lacked safe playgrounds. As advised by the Ministry of Education, the researcher offered the following recommendations for guaranteeing safe school playgrounds: In addition to having their grounds securely gated, schools must have clearly defined boundaries. The grounds must

also always be kept tidy, attractive, and conducive for learners, faculty, parents and community members to utilize. This study aimed to establish a connection between student safety and the condition of school playgrounds and how it affects the learning process.

Maritim et al. (2015) investigated the safety of Kenyan secondary schools' physical infrastructure. Chaos Theory guided the study; it provides direction on how to manage times when a system is extremely unstable. The descriptive survey design was used in the investigation. The sample size was determined using stratified and purposive sampling approaches. Participants in the study included security guards, instructors, principals and learners. The study instruments included the questionnaire, interview schedule, and observation checklist. The collected data was both quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. The survey stated that most schools lacked the necessary equipment and preparation to handle emergencies. Even though Maritim et al.'s study focuses on the physical infrastructure safety in Kenyan secondary schools, it will nevertheless have an impact on the current study's methodology, including the research design, research tools and respondents. Unlike Maritim et al. study, the current study employed the Abraham Maslow's and General Systems theory. Additionally, the current study was conducted in a subset of Bureti Sub-County secondary schools in order to close the geographic gap.

Another study by Magaki, Ntabo & Nduku (2021) found that schools buildings in Kenya are not well kept. The research design for the study was convergent parallel mixed technique. Based on their findings, despite the adequacy, certain schools had toilets with floors that were chipped, which enlarged the opening and deterred younger learners from using them. The research also revealed that most latrines had broken doors, no privacy at all and learners could be observed outside while using them. It is difficult for learners to use these toilets.

This study differentiated itself from Magaki et al., (2021), a study which was done in sampled primary schools, by finding out how maintaining safety of toilets impacted risk reduction in school environment in secondary schools in Kericho County. The current study also filled the research design gap as it used the descriptive survey design.

2.5 Challenges facing the implementation of government safety policies and suggestions on ways that safety standards can be made better in schools.

In today's ever-changing world, ensuring the safety and well-being of learners is a top priority for schools. However, implementing effective safety policies comes with its own set of challenges. From striking a delicate balance between security and a nurturing environment to managing limited resources and complying with regulations, schools face a multitude of hurdles on their pursuit of provision of a safe space for learning.

According to Kikui (2016), lack of finance is the primary barrier to the effective implementation of safety requirements in schools. Enough funding must be provided by the government in order to fully implement appropriate school safety measure. Donors must step forward to assist in putting appropriate safety measures in place in schools. Without donors, schools have few or no sources of finance and continue to maintain appalling conditions for safe learning settings.

In Tanzania, Makiya, Mnyanyi & Ngirwa (2023) conducted research to determine the obstacles schools faced while attempting to implement safety measures. The study used a concurrent research design using a mixed methods approach, with a focus on rural schools exclusively. According to the report, many schools relied on parent donations since they lacked the funds to create safety regulations in learning environment. The current study

chose schools from both urban and rural areas and employ a distinct research design which is a descriptive survey research design in Bureti sub county.

Madani et. al (2019) also found that lack of funding and adequate financial management is the main obstacle to the safety policy's implementation. Because of their high expenditures, which include building, renovation, relocation and the acquisition of expensive equipment, this study purposed to ascertain the difficulties that Bureti Sub-County schools are encountering when putting the school safety rules into practice.

In their study, Kemunto, Role & Balyage (2015) selected 18 public national secondary schools in Kenya that had been administering the KCSE since 2010. The findings asserts that a number of reasons, such as insufficient time, limited resources, a lack of technical expertise, improper coordination and oversight by the Ministry of Education, contributed to the inefficient execution of safety regulations. Given that the manuals are designed to act as a reference, several schools stated that they are unable to apply the safety requirements because they do not have the ministry's recommendations (MOE, 2008). The current study selected both public and private secondary schools to create a base for comparison.

The effect of CCTV surveillance technology on school safety in public boarding secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya, was assessed by Gitonga (2020). The study came to the conclusion that a large number of students thought CCTV surveillance cameras were a good idea and that they helped keep schools safe. However, there were some obstacles that prevented the complete application of CCTV, such as malfunctioning cameras, the high maintenance costs of the CCTV system, and a lack of personnel to properly man CCTV cameras in schools. This was crucial for the current study since the researcher looked into whether or not schools had CCTV and whether or not it helped keep the school safe. The

current study focused on public, private, boarding, and day secondary schools, whereas Gitonga's study focused on public boarding schools.

Additional safety issues arise as a result of the school administration's incompetence and other factors, such as stakeholders' lack of support (Bishoge, 2021). This present study was important to establish whether effective support from the administration and relevant stakeholders would make implementation of school safety policies successful in Kericho County. The culture and attitudes of the community surrounding the school may also influence school safety policy implementation (Wilbert et al., 2016).

Grossi et al., (2019) in their study suggested that a plan and budget on safety is the road to achieving proper safety status in schools. Effective planning and budgeting are so appropriate in this process of implementation of school safety policies. Schools that have well planned ways and budgets for meeting standards of safety in schools are more likely to hit their goals and attract additional funding from well-wishers to successfully implement the safety measures. The current study will however seek from the respondents, suggestions on how safety standards in schools can be made better by utilizing available resources.

2.6. Summary of Knowledge Gaps

The study carried out by Udali (2020), selected only public boarding secondary schools to study on stakeholders' safety protocols awareness levels. However, the current study involved both public and private, boarding and day secondary schools and studied the alignment of safety practices in school with the safety policy and compared the results. Gautham et.al study (2020) in Bengaluru and Kolar districts, India did safety assessment on physical infrastructures in school only. There is scanty documented information on how the state of physical infrastructure in school impacts learning process in Kericho County and

therefore there was a need to carry out this study. Another study carried out by Maritim et.al (2015) was founded in Chaos Theory. However, this study distinguished itself as it employed Abraham's Maslow and General Systems Theory. A study by Nemes (2014) employed a cross-sectional research approach and only included schools in rural areas. The current study used a descriptive survey research design. Unlike Nemes' (2014) study, this one included both rural and urban schools in Bureti Sub-County.

The sole research instrument given to participants in Ikegbusi, Eziamaka & Iheanacho (2021) study in Lagos state's primary schools was a questionnaire. In the present investigation, the researcher made use of questionnaires, interview schedules and checklists for physical environment observation to collect data. Most studies reviewed were done in public schools and therefore this study sought to fill that gap by involving the private secondary schools for data collection. Apio (2018) did a study on Domestic violence and impact on children's academic performance in Uganda. This reviewed literature did not indicate the influence of other sociocultural issues such as drugs and substance abuse; child abuse and bullying victims are handled hence the need for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology that was used in the current study. It contains the study design, the study location, target population, sampling techniques and sample, research instruments, piloting of the study, reliability and validity of the instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical and logical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, to collect factual information describing national school safety policy alignment with activities in school environment in secondary schools (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). This design is utilized to acquire information from a wide range of respondents on current issues, in this situation: status of school safety in the study locale (Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza, 2016). This approach was also appropriate because it allowed information on the alignment of risk management practices in the school setting with the requirements outlined in the safety standard manual to be collected, both quantitatively and qualitatively to provide a baseline for comparison, making it possible to identify similarities and differences between private and public schools.

This study, like many comparative studies, did an analysis at the intra-national level, comparing practices between private and public secondary schools. The Scientific Method of Comparative Education, which Noah and Ekstein (1969) proposed, guided it. The first process involves identification and a critical examination of the problem to be studied. The

problem must reveal its relevance to the society and education sector. The second step is formulating the specific research questions that would guide the comparative study. These questions should be clear, focused, and relevant to the subject being investigated. The third entails definition of operational terms whereby the writer illustrates all important propositions that are to be used in the research. Fourth is the selection of units of study, the primary objective of comparative education is to foster the advancement of the education sector through cross-country or cross-regional study. Fifth step involves collection of data where the researcher is expected to note every process and the challenges that accrue in the process of obtaining data. Data analysis is the sixth step where the researcher categorizes, code and subject data for comparison and conclusion. The last step is data interpretation which entails critical examination and accounting of all the data obtained in the research. Raw data is given meaning in a way that is easy to understand. These steps guided the current study through interpretation of the data that were collected in the field on implementation of school safety guidelines in the teaching and learning processes and in school environment.

3.2.1 Variables of the Study

The independent variable (IV) of the study is the Safety Standard Manual for schools. It outlines how the school environment should be in terms of health and hygiene, infrastructures and school ground standards, dealing with bullying, drug and substance abuse cases in schools, safety against child abuse and safety of children with special needs. The dependent variables (DV) comprise the implementation of risk management practices which were in turn expressed as sociocultural safety practices, enhancing physical infrastructure safety, policy awareness levels and the challenges that schools face while implementing the

policy. The value of DV depends on IV therefore, changes in the safety standards manual can cause changes in the risk management practices in school.

3.3 Location of the study

Bureti Sub County, one of Kericho County's sub-counties, was the site of the study. Other sub counties Kipkelion East and West, Belgut, Sigowet-Soin and Ainamoi share common borders with the sub county. The researcher chose this site because, in comparison to other sub-counties, it has the greatest number of learners and secondary schools. High population density in school poses significant challenges for school safety, including overcrowded infrastructure, delayed emergency response times, and increased risks of violence and crime.

Table 3.1: Number of schools and total enrolment per Sub-County in Kericho County

Sub-County	No. of public secondary school	No. of private secondary school	N0. of students
Bureti	56	5	18954
Belgut	29	2	11036
Ainamoi	31	1	11605
Soin/Sigowet	28	6	6512
Kipkelion East	32	1	8835
Kipkelion West	38	-	12136
Total	214	15	69081

Source: County Director of Education, Kericho (2023)

This region has experienced higher number of student’s unrest and disciplinary cases which have occurred regularly compared to other regions in Kericho county (Ruto, 2018). From the year 2015, many incidents of violence, accidents, infrastructure issues, health and sanitation challenges, school buildings and properties catching fire have been reported (CDEs Office Report, Kericho, 2023). The sub-county director confirmed that there has been a minimum estimate of 6 main dormitory fires in 2024 alone. Schools which have witnessed the unrests have lost property worth thousands of monies. Instances of conflicts and safety

concerns in schools caused by students that disrupts school routines are still rampant in Kericho County. This indicates that there is a problem despite the existence of a school safety policy that is meant to provide direction on risk management in educational institutions. In this case, therefore, it is the prime interest of this study to establish how safety can be improved in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kenya.

3.4 Target Population

The term "target population" refers to all members of a natural or hypothetical group of people (Orodho et al., 2016). Population according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) is the whole set of people, things or events that have observable qualities. The target population of this study were 61 secondary schools, 61 principals, 470 teachers, 18954 learners and 6 Education Officers in Kericho County.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

3.5.1 Determination of Sample Size

A sample is a subset containing the characteristics of a larger population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). The researcher used sampling formula as suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) which indicates that 10% to 30% is sufficient for a sample if it is too large. Therefore, 180 learners, 20 teachers, 7 principals and 1 education officer added up to this sample size.

Seven principals were sampled because it is their responsibility to guarantee that the safety regulations established by the Ministry of Education (MOE) are followed in their individual schools. In order to help administrators, ensure that student safety is maintained in the classroom, twenty teachers were also involved. Learners were among the respondents because they are the ones most impacted by state safety regulations in schools and because

they have specific roles to play in putting government safety policies into practice. Education Officer was involved in the study since they are school administrators and are in charge of implementing government policies.

Table 3.2: Sampling Size Distribution

Respondents	Population	Sample	Percentage (%)
Principals	61	7	11
Teachers	470	20	4
Education officer	6	1	17
Learners	18954	180	10
Total	2332	208	

3.5.2 Sampling Techniques

Bureti sub-county has got 56 public and 5 private secondary schools and has 18,954 learners (County Director of Education- Kericho, 2018). Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling methods were used in this study to gather sample. Stratified random sampling was applicable in selecting 7 secondary schools which were put in two strata; (private and public schools). Four public and three private schools were chosen at random after the names of the schools from the two strata were written down, folded, and shuffled. This guarantees accurate representation of the population being studied. Purposive sampling was helpful in choosing a Sub-County Education Officer and seven principals from the selected schools because of their critical roles, institutional knowledge, and direct involvement in implementing and overseeing school safety measures. Simple random sampling provides each individual of a population an opportunity of being chosen. It was used to choose 180

learners and 20 teachers in the selected schools. Additionally, their inclusion was determined by the choice of their schools.

Table 3.3: Sample Selection of Schools

Ownership	School Type	Population	Sample Size
Public	Boys' Boarding	31	2
	Girls' Boarding	24	2
	Mixed Day & Boarding	1	-
Private	Boys' Boarding	2	1
	Girls' Boarding	2	1
	Mixed Day & Boarding	1	1

Source: County Director of Education, Kericho (2023)

3.6 Research Instruments

To collect data, the researcher used questionnaires, interview schedules, physical environment observation checklist and photography.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Orodho (2009) asserts that questionnaires are instruments of collecting data, and they make it possible to measure for or against a standpoint. The researcher employed questionnaires as they are faster, less biased, and permit the collection of large volumes of data on a confidential basis. The questionnaire contained both open ended and structured questions. The structured questions permit the respondent to give unrestricted opinion (Orodho, 2012). Two different questionnaires were used namely; the teacher questionnaires (Appendix I) and learners' questionnaires (Appendix II). The questionnaires explored all the objectives.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule

According to Orodho (2017) interviews are research instruments which involve oral administration of questions from the researcher to the respondents. The researcher developed

an interview guide (Appendix III). This allowed the researcher to gather qualitative information about the state of school safety in the sampled schools from principals and the education officer regarding their opinions, experiences, and perceptions. Interviews allowed them to express themselves better and offered an opportunity for further clarification and probing thus better understanding of the objectives from the respondents (All objectives).

3.6.3 School Physical Environment Observation Checklist and Photography

An observation form is used during data collection to record what the researcher expects to see (Orodho, 2009). To assess the physical infrastructure's state and the safety of the social environment, the researcher used observation checklists (Appendix IV). This comprises the school's property, labs, classrooms, bathrooms, pit latrines, fencing, kitchen, residence halls, firefighting supplies, site plan, and security alarms in the selected secondary schools in Kericho County (Objective 2 and 3). Photographic tool was used to capture images of the safety-related physical infrastructures such as school fences, state of classrooms and entire school ground. The researcher asked permission before taking the photos, ensured no faces were visible, and explained that the goal was to improve safety, not blame individuals.

3.7 Pilot Study

According to Mugenda (2013), it is essential to test any research instrument to make sure that the research tools are written simply and convey the same meaning to all target population. Therefore, piloting on the questionnaires was done in two secondary schools (1 private and 1 public) in Bureti sub-county. The schools share similarities with the Sub-County's target schools, which have a large student body and a history of having more incidents of insecurity in the classroom. Ten students and six teachers who participated in the pilot study were selected from the same population as the final sample in order to confirm

the validity and reliability of the data collection instruments. While arguing that instruments should be pretested with a sample that is chosen to be similar to the real sample, Orodho et al., (2016) advise against using research participants in the pretest.

Some shortcomings were identified in the tools after the piloting, but the researcher was able to modify and reword them before actual study. An issue identified was that the tool included a question asking for the name of the school; however, this was revised to enhance confidentiality.

3.7.1 Validity of the Instruments

Clark & Watson (2019), describes validity as the assessment of how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. A valid instrument should therefore contain relevant content to the study. With the assistance of experience of the supervisors, a methodical literature review and a background review of the study, the researcher ascertained the face validity of the instruments. Subjectively determining how well an instrument measures the idea it claims to assess is necessary for face validity. The instruments were revised to assess if the instruments adequately captured the study variables and objectives and ensured that the items were clearly comprehensible for the participants. Content validity was strengthened by having experts in the field review the instrument to ensure that it covers all relevant content. Data triangulation was also involved so as to look at the situation under study from multiple angles and get a more comprehensive view.

3.7.2 Reliability of the Instruments

According to Rogers and Revesz (2019), reliability is the extent to which research tools produce consistent data or results following multiple trials. The study employed the test-retest method to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire. To evaluate the reliability of

the research instruments, the same participants, teachers and students, were given the instruments twice in two piloted schools in two weeks' difference. Data was collected and recorded. The respondents were then not involved later in the actual study. The researcher then assessed the consistency of responses for time 1 and 2 and made conclusions by calculating the correlation coefficient using a spearman rank order. A correlation coefficient of 0.86 was obtained through test-retest analysis, indicating a high level of instrument consistency. This suggests that the instrument reliably measures the construct across different administrations.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The data was gathered in stages. The first step involved obtaining a research authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) following approval from the supervisors and school of education. After that, the researcher used it to request permission from the Sub-County Education Officer to visit schools and gather data. Following that, the researcher scheduled meetings and explained the aim of the research with the principals of the chosen schools. The questionnaires were issued in person to the teachers and learners, whereby the researcher requested them to read and fill the questionnaires individually on the spaces provided without influence of somebody. Upon completion, the researcher received them back. Interviews were also conducted with sampled principals and an education officer whereby during the meeting, the researcher asked questions and gave them time to answer as she recorded the responses in writing. The researcher also conducted observations of the physical environment safety status on the sampled schools with one teacher and recorded information on the checklist which lasted for 25 minutes in each of the sampled schools.

3.9 Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The data was coded, categorized, and classified using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data. Qualitative data was gathered using the observation guide and interview schedule. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze numerical data. The findings were primarily displayed in the form of frequency distribution tables and bar graphs. The interview findings were displayed in narrative form through thematic analysis. The interviewees' experience and views were documented during the interview process. Combining both methods helped the researcher to achieve a more valid finding regarding the status of school safety and its conformance to national school safety standard manual requirements in the selected schools.

To describe how the situation was on the ground regarding schools' physical environment, narratives and interpretive reports were published, photographs were also taken. This data was analyzed by first identifying themes, patterns, trends and linkages in the data information collected. An observation checklist was used to record the presence or absence of school safety features. Photographic evidence was collected alongside the observation checklist to verify the presence of those items, supporting interpretation of observer notes.

3.10 Logistical Considerations

The researcher requested a letter of research authorization from Kenyatta University, graduate school, prior to the data collecting exercise. This then enabled the researcher to move forward and apply to the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) for a research permit. Using the NACOSTI letter, the researcher requested authorization from the Kericho County Director of Education to write an

introductory letter about the research to the selected schools. Subsequently, the researcher sought permission from the sampled schools to carry out a study within their institutions. To avoid complications, the researcher made appropriate travel and financial arrangements.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Voluntary participation principle was observed which means that respondents were not coerced into being part of the research. This ensured that they willingly involved themselves in the study. When conducting the research, confidentiality was guaranteed and upheld by the researcher.

The principle of anonymity was observed in the course of study. Codes were used to name the chosen secondary schools and principals in order to safeguard the respondents' privacy.

To prevent the aspect of deception, the respondents were given reasons for the study by the researcher so that they could evaluate their own participation in the study. When reporting the results, the researcher accurately presented what was in the research tools.

To ensure privacy protection and security of data, written permission was obtained from school authorities and purpose made transparent, images were taken in a manner that it did not show the faces and data stored in password-protected file.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATIONS OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with data analysis, presentation and interpretations of the findings. The findings of this study are presented in line with the objectives which guided the study. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and present quantitative data while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data.

The chapter is discussed in several sections: general and demographic information of participants and findings under each objective.

4.2 Instrument Return Rate and Demographic Information

4.2.1 Instrument Return Rate

The sample size was 208 respondents made up of 180 secondary school students, 20 teachers, 7 principals and 1 education officer. In a sample of 200 target teachers and learners who were to fill the questionnaires, all the 20 teachers and only 172 learners filled and submitted them for analysis. This resulted in a 96% response rate. The great response rate was due to the positive relationship established between the researcher and the respondents and a close follow-up.

4.2.2 Demographic Information

This section addresses the characteristics of the research population according to the data collected. The study sought to determine the gender distribution of respondents, teaching experience of teachers, age of learners and category of school.

Table 4.1 Teachers Teaching Experience

Experience	F	%
1-5yrs	10	50
6-10yrs	3	15
11-15yrs	3	15
16-20yrs	4	20
Totals	20	100

Source: Fieldwork, Bureti Sub-County (2024)

Table 4.1 shows that the majority (10) 50% of the teachers had a teaching experience of 1-5 years, three teachers (15%) had an experience of 6-10 years and another three (15%) teachers had 11-15 years teaching experience. The remaining 4(20%) of teachers had taught for 16-20 years and above. Combined, the percentage of teachers who have worked for more than five years is 50%, of which is prudent to conclude that out of their experience and familiarity with school practices, they were resourceful to provide the researcher adequate information on their perception in respect to school safety practices and implementation status.

Table 4.2 Learners' Age Distribution

Age	F	%
14-16	13	7.6
17-18	158	91.8
Above 18	1	0.6
Totals	172	100

Source: Field work, Bureti Sub-County (2024)

From table 4.2, a small percentage of learners (13) 7.6% had an age distribution of 14-16 years while a bigger percentage of learners (158) 91.8% were of 17-18 years and only 1(0.6%) was above 18 years. This was however expected being the normal age bracket for most learners at secondary school level. Examining the age of learners was important because different age groups may have varying levels of vulnerability to certain risks and may assist to tailor safety measures in schools to address specific needs of the learners.

Table 4.3 Teachers’ and Learners’ Gender Distribution

Gender	Teachers		Learners	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Male	11	55	92	53
Female	9	45	80	47
Totals	20	100	172	100

Source: Field work, Bureti Sub-County (2024)

From table 4.3, the study had a participation of 55% and 45% male and female teachers respectively. For learners, 53% respondents were male while 47% were female. In this regard, majority of respondents constituted the male. Nonetheless, there was a fair balance of gender and the information collected represented them equally. The gender distribution was crucial to the study's ability to compare and comprehend how the two genders perceive school safety and whether it has an impact on them in various ways.

Table 4.4 Category of the Schools

Category	F	%
Public	4	57
Private	3	43
Totals	7	100

Source: Field work, Bureti Sub-County, (2024)

From table 4.4, it is evident that the researcher sampled 4 public and 3 private secondary schools. The researcher got an opportunity for a fair representation of each category. The sample was almost equal and important because it allowed the study to understand the situation from the categories of the schools and to compare the alignment of risk management practices in school environment and the requirements in the school safety manual.

4.3 Awareness Levels of School Safety Policies Among Stakeholders

The first objective of the study sought to assess the stakeholder's awareness levels of the school safety policy in Bureti sub-county. To realize this, the researcher broke down the objective to manageable components: stakeholders training and education on safety and safety policy distribution.

4.3.1 Stakeholders Awareness Levels, Training and Education on the Safety Policy

In order to determine this, data was gathered via the learners' and teachers' questionnaires as well as through scheduled interviews with the principal and the education officer. The study sought to examine the school stakeholder's awareness levels, whether they receive training and are educated on the school safety policy.

Table 4.5 Stakeholders' Awareness Levels of School Safety Policy

School Category	Respondents	Aware (f)	Aware (%)	Unaware (f)	Unaware (%)
Public	Teachers	11	55	-	-
	Learners	96	65	17	71
	Principals	4	57	-	-
Private	Teachers	9	45	-	-
	Learners	52	35	7	29
	Principals	3	43	-	-

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.5 shows that all teachers (n=20) are aware of the government policies on safety. The findings indicated that their knowledge is based on oral instructions and experience, not on reading formal policy. This means that majority of the schools have adhered to the Safety Standards Manual (SSM) requirements of providing training and necessary resources to stakeholders to enhance safe environment. On the other side of learners, 148(86%) agreed that they know of school safety policies and their importance while 24(14%) were not aware. The finding suggests a strong progress, but also highlights the need to reach the remaining unaware, to fully meet the required safety awareness standard. Also, all the principals (100%) mentioned that they are aware of the government policies on school safety. These findings on safety awareness levels contradict with a study by Ng'ang'a (2013) and Song (2019) which established that most stakeholders in schools were unaware and ignorant of safety contents. The current study found that most stakeholders are aware of safety and they are practiced in schools.

Systems Theory posits that an organization's success depends on the effective interaction of its subsystems. In the context of this study, awareness of safety protocols represents a critical communication and preparedness. To improve overall school performance, awareness,

infrastructure, and leadership must work cohesively as interdependent components of the education system that neither school category demonstrated full systems integration.

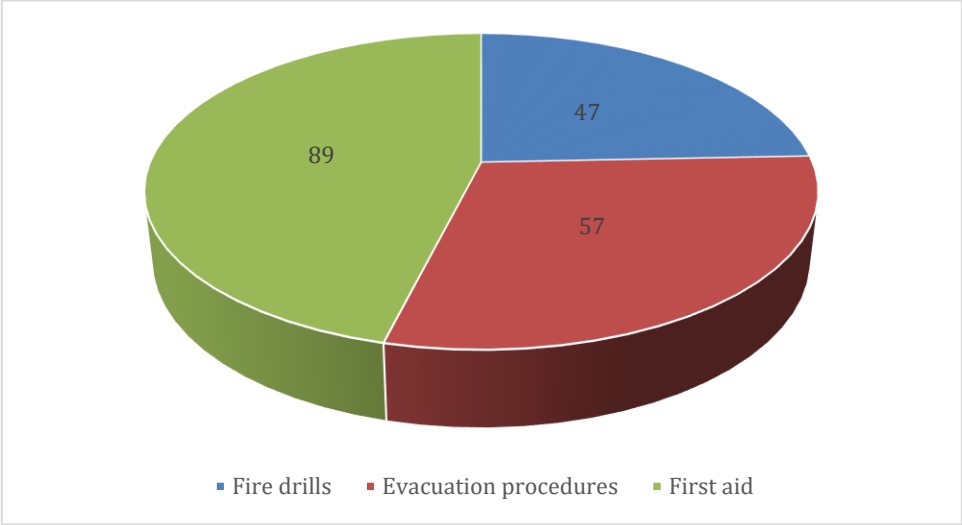
Table 4.6 Teachers training levels on school safety in Bureti Sub- County

Category of schools	Yes		No	
	f	%	f	%
Public	5	56	4	44
Private	6	55	5	45

Source: Field work, Bureti Sub-County, (2024)

Table 4.6 shows that in private schools, 55% of teachers agreed that they were trained while 45% claimed that they were not trained on risk management practices. In public schools, 56% of teachers agreed that they were trained in relation to improving safety in school while 4 (44%) disagreed. It is evident that both were eager in relation to the provision of those safety measures. The researcher also sought to find out the safety practices that students have been trained on through the questionnaire. Figure 4.1 summarizes the findings.

Figure 4.1 Pie Chart showing Trainings Learners Have Been Given to Enhance Safety in School



Source: Researcher, 2024

From figure 4.1, the majority of learners in this study 153 (89%) agreed that they have undergone first aid lessons in school, 98 (57%) that they have undergone lessons on how to escape in case of an emergency, and 81 (47%) that they have undergone lessons on how to follow fire drills. The above information contradicts a study conducted by Udali in 2020 that revealed that a large number of learners had not undergone security drills and safety training in readiness for security challenges. In this context, it can therefore be concluded that the level of training response from learners is average and not well compliant and not compliant to safety standards requirement.

Through the interview schedule to the schools' principals, the researcher established that all of them (n=7) have the manual document in their offices. Regarding implementation, one of the principals from the public schools made the following statement:

“This is a developing school; we have tried as much as possible to comply with the requirements in the safety manual document by eliminating objects that are a threat to students' safety. We have installed fire extinguishing equipment and school stakeholders have been sensitized on it. Demonstration on how to use it is done at least once per term (Principal, school A).”

The excerpt of the principal suggest that schools are trying as much as possible to put these safety measures in practice to avoid exposing learners to unsafe conditions. Of the seven principals, only five (71%) mentioned that they have trained the school stakeholders on risk management practices like fire drills, security drills, first aid administration and evacuation procedures. The result is in agreement with those in a study by Ng'ang'a (2013), which it as well established that principals have not provided training on safety procedures to stakeholders.

4.3.2 Policy Distribution to Stakeholders

In relation to school safety policies and their distribution to learners and teachers respectively, here are their responses. Among the teachers, all of them (100%) stated that they did not have a copy and had not read a Safety Standards Manual for school safety. Among learners, all of them (n=172) stated that they had not read a Safety Standards Manual since it had not been distributed to them. This can explain partly how safety cases are rising significantly; this is according to school safety inspections (2023). However, learners added that they are equipped with risk management techniques through Life Skills Education. Life Skills Education in Kenya covers different dimensions in relation to school safety policies. Among those are fire safety basic first aid skills, disaster preparedness, personal safety (stranger danger and online safety), road safety (traffic rules and pedestrian safety), personal and family health and hygiene and sanitation practices in addition to a positive school safety and health-supportive school environment (KICD, 2017). Educators may incorporate Lecture, demonstration, visual aids, doing project, roleplay, practical and discussion as modes of delivery on contents of school safety. These results corroborate those of a related study by Udali (2020), who reported that as teachers had not previously had access to the safety handbook, they were unaware of its contents and ill-prepared to deal with potential hazards.

Once again, a principal from a private school made the following comments in regard to the dissemination of Safety Standards Manual of schools to school stakeholders:

“However, it is important to ensure that all people are well informed. But I have not distributed safety manuals to stakeholders in my school. We have had training sessions to promote a child friendly learning environment. In the next week, an NGO will come to our school to train club members and other stakeholders on how to manage risk in a school environment (Principal, school B).”

The researcher confirmed that the claim made by the school principal is true since it is evident that many teachers and learners had not made use of that safety manual. Upon further inquiry on the significance of improving safety training practices, one of the school principals made this response:

“School safety procedures training is a critical aspect since it ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff members are well informed on how to implement procedures that will ensure that the school environment is a safe place to learn. The training equips one with all the relevant knowledge and skills that are required to tackle a situation in case risk occurrences happen. Through this activity, all members will remain up-to-date and confident in their ability to address safety concerns (Principal, school C).”

The statement made by the principal showed that they understand the benefits of providing training sessions to stakeholders as a way of securing the learning environment. The SSM (2008) indicates that safety measures should be implemented in schools in order for learners to concentrate when learning. The researcher conducted an interview schedule with an education officer to try and gauge their level of awareness and how they contribute to ensuring that there is creation of awareness related to school safety policies within the school community and stakeholders. The education officer made this response:

“...generally, I know that there are many school safety policies that have been offered by the government. There is the Kenyan Constitution of 2010 that offers a child all kinds of protective services against child abuse. There is also a Basic Education Act of 2013 that insists all institutions have safety standards in place. Then there is a Safety Standards Manual for Schools. We have always had a yearly routine when school-going kids are in school where we train them on how to handle safety issues in school like fire extinguishers and first aid. However, instances have still continued to occur where school safety is a concern (Education Officer, A).”

The excerpts from the officer shows that as administrators, they understand their responsibility of ensuring that all relevant school stakeholders are made aware of such safety practices and measures for them to be provided in case of any risk and emergency occurrence.

4.4 Sociocultural Safety Practices in School Environment and Alignment with the School Safety Policy Requirements in Bureti Sub-County

The second objective aimed to examine how the sociocultural aspects of safety in school and are in line with requirements and guidelines in the school safety standards manual. The researcher applied a teachers and learners' questionnaire and a principals' interview guide to sought information in regard to guidance and counseling, conflict resolution, harassment, bullying and discrimination, presence of school safety sub-committee and impact of CCTV cameras.

4.4.1 Guidance and Counselling Services to Deal with Alcohol, Drugs and Abuse Cases for Learners

To achieve this, the researcher employed a questionnaire for both the teacher and learner as well as through an interview schedule with school principals. Information obtained regarding availability of counseling services and counseling sessions for learners to address Alcohol, Drugs and Abuse (ADA) cases for learners in order to promote safety in schools is shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Principals', Teachers' and Learners' responses on availability of guidance and counselling sessions for learners to promote safety in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County.

School Category	Respondents	Yes (f)	Yes (%)	No (f)	No (%)
Public	Teachers	7	87	1	13
	Learners	46	85	8	15
	Principals	3	75	1	25
Private	Teachers	12	100	-	-
	Learners	112	95	6	5
	Principals	3	100	-	-

Source: Researcher, 2024

As table 4.7 above indicates, 6 principals, 19 teachers, and 158 students were in agreement that guidance and counseling sessions for addressing alcohol, drug abuse, and abuse cases for learners are provided to ensure safety in schools. This suggests that stakeholders in private schools generally have a more favorable access to the services compared to those in public schools. The variation in public school responses, particularly the lower agreement among principals, may reflect challenges or dissatisfaction not as commonly found in the private school context. This implied that majority of the schools had adhered to the SSM which requires schools to strengthen guidance and counselling to empower learners to avoid harmful habits like drug abuse. On their effectiveness, 66% of the principals agreed that the sessions were beneficial while 34% disagreed. This is important and can have some positive psychological repercussions on those affected. From the principals' interview, it was noted that all of them (n=7) agreed that issues of drug abuse are rampant among school-going learners which is caused by many factors and have serious effect on their physical and mental health. This is in relation to a study conducted in Tanzania by Nshekenabo in 2018 that established that drug and substance abuse posed a serious threat to learners' safety in many secondary schools. However, 1 principal, 1 teacher, and 14 students disagreed that there are sessions for counseling and guidance to address alcohol and drug abuse in order to ensure school safety. One of the principals who disagreed had this to say in an interview:

“I recently transferred to this school; I am about 4 days old. I won't say that since I came here, we have had any guidance sessions. But from the other station I was in, we invited several visitors from the ministry of health and education to guide and motivate those staff and learners in all aspects and against the use of drugs. With my new place, I am going to organize with my deputy principal and the other teachers in charge (Principal, School E).”

Feelings expressed by one of the principals have revealed that schools are making efforts to arrange counseling sessions as they are imperative in raising awareness about the

significance of social and emotional well-being. As supported by the Safety Standards Manual (2008), learners are supposed to be informed about the risks associated with drug use and abuse. Schools should regularly monitor the activity of small enterprises near schools with the objective of adopting an early essential action and educating learners on how they can avoid peer pressure to use drugs. Pastoral advice should be given to learners including those with/without drug problems. It also notes that teachers should appreciate and show concern through counselling those individuals caught engaging in misuse of drugs. Five (71%) of the people in the researcher's observation guide who were required to abide by this regulation were in private institutions, 29% were in public institutions, and 2 (29%) were all in public institutions. The significance of this is that students and workers are constantly reminded to steer clear of and that those intending to offend to note that the institution is serious about drug abuse.

In a school where this drug free zone poster is placed, one of the principals made this comment regarding its effect:

“The role of these posters is critical in helping promote the well-being of learners and as a preventive strategy in reminding learners constantly of the school’s commitment to encourage positive behavior and against drug abuse in schools. However, if learners refuse to change their behavior, then the effect of the posters will not be realized (Principal School D).”

The above sentiments from the principal imply that a Drug Free Zone poster in a school setting is important since it increases awareness concerning the need to promote a drug-free zone and therefore it is an individual’s choice to decide to follow and promote through the message posted on a drug-free zone poster.

On Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory, it is imperative to acknowledge that for students to focus on learning and achieve their full potential, their basic needs of safety and

physiology must first be satisfied. On a similar note, given the favorable environment in learning institutions, it is evident that learners are in a position to have their basic needs satisfied.

Figure 4.2: An example of a Drug Free Zone poster in one of the schools



Source: Researcher, 2024

In dealing with cases of drug abuse, guidance and counselling are crucial. People can be given the necessary assistance, knowledge, and resources they need to modify their behavior for the better and overcome addiction.

4.4.2 Involving Learners in Conflict Resolution to Enhance Sociocultural Safety

This section sought to find out whether learners are involved or not involved in conflict resolution in their schools. Conflicts in schools may arise due to differences in opinions, misunderstandings and disagreements and competition among learners.

By using questionnaires for both teachers and students, this researcher aimed to determine how many learners in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County are involved in conflict resolution. The results are shown in table 4.8:

Table 4.8 Learners’ and Teachers’ responses on whether students are involved in conflict resolution

<u>School Category</u>	<u>Respondents</u>	<u>Yes (f)</u>	<u>Yes (%)</u>	<u>No (f)</u>	<u>No (%)</u>
Public	Teachers	11	55	-	-
	Students	100	58	4	2
Private	Teachers	9	45	-	-
	Students	68	40	-	-

Source: Researcher, 2024

As observed in table 4.8 above, all of the 20 (100%) teachers agreed that learners can contribute to resolving a conflict in case it arose in the school setting. Of all the 172 learner responses submitted, 168 a vast majority (98%) confirmed that they can contribute to resolving a conflict in school, while only 4 a minority (2%) disagreed that they are involved. As per SSM guidelines in 2008, it is important for school administrators to provide avenues like committees to train learners on how to handle a conflict in case it arose.

In both public and private schools, respondents demonstrated a high level of involvement in conflict resolution activities. For instance, 100% of teachers and 98% of students from both categories reported active participation, indicating a strong culture of conflict management across the school types. Which aligns with the safety standards manual.

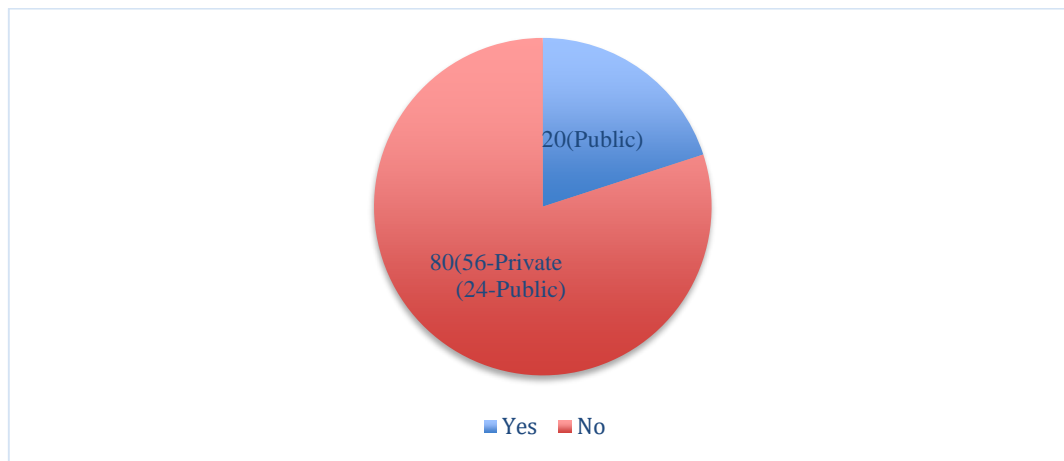
4.4.3 Healthy Interpersonal Relationships

The researcher found it necessary to find out whether practicing healthy interpersonal relationships in school can contribute in making schools a safe place to stay in. In a school

setup, some threats to meeting a healthy and safe social environment are factors like bullying, harassment, bitterness, discrimination and mocking.

Teachers and learners were asked whether there have been cases of bullying, sexual abuse, domestic violence (DV), harassment and discrimination in school and the figure 4.3 summarizes the findings.

Figure 4.3: Pie chart showing Teachers’ responses on whether there are bullying, DV, harassment and discrimination cases in school.



Source: Researcher, 2024

In fact, as evident in figure 4.3 above, most teachers (80%), 56% from private secondary schools and 24% from public secondary schools respectively, felt that there are no bullying and/or DV cases while 20% in total from public secondary schools felt that there are bullying and/or DV cases in their respective institutions. Therefore, this suggested that among those in mainly public secondary institutions, the practice of sociocultural safety is still not practiced. The school heads were interviewed on bullying cases which had occurred in their institutions and how they handled bullying. One of the school heads made this response:

“...the rate of bullying cases in our school is very low; this is because we have made the students aware of the need to treat fellow students with kindness and respect and that bullying is not tolerated in our school. It has actually happened in the past and we were able to manage it through making students report to us and taking the reports serious and doing a swift investigation; organizing peer mentor and counseling programs for those involved and offering support to the victim and punishment to the culprit (Principal, School F).”

Learners were also questioned whether they have experienced any form of child and sexual abuse; 34% agreed while 66% disagreed. It means that children are still safe from this kind of abuse. Some of the consequences of this abuse linger even after they become adults and might affect their growth. The concern expressed in the statement made by the principal of school F indicated that bullying is considered a serious matter as it can affect people physically and psychologically.

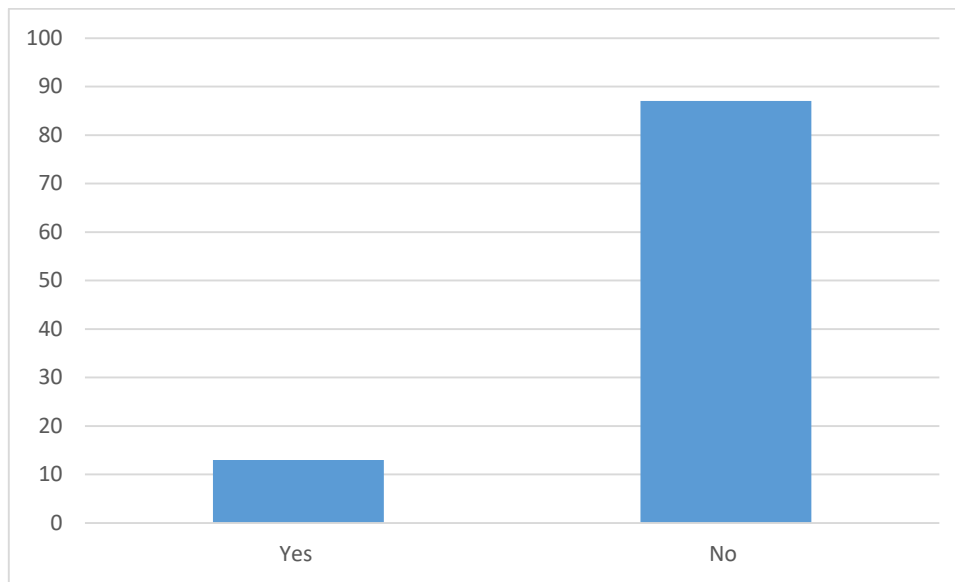
The guideline in SSM (2008) stipulates that teachers are supposed to address bullying, harassers, and discriminators since they are capable of making learners feel isolated and helpless, anxious, and lacking self-esteem. The learners are hesitant to come to school and some even skip lessons. In school, their attention is not focused. The guidelines will therefore ensure that this type of violence is not committed in schools. The effect aligns with the study conducted by Apio (2018), where a learner is adversely affected in school performance. The study states that a child needs to have a closer relationship with a parent. The child will develop emotional development, social development, and manage emotions while under pressure.

Furthermore, when asked if the teachers have attended a seminar or workshop on how to address bullying and its related issues in school through methods of cases of bullying, harassment, and discriminative behavior in school, only 1 (5%) female teacher in a public secondary school agreed with this assertion while 19 (95%), 40% females and 55% males

disagreed. The above shows that a greater number of teachers have not attended this training, which is opposite of the SSM guidelines, as it requires staff to attend training to educate them on what types of harassment, bullying and discrimination exist in school environment, how to identify, report and investigation process. They can also be trained on listening and behavior sessions and how to manage the emerging issues.

Learners were also questioned if the school has a club that encourages safety in the school environment; the responses are displayed in figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Learners' responses showing whether their school has a club that promotes safety



Source: Researcher, 2024

From figure 4.4, only 22 (13%) who were all learners in one private secondary school in the study locale agreed that their school had a club that sensitizes on school safety. Upon further probing on how the club contribute in making schools safe places to stay in, some students mentioned that:

“...they create awareness on school safety and importance of keeping schools safe, preventing bullying, promoting mental health and well-being, training fire drills and how to use fire extinguisher in case of fire (Student school B).”

“...reporting cases of risks experienced in schools, reporting students found with illegal things in school (Student School B).”

“...practicing and training other students on safety practices, promoting positive relationships, leading in solving conflicts (Student School B).”

The excerpts show that the students agree that safety clubs play significant roles in promoting adoption of safety procedures in schools. But the majority of the 150 students (87%) claimed that there are no such clubs at their schools that can encourage safety.

4.4.4 Availability of CCTV cameras

This section sought information on availability of CCTV cameras in schools and its contribution in promoting school safety. CCTV footage can be reviewed to investigate unsafe incidents, identify those responsible and provide accountability, ensure fair and objective decision-making. To achieve this, teachers were asked 30%, 2(10%) from public and 4(20%) from private secondary schools, agreed that their school had installed and functioning CCTV. This 30% of teachers, also agreed that the cameras are important in monitoring school activities, preventing unauthorized access and enhancing overall security and safety of school environment. The findings of the study were comparable to the study conducted in United States by Galligan et al., (2020) who gave importance to the use of CCTV cameras. But 14 (70%), 5(25%) and 9(45%) from the private and public secondary schools respectively indicated that schools were in need of such vital devices. The study indicated that most of the school was not equipped with CCTV to help in monitoring areas in the school environment to make learners feel socially, physically, and psychologically secure to be able to thrive. According to the SSM 2008, incidences of bullying and harassment and other negative behaviors can be deterred by the help of CCTV. Individuals

who are aware that they are being monitored are less likely to participate in activities that jeopardizes the safety and well-being of others.

4.4.5 School Safety Sub-Committee

To find out this, the researcher through the questionnaire asked the teachers whether their schools had school safety sub-committee. All the teachers $n=20(100\%)$ said that their school did not have a safety sub-committee hence they are unaware of their responsibilities in putting school safety measures into practice. The study produces comparable results to that of the study conducted by Nderitu in 2009, where it was indicated that the schools lacked safety committees to help in the implementation of the school safety policies. The result from the study done 13 years ago by Nderitu and the current study has not changed to date in that schools continue to lack safety committees. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs emphasizes the need to address the needs related to safety before being able to proceed to higher-order processes for learning and teaching. The absence of a safety sub-committee in schools, as unanimously reported by teachers (100%), indicates a systemic failure to address basic safety needs. This lack of structure leaves stakeholders unaware of their roles in maintaining a safe environment.

4.5 Status of School's Physical Infrastructural Safety and Alignment with School Safety Policy Requirements and Influence on Learners' Participation in School.

The third objective of the study was to assess how safe the physical infrastructures are in schools and how well they are aligned with the national school safety policy requirements. It goes further to establish the impact these infrastructures have on learners' participation in school. Information was sought from teachers, learners and the schools' principals.

Table 4.9 Teachers’ opinion on the state of Physical infrastructural safety

Statement on physical infrastructural safety in school	Teachers score on safety status				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Classrooms are large enough to accommodate learners comfortably.	8 40	10 50	-	2 10	-
Classrooms are well ventilated to allow proper air circulation	9 45	9 45	2 10	-	-
Furniture in the classrooms is appropriate.	7 35	11 55	-	2 10	-
Schools have fire extinguishers and are functioning	2 10	3 15	-	8 40	7 35
There is enough space between the beds in the Dormitories (boarding schools only)	-	10 71	-	4 29	-
Dormitories are well ventilated and have two exits and an emergency exit in the middle	-	10 71	-	3 21	1 8
Dining halls are spacious, clean and well maintained	3 15	10 50	-	6 30	1 5
School laboratories are spacious enough for students to learn safely	5 25	12 60	-	3 15	-
Toilets are clean, well maintained and clearly designated for girls and boys	5 25	15 75	-	-	-
There is proper storage of food in stores.	4 20	4 20	2 10	10 50	-
Kitchen is clean and well maintained.	4 20	5 25	2 10	9 45	-

KEY: SA – Strongly Agree D – Disagree U- Undecided A - Agree S.D – Strongly Disagree

Source: Researcher (2024)

The attitude of teachers on the status of the safety of physical infrastructures in schools was considered, and the results are presented in table 4.9. The majority of teachers, 10(50%) agreed that classrooms are enough to fit students comfortably while 8(40%) and 2(10%) strongly agreed and disagreed respectively. There was an equal response in terms of well classroom ventilation to allow free air circulation where 9(45%) strongly agreed and 9(45%) agreed. However, the researcher’s observation revealed discrepancies: classrooms in both public and private school categories were often crowded, with broken window panes,

insufficient lighting, and poor spatial planning. These findings contrast with Grover's (2015) recommendation that classrooms should be well-organized and free from potential hazards. Eight (40%), seven (35%), three (15%), two (10%) disagreed, strongly disagreed, agreed and strongly agreed respectively that their schools have functioning fire extinguishers in case of fire. This observation highlights significant deficiencies in the physical infrastructure of the schools and that most of these schools are trying to seriously take this guideline into consideration. This could negatively impact the learning environment and potentially compromise safety.

Amongst the 7 schools sampled, 5 were boarding while 2 were day secondary schools. Majority of teachers in those boarding schools (71%) agreed that there is enough space between the beds in the dormitories, (71%) agreed that dormitories are well ventilated, have two exits and an emergency exit in the middle. However, from the researchers' observation, most of the doors in the dorms were opening inwards and that boxes were not well organized hence might injure learners. The results suggest that, though majority, not all schools have spacious and emergency exits in dormitories so as to align with the SSM guidelines. Steinberg et al. (2018) note that dormitories should have appropriate ventilation and not congested so as to promote hygiene. Most of them (60%) also agreed that school laboratories are spacious enough for students to learn safely, 75% agreed and 25% strongly agreed that toilets are properly maintained and clearly designated for girls and boys. This agrees with the researcher's observation as the findings showed that the laboratories were spacious though not with appropriate infrastructure and the toilets were well labelled to show for male and female. Most teachers, 50% and 45%, disagreed that there is proper storage of food in stores and that kitchen is clean and well maintained respectively. The researcher's

observation confirmed this, particularly in public schools, where poor drainage systems and foul odors were prevalent around kitchen areas, indicating critical health and safety issues.

The comparative study conducted between public and private schools showed that the physical infrastructure in private schools was better maintained. The aspects where private schools fared better were in the functionality of fire extinguishers, cleanliness and space in kitchens, well-ventilated classrooms and dorms, and well-organized physical infrastructural facilities. The structural deficiencies, absence of safety features, and maintenance aspects in most public schools were areas of concern.

Table 4.10 Learners’ opinion on the state of Physical infrastructural safety

Statement on physical infrastructural safety in school	Learners score on safety status				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Classrooms are well ventilated to allow proper air circulation	31 18	108 63	-	26 15	7 4
Furniture in the classrooms is appropriate.	13 8	57 33	18 10	43 25	41 24
Schools have fire extinguishers and are functioning	19 11	42 24	4 3	61 35	46 27
There is enough space between the beds in the dormitories (boarding schools only)	34 30	31 28	6 5	21 19	20 18
Dormitories are well ventilated and have two exits and an emergency exit in the middle	44 38	14 13	-	40 36	14 13
Dining halls are spacious, clean and well maintained	37 22	58 34	9 5	40 23	28 16
School laboratories are spacious enough for students to learn safely	42 24	100 58	4 2	20 12	6 4
Toilets are clean and well indicated ; for girls and boys	58 34	49 28	12 7	37 22	16 9

Key: SA- Strongly Agree, A-Agree, U-Undecided, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

Source: Researcher (2024)

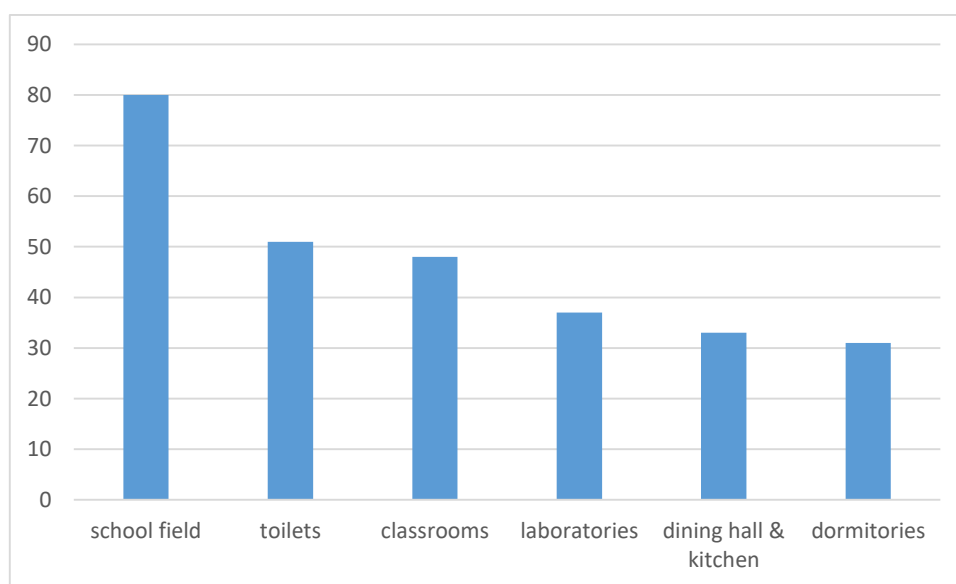
Based on table 4.10, it can be seen that most students agreed that classrooms are well ventilated for proper air circulation and that furniture in classrooms is adequate to 108(63%) and 57(33%) respectively. However, it was observed that in four schools, namely 3 public schools and 1 private school, the furniture in classrooms was inappropriate in that students were working on stools, there were broken chairs, and cement bags were stored there. This could explain the reason for the increase in cases of injuries as per the reports from the County education office that are caused by inappropriate furniture in classrooms. Majority 61(35%) disagreed to the statement saying that schools have functioning fire extinguishers. The results from the study agree with the researcher's observation and the study conducted by Gatua (2015), which indicated that most schools were without fire extinguishers and where they were available, they were not enough and not working. From the observation findings concerning dormitory safety, the researcher found that the beds were squeezed and that in case of an emergency, learners could easily damage themselves. This is similar to those findings indicated in a study by Xaba (2014), that dormitory and bed conditions impact a student's safety. It can be concluded that boarding secondary schools have not met the safety standards as outlined in the manual. This conclusion was based on their adherence to cleanliness protocols and the presence of good ventilation. There was a higher response (34%) of those who agreed that dining halls are spacious, clean and well maintained and (58%) agreed that school laboratories are spacious enough for students to learn safely. These findings suggest that the sampled schools have made significant strides in providing adequate facilities to support teaching and learning. Concerning adequacy and cleanliness of toilets, majority 58(34%) strongly agreed that they are clean and clearly separated for boys and girls in mixed schools. The results agree with the study conducted by Magaki et al.

in 2021, where it was concluded that despite being functional, the toilets lacked privacy and functioning doors. The SSM (2008) recommends that girls' sanitation areas must be separate and completely private, in schools that are mixed. These results were in line with the researchers' observations in three of the four sampled public and only one private school had fully met this requirement, suggesting a notable difference in compliance levels.

Relative to public schools, there was a higher probability for private schools to satisfy the requirements concerning safety and school infrastructure, specifically in terms of ventilation, furniture, cleanliness, and school organization. The results of the comparative study highlight the importance of directing special attention to public schools in order to improve the existing discrepancies related to school infrastructure in ensuring a conducive learning environment for students.

The researcher also sought from the learners the type of infrastructure they felt should be improved in their school and figure 4.5 summarizes their responses:

Figure 4.5 Learners' responses on type of infrastructure that they felt should be improved



From figure 4.5, majority of the learners 138 (80%) mentioned the school field is so unsecured and that many students got injured because of its status. The rest of the suggestions were toilets 87 (51%), classrooms 81 (48%), laboratories 64(37%), dining hall and kitchen 56 (33%) and dormitories 54 (31%). This implied that most students understand the essence of safe schools and value their own safety. They are obligated to keep the learning spaces safe from threats. It is also evident that these infrastructures influence teaching and learning processes. Schools should involve students in matters of safety because they are the ones who are most affected, and they may provide their perspectives on where and what should be improved to create a safer environment.

The researcher was further interested in obtaining the views of the principal regarding the safety status of the physical infrastructure in the school. One of the principals in a private school made the following statement:

“Most of our buildings are learner-friendly. When you look at our doors they are opening towards outside and windows have no grills apart from these of my office. We have a security guard at the gate and another who does patrol within school. There is a clean source of water which is treated and stored in tanks, we certify what we eat and provide good storage of food, and our facilities are insured. There are ramps in all other places apart from the administration (Principal, school D).”

The statement from principal school D is in agreement with the researcher’s observation, that most of the facilities mentioned were grossly taken in to consideration to align with the safety policy guideline.

Figure 4.6: An example of a door opening towards outside and a spacious classroom



Source: Fieldwork, Bureti sub-county (2024)

Another principal from a different private school also remarked:

“The state of safety is average in our school because the management had gone down so there were no effective follow-up and most learners left. But since the new management came in the environment has improved. We are planning to increase enrolment because our buildings are enough and spacious to accommodate many learners. The buildings are well-ventilated and not crowded, and there is a live fence and a well-guarded gate to prevent unauthorized entry. The facilities might not, however, accommodate those with disabilities; perhaps this will change in the future (Principal, school F).”

According to the principal's statement, the school does not comply with Ministry of Education school safety regulations since it may not provide preference to students with disabilities. The researcher found that only four of the seven schools in the survey had perimeter fences, lockable gates, and security personnel. This demonstrates that most secondary schools made an effort to adhere to the SSM, which mandates that buildings have secure gates. According to Wayong'o (2018), safe school playgrounds should be guaranteed by ensuring levelled ground that is free from danger, having a secured gate and monitoring entries into the school.

Figure 4.7: A school gate guarded with a security and Live fence



Source: Fieldwork, Bureti sub-county (2024)

This was different from the opinion of a principal in a public school who said:

“Most of our facilities are not aligned with the requirements, for example, look at those doors they are opening towards inside, there are no window panes, no fire extinguishers, and intruders can easily access the school because the state of fence is poor. The dormitories are squeezed and learners can easily injure themselves. We have tried as much as possible to reduce the learners’ enrolment because of much congestion but that has not been achieved yet (Principal, school C).”

The principal's opinion indicates that the school is far from meeting the necessary safety requirements because the majority of the facilities were unsuitable for staff and pupils to use.

The principal's assertion is consistent with the researcher's observations.

Figure 4.8: An example of an unsafe window without window panes.



Figure 4.9: An example of an inappropriately Constructed staircase



Source: Fieldwork, Bureti sub-county (2024)

The researcher also aimed to determine how frequently an education officer visits schools to assess the safety of the physical infrastructures through an interview schedule. Upon further investigation, the education officer stated the following:

“...implementation of safety policies is in progress for most schools. In my office, we conduct a routine inspection to assess the safety status of schools’ facilities, identify and address any potential risk. We take extensive measures to ensure the well-being of school community at large by checking areas where there is a need for improvement and taking proactive actions (Education Officer, A).”

The education officer pointed out that their commitment to ensuring safety in schools is a top priority for them.

This study also sought from teachers how the state of physical infrastructural safety impacts the teaching and learning process in schools. A teacher in a public school noted the following:

“Safe infrastructure boosts confidence and comfort, allowing learning to take place without distractions or worries. We teachers can also deliver our lessons with peace

of mind knowing that we are in a safe environment. Learning cannot take place in unsafe environments (Teacher, School G)."

From the interview schedule, one principal endorsed:

"Safety affects teaching and learning, recently we experienced strong wind that took off roofs in some classrooms and dormitories. Students were mostly terrified and affected and some were injured. We cannot blame the occurrence of such a calamity but we need to inspect these infrastructures to avoid such cases in the future. This might affect the psychological well-being of students (Principal, School E)."

The two excerpts indicate that facilities in learning environment greatly impact education achievement, hence should be effective and safe. According to the SSM 2008, a safe physical environment enables enhanced learner enrolment, retention, and completion rates, resulting in high-quality education.

Comparatively, according to the researchers' observation of the physical structure's safety status, private secondary schools are doing better than public schools in terms of adhering to the guidelines in the SSM 2008. The findings also support those of Gautham et al. (2020), who found that private schools had significantly better infrastructure than public schools. This is because in public schools there is a high enrolment of learners more than the number the school could comfortably accommodate hence the inadequacy of the infrastructures. This demonstrates that the majority of these public schools were not in compliance with the Ministry of Education's circular and SSM on Health Standards and Enrolment. Upon further probing, one of the principals in a public school summarized that *"...it will be difficult to comply with the safety guidelines since it will involve adjustment of some structures which might take longer periods"* (Principal School G). The principal's statement shows a failure in the structural/facilities subsystem, which negatively affects the school safety subsystem. This reflects a systemic failure as described in Systems Theory, where one malfunctioning subsystem, such as infrastructure, can impair the effectiveness of the entire school system.

On the other hand, private schools have tried to comply with the requirements despite the burden. The school community is enjoying the sufficiency of these facilities because of its low population in school and close supervision which promotes safer learning environments.

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, people cannot concentrate on learning and self-improvement unless their basic physiological and safety requirements are satisfied. This study found that in many public schools, basic needs such as safety (through functioning fire extinguishers and emergency exits), hygiene (through clean toilets and kitchens), and physical comfort (through appropriate classroom furniture) were not adequately addressed. This suggests that learners in such environments may struggle to reach their full academic potential. In contrast, private schools, which generally had better facilities, are more likely to support learners in achieving higher-level cognitive and academic goals, in line with Maslow's framework.

4.6 Challenges and suggestions on ways that safety standards in schools can be improved

The fourth objective aimed to determine the obstacles schools encounter when attempting to execute school safety policies and how school safety conditions can be enhanced. The researcher used the teacher questionnaire and the principal and education officer interview schedules to gain an understanding of this. The researcher made the following claims in Table 4.11 to learn more about teachers' opinions regarding actions that can be taken to raise school safety standards and lessen implementation difficulties. The results of their responses were as follows:

Table 4.11 Teachers’ responses on measures to be put in place to increase safety standards in schools.

No.		Agreed	Strongly agreed	Disagree	Strongly disagreed
	Increase in budget allocated to improve school safety will make schools environment safe for learning?	10 50%	10 50%	-	-
	Involvement of safety experts will help reduce risk occurrence in schools?	12 60%	8 40%	-	-
	Extensive and intensive education on safety will help improve safety in schools?	12 60%	8 40%	-	-
	Specification of roles on school safety will help improve safety status?	7 35%	13 65%	-	-
	Formation and strengthening of safety clubs and committees will help improve the safety status of school?	9 45%	11 55%	-	-

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.11's findings indicate that 50% of teachers agreed and 50% strongly agreed that increasing funding for school safety measures will create a safe learning environment. In addition, 60% of respondents agreed and 40% strongly agreed that involving safety experts would help lower the incidence of risk in schools. Additionally, 60% of respondents agreed and 40% strongly agreed that comprehensive and intensive safety education is a good way to increase school safety. When the researcher asked if defining roles for school safety would help to improve school safety, 35% of the teachers agreed, and 65% strongly agreed. Finally, 45% and 55% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the proposed measure when asked if creating and bolstering safety clubs and committees would contribute to improving the school's safety situation. The proposed measures are parts of an integrated system; they require coordination for an appropriate safety model. Although schools may seem “safe enough,” teachers prioritize safety as a foundational need desiring concrete structures (like clubs and roles), resources (budgets), and knowledge (training) to secure that

need long-term. This aligns with Maslow's concept that just the perception of possible danger or instability can undermine one's ability to move to higher-level needs like academic achievement or teacher performance.

The researcher used the following themes to steer the examination of challenges that had been established: inadequate funds, lack of enough space, lack of training on safety measures and poor administrative support in implementation.

4.6.1 Inadequate Funds

The Education Officer and principals were interviewed by the researcher on problems that they face when attempting to implement school safety. From the responses, the researcher noted that the major problem is a lack of funds. According to the education officer, the following was mentioned that *"the amount budgeted for meeting school safety needs is inadequate and hence is unable to meet all schools' safety projects (Education Officer A)"*. This is similar to Kikuvi's (2016) study which also found that the main obstacle to fully implementation of safety regulation is lack of enough funding. Limited funds may impact the ability to install security systems, repair and upgrade infrastructures in school.

One principal from a private church-sponsored school made the following statement:

"Lack of finances pose a great challenge in implementing school safety policies. We cannot afford to buy some better equipment or even improve the existing ones because finances are limited. Our school depend on donations from the church, board of management, well-wishers, parents and community to help in overcoming financial barriers to meet other school needs, at some point safety needs comes last priority since school staffs need to get paid, learning resources purchased. It's so unfortunate that the government doesn't allocate funds to our school because it is private (Principal School D)."

By seeking help from elsewhere and exploring other options on how to generate funds, schools can make efforts to implement effective safety measures in spite of a lack of

finances. Makiya et al. (2023) ascertained that parents were the main source of donations used to make schools safe learning environments. Therefore, school administrators and communities must work together in pursuit of innovative solutions.

According to the education officer,

“...when money have been allocated to the sub-county, we try as much as possible to first ensure enough supply of teachers in schools, build classrooms, provide books and other learning resources. After this is when we budget for investing in necessary security measures, maintaining safe school environment, give training to school stakeholders on safety. We have always advocated for increased funding to ensure that safety policies are implemented, but receiving the finances is still a problem. In future we shall collaborate with other NGOs to seek support and fundraise to help meet safety standards of schools (Education Officer A).”

According to the responses of the teachers in the questionnaire, all of them (n=20) reported financial limitations as among the obstacles that hinder schools from enacting totally safety policies. This was in agreement with Madani et. al., (2019) study which also found lack of funding and inadequate financial management as a major obstacle to successfully implement safety guidelines.

From a Systems Theory viewpoint, financial resources are a vital subsystem within the broader school system. The lack of adequate funding weakens the system’s structural integrity, reducing schools’ ability to function safely and effectively.

4.6.2 Lack of Training and Awareness On Safety Measures and Guidelines

Most of the teachers (90%), 66% male and 24% female, responded that they could not support the process of implementation since they were not trained in safety procedure and measures. This means that out of the sampled teachers more males than the females had been trained. One of the teachers remarked that:

“As teachers we lack safety information because there is no training on how to implement safety standards and how to handle safety equipment like fire

extinguishers and CCTV cameras which are important in keeping schools safe (Teacher School C).”

The statement from a teacher in School C is similar to Gitonga’s (2020) study which found that CCTV cameras were perceived positively to keeping school safe. However, he said using it involves a number of challenges like the cameras breaking down and inadequate personnel to effectively operate them.

One teacher further stated that *“lack of the guidelines from the ministry to be used as reference has made it difficult to achieve complete implementation. I know some safety measures while I do not know others (Teacher School F).”* The findings of Kemunto et al. (2015), which noted that certain schools lacked safety guidelines, making it difficult to implement the safety standards in schools, are consistent with the statement made by a teacher from School F. This implied that high school safety status cannot be fully achieved if the school stakeholders are not well trained and made aware of it. School management should allocate more funds and time to ensure that stakeholders are trained on risk management practices. In an interview with a principal regarding the challenges in the implementation of school safety policy, among them made the following remarks on lack of training on safety procedures as a hindrance:

“...unless properly trained on safety protocols, students and staff can be oblivious and not able to handle potential hazards safely, will not know what to do in emergencies and what precautions to take. Training can be made interactive by engaging employees and students which will help them remember better(Principal School C).”

This sentiment from the principal shows that it is definitely a challenge when schools don’t provide enough and prioritize training on safety measures to its stakeholders; this affects how the school safety policy is put into practice. These results demonstrate the urgent

necessity for safety standard training in order to achieve total adherence to the safety standards handbook and its application.

4.6.3 Poor Administrative Support

From the findings, 11, 5 were from public schools and 6 from private schools, teachers indicated that poor support from the administration contributed to the challenge of successfully implementing safety policies. A teacher from one public school made the following statement:

“Without strong support from administrators, it has been difficult to get allocation of funds, training personnel and time for matters concerning safety and protocols to be observed (Teacher School A).”

One from a private school also said:

“There is much ignorance of safety concerns raised by students, staff members and parents by the administration. We lack the motivation and commitment to practice the safety initiatives because of insufficient involvement of all relevant stakeholders (Teacher, school D).”

The remarks from the two teachers show that both category of schools has the challenge of poor involvement of the administration in enhancing school safety policy implementation.

A study by Bishoge (2021) indicates that effective involvement of relevant stakeholders including the management would make implementation of safety policies successful.

One principal also made these remarks:

“There is inconsistent enforcement of safety policies because some of these policies from the ministry are unclear, the resources allocated to schools are insufficient and sometimes their usage is not transparent, limited communication and collaboration between the school stakeholders. From my view, they need to involve everyone in developing and updating these safety policies, some measures are even outdated and no longer effective (Principal School D).”

Another principal said:

“...there is lack of accountability in resources allocated by the ministry. At times we are told funds will be channeled to schools to improve on the infrastructures, however, it takes a long time before action is taken. When the money is disbursed to our account, we do not know whether the amount is appropriate or not (Principal school F).”

This suggests that some principals are dissatisfied and concerned with the way safety funds are allocated and used by the school administration and government. The results concur with those of a study by Bishoge (2021), which identified financial mismanagement and corruption as two major causes of the low safety status of many African schools. To overcome this challenge, it's crucial for the administration to appreciate the need of having safe schools and actively promote the implementation of safety policies for schools.

The education officer admitted that with poor administrative support, they are faced with the challenge of limited funding and resources for safety equipment, insufficient communication, inadequate infrastructure and safety training personnel.

4.6.4 Lack of Space in School Compound

From the themes that emerged, inadequate space within the school was identified as a significant challenge by 78% of the teachers, with 52% from public schools and 26% from private schools reporting it as a concern. Regarding this, one teacher remarked that *“our school is so small that more infrastructures like classrooms cannot be built, there is high enrolment while there is no space to accommodate all (Teacher School G).”* Another teacher also noted that *“there is limited space which has made it difficult to allocate sections for safety zones within the school like fire points in the event of a fire, emergency exits in case of natural disasters or other emergencies (Teacher School F).”* These two teacher's remarks

are in agreement with Kemunto et al. (2015) study which found that schools have limited resources, including space, to effectively implement school safety policies.

In an interview schedule with the principals, one of them replied as follows:

“Inadequate space could result in non-compliance with safety regulations, potentially leading to compromised safety standards. Overcrowded classrooms or common areas affects ventilation that can potentially impact well-being of students and staff. For example, during pandemic, where social distancing was crucial, insufficient space made it challenging to implement and maintain proper distancing measures which increased the disease transmission (Principal School G).”

This excerpt from the principal implied that to maintain staff and learners’ safety and to comply with safety regulations, schools should periodically evaluate and modernize its infrastructure and find creative solutions to overcome this challenge and ensure that safety remains a priority, even in limited space. To the students, a response on how the level of safety at their institution affects them participating in co-curriculum activities as well as during learning was sought and some from a private school gave the following responses:

“When I feel safer, I am able to attend classes on a regular basis and participate actively in school life but when the environment is unsafe I become fearful (Student school D).”

“I am able to focus more on my work and participate in extracurricular activities when I know that I am safe, and when safety becomes a problem it will affect my ability to focus in and out of school (Student school D).”

The two students' statements indicate that they too cherish their safety and that they openly wish to take part in school activities without fear of assault or injury. The study went further to require insights from the Education officer to elaborate on the deficiencies in risk management practices. The officer made the following comment:

“... schools experience different threats and risks hence it becomes a challenge to identify appropriate protocol to handle them all. Safety policies are also outdated and inadequate such that they cannot cover all and other emerging and critical situations in school environment. Gaps in collaboration and coordination among

school stakeholders also hinders effective risk management efforts. There are gaps in providing regular training sessions and awareness programs for stakeholders which lead to confusion or improper responses to emerging risks. Schools may overlook or underestimate emerging risks which makes it difficult to address those issues (Education Officer, A).”

The comment by the officer implied that the policy does not meet all the safety needs experienced currently in schools and therefore there is need to fill the gaps. The results from the analysis are similar to those in a study by Wanderi (2018), which found that the contents in the safety manual of 2008 are insufficient and therefore there is a need to revise it to include all safety concerns. From Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs perspective, overcrowded classrooms and limited safety zones fail to meet learners’ safety needs, causing anxiety and reduced participation. Students’ feedback shows that feeling safe is crucial for their focus, wellbeing, and academic success.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a general summary of the study; conclusions drawn from the study and makes recommendations. The chapter further provides suggestions for further research based on the study's findings.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The summary of the findings was based on the study objectives.

5.2.1 Trends in the awareness levels of school safety policies among stakeholders

The first objective focused on establishing the trends in the awareness levels of school safety policies among stakeholders in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kenya.

The study found that awareness of school safety policies among stakeholders was generally high in both public and private schools, with all teachers and principals confirming familiarity with government safety guidelines. However, private schools showed slightly lower percentages of awareness among teachers (45%) and learners (35%) compared to public schools (teachers 55%, learners 65%). Despite this, neither private nor public schools had distributed the official Safety Standards Manual to teachers or learners, with reliance mainly on oral instructions, training sessions, and Life Skills Education. Private schools tended to have more organized training efforts, often supported by NGOs and external partners, whereas public schools reported challenges such as limited resources affecting full policy implementation. Principals in both school types acknowledged efforts to comply with safety guidelines, including fire drills and stakeholder sensitization, but noted constraints

like negligence in reading official manuals and lack of access to written safety materials. Education officers confirmed ongoing training and awareness efforts across schools, yet safety incidents persist, indicating gaps between policy awareness and practical implementation. Systems Theory posits that in the context of this study, awareness of safety policy represents a critical communication and preparedness subsystem among school stakeholders that if any one part fails, it weakens the entire system.

5.2.2 Sociocultural safety practices in the school environment and alignment with the school safety policy requirements

The second objective was to analyze the school's sociocultural environmental safety practices and alignment with national school safety policy requirements in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kenya.

From the findings, the sociocultural safety practices in private secondary schools are better and aligned with the school safety manual requirements than in public. Both public and private secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County show efforts to promote safety through guidance and counselling on alcohol, drugs, and abuse, with private schools slightly outperforming public ones in coverage and use of drug-free zone posters. Learners in both school types are highly involved in conflict resolution, reflecting a positive culture of peer management. However, public schools report more cases of bullying, harassment, and discrimination, with limited teacher training on these issues, while private schools have somewhat safer sociocultural environments. Security measures like CCTV cameras are largely lacking in both categories, and none of the schools have established safety sub-committees, indicating a significant gap in formal safety governance. Overall, private

schools tend to implement safety policies more effectively, but both sectors face challenges in fully ensuring safe, supportive environments for learners.

5.2.3 Status of school's physical infrastructural safety and alignment with school safety policy requirements and influence on learners' participation in school.

On the third objective, the study sought to evaluate the status of physical infrastructural safety and its alignment with national school safety policy requirements, as well as its influence on learners' participation in secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kenya.

The study found notable differences in the safety status of physical infrastructure between public and private secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County. While many teachers and students agreed that classrooms were well-ventilated and facilities adequate, researcher observations revealed that public schools often had overcrowded classrooms, broken furniture, non-functional fire extinguishers, poor kitchen hygiene, and unsafe dormitories. In contrast, private schools generally maintained better infrastructure; spacious classrooms, secure perimeters, clean water, functional safety equipment, and better food storage. Learners, especially in public schools, identified unsafe fields, toilets, and classrooms as priority areas for improvement. Public schools faced challenges meeting the Safety Standards Manual (SSM) due to high enrolment and limited resources, indicating systemic issues that compromise learning environments. Private schools, benefiting from lower enrolment and closer supervision, were more compliant. Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, learners in unsafe environments (mostly public schools) may struggle to focus on academics, while those in safer (mostly private) schools are better positioned to reach their full potential.

5.2.4 Analyze challenges that schools face in their quest to implement the school safety policy

The fourth objective sought to analyze the challenges that schools face in their quest to implement the school safety policy in secondary schools in Bureti Sub County, Kenya.

The study revealed several key challenges hindering the effective implementation of school safety policies, with notable differences across school types and gender. Inadequate funding emerged as the most pressing issue, with all 20 teachers acknowledging financial constraints as a major barrier. Public schools reported delays in government disbursements and prioritization of academic needs over safety, while private schools, especially church-sponsored ones, lacked any government support and relied on inconsistent donations, making safety efforts unsustainable. Gender disparities are evident in access to training, with male teachers more likely to receive safety-related education. Teachers pointed to poor communication, minimal stakeholder involvement, and lack of commitment to safety practices as key issues that cuts across school both school types. The issue of inadequate space is more severe in overcrowded public schools. Principals confirmed that space shortages led to non-compliance with safety regulations. From the Systems Theory, lack of the mentioned challenges, which acts as subsystems in a school, weakens its ability to function safely as a whole.

5.3 Conclusions

Focusing on findings based on the objectives that guided the study, these are the conclusions:

Overall awareness of school safety policies among stakeholders in Bureti Sub County is relatively high, with public schools showing slightly greater awareness among teachers and learners compared to private schools. However, the lack of distribution of official safety

manuals and reliance on informal training methods indicate gaps in formal communication and resource accessibility. While private schools benefit from more organized training through NGO support, both school types face challenges in translating awareness into consistent practice, highlighting the need for improved dissemination and engagement strategies.

Sociocultural safety practices in Bureti secondary schools show better alignment with policy requirements in private schools than public ones. Although both school types engage learners in conflict resolution and promote substance abuse prevention, public schools experience higher incidences of bullying and harassment, partly due to limited teacher training. The absence of formal safety committees and inadequate security infrastructure in all schools' points to significant gaps in governance and comprehensive safety management, underscoring the need for systemic improvements to foster safer sociocultural environments.

Thirdly, there are marked disparities in physical infrastructural safety between public and private schools in Bureti Sub County, with private schools generally maintaining better facilities that align more closely with safety standards. Overcrowding and dilapidated infrastructure in public school's compromise safety and learners' ability to participate fully in school activities. This discrepancy highlights the urgent need for increased resource allocation and infrastructure upgrades in public schools to create safe learning environments conducive to academic success and holistic development. Safety concerns included facility location, overcrowding, lighting, ventilation, furniture, roof condition, and cleanliness.

Fourthly, financial constraints are the predominant challenge in implementing school safety policies, exacerbated by delayed government funding for public schools and lack of government support for private schools. Gender disparities in safety training further hinder

effective implementation. Poor administrative support and inadequate space, especially in overcrowded public schools, compound these issues. Addressing these challenges requires targeted funding, inclusive training, stronger administrative commitment, and innovative solutions to optimize limited physical space, thereby enhancing the safety and wellbeing of all school stakeholders.

5.4 Recommendations

Considering the study findings, the researcher made the following recommendations:

5.4.1: Objective 1- Awareness Levels of School Safety Policy

Conduct a comprehensive study to explore the factors influencing awareness levels of school safety policies among different stakeholder groups (teachers, students, parents, administrators) and assess the effectiveness of current communication and training strategies.

Conduct longitudinal research to track changes in awareness levels of school safety policies among stakeholders over time. There is a need for clear policy guidelines and communication on school safety policy to avoid confusion during implementation.

Train school-relevant stakeholders on safety practices and how they should handle disasters and emergencies in case they occur. Further, the government should increase funding to cater for training and education on safety, improving safety and number of infrastructures to control over enrolment and installing security systems. Since the policy was a collaboration among different groups, there is a need for the parties to meet and evaluate the policy through monitoring its effectiveness and initiate revision in areas where there is need.

5.4.2: Objective two- Sociocultural Safety Practices and Policy Alignment

Investigate the direct relationship between sociocultural safety practices in schools and students' academic performance and mental well-being. Schools should provide training to all stakeholders on essential safety skills. School administrators should provide necessary support for the execution of school safety policies. Public schools should be sensitized to establishing clubs to promote and share knowledge of safety in schools. The safety standards manual should be revised to include aspects such as cyberbullying and mental health practices.

The study recommends teachers to offer guidance and counselling sessions in schools for learners to encourage the adoption of proper health habits, sensitize on the dangers of drug abuse and strategies for fending off peer pressure to try drugs.

5.4.3: Objective three- Physical Infrastructure Safety and Learners' Participation

Explore how specific physical infrastructure elements (e.g., playgrounds, sanitation facilities, emergency exits) affect learners' participation and safety perceptions in diverse school settings. There should be proper lighting installed and ventilation, particularly at boarding schools where students live after school hours. Fences and lockable gates should be erected around schools to keep unauthorized people out and for safety reasons. Private schools should advocate for policy improvements and reforms that address the unique needs and challenges they face in ensuring school safety. Public schools should adhere to enrolment rules to prevent overcrowding of physical facilities that disrupt learners' health and learning experiences. There is need for monitoring and evaluation which will enable schools to know if their safety improvements on infrastructures are effective.

5.4.4: Objective four: Challenges in Implementing School Safety Policy

Study the effectiveness of various strategies schools use to overcome challenges in implementing safety policies, including resource allocation, training, and stakeholder engagement. Schools should be more creative on ways to supplement government and church provision by searching for external aids to mobilize resources to support the execution of school safety policies. Clear lines of communication should be established by schools to ensure that everyone is informed during emergencies. Schools should have regular assessment and inspection of infrastructures in the learning environment. Schools should evaluate potential solutions and support mechanisms that can facilitate effective implementation

5.5 Recommendations for further research

The study recommends the following studies to be done:

1. There is need to carry out the same study but more specifically in private schools since based on the review done, this has been done more in public schools unlike in private.
2. A second study should be done on the effects of unsafe learning environments to the staff and learners.
3. Since this study just looked at the challenges that schools face in their quest to implement school safety policies, a third study can be done to look at possible solutions to those challenges and come up with strategies that schools might use to make schools better and safe environments to learn from.

4. There is need to conduct comparative studies across different regions within a country to examine variations in the alignment of national school safety policies and practices in the school environment.
5. There is need to conduct a national-level policy evaluation of the 2008 Safety Standards Manual using a systems-based implementation framework.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

My name is Dorine Chepngeno, a Master's of Education student at Kenyatta University. This questionnaire is part of my Master's degree research. The purpose of this study is to examine the national school safety policy alignment with risk management practices in school environment in Secondary schools in Bureti sub county, Kericho County. Identity and the collected data will be handled with the highest confidentiality and utilized exclusively for the study's analytical needs. Please answer honestly as much as you can.

Instructions

Please put a tick (✓) in the bracket in front of your responses as requested. Where explanation is required, use spaces provided.

Demographic information

1. Indicate using a tick (✓) the category of your school: Boarding (), day ()Public (), Private ().
2. Gender Female [] Male []
3. What is your teaching experience?

1-5yrs 6-10yrs 11-15yrs 16-20yrs

SECTION 1: School safety policy awareness levels

1. Do you know of government policies on school safety standard manual?

Yes No

2. If yes, how did you get to know about the policy

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Circular Training Elsewhere

3. Do you have a copy of the safety standards manual for schools from the Ministry of Education? Yes [] No []

4. Does the school receive any support for improving school safety from the County public Education officers?

Yes No

5. If yes, what kind of support do you receive from the Public education officers on safety?

Inspection and guidance Training Both

6. Are there teachers who have been trained on improving and managing risks in school?

Yes No

7. If yes, who trained the teachers?

.....

8. Are you included in making decisions concerning school safety?

Yes No

9. Have you been given any role in matters concerning implementing school safety?.....

SECTION 2: Status of school’s physical infrastructural safety

Please provide your opinion on the following statements on the physical infrastructure safety of the school. Kindly mark (√) if you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with each statement.

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
Classrooms are large enough to accommodate learners comfortably.					
Classrooms are well ventilated to allow proper air circulation					
Furniture in the classrooms is appropriate					
Schools have fire extinguishers and are functioning					
There is enough space between the beds in the Dormitories (boarding schools only)					
Dormitories are well ventilated and have two exits and an emergency exit in the middle					
Dining halls are spacious, clean and well maintained					
School laboratories are spacious enough for students to learn safely					
Toilets are adequate for students (1:7 - one toilet for seven students)					
Toilets are clean, well maintained and clearly designated for girls and boys					
Kitchen is clean and well maintained.					
There is proper storage of food in stores					

1. What are the impacts of enhancing physical infrastructure safety on teaching and learning processes?

.....

.....

...

SECTION 3: Sociocultural environmental safety practices

1. Are there guidance and counseling services to deal with Alcohol, Drugs and Abuse cases?

Yes No

2. How are the services delivered?.....

3. Are learners involved in conflicts resolution within school environment?

Yes No

4. Do your school have CCTV cameras?

Yes No

5. If yes, do they contribute in making schools safe places to stay in ?.....

.

6. Are there bullying of all learners(including those with special needs) in your school?

Yes No

7. Are classrooms pleasant and adaptable for all learners including those with disabilities?

Yes No

8. Does safety of infrastructure influence the physical and social safety of learners in your school?

Yes No

9. Do the school have a school safety subcommittee?

Yes No

10. If yes, how often do they meet to check and discuss on matters of school safety?

Weekly Monthly Once in a term

11. Have you ever been trained on how to use the following?

(a) Fire extinguishers Yes [] No [] (b) Emergency doors Yes [] No []

(c) Fire alarms Yes [] No [] (d) Emergency signs e.g. exit routes Yes [] No []

10. Have you attended any seminar or workshop on how to deal with cases of harassment and discrimination? Yes [] No []

SECTION 4: Challenges

Please indicate using a tick(✓) whether you Agree, Strongly agree, Disagree or Strongly disagree to the following measures to be put in place to increase safety standards in schools.

No.		Agreed	Strongly agreed	Disagree	Strongly disagreed
	Increase in budget allocated to improve school safety will make schools environment safe for learning?				
	Involvement of safety experts will help reduce risk occurrence in schools?				

	Extensive and intensive education on safety will help improve safety in schools?				
	Specification of roles on school safety will help improve safety status?				
	Formation and strengthening of safety clubs and committees will help improve the safety status of school?				

APPENDIX II: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

My name is Dorine Chepngeno, a Master's of Education student at Kenyatta University. This questionnaire is part of my Master's degree research. The purpose of this study is to examine the national school safety policy alignment with risk management practices in school environment in Secondary schools in Bureti sub county, Kericho County. Identity and the information obtained will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for analytical purposes of the study. Please be as honest as possible in your responses.

Instructions

Please put a tick (✓) in the bracket in front of your responses as requested. Where explanation is required, use spaces provided.

Background Information

This section requires you to give information with regard to your gender, age, school type, and your form (class).

1. Indicate your Gender

Male () Female ()

2. Indicate your age in one of the following age brackets

14-16 () 17-18 () Above 18 ()

3. Indicate the type of your school.....

Part 1: School safety awareness levels

1. Are you aware of school safety policies and their importance?.....
.....

2. Has the school provided you with school safety guidelines?

Yes No

3. Which safety practices have you been trained on?

Fire drills evacuation procedu healthy interpersonal relationships

Who conducted the training.....

.....?

4. Did the training improve safety standards in your school

5. What other measures do you suggest that should be incorporated to enhance safety awareness is created in your school?

i)

ii)

iii)

6. Do you think the state of safety affect your ability to attend and concentrate in school?
.....

7. If yes, how does safety affect your ability to attend school?
.....

8. Do you consider yourself to be fully aware of all safety precautions that schools should take to prevent accidents and disasters? Yes [] No []

Part 2: State of school's physical infrastructural safety

Please provide your opinion on the following statements on the physical infrastructure safety of the school. Kindly mark (√) if you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with each statement.

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
Classrooms are large enough to accommodate learners comfortably.					
Classrooms are well ventilated to allow proper air circulation					
Furniture in the classrooms is appropriate					
Schools have fire extinguishers and are functioning					
There is enough space between the beds in the Dormitories (boarding schools only)					
Dormitories are well ventilated and have two exits and an emergency exit in the middle					
Dining halls are spacious, clean and well maintained					
School laboratories are spacious enough for students to learn safely					
Toilets are clean and adequate for students (1:7 - one toilet for seven students)					

1. Who monitors the safety of physical facilities in school.....?

2. How often are the inspections carried out to monitor environment safety?

Daily [] Weekly [] Fortnightly [] Monthly [] Termly []

3. Suggest a physical infrastructure that needs to be improved in your school.....
.....

Part 3: sociocultural environmental safety practices

1. Are there guidance and counseling services to deal with Alcohol, Drugs and Abuse

cases for learners ? Yes No

2. Are learners involved in conflicts resolution within school environment?

Yes No

3. Is there a club that promotes safety within the school environment?

Yes No

4. If yes, how does the club contribute in making schools safe places to stay in?.....

5. Comment on how cases of child abuse can influence learning processes in your school environment.....

6. Do safety of physical infrastructure influence teaching and learning processes in your school?

Yes No

9. How can cases of Drugs and Substance abuse influence learning in your school?.....

10. Do learners discuss and suggest ways that can contribute to creating a drug free school environment?

Yes No

11. Have you experienced any case of child and sexual abuse?

.....

Part 4: Challenges

How does the safety status of your school affect your participation in co-curriculum activities and during learning?

.....
.....

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS

Dear respondent,

My name is Dorine Chepngeno, a Master's of Education student at Kenyatta University. This interview guide is part of my Master's degree research and gives you an opportunity to express your view on subject under study. The purpose of this study is to examine the national school safety policy alignment with risk management practices in school environment in Secondary schools in Bureti sub county, Kericho County. Identity and the information obtained will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for analytical purposes of the study. Please be as honest as possible in your responses.

1. Are you aware of government national school safety standard manual for schools (2008)?
2. Is your school implementing safety policy? If yes, How far have you gone in the process of implementation of the national school safety policy in regard to teaching and learning processes?
3. What are your views with regard to the state of physical infrastructural safety in your school?
4. Have you trained the school stakeholders on the risk management practices (fire drills, evacuation procedures etc.)?
5. Does the Board Of Management, learners, teachers and Parents take part in the implementation of the national school safety policy? What roles do they play in the implementation process?

6. Are there difficulties in putting school safety policies into practice at your school?
What challenges are they?
7. Comment on the safety of the following issues in the schools in your area; Child Abuse, Alcohol and Drug Abuse and Children with special needs.
8. How many cases of bullying have you experienced in school and how does the school handle such cases?
9. How effective are the guidance and counselling services to curbing issues of drug and sexual abuse?
10. List any safety practices undertaken in the school. How frequently are they undertaken?
11. How frequently do you service the safety equipment in your school?
12. There are many causes of unsafe situations in schools. Mention any that you had to deal with in your school.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BURETI SUBCOUNTY EDUCATION OFFICER

Dear respondent,

My name is Dorine Chepngeno, a Master's of Education student at Kenyatta University. This interview guide is part of my Master's degree research and gives you an opportunity to express your view on subject under study. The purpose of this study is to examine the national school safety policy alignment with risk management practices in school environment in Secondary schools in Bureti sub county, Kericho County. Identity and the information obtained will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for analytical purposes of the study. Please be as honest as possible in your responses.

1. Are you aware of the national school safety standard manual for schools in Kenya (2008)? Name any policy documents on safety that you know.
2. How do you create awareness of the safety policy guidelines to the school community? Do you feel that the efforts you put are sufficient?
3. What is your perspective on the gaps in risk management practices in school environment? Do you think what the policy is covering is adequate?
4. How frequently do you visit schools within your sub county to inspect on their safety status?
5. How do the teachers, students and parents support safety policy implementation in your sub county?
6. What challenges have you faced in creating awareness and implementation of safety policy guidelines in school.

APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The observation schedule below is designed to gather information on the extent of adherence to safety guidelines contained in a manual developed for schools. It is aimed at assessing what has been given by the respondents against the physical situation on the ground.

Observation	Available	Not available
The school has 'The Safety Standards Manual for Schools'		
All Visitors report and sign at the gate or school entrance.		
There are directions to various facilities in the school (classrooms labs, offices etc.)		
There are posters to indicate that the school is a DRUG FREE ZONE		
The school ground is leveled to deter injuries on learners		
There are adequate and functional fire extinguishers in the school		
The classrooms are spacious and well-ventilated to accommodate learners comfortably		
There are adequate toilets which are separated in mixed school for boys and girls		
School laboratories are spacious for students to learn safely		
Laboratories have trained assistants and appropriate furniture		
Dormitories have good ventilation for free air circulation (boarding schools only)		
School libraries are well ventilated and large enough to accommodate learners at one given time		
There is a secure and well-guarded school gate (with a security office)		
A perimeter fence has been put around the school (permanent or live fence)		
The school has maintained and clean kitchen with proper drainage		

APPENDIX V: INFORMED CONSENT PARTICIPANT FORM

Before choosing whether to take part in this research, please carefully read the information provided.

Purpose of the research: To establish whether practices in the school environment aligns with requirements in the school safety manual document.

What you will do in this research: You are encouraged to provide accurate and sincere answers to the questions. The researcher assures you that neither the respondent nor the school identities will be revealed in the research's publication, and that all information gathered will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and utilized only for the study's objectives.

Confidentiality: the researcher assures you that all the information you will provide will be secure and private. The data collected will be protected and used only for the study.

Participation and withdrawal: Participation in the study is entirely optional, and you are free to stop at any time by telling the researcher that you would like to stop without facing any repercussions.

Agreement: I consent to participate in this study after receiving adequate explanations about its nature and purpose. I am aware that there are no repercussions if I decide to withdraw at any point.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name _____

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX VI: KU AUTHORIZATION LETTER



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DEAN GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 020-8704150

Our Ref: E55/21996/2021

DATE: 23rd April 2024

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MS. DORINE CHEPNGENO –
REG.NO. E55/21996/2021**

I write to introduce Ms. Dorine Chepngeno who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for M.Ed. degree programme in the Department of Educational Foundations.

Ms. Chepngeno intends to conduct research for an M.Ed. Thesis Proposal titled, *“National School Safety Policy Alignment with Risk Management Practices in School Environment in Secondary Schools in Kericho County, Kenya”*.

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

**PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

APPENDIX VII: NACOSTI LICENSE

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Ref No: 593479

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms.. Dorine Chepogeno of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kericho on the topic: National School Safety policy alignment with risk management practices in School Environment in secondary schools in Kericho county Kenya. for the period ending : 13/May/2025.

License No: NACOSTI/P/24/35245

Applicant Identification Number: 593479

Director General

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

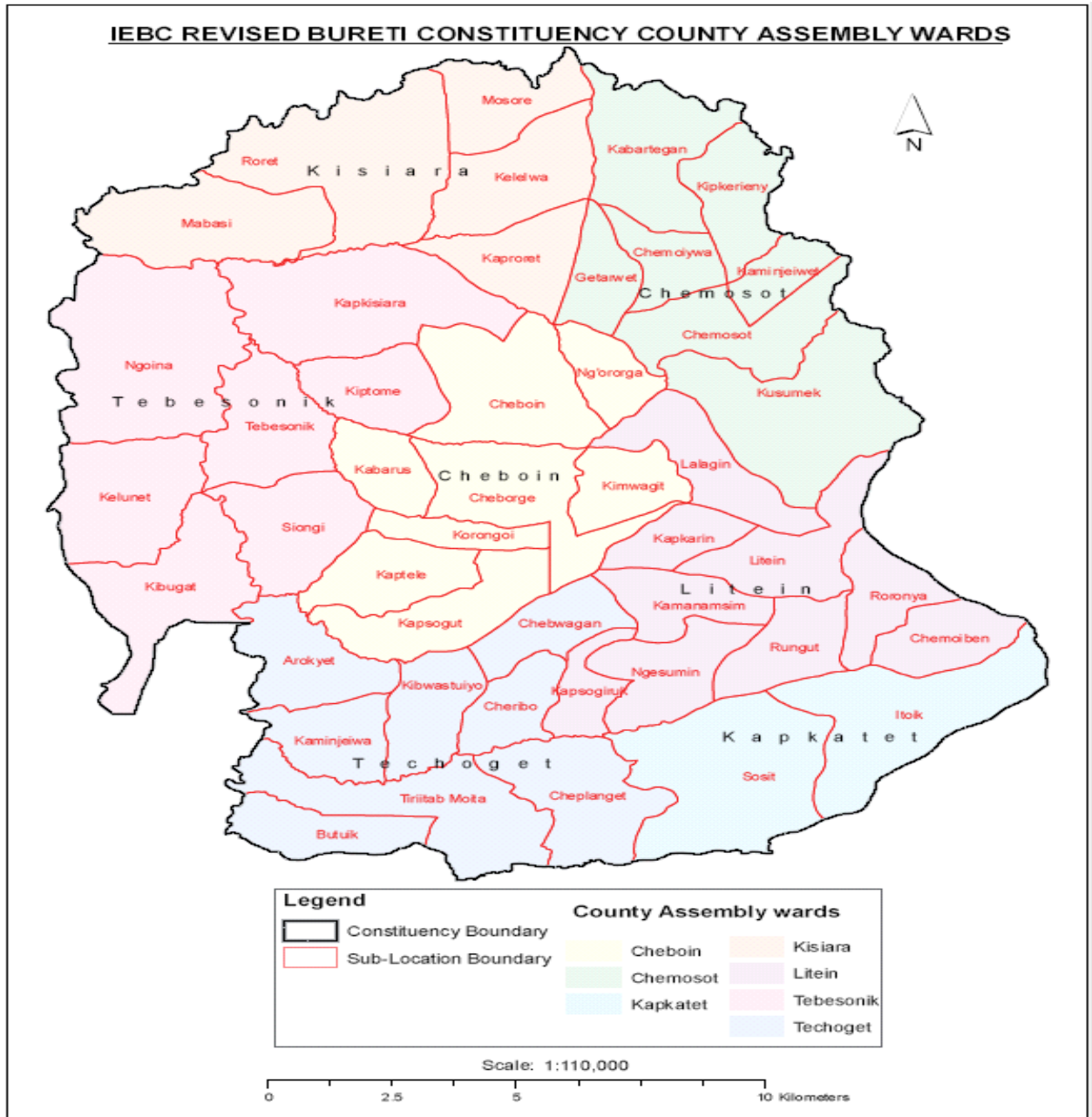
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See overleaf for conditions

APPENDIX VIII: MAP OF BURETI SUB-COUNTY



SOURCE: KERICHO COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE