

**GRAFFITI WRITING AND ITS LIKELY INFLUENCE ON  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SELECTED  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE LARGER LAIKIPIA EAST  
DISTRICT, LAIKIPIA COUNTY**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents, my wife Naomi, daughter Sasha and my sons Lee and Collins.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Page</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
TITLE	PAGE
.....	i
DECLARATION	
.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	
.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	
.....	iv
TABLE	OF
CONTENTS.....	v
LIST	OF
TABLES.....	x
LIST	OF
FIGURES.....	x
i	
ACRONYMS	AND
	ABBREVIATIONS
.....	xii
ABSTRACT	
.....	xiii
<b>CHAPTER</b>	<b>ONE:</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Introduction	
.....	1

1.1	Background	to	the	Study	1
.....					1
1.2	Statement	of	the	problem	6
.....					6
1.3	Purpose	of	the	Study	6
.....					6
1.4	Objectives	of	the	Study	6
.....					6
1.5	Research	questions	of	the	Study
.....					7
1.6	Significance	of	the	Study	7
.....					7
1.7	Scope	of		the	
	Study				8
.....					8
1.8	Limitations	of	the	Study	8
.....					8
1.9	Assumptions	of	the	Study	8
.....					8
1.10				Theoretical	
	Framework				8
.....					8
1.10.1				Systems	
	Approach				9
.....					9
1.11				Conceptual	
	Framework				11
.....					11
1.12					
	Summary				
.....					
.....					12
1.13	Operational		Definition	of	
	Terms				13
.....					13

**CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....14**

2.0				Introduction	14
2.1	Graffiti	as	a	mode of communication	14
2.2		Types		of graffiti writing	19
2.2.1			Political	graffiti	20
2.2.2		Gang		graffiti	22
2.2.3				Existential graffiti	23
2.2.4		Summary		of types of graffiti	24
2.3		General		studies on graffiti	24
2.3.1		The		cultural approach	25
2.3.2				The quantitative approach	25
2.3.3				Linguistic approach	26
2.3.4				The folkloric approach	26
2.3.5		The		aesthetic approach	27
2.3.6		The		motivational approach	28
2.3.7		The		preventive approach	28

2.3.8	The popularization approach	29
2.4	Graffiti and English language learning	30
2.5	Graffiti and learning environment	33
2.6	Summary	36

**CHAPTER THREE:**

**METHODOLOGY.....37**

3.0	Introduction	37
3.1	Research design	37
3.2	Location of study	38
3.3	Target population	38
3.4	Sampling techniques and sample size	38
3.4.1	Sample of respondents	39
3.4.2	Sample graffiti text	40
3.5	Instrumentation	41
3.5.1	Questionnaires for students	41

3.5.2	School Administrators Interview Guides.....	42
3.5.3	Interview schedule for teachers.....	43
3.5.4	Respondents for focus group discussion.....	43
3.6	Piloting of study instrument.....	44
3.7	Validity of study instrument.....	44
3.8	Reliability of study instrument.....	45
3.9	Data collection procedures.....	46
3.10	Data Analysis and Presentation.....	46
3.11	Ethical and logistical consideration.....	47
3.12	Summary.....	48

**CHAPTER FOUR : DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

4.0	Introduction.....	49
4.1	Types graffiti writings found in schools.....	49

4.2	Graffiti	Texts	in	schools	.....50
4.3	Types	of	graffiti	in	schools.....50
4.3.1		Single		word	graffiti.....51
4.3.2		Phrases	in	graffiti	writing.....53
4.3.3		Sentences	in	graffiti	writing.....54
4.3.4	Graffiti	in	form	of	words and drawings.....56
4.4	Graffiti	communicative	strategies	used	by students.....65
4.4.1				Humour	.....65
4.4.2				Symbolism	.....66
4.4.3				Irony	.....67
4.4.4				Imagery	.....67

4.4.5	Taboo words	.....	68
4.4.6	Short forms, acronyms and abbreviations	.....	69
4.5	Messages recurring in graffiti in schools	.....	77
4.5.1	Graffiti with messages on sex, love. Relationships admiration	.....	72
4.5.2	Graffiti with spiritual messages	.....	74
4.5.3	Graffiti with messages on role models and celebrities	.....	75
4.5.4	Graffiti with messages on Food	.....	76
4.5.5	Graffiti on messages on drugs	.....	77
4.5.6	Graffiti with messages on music and television programmes	.....	78
4.5.7	Graffiti with message on emerging issues	.....	79
4.5.8	Graffiti with messages on political issues	.....	79
4.5.9	Graffiti with messages relating to students' dissatisfaction with the authority	.....	80

4.5.10	Graffiti with messages on remembrance of persons	82
4.5.11	Graffiti with messages that suggest occurrence of bullying in schools	83
4.5.12	Graffiti with messages on territorial markings	84
4.5.13	Graffiti with messages on slogans and general comments	85
4.6	How the administration viewed graffiti writing in schools	87
4.7	Gender difference in graffiti writing in schools	89
4.8	Influence of graffiti on the learning of English language in schools	93
4.9	Effects of graffiti writing on classroom learning environment	97
4.10		
	Discussion	101
4.10.1	Types of graffiti writing in secondary schools	102
4.10.2	Communicative strategies used by students in graffiti writing	103

4.10.3	How the school administration responds to graffiti writing.....	103
4.10.4	Gender difference in graffiti writing.....	104
4.10.5	Speculation on how graffiti is expected to Influence learning of English language in schools.....	105

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.0	Introduction	.....107
5.1	Summary of the study	.....107
5.2	Conclusion of the study	.....108
5.3	Recommendations	.....108
5.4	Areas for further study	.....109

REFERENCES	.....	110
------------	-------	-----

APPENDIX A SAMPLED GRAFFITI TEXT.....	116
---------------------------------------	-----

**APPENDIX B RESEARCH BUDGET**  
.....130

**APPENDIX C INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO ALL SAMPLED  
SCHOOLS.....131**

**APPENDIX D INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL HEAD  
TEACHERS.....132**

**APPENDIX E INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ENGLISH  
TEACHERS.....133**

**APPENDIX F QUESTIONNAIRE FOR  
STUDENTS.....134**

**APPENDIX G QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION  
.....136**

**APPENDIX H GRAFFITI COLLECTION GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS  
.....136**

**APPENDIX I SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE LARGER  
LAIKIPIA EAST DISTRICT IN LAIKIPIA  
COUNTY.....139**

**LIST OF TABLES**

**Table 3.1** Sampling grid.....40

**Table 4.1** Quantitative Analysis of Graffiti Occurrences.....50

**Table 4.2** Opinion on whether graffiti writers are known.....61

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure 1.1</b> Conceptual framework on graffiti communication in schools derived from GST.....	11
<b>Figure 4.1</b> Graph showing opinion that problems are expressed in graffiti.....	82
<b>Figure 4.2</b> Opinion on Gender difference in graffiti writing.....	90
<b>Figure 4.3</b> Influence of graffiti on learning of English in Schools.....	97
<b>Figure 4.4</b> Effect of graffiti on classroom climate.....	98

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

- FGD:** Focused Group Discussion
- SPSS:** Statistical Package for Social Sciences
- DEO:** District Education Officer
- ASAL:** Arid and semi-arid region
- GST:** General System Theory
- KACC:** Kenya anti-corruption commission
- SMS:** Short Message Service

## ABSTRACT

Graffiti takes the form of written language whose authorship always remains anonymous. It precisely refers to any wall writing, pictures and symbols or markings of any kind on any surface anywhere no matter what motivates the writer. Most graffiti are viewed as illegal or vandalism of property by those in authority. Secondary school students use graffiti as a form of communication when they feel other channels to express themselves, have been blocked by those in authority. This study investigated, identified and described the types of graffiti used for communication by the students. The study also aimed at identifying the communicative strategies employed in graffiti writing and the influence of graffiti on learning of English language and classroom learning environment in our schools. Graffiti texts were collected in ten secondary schools purposively sampled in the Larger Laikipia East District in Laikipia County. Out of one thousand graffiti texts collected, two hundred were randomly sampled for analysis. Twenty English teachers were purposively sampled to take part in an interview. One hundred students were randomly sampled to fill in questionnaires. A Focused Group Discussion (FGD) was carried out with another group of five students randomly sampled across the classes in each school. The data collected from this exercise were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to arrive at inferences and conclusions. The research leaned on sociolinguistic approach to the study of graffiti. The study was guided by General System Theory. The findings of the study were that students used varied communicative strategies like humour, symbolism, irony, short forms, acronyms and abbreviations in their graffiti writings. Some school administrators viewed graffiti as a nuisance while others viewed it as an important mode of communication. There was striking gender difference in graffiti writing as far as language use is concerned. It was also established that teachers expressed varied opinions that graffiti influenced learning of English language and classroom learning environment in secondary schools. The findings of this research may contribute to the study of sociolinguistics in general and communication in schools in particular. It has been established that students use graffiti to communicate a lot of information that would be beneficial to the headteachers, quality assurance officers, students' counsellors, policy makers and other stakeholders. Classroom teachers may also use graffiti to establish the unspoken students problems and behaviour and thus prevent entropy of the school system.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and objective of the study. It also looks at research questions of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study and finally, assumptions of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Graffiti (singular, graffito) refer to writings or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed on a wall or a public space. Graffiti are any type of public markings or written words that appear on walls of buildings. Graffiti have existed since ancient times, with examples dating back to ancient Greece and Roman Empire. In the modern era graffiti have been used as a mode to pass socio-political messages in an artistic form. Its growth into urban culture has been fuelled by the evolution of hip-hop and other urban cultures. Though celebrated by many, graffiti is a constant point of disagreement between the artists and law enforcement officers.

Elsewhere in the world, graffiti have been used to pass radical political and social change messages. For instance, during the Arab Spring, Egyptian graffiti artists played a huge role in expressing the mood of the country through their caricature of former president Hosni Mubarak.

In most countries, defacing property with graffiti without the property owner's consent is considered vandalism and is punishable by law. Most times graffiti is employed as a medium of communication to communicate social, economic and political messages in society. The study of graffiti in secondary schools could help to establish the strategies students use to communicate among themselves and with the administration. There are a lot of writings on the walls of most schools and there could be reasons why the students opt to write instead of communicating verbally. Graffiti in secondary schools could also help to explain some behaviour manifested by the students as they try to express their needs, wishes and grievances.

The study of graffiti in schools could also help to explain the influence of graffiti written in classrooms have on learning environment. Students could have unique ways that they use to summarize what teachers teach their classrooms in graffiti. Graffiti written by students in classrooms that depicts violence and use vulgar language could give a negative impression to the teachers about that particular class. This could affect teaching as the teacher would not feel safe and would have a very low opinion on the class. This may most probably affect his/her content delivery.

The population of secondary schools is made up of adolescents who crave for self identity. They are people who are teenagers and rebellious to any form of system that is put in place for them to follow. To avoid falling victims to the system if they complained, they resort to writing graffiti to express their discontent with the system. They feel they have been oppressed and avenues for expressing their opinions blocked. The Larger Laikipia East District is in Laikipia County and is a semi-arid

region. It is classified as an ASAL region. Due to this reason students undergo various hardships both at home and in schools which could be explained by the graffiti they write.

In most secondary schools in this region there had been persistent writing of graffiti on the walls of classrooms, toilets, libraries, dormitories and laboratories. Students sometimes used various coded and complex graffiti to communicate among themselves and understanding these codes could help to understand what transpires amongst them and also help in understanding them. The problems expressed through graffiti if not addressed could have an effect on learning in schools.

Graffiti is treated as a challenge to authority especially in contexts where one group exerts pressure or control on the other. Graffiti is also viewed as a form of informal communication that marginalized, oppressed or neglected groups resort to express their discontent, needs and grievances to those in authority. This usually happens after they feel other channels of communication have been blocked or they are not involved in decision making on issues that affect them. People will always look for alternative ways of expressing their opinions on matters affecting them especially when they feel oppressed. They may write graffiti using pens, chalk, human faeces, can sprays or even blood.

There has been existence of graffiti in churches, hospitals, prisons, schools and even in institutions of higher learning.

According to Nwoye (1993), wall writings and drawings have been used for a long time by various groups of people in the society who in one way or another feel oppressed. Such groups of people who are prohibited from, or denied avenues of public space for expression seek other avenues and often graffiti on the walls of public places becomes a favoured option.

Nwoye (1993) points out that student population in most parts of the world is one such group that feels it does not enjoy the privilege of public self-expression. Many students opposing the school system may not come out openly but may express their anger in graffiti for fear of the consequences. In writing graffiti students may use codes that are uniquely understood by the writer and the targeted audience. (Ferrell 1993) claims that Graffiti can naturally be viewed as a contemporary type of expressive opposition to authority; though each graffiti contains a complex message of its own, there is the simple implicit assumption that every graffiti opposes authority.

School is taken to be a social institution with students being the inferior and voiceless group and the authority as the dominant one. Students feel that the rules and regulation are imposed on them yet avenues for expressing their grievances blocked. This leads to the young students feeling neglected and oppressed by those who are in the administration, teachers, prefects and sometimes school workers. According to Rothman (2002) adolescence is the stage of growth and development that most of the secondary schools students are in, and is mostly a time of resistance to authority. In their effort to express their wishes the students are generally

misunderstood and dismissed. The adults dominate the scene and the adolescents feel oppressed when they lack chances to express their opinion. This brings discontent to the adolescents who try to look for other ways to make themselves be heard.

Phillips (1999) claims that graffiti is viewed traditionally as the product of people who have little representation within the traditional mass media. This is also supported by Nwoye (1993) who says that graffiti is perceived as sheer expression of youthful exuberance, a manifestation of vandalism. Most students use their energies to make sure that they are heard through the use of graffiti because of hidden identity of the graffiti author.

Students in secondary schools react and respond to the school authority in a similar way. They rarely use legitimate avenues for self expression and may often not be involved in decisions making by those in authority. Students always view their parents, teachers, prefects and administrators as people who do not understand their thoughts, fears, attitudes, wishes, needs and opinions regarding the world around them. So they find graffiti as the only avenue that can provide privacy and anonymity necessary to express themselves for fear of the consequences of being noted. So writing graffiti therefore provides the author with the opportunity, safety and unlimited freedom to express himself/herself on a matter of interest and or concern .In this way, graffiti can be studied in terms of their being a portrayal of current social issues. Graffiti has its own special language and can therefore be studied as forms of language in context.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

There has been persistent graffiti writing in secondary schools in the Larger Laikipia East District. This has been coupled with various forms of indiscipline in these schools. There is no documented information on the study of these complex graffiti codes used by students to communicate and their influence on classroom language learning. This study attempted to fill this gap.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study leaned on sociolinguistic approach to the study of graffiti whose purpose was to investigate and analyze writing of graffiti and how it influences Learning of English language in secondary schools in the Larger Laikipia East District in Laikipia County.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives.

- a) To identify and describe the types of graffiti used by students.
- b) To identify the graffiti communicative strategies used by students.
- c) To find out how the school administrations respond to graffiti writing
- d) To determine the gender difference if any in graffiti writing in schools.
- e) To speculate on how graffiti is likely to affect learning and use of English language in the classroom.

### **1.5 Research Questions.**

The study attempted to answer the following research question:

- a) Do students use different types of graffiti to communicate?
- b) What specific communicative strategies are employed in graffiti writing?
- c) What is the reaction of school administrators towards graffiti writing?
- d) Is there any difference between boys and girls graffiti writing?
- e) What is the likely influence of graffiti on learning and use of English language in the classroom?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant to the field of education and communication since graffiti have been analyzed in this study in terms of their language structures and also as a form of language use in communication. The research is expected to be beneficial to secondary school quality assurance and standards officers, headteachers and teachers who will access knowledge regarding graffiti as an avenue for addressing students' needs, grievances and making informed decisions on how to resolve them. This will also help teachers to understand students' behaviour and thus avert cases of students' unrests that mostly occur in secondary schools resulting in loss of property and even life. This study is also expected to assist English teachers to identify students' weaknesses in language use through observation and analysis of graffiti writings in their schools.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on only two hundred graffiti texts from ten secondary schools which was a representative sample of graffiti texts in approximately twenty seven secondary schools in the larger Laikipia East District.

### **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

This study collected data from surfaces written by both girls and boys with the view to focusing on the types of communicative strategies used by both genders and influence they had on English language learning. The analysis of other aspects of graffiti is beyond the scope of this research as these can constitute other independent studies. The study only concentrated on graffiti in secondary schools, and not primary or university. For this reason, the findings of the study may not be generalized to other levels of the education system because their graffiti may be different.

### **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

This study is dependent on the following basic assumptions:

- (a) The assumption of the study was that most of the graffiti in the schools are written by the students. This is because graffiti are found in most areas in the school where students frequent, for instance toilets, classrooms, libraries, laboratories, dining halls and even in dormitories.
- (b) In case of mixed schools, it was assumed that both boys and girls wrote graffiti to express themselves.

### **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by the General System Theory as the theoretical framework

### **1.10.1 Systems Approach**

General Systems Theory (GST hereafter) was originally proposed by biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1950's. According to Ayot & Patel (1987), Joyce & Well, (1980), system could be broken down into its individual components so that each component could be analyzed as an independent entity, and the components could be added in a linear fashion to describe the totality of the system. The premise of the GST is to fully understand the operations of an entity; it must be viewed as a system. A system is defined as a number of interdependent parts functioning as a whole for some purpose. In case of our graffiti study, the school as a whole was viewed as a system which has resources, teachers, workers and students.

According to Schmuck (1977), schools are essentially living systems and that without people they are nothing but concrete and paper. As living systems, they are in constant process of interaction with their communities and other institutions in them. The school system can be viewed as a living and dynamic organization and for it to function properly there must be communication among the interacting elements who are the students, teachers, parents and the administration. It is this reason that makes it important for graffiti writings written by students be decoded and understood so as to create harmony in the system and avoid entropy of the system.

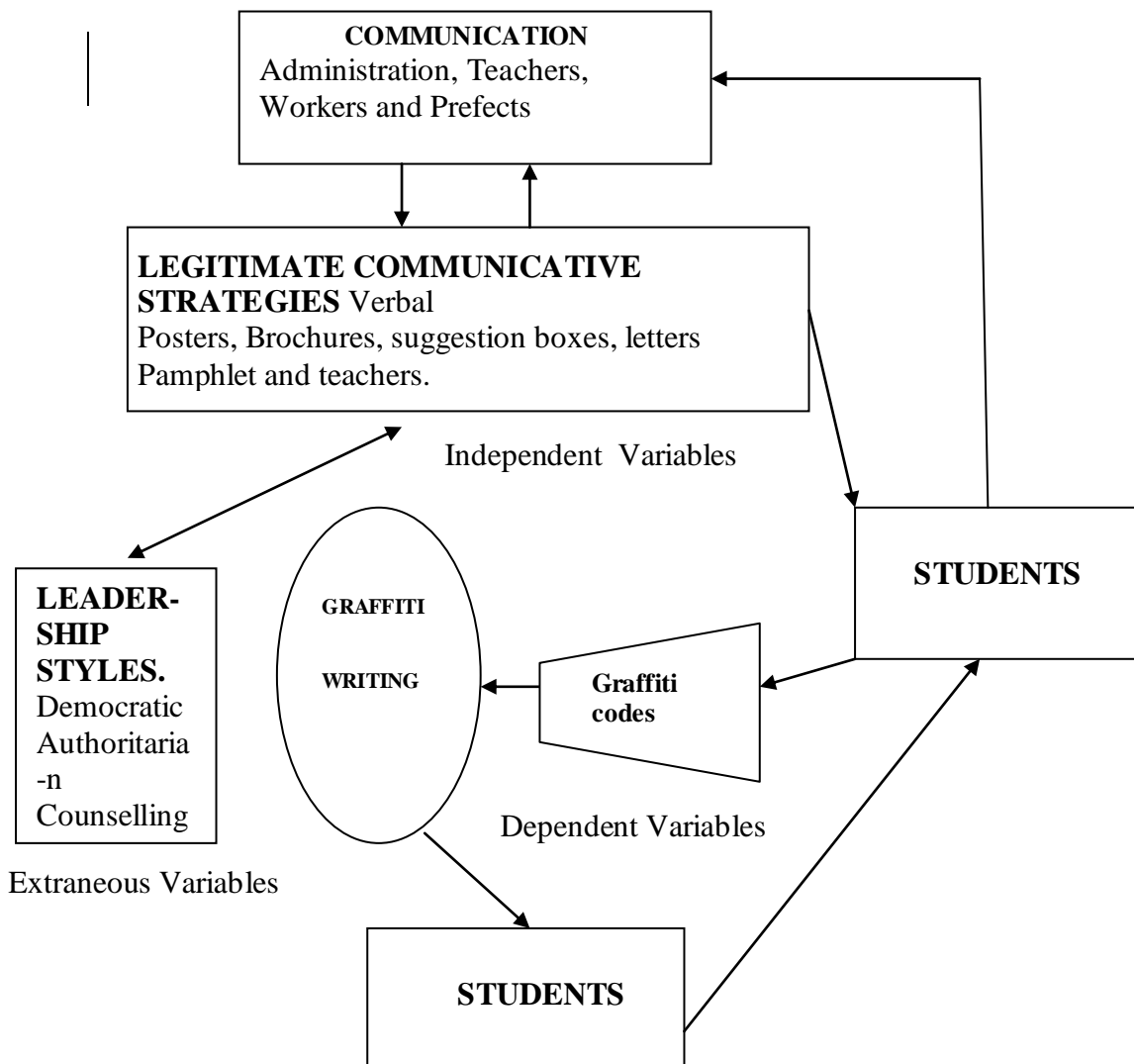
A perspective informed by GST embraces the uncertainty of predicting behaviour and recognizes that behaviour is always determined by multiple influences. In light of graffiti writing by students in schools, it could be caused by multiple factors that could be indicators of appraisal or decay in the system. Relationships between

students and teachers are systems and are in turn part of larger systems (classrooms). This perspective was helpful in understanding how graffiti writing as a channel of communication could have an effect on classroom learning environment if both the teachers and students did not understand each others' needs.

The GST also operates on the premise that components or elements, that make up a system are closely interdependent and actions or conditions that affect any one element will affect all others within the system (Powers, Cheney & Cnow, 1990). If the students messages communicated in graffiti are not interpreted and addressed then no matter what environment is provided in school for learning still the expected outcome will not be realized.

In both top-down and upward communication in school, if the administration and teachers rely on verbal communication and suggestion boxes and ignore decoding messages on the wall then the whole system might collapse because there is more on the wall than what is spoken and students like using artistry to communicate their thoughts. So, GST guided the research in establishing the needs of the students and looking at how the hidden communication using graffiti could affect the school as a system. The ideas and concepts of GST valuable in this study as they helped to understand and conceptualize social institutions like schools, communication and their environment.

### 1.11 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1:1 Conceptual framework on graffiti communication in schools derived from GST**

The above framework shows the independent variables in this case the normal or ordinary communication strategies used by school administrators and teachers while dealing with issues that affect the students. These variables were communication strategies like letters, posters, verbal, and suggestion boxes that are legitimate avenues presented to the students for communicating with the school management. These independent variables were investigated to establish whether they cause

students to communicate using graffiti. The extraneous variables that could affect the outcome of this study were the leadership styles either democratic or authoritarian in schools, the students characteristics like gender and services provided to the students like counselling whenever they have problems. The dependent variable was the graffiti texts written in various areas by the students for communication purposes. These graffiti texts were analyzed in terms of meaning, language and source.

Students are considered to be the oppressed group and thus it is assumed that most of the avenues for communicating their needs are blocked by those in authority. Those in authority include the headteachers, teachers and prefects who always meet and pass decisions on how to control and discipline the students. In these decisions making, the students are not represented and they do not have any voice at all. The decisions made are relayed to the students through verbal or written communication by those in authority. The administration gives students suggestion boxes to air their grievances which are rarely addressed. Thus students resort to graffiti as the alternative way of communication. In most cases those in authority do not bother to decode the messages on the wall until it is too late.

### **1.12 Summary**

This chapter has presented the background to the study problem and the statement of the problem. It also highlights the objectives of the study and the significance of the study. The chapter has also looked at the scope, limitation and assumptions of the study. Finally theoretical framework has been discussed in this chapter.

### **1.13 Operational Definition of Terms.**

**Community Graffiti:** The artistic and aesthetic type of graffiti characterized by elaborate creative drawing and paintings.

**Communicative strategies:** Various styles in which graffiti is written in order to communicate.

**Existential Graffiti:** A general classification of graffiti comprising sub- categories based on the message types.

**Graffiti:** Any illegal scribbles, writings, sketches or drawings on surfaces.

**Graffito:** A single illegal writing on the wall of an unauthorized surface.

**Inferior:** Students who are considered as disadvantaged and are in a marginalized group in terms of the balance of power.

**Privacy:** The opportunity, safety and unrestricted sense of freedom an author enjoys as s/he write graffiti.

**Popular Graffiti:** The ordinary day-to-day illegal writings on various public places.

**Public places/surfaces:** The different areas and surfaces where graffiti are written on.

**Sociolinguistic approach:** This is the approach in the study of graffiti that involve how language use and linguistic behavior is influenced by social and cultural factors.

**Sociolinguistics:** Is the study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used and the effects of language use on society.

**Text:** A single meaningful and interpretable graffito.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter centred on literature reviewed on earlier research carried out on graffiti in Kenya, Ghana, Paraguay and United States of America. This review is sub-divided into five parts: Graffiti as a mode of communication, types of graffiti writing, general studies on graffiti, graffiti and English language learning and graffiti and learning environment.

#### **2.1 Graffiti as a Mode of Communication**

Gross (1997) argues that in order to understand graffiti as a mode of communication, it is insufficient to simply decipher the texts without first identifying graffiti as a medium. Graffiti is a linguistic phenomenon which involves both “form and content” by commonly making use of discourse “any segment of signs larger than a sentence,” and sign – something which “stands for something other than itself”. Thus, it is both useful and necessary to acknowledge and examine the significance of graffiti as a product of human linguistic expression, as well as the nature and impact of the message being communicated.

Yieke (2003), in a study conducted on graffiti in Kenyan universities suggested that graffiti should never be ignored by those in authority if they wanted to know the sentiments and needs of the students. This clearly implies that students in learning institutions use graffiti writings to communicate issues that if addressed are beneficial

to the smooth running of these institutions. She continues to assert that if well channeled, graffiti could provide a forum for students (who consider themselves a minority) to express themselves in a wide range of topics and at the same time, act as an expression of academic freedom and on-going intellectualism.

Obeng (1998) in a graffiti study done in Legon University in Ghana established that graffiti in a place reflected graffitist political and ideological inclinations, social and ethnic identities, and the prejudicial and stereotypical view they hold about certain people and their languages as well as their views on specific persons and personality. This assertion was important in the current graffiti study because it implies that graffiti writing in each school could be unique due to the social and cultural inclinations of the students.

Chaffee, et al (1990) argue that graffiti and other “public art media”- a collective term for alternative communication method have been largely dismissed as subversive and illegitimate. While it is debatable whether these qualities are negative or positive, the counter structural nature of graffiti communication nonetheless, appeals to the marginalized voices that seek to challenge the control and censorship of dominant discourse. In Paraguay, for example, the use of graffiti as a communication medium has become well established as “a social and political dimension of popular culture and of the socio – political system” by many different political forces, especially by those who are marginalized in the struggle over power and distribution of influence (Chaffee,1990).

This phenomenon could largely be attributed to the key features of graffiti, accessibility and anonymity.(Chaffee, 1990). Like many other forms of media or art, graffiti serves to advertise and propagate ideas, share information and support or oppose the system. However, a distinctive quality separating graffiti from other, more “legitimate.” forms of media is that it is “one of the easiest and most efficient” way for individuals and groups to voice political dissidence, social alienation and anti-system ideas because it offers to individuals, high-accessible communication channels at low-risk retribution.

Nwoye (1993) asserts that groups that had been prohibited from or denied avenues of public expression seek other outlets, with graffiti on walls of public places a favoured option; and she goes ahead to identify students population in most parts of the world as one such group. The fact that students do write graffiti in an area that facilitates the anonymity acknowledges the vulnerability of face ( Goffman 1967). It is usually during face-to-face encounters that hazards are maximized due to the instantaneous consequences inherent in face to face behavior. Graffiti therefore constitute avoidance discourse that like other avoidance discourse, it insulates the participants against face threat.

Yieke (2004) examined graffiti as one widespread yet generally overlooked way of voicing dissatisfaction. After analyzing samples of graffiti from factories in the Export Processing Zone of Kenya, she asserts that these writings should be taken seriously for they are one way in which otherwise muted individuals can express their feelings and share their concerns with others in the same situation. In the factories

under study, graffiti were used as a medium for voicing criticism of a various matters, including harsh working conditions, lack of maternity or sick leave, poor salaries, sexual harassment and lack of trade union representation. Like a factory, a school is a social institution with power structures and students who feel voiceless resort to graffiti writing to express their dissatisfaction with the school administration.

According to Gadsby (1995) it is understandable why graffiti is such a desirable method of communication against inequalities in resource and power distribution. Graffiti has been able to “reflect the nature of the society that produced them” by communicating individual’s opinions and values concerning important issues within the society. However these advantages may also lead some individuals to perceive that graffiti serves to express or perpetuate negative ideas about other groups (Gadsby 1995). Consequently, conflict theories would question who is given the power to define graffiti: which groups are able to gain dominance to decide what should be considered deviant.

Bartolomeo (2001), argues that the use of publicly owned space is undoubtedly recorded as deviant, and yet the use of private space for public consumption, like graffiti – will also be considered deviant by the general public. “Private space becomes public when the public disapproves of how an individual uses the space privately”. Thus society often determines both public and private dimensions, leaving the little room for self expression of individuals. This in turn affects the efficacy of accessibility; a graffitist’s primary objective is always to communicate to

others; his/her message will not be known to the public if it is concealed behind the walls (Bartolomeo, 2001).

Teeyan & Dryburgh (2000) attempted to find the causes of graffiti or vandalism in general by interviewing fifty-six adolescent. The main reason for delinquency was peer influence: while for property crimes, the motives included self gratification and practical uses. A general theory, proposed by Gettfredson and Hirshei, states that delinquency comes from a “need for excitement and risk-taking”. According to Horowitz & Tobaly (2003) school vandalism can be viewed as “a voluntary degradation of the environment with no profit motive whatsoever.” They viewed people who engage in vandalism as those who experience social, moral and value inconsistencies.

According to Gross (1997) anonymity and accessibility allowed by graffiti can be equally invaluable to a student venting in the bathroom stall about school rules or tuition hikes as well as bad administration. Graffiti constitutes an act of self disclosure and an expression of a very personal nature, but maintains the writer’s privacy through anonymity.

Mc Cormick (2003) argues that in institutions where formality and structure are privileged, graffiti offers opportunities to break away from the rigidity to create a space for a more organic discourse by inviting uninhibited and uncensored discussions that are often rare in scholarly writing. Freed from the unyielding language of academic, student are able to assert aggressive identities and resist

dehumanization. For instance, numerous evidences of extensive multi person dialogues staged in campus bathroom stalls suggest graffiti not only serves its purpose as a mode of communication but also serves it well.

According to graffiti studies conducted in the U.S.A., some universities now recognize the importance of graffiti in informing them of important social issues and problems at these institutions. They have thus formed “graffiti corners” where students can freely write graffiti without fear of being accused of vandalism. The authorities then take photographs and videos to keep as records for future action and then repaint the surface for fresh graffiti.

To dismiss graffiti in schools as obscenity would be to discredit its value as a medium of communication by marginalized groups. (Abel & Buckley 1977) asserts that graffiti writing is a form of communication that is both personal and free of everyday social restraints that normally prevent people from giving uninhibited reign to their thoughts.

## **2.2 Types of Graffiti Writing**

Previous studies conducted on graffiti acknowledged and documented the presence and existence of various different types of graffiti each of which serves a different function in relation to society. Notably, the content of each graffiti is unique to the content and circumstances from which an individual writes. However, according to Abel & Buckley (1977) quoted in Alonso (1998), all types of graffiti not only provide a vivid and open unflattering insight into the hidden side of our society; but they also

represent an intriguing and an important source of information for those studying the behaviour of human beings. A few of those types have been discussed and summarized below.

### **2.2.1 Political Graffiti**

According to Phillips (1999) quoted in Bartolomeo (2001), one common type graffiti is political graffiti also called radical graffiti, and which is known to inherently oppose political domination and authoritative control. Writers of this type of graffiti use it as a method or tool of resistance. Political graffiti are considered the most open and are posted on surfaces where the most number of targeted readers can access them, it is safe and at the same time the writer needs not suffer the dire consequences of being caught.

The graffiti are a voice of the common man who voices his criticism on popular policy or the ideology of the oppressor. For the writer, the oppressive and suppressive lot in power serves as the pressure and motivation behind their writing. They communicate ideas that are against the establishments, ideas that are more or less 'taboo' in the context. In expressing such ideas that may otherwise be silenced, the writers are communicating their wish for freedom and a change in the current social order.

The authors of political graffiti therefore use graffiti as a method to not only stage resistance but also initiate negotiations for recognition and engage in a struggle for a better social order. In 2012 there were political graffiti images all over the city of

Nairobi, Kenya, courtesy of the deft hands of a group of young graffiti artists. There were political graffiti on the toilets, buildings and on roads. In one of the political graffiti writings the artist had drawn a huge, menacing vulture sitting on a throne with a briefcase overflowing with cash cuffed on his wrist with a chain. Around the political graffiti was evidence of all manner of scandals that had taken the Kenyan economy on a free fall. Below these drawings the message was loud and clear: *use your vote to get rid of vultures* referring to the corrupt political class. Political graffiti messages are fragments of truth (Mc Glynn 1972:353), a hurried summary of facts that include themes associated with labor conditions, freedom, political power, homelessness, unemployment, religious thought, and civil rights.

Jeff Ferrell's *Crimes of style: Urban graffiti and the political and criminality* studies the case of Denver, Colorado, in the U.S. He says that "During the late 1980's and early 1990's Denver and its suburbs had seen the markings of racism and reaction" (1993; 3). Ferrell pushes the matter of racism further by illustrating the proliferation of "white power" messages, KKK images, and the pictures of Swastikas (1993: 3). Clearly, the graffiti in this nature exposed the need for white supremacists to maintain their position in the hierarchy of whiteness and power, to attribute their own problems to self-created scapegoats, and to help simplify the complexity of a constantly unstable environment.

In one specific time period, during the war in the Persian Gulf, the alleys of Denver experienced graffiti hits, which openly revealed people's "criticism of U.S. imperialism and linguistic attacks on Saddam Hussein" (1993). However, Ferrell

states that extreme political graffiti (include racists and gang-related graffiti) should not be categorized as an aberration. More specifically he cites that “the great majority of Denver graffiti originates somewhere outside of Bloods and Crips, neo-Nazi group, and unaffiliated individuals” (1993: 4). As a result authorities regard this type of graffiti as disruptive and subversive and make efforts to suppress its writing and consequently curtail the discussion they propagate. The tenets of this type of graffiti guided this research in identifying graffiti that targeted, discussed, questioned and criticized the school administration hierarchy.

### **2.2.2 Gang Graffiti**

Gang graffiti comprises writings used by a group to mark their territorial boundaries, put across sentiments and express group identity and solidarity. It is highly stylized and characterized by symbols whose interpretations expose the specific gang culture. Gang graffiti serves to fulfill four potentialities of territoriality as described by Sack (1986). A gang’s *classification* of an area is in part defined by the geographical organization of gang writing in public space. Messages, slogans, and symbols communicate the extent of a territory and the location of boundaries.

While gang graffiti makes up a small proportion of general graffiti, they are usually considered the most violent and dangerous. Artists in gang graffiti find enjoyment in “marking territorial boundaries, advertising individual members, and threatening rival gangs.” This phenomenon become an entry point into a subculture that leads to more serious crimes such as burglary, assault, fights, and drive-by shootings (Grant, 1996). Although gang graffiti deviates from and has no direct bearing on this study, its

inherent properties (which as a matter of fact shares with all other types of graffiti) are nonetheless applicable. The gangs, just like students in school are the minority and marginalized group, challenging the stronger society's normative values so as to assert their existence and identity. The study looked at graffiti not as a form of art, but as a form of communication and as instances of language use.

### **2.2.3 Existential Graffiti**

Another type of graffiti is existential graffiti as classified by Alonso (1998). It comprises individual personal commentaries which can be categorized into different sub-types based on their content or subject matter. They may be religious, sexual, racial or even on love. A large number of them comment on issues that the writer would not express publicly as they are typically obscene or taboo in character. They are usually more commonly found in public washrooms and abound in derogatory overtones and hostile expressions. The research tried to analyze graffiti texts in terms of the messages expressed borrowed from this classification.

Most of the previous researchers in graffiti had concentrated much of their work on the view that writing of graffiti is vandalism of other peoples' property and that it is a behaviour that should be condemned and discouraged. The current study focused at graffiti as a means of communication and as such it should not be out rightly dismissed as a deviant behaviour but people should try to understand messages communicated.

#### **2.2.4 Summary of Types of Graffiti**

Alonso (1998) while quoting Lachman (1988) sums up the characteristics of graffiti types. Graffiti in some forms can challenge hegemony by drawing on particular experiences and customs of their communities, ethnic groups and age cohorts, thereby demonstrating that social life can be constructed in ways different from the dominant conceptions of reality.

The research was aided by this view to identify the inherent nature of students' graffiti as depicting only the one sided view of the students in reaction to the views institutionalized by the dominant school authority. Graffiti then should not be ignored by those in authority if they wanted to learn the sentiments, anxieties and needs of those they govern, rule or control. Thus studying students' graffiti becomes relevant if viewed from this perspective, analysis of their graffiti would most likely give an insight into the students' attitudes towards the authorities and among themselves, the general functioning of their community as well as highlighting youth styles of expressing themselves.

#### **2.3 General Studies on Graffiti**

The study of graffiti has attracted researchers from a wide variety of disciplines for instance, Geography, Psychology, Linguistics, Law enforcement and Sociology. The researchers use different graffiti study approaches depending on the objectives one has set to achieve. Gadsby (1995) outlines nine categories of graffiti research. These nine categories are discussed below.

### **2.3.1 The Cultural Approach**

The discussion of culture and the practice of everyday life have interested many modern scholars, including sociologists and anthropologists in the cultural study of graffiti. Researchers in this case look at graffiti as a representation of a specific community or ethnic group. They use all available data in reviewing each graffito (i.e. language, location, etc) to illustrate the collective everyday life and feelings of the people of that particular culture. The possible difficulties with this type of approach is that odd graffiti (material that is completely different from other materials) may be taken as representing a significant portion of the community rather than just the attitude of that particular writer, in other words, the individual is seen as less significant than the community.

### **2.3.2 The Quantitative Approach**

This approach has its main focus on numbers and concentrates on studying differences in the graffiti categories like content, gender, stylistic devices and /or other measurable quantities. Bates & Martin (1980) found sixteen separate graffiti content categories on the campus of University of Massachusetts. Their statistical evaluation of the collected graffiti detailed how many responses were pro or con regarding a particular subject and there was further breakdown based on gender. Its major drawback, however, is that it provides very little or no contextual information, unlike the cultural and linguistic approaches. This approach was valuable to the research in as far as it provided guidelines for the quantitative analysis and interpretation of graffiti categories as well as their statistical evaluation.

### **2.3.3 Linguistic Approach**

Just as the term implies, the linguistic approach is based on the language used in each graffito and the way the writer employs that language. One of the most interesting linguistic studies was done by Grider (1973) involving the Con Safos graffiti of Mexican – Americans. These writers used the term Con Safos or the initials C.S. around their tags and public graffiti as a form of protection for their writing. “Just as the reflection in Perscus” shield killed Medusa, it throws the obscenity or slur back upon the defacer of the graffiti name thus protected” (134). This article deals with the cultural and linguistic use of the term Con Safos within the community. Linguistic analysis is best when used with contextual information from the community where the graffiti is located. This approach was useful as it guided in identification, description and analysis of the language used in each graffito and how it articulated the concerns of the graffiti writers.

Linguistic analysis of graffiti is best used with contextual information from the community where the graffito is located. This approach was useful to the study of graffiti as it guided in identification and description of the messages communication by the students in their graffiti writing. Students used language differently in the classroom and the current research tried to establish the influence the graffiti they wrote had on learning of English language in their classroom.

### **2.3.4 The Folkloric Approach**

This approach stresses the collection of graffiti as accurately as possible. Sometimes there is analysis of the data and sometimes there is contextual information provided

but not always. One of the problems with this approach is that sometimes an accurate accumulation is completed with little analysis of the information. When this happens, the collection becomes simply archival. Also these archives contains only graffiti which the researcher sees as interesting and rarely is every single graffito recorded. This selectivity in the collection process diminishes the whole.

Read (1977) travelled to tourist attractions across the United States (mostly national parks) in the late 1920s and recorded the folk epigraphy he found. He provided little contextual information for these graffiti but he carefully documented the date and location for each graffito. His motivation was to preserve these writings for posterity. Without contextual information, the only aspect of the graffiti in Read's collection that can be analyzed is the words themselves. Blake (1981) and Fraser (1980) are other examples of the folkloric approach. This approach was not the main focus of our study.

### **2.3.5 The Aesthetic Approach**

This approach looks at the artistic qualities of graffiti. There are many common factors between public graffiti and art. Varnedoc & Gopnik (1990) drew comparison between graffiti art and the works of Marcel Duchump & Jean Dubuffet. Robinson (1990) documents the subway graffiti art of the Sotto District of New York and its artistic connection to the broader cultural implications of Hip Hop. Usually those text, which engage in aesthetic approach to graffiti are beautifully illustrated with wonderful photographs. This approach deviates from the approach that was used in

the study which viewed graffiti as a medium of expression and communication in society.

### **2.3.6 The Motivational Approach**

This approach tries to establish what motivates people to write graffiti. It tries to examine the mind of the individual writing the graffiti, rather than the entire culture or community, then look for patterns between all writers to find a common denominator. This approach is often used in conjunction with the preventative approach, but not always. Many of the psychologists researching graffiti use this approach (for instance, Abel & Buckley, 1977).

Blume (1985) has created categories for the various motivations for writing graffiti. Basically, she found there were two main groupings with eight sub-groupings beneath them. Part of the problem with much of the motivational research is that much of the conclusions are subjective or that there is little consistency in terminology or approach. There was a great deal of improvement in motivational analysis of graffiti in this research.

### **2.3.7 The Preventive Approach**

This approach stems from the view that graffiti is a disease and a nuisance that needs to be eliminated. It entails research into surfaces which discourage people from writing graffiti, and consequently aims at suggesting ways of preventing their writing. This approach was not considered during the research. Graffiti and

vandalism can cost a school a great deal of money in repairs. They also may contribute to a perception that the school is not well-cared for and is an unsafe environment for students and staff. Because the writing of graffiti and acts of vandalism are usually carried out in secret, schools may discover that these types of misbehavior are difficult to curb.

One intervention idea to reduce misbehaviour directed against school property is to have classrooms of students adopt various school locations and to reward them for each day that these locations are kept in good repair (Watson, 1996). When student bystanders are given a personal stake in the maintenance of school property, they can quickly send a message to potential vandals that defacing or destroying property is not cool!

### **2.3.8 The Popularization Approach**

It deals with graffiti meant purely for the readers' entertainment and amusement. This category really isn't an approach since most often it is just a collection of graffiti provided to entertain the reader. Both of Colombo's books (1975 and 1983) fall into this category. Rarely are the locations of graffiti listed, except in very vague terms, and there is no contextual information, just subjective commentary from the author. The books are quite amusing as they were designed to be, but there is usually not enough information on the writings or their surroundings for the collection to be used for anything other than entertainment.

Gadsby (1995) points at the missing link in graffiti research. She highlights the importance of blending different approaches to the study of graffiti, for instance, the

cultural with linguistic aspects of wall writing so as to bring out the relationship existing between *language use* and *society*. Davies (1985) uses gendered, linguistic, folkloric and motivational approaches in examination and analysis of graffiti and the result was a thorough and thought provoking article. This approach was not the main focus of the current study.

#### **2.4 Graffiti and English Language Learning**

According to Heath (1983), graffiti texts often go unacknowledged and are rarely used for reading or content learning in the classroom, students nevertheless learn a great deal about themselves, about schooling, and about society from the texts they create and exchange. At times, these “missing” texts are a result of a disjuncture between home/community and school that is, home and community texts of various cultural groups do not always match the texts that are valued in school. A number of studies have found that what children and adolescents learn from the various texts they use outside of school texts that they view as important in their social interactions with peers can often be more powerful and valued than what they learn in school (Camitta, 1990; Finders, 1996; Hartman, 1997; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; Moje & Thompson, 1996; Moll, Tapia, & Whitmore, 1993; Myers, 1992).

One of the ways students actively construct their social and classroom contexts is to create their own texts, that serve multiple purposes in their in- and out-of-school learning. They use these texts to make a social space for themselves but also to define themselves and to limit others’ participation in their social groups. One example is graffiti and tagging texts, as well as conventional written texts about gang practices,

that serve to claim space and position in their authors' social worlds (Moje, 2000). These texts are not validated in their schools, homes, churches, or communities, but are nevertheless quite powerful for the adolescents in their social interactions with other youth. Studies of these kinds of text raise questions about how to acknowledge the sophistication and power of these textual practices for young people without simply appropriating them into the official curriculum as "sanctioned" texts.

In spite of the controversies that surround legality of application of graffiti writing for classroom learning, some researchers have pointed its importance in enhancing understanding in reading of comprehension passages and novels through what they refer to as graffiti text coding. According to Tovani (2000) graffiti text coding involves two elements. The first step involves highlighting or marking a spot in a paragraph and then jotting a symbol in the margin to indicate the kind of thinking that was elicited at that point of reading. Text coding focuses on thinking such as making connections to background knowledge and experiences, posing questions, identifying confusions, making inferences, determining importance and summing up key ideas.

According to Buehl (2004), text graffiti is a method of annotating a text that expands on text coding by including marginally commentary. Learners highlight, underline and annotated texts to impose their priorities on someone's else words. The learners begin to own a text by intertwining their ideas with those of an author. Learners are provided with photocopies of passages or sections of novels that allow wide margins on both right and left sides to facilitate writing of marginal graffiti or marginalia.

Colour felt pens are an excellent resource for annotating texts. Researchers estimate that consistent use of colour for coding (for example, red for main points, blue for details or examples) can enhance memory by up to 20%.

Buehl (2004), asserts that graffiti text coding is a powerful strategy that helps students to retain their thinking and create a personal understanding of an author's message. He also points out that students come to realize that comprehension is as the result of the interplay between an author's words and a readers thinking.

According to (Tovani 2000), graffiti text coding enables students to become accustomed to listening to their inner dialogue about a text as they read and this makes the students become involved in summarizing material in their own words thus helping them to remember as well as understand. Through the writing of marginal graffiti, students are provided with a system to verbalize their problem solving through difficult texts, and are encouraged to attempt fix-up strategies rather than give up or accept partial comprehension of a passage. This is in agreement with Ponyton (1989) assertion that we can account for a considerable amount of what any instance of language means by examining the structure of the text and particular choice of words used.

Claggett (1992) argues that "the use of graphics can help students make meaning as they read, write, and act, [which] is firmly rooted in current thinking about how the mind works." She adapts "Jung's concepts of the four primary ways that we make sense out of the world" (paraphrased as "observing, analyzing, imagining, and

feeling") to describe aspects of a balanced approach to learning. These graffiti can be form of graffiti that students write during reading to enhance their comprehension.

Claggett (1992), further argues that "through the use of graphics, students have opportunities to experience all four functions as they interact with the books they are reading and the essays, stories, and poems they are writing." Teaching students to visualize what they are reading and create graphic symbols helps them develop as readers. Furthermore, sharing their individual responses in cooperative group activities deepens their understanding and skill as readers and writers. This is the concept of graffiti writing that has been applied employed as a classroom learning strategy thus personalizing learning through activities that prompt students to put their face onto texts created by others.

## **2.5 Graffiti and Learning Environment**

Grant (1996), asserts that unattended piece of graffiti give off the visual impression of an "uncaring and indifferent society." When the city fails to remove graffiti, it creates an "environment where other more serious crimes flourish". Writing of graffiti together with litter of broken windows, noise and trash in schools according to Broken Window Theory developed by James Wilson and George Kelling are indicators of vandalism and indiscipline and can cause decay in institutions such as schools and urban areas (Philip,1969).

The Broken Window Theory operates under the premise that if one window pane is broken and not repaired the chances are that another one will be broken and finally

the whole building ends up with no window panes. This premise had a bearing in that most students who engaged in writing graffiti had issues they wanted to express in order for them to feel relieved and learn properly. These issues if not established and addressed may affect classroom learning environment and students may become forms of indiscipline and frustrate the efforts of their teachers to assist them succeed in their studies.

According to Ngare (2008) school principals in Kenyan high schools reported concern over the ever increasing number of cases of learner indiscipline in Kenyan schools. Such indiscipline resulted, in some cases, in the destruction of property in schools, violence and substance abuse, and school authorities indicated that indiscipline had reached unmanageable levels. Most of the issues that cause indiscipline cases in schools are mostly captured in graffiti writing and affect school learning environment if go unchecked. Hougan (1972) asserted that when some events or problems trouble the community, these anxieties manifests themselves in graffiti. He also suggested that people in authority would learn more from reading restroom walls than by taking a poll.

According to Day (1996) damage to school buildings and equipment, without theft of property, consists an act of social reaction against the school. Studies conducted in the United States demonstrated that vandalism like writing of graffiti on school property was associated to school administrations that were either authoritarian or indifferent and remiss; as well as to principals and teachers who were not receptive to students, to a high turnover of teachers, and, finally, to the application of punishments. Thus, one

must try to interpret the graffiti messages disguised in the acts of violence against school property, which may have several meanings: the need to call attention, to show off to school-mates and to express revolt. Day (1996) also asserts that,

“the wish to leave a mark in the world, since the students who do it are letting out their rebellion against the government or the parents, against society, against the school. They do graffiti to express their will, their desire.”

Writing Graffiti, destruction of fences, windows, walls, and damage to equipment, together with thefts, appear as the most common forms of vandalism that prevail in schools. Graffiti writing occurs both in public and in private schools, particularly in restrooms, consisting in love declarations, messages about the legalization of marijuana – “*Yes, I smoke. Legalize*” and “*stoned with pot*” – and, less frequently, protests against the government. There are also names, references to gangs, dirty words and pornography directed to some people in particular (Day 1996).

Graffiti writing in schools may also be evidence of sexual harassment by young people generating a permissive culture, in which case such acts are not viewed as serious to attract punishment. These types of graffiti especially with sexual overtones when written in classrooms may affect students who may feel as if they are the victims of such harassment. According to Dupaquier (1999), sexual harassment is defined in a broader sense in school environment to include several forms of sexual intimidation such as looking, making gestures, telling jokes, obscene comments, exhibitionism, and other forms of abuse, such as proposals, insinuations, and apparently unintentional physical contact, as well as gossip and graffiti written on restroom walls. If all these issues reflected in graffiti writings are not addressed, they

may cause disturbances or unrests in schools and hence affect the school learning environment.

From the reviewed literature, graffiti writing in schools had been viewed as vandalism of school properties that should be stopped by all means. There are other researches that found graffiti to be an important channel of communication that was used by voiceless marginalized groups to air their needs, interests and grievances. The current study embarked an attempt to analyze graffiti writings written by students so as to unravel the unique and peculiar graffiti codes used by students to communicate amongst themselves. The study also attempted to establish the effects of graffiti writing on English language learning and learning environment. This study attempted to fill this gap.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter covers the literature related to the study, graffiti as a mode of communication, types of graffiti writing, general studies on graffiti, graffiti, language learning and graffiti and learning environment., It has also focused on types of graffiti writing, general studies on graffiti, graffiti and language learning and graffiti learning environment.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter covers the procedures that were used to collect and analyze data. It focuses on research design, location of study, target population and sampling technique used in selecting schools and respondents both teachers and students. The sample size, sample graffiti data collection and analysis are discussed.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study was a survey design. Surveys are used systematically to gather factual information necessary for decision making. They are an efficient method of collecting descriptive data regarding the characteristics of the population and the current practices, conditions and needs. Any study that deals with how people feel or how they behave is considered a survey study. It is one type of descriptive research in which researchers commonly use questionnaires and interviews to gather information of some phenomena. It allows for generalization (Ogula, 1998).

A descriptive research using both quantitative and qualitative data analyses was adopted in this study. This is because qualitative research helps the educational researcher to obtain in-depth data on the study problem. Qualitative research enables one to study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Human behavior is also explained best using this approach (Mugenda & Mugenda 1999).

### **3.2 Location of the Study**

The location for this study was in The Larger Laikipia East District in Laikipia County. This area was considered suitable for study because as with many other areas no research has ever been done on graffiti writing by students yet there has been persistent writing of graffiti in schools in the region. Students have been writing graffiti on the walls of classrooms, dormitories, laboratories, dining halls, toilets and secluded places. The targeted schools had also been experiencing some forms of indiscipline students' behaviour though the magnitude varied. The analysis of these graffiti writings may hold the key to understanding various graffiti communicative strategies used by students in schools and thus unmask what is communicated. From the reviewed literature there had not been documented evidence on a study on graffiti in schools or their analysis in the Larger Laikipia East District in Laikipia County.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The target population for this research was the graffiti texts, students and teachers in all secondary schools in The Larger Laikipia East District. This is the population to which a researcher wanted to generalize the results of the study. The total target population was about ten thousand eight hundred secondary students.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size.**

Ten secondary schools were purposively sampled from across the four divisions namely Lamuria, Central, Daiga and Mukogodo division. The research specifically targeted ten schools that had experienced unrests, go-slows or other forms of

students' disturbances both internally and externally in the last three years. The sample size was 150 out of 3931 secondary school students in the district.

#### **3.4.1 Sample of Respondents.**

A major assumption of the study was that students are the authors of the graffiti and that they and their teachers constituted the larger number of consumers of graffiti. Consequently, teachers were identified by the researcher so as to assist in randomly sampling ten students in each of the schools that was visited. The ten students in each of the ten schools sampled were used to fill in the questionnaires and assisted the researcher in interpretation of graffiti writings in their individual school after collection of the graffiti texts by the researcher.

The researcher collected one hundred graffiti texts in each school and randomly sampled twenty which was 20% of the graffiti collected. Another five students were randomly sampled in each of the ten school sampled to be involved in a focus group discussion on graffiti in their school with the researcher acting as the facilitator. Twenty English language teachers in ten schools were also purposively sampled to take part in an interview because they had the knowledge on English second language teaching and learning and thus could give opinions on how graffiti writing influenced teaching and learning in their schools.

**Table 1.0 Sampling grid**

<b>Division</b>	<b>Scho ols</b>	<b>Sampled Secondary Schools</b>	<b>No of teach ers</b>	<b>Sampled no of teachers</b>	<b>Total no of students</b>	<b>Sample students</b>	<b>Collected Graffiti per school</b>	<b>Sampled Graffiti</b>
Lamuria	7	1.Ngobit	28	2	400	10	100	20
		2.Wiyumiririe	18	2	340	10	100	20
		3.St.Augustine	24	2	280	10	100	20
Central	11	1.Thingithu	23	2	386	10	100	20
		2 Inoro	34	2	642	10	100	20
		3.Nanyuki	42	2	578	10	100	20
Daiga	6	1.Ngenia	21	2	311	10	100	20
		2.St.Loise	19	2	341	10	100	20
Mukogodo	3	1.St.Francis	25	2	322	10	100	20
		2.Doldol	23	2	327	10	100	20
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3921</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>200</b>

### 3.4.2 Sampling Graffiti Texts

Though the actual graffiti writers are not known, students were assumed to be the authors as graffiti were found in places where they reside or frequent most of the time in school. As such the students were in a better position to give first hand information about what they communicate in graffiti and the reasons behind it.

The researcher collected the graffiti texts from different locations and entered them in a graffiti collection guide prepared by the researcher. The student assisted the

researcher in graffiti interpretation and decoding the messages contained in the graffiti writings. From these graffiti texts collected the researcher sorted out and randomly selected 20% of graffiti texts collected in each school for analysis. Care was taken to ensure that taggings, scribbles, symbols and drawings were written down or photographed in their original form. Writing the data was to help in preserving it for later coding and analysis.

The data elicited from graffiti text assisted the researcher to establish the types of graffiti and messages students communicated through writing of graffiti. This data also assisted the researcher to identify the graffiti communicative strategies or codes used by students and gender differences in graffiti writing. A camera was used to record graffiti which the researcher found a bit challenging to sketch due to the nature of their location. So in total two hundred graffiti texts were analyzed for the purpose of this study. The texts sampled were treated as being representative of graffiti texts in the whole Laikipia County..

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

In this section, the tools used for the collection of data are analyzed and the data elicited by each instrument discussed.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires for Students**

A questionnaire is a tool that gathers data over a large sample. It enables the researcher to preserve respondents' anonymity and also make it possible to elicit their responses. It also saves time and allows greater uniformity in the way questions

are asked and thus greater compatibility in the responses (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The researcher with the assistance of teachers briefed the one hundred sampled students to ease tension before administering questionnaires.

The questionnaires administered to students attempted to gather data on the type of graffiti they wrote in order to communicate and their views on how the administration responded to graffiti writing. Data elicited from these students questionnaires helped to estimate the extent of graffiti writing in these schools and motives for writing the graffiti texts. The data elicited by this research instrument also helped the researcher to get insights on the nature of problems and needs the students were facing in schools

### **3.5.2 School Administrators' Interview Guides.**

Reliability of the information gathered is high when a researcher uses interview guides to collect data since they provide in-depth information about particular cases of interest to the researcher and data collected is quantifiable (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Interview guides were mainly used to counter-check the information collected through questionnaires and FGDs. Head teachers were interviewed by the researcher individually to assess the opinion of the school administration on the role of graffiti writing in schools. Data elicited from these interviews helped the researcher to assess the role played by graffiti as a form of communication and whether the administrators viewed graffiti by students as a positive or negative undertaking.

### **3.5.3 Interview Schedule for Teachers**

Two language teachers in each school were purposively sampled so as to participate in an interview with the researcher. The questions posed to English language teachers during the interview were meant to establish whether graffiti writing in schools had any influence English language in schools. The interview with the English language teachers was also expected to elicited data on whether graffiti writing by students had an influence on classroom learning environment.

### **3.5.4 Respondents for Focus Group Discussion.**

The researcher carried out a Focus Group Discussion after randomly sampling five students across the forms and because each form had unique characteristics. All the students were interviewed collectively. The purpose of keeping the number of discussant small was to ensure that all members participated actively in the discussion. After reading through the graffiti texts collected, permission was sought from the students and the school heads to record the students assuring them that the recording was purposely for research only. The interview was more like a guided discussion among participating members with the researcher acting as the facilitator. Focus Group Discussion is best suited for obtaining data on group attitudes and perceptions (Mwiria & Wamahiu 1995). Focused Group Discussion is used to assess needs, develop interventions, test new ideas or programmes as it produces a lot of information quickly (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

The discussion was based on the graffiti texts collected in each school. This instrument was used so as to confirm the information the researcher had gotten from

graffiti texts in each school. The purpose for tape recording the FGD was to enable the researcher to replay the tape later during data analysis to confirm opinions of the students.

### **3.6 Piloting of the Study Instruments**

The researcher wrote a letter to the principal of a mixed day secondary school in a neighbouring district requesting permission to be allowed to carry out piloting in the school. This school was not used in the actual study. A mixed day secondary school was used for pilot study because in it graffiti content written by both boys and girls could be gathered with ease. After permission was granted and a day agreed upon, the researcher visited the school and developed rapport with students and teachers. The researcher then administered questionnaires to the students and teachers. An interview was also carried out with the school principal. Graffiti texts were collected in areas frequented by students. The data collected were preserved in their original form. According to Coolican (1994), there is a significant need for a researcher to carry out a pilot study before the actual field work so as to discover the flaws in research instrument and hence permit their necessary refinement.

### **3.7 Validity of the Instruments**

Validity is the accuracy, meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. It is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study (Mugenda & Mugenda 1999). Validity also means that the findings are based on research evidence that does not fluctuate (Niemann et al. 2002). The adapted instruments were modified to answer the

set objectives of the study. The instruments were validated by four experts in education research from Faculty of Education, Kenyatta University, to assess the content, construct and face validity. Their comments were incorporated into the instruments before being taken to the field. This showed that the items in the instruments were precise and comprehensive enough to provide to the anticipated type of data and also determined that the research objective was achieved.

### **3.8 Reliability of the Instruments**

According to Gay & Airasian (2003), the more reliable a text is, the more confidence we can have that scores obtained from the administration of the test are essentially the same scores that would be obtained if the test were re-administered. Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Reliability of research instruments was carried out before use.

The main statistical measure to determine reliability of one of the gathering tools, the questionnaire, was the use of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach alpha coefficient was used because the items in the research instruments were not dichotomous. The researcher with the help of an expert made an SPSS generated Cronbach alpha coefficient calculation for all sections of the questionnaires for students used to collect data in this study. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient average for the students' questionnaire was 0.87 since 0.7 and higher indicates an acceptable reliability coefficient, (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Mugenda & Mugenda 1999).

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher first got a research permit from the office of the President and Ministry of Education offices. With these documents, the researcher visited the District Education Officer's office to request for permission to be allowed to carry out research in the district. The researcher then sent introductory letters to individual schools that were to participate in the research. The researcher proceeded to develop rapport with school administrators, teachers and students of the selected schools and discussed details of the research. Convenient day were agreed upon during which data were collected. The researcher visited the schools physically and dealt with the targeted group individually. The questionnaires and interview guides were administered with the assistance of teachers to the respondents who were handled with confidentiality. During filling in of questionnaires, students were reminded that it was not a test to ease any tension and anxiety experienced during examination.

### **3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The data analysis procedure started with the coding of the questionnaires. A code sheet was prepared in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences computer package (SPSS). Then the data from questionnaires were then entered into the computer directly and analyzed using SPSS. This was done with the help of an expert. The study used a qualitative approach to analyze all the collected graffiti texts. The recorded graffiti texts were studied to identify the different types of codes used by students to communicate.

Visual examples of graffiti texts were analyzed as they appeared on the photographs, using descriptive methods. This analysis approach consisted of questions where the responses were extracted and assigned to determined categories. Translations were done for those texts that were not written in English, an explanation given and interpretation of each done in terms of meaning of message communicate. The numbers representing the various categories were then entered into the computer. The data collected were analyzed and reported in descriptive format as the study was descriptive in nature. Cross tabulation of data and frequencies were done, and then all data were presented by use of percentages, graphs and tables. On the basis of this analysis, the researcher gave the findings, suggestions and recommendations for future actions and further research.

### **3.11 Ethical and Logistical Consideration**

The researcher first sought a permit to collect data from the Ministry of Education. He later applied for permission to be allowed to collect data from the targeted schools to the District Education Officer. The researcher also sent introductory letters to the heads of the sampled schools notifying them that their schools had been selected for the study. The researcher then visited the schools to develop rapport with teachers and students and agreed on the date for collection of data.

During the research the researcher faced some challenges one being reluctance by some school principals to allow their students to be interviewed on the topic of graffiti as they claimed it was sensitive. Some heads claimed that it would lead to an increase in graffiti writing in their schools since the research would be justifying

their importance. Some administrators also claimed that they had just repainted the walls forgetting that students also made graffiti by peeling off newly painted walls. In fact painting walls clean without addressing the issues raised did not deter the students from writing graffiti instead the newly painted walls provided better avenues for them to express their thoughts even more forcefully.

Another problem that the researcher encountered during research is that most of the schools were in rural areas and students used pit latrines instead of toilets as they had no sewerage system. Some of the latrines appeared to have not be cleaned for a long time. The researcher had to withstand stench coming from these almost full latrines when collecting data.

### **3.12 Summary**

This chapter has presented the research design, location of study, target population, sampling procedures and sample size. Instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical and logistical consideration have also been discussed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter comprises seven sections. The first section gives the frequency distribution of the graffiti data collected in different locations in schools. The second section deals with types of graffiti writings used by secondary school students to communicate. The third section analyses the communicative strategies that students use to communicate in graffiti. The fourth section analyses how the school administration responds to graffiti writing in the schools. The fifth section deals with gender differences in graffiti. The sixth section deals with the influence of graffiti on teaching and learning English language. Finally, the seventh section gives a discussion of the content of this chapter as a whole.

#### **4.1 Types of Graffiti Writings Found in Schools**

Graffiti texts appeared to be written using various language forms ranging from single words, phrases and sentences. Table 2 presents the frequency of different surfaces that graffiti texts were collected from in the targeted secondary schools. The study data occur in the form of words, phrases and sentences on various surfaces within the school environment. Desktops (desks, chairs, lockers, classroom walls) appeared to be the area that carried the highest number of graffiti texts mostly due to its proximity with the students. In total two hundred graffiti texts were sampled from different locations.

**Table 4.1 Quantitative Analysis of Graffiti Sampled in Schools**

Occurrence of graffiti	Frequency (f)		Percentage (%)
	Boys	Girls	
Graffiti sources			
Dormitory	20	15	17.5%
Toilets/Ablution	10	10	10%
Desk tops/class	20	20	20%
Laboratory	15	10	12.5%
Dining Hall	20	15	17.5%
Library	10	15	12.5%
Computer room	5	15	10%
Total	100	100	100%

#### **4.2 Graffiti Text in Schools**

The study found various graffiti texts written by students in different locations in schools. Graffiti writings with similar messages were grouped together and discussed. Graffiti writings that were found to influence writing of composition and pronunciation in classroom learning were also discussed.

#### **4.3 Types of Graffiti Writing**

The study established that students used one word graffiti, phrases, sentences and a combination of words and drawings to communicate their messages. These graffiti

texts were analyzed in terms of location where they were found and the message conveyed.

#### **4.3.1 Single Word Graffiti**

Single word graffiti that were sampled accounted for 14 out of 200 (7%) of the graffiti analyzed in the study. Students could have used single word graffiti due to their hurry to leave the place for fear of being noticed. Most students are aware that graffiti writing attracts punishment in their schools and that is why they write these graffiti in secrecy. These single word graffiti were picked in were in collected in classrooms, dormitories, laboratories, dining halls and toilets. These graffiti writings are discussed below,

**94. KANe**



This is a graffiti text that was found in a boys' dormitory.

**KANe** refers to a popular brew that is taken by majority of the youths. The pictorial representation by the heart shape (widely accepted as a symbol of love) indicates that the writer really loves the alcoholic drink. It also suggests that the boys could be per takers of this drink in their dormitories. This could be a strong indicator that students in this case the boys could be using alcohol either inside or outside the school.

#### **85. ROLNALD.**

This is a graffiti that was found on a boys' classroom wall. Though misspelt (RONALD) the graffiti refers to a football icon who plays for a European team. The writer appears to like the player and that is why he has written his name in capital letters for others to see. This graffiti also shows boys' love for football and international football players.

#### **14. Nameless**

This graffiti text was picked from a girl's locker. The text refers to a famous Kenyan musician. The writer appears to like his music and that is why she had written his name on her desktop. This also suggests that musicians and their music are popular topics among the students in school. It is also clear that most of students are adolescents who like directing their energies to such activities to let off steam.

#### **66. she –goat**

The graffiti text was found in the laboratory in a boys' boarding school. It refers to a nickname of a female teacher who teaches C.R.E and history. The teacher had just been transferred to that school to join her husband who was the deputy principal in the same school. This deputy principal was nicknamed *Mburi* kikuyu word for goat because whenever he was angry with indisciplined students he would call them goat so when the lady teacher joined her husband she was immediately nicknamed *she-goat*. This clearly shows that students nickname teachers on the basis of their mannerisms, characters, walking styles, body sizes and whom they associate with.

### **4.3.2 Phrases in Graffiti Writing**

The study also found out that students wrote graffiti in phrases to communicate their ideas and opinions. These graffiti accounted for 76 out of 200 (38%) of the two hundred analyzed graffiti. Some of these graffiti writings are discussed below.

**1. NO Rules** is a graffiti that was found on a desktop in a mixed secondary school. The writer of this graffiti seems to tell others that there should be no rules to be followed in the school and so others should disobey the authority. These are some of the issues that lead to strikes in schools.

**156. White house.**-This graffiti was found written on the wall of a dilapidated dormitory that was in a pathetic state in a boys' school. Most of window panes were broken and the walls had never been painted since the dormitory was constructed. There were numerous potholes and cracks on the floor of this dormitory. The author of this graffiti ironically referred to this dormitory as *white house* which is the magnificent house that is occupied by the sitting president of the United States of America. The graffiti was directed to the school administration as a complaint to do something to improve the welfare of the students in the dormitory. This is a proof that some graffiti have hidden messages that need one to have a critical view at them to decode their meaning.

**154 NGETTO IN HELL**

**158 WELCOME TO KAMITI**

This graffiti was found on the door of a boys' dormitory. Unlike graffiti **No 156** *White house*, that uses irony as a style for communication, this one openly declared

that the dormitory was synonymous to Kamiti Prison in terms of conditions. The author tried to liken the poor conditions of the dormitory to those of a jail known as Kamiti. The graffiti was again directed to the administration as a complaint to do something about the poor living conditions in the dormitory.

### **4.3.3 Sentences in Graffiti Writing**

Students also used graffiti written in full sentences to communicate their thoughts and feelings. They usually used sentences when they wanted their messages to be as clear as possible to the graffiti readers. These graffiti accounted for 94 out 200 (47 %) of graffiti writings analyzed for this study. Some of the graffiti are discussed below.

#### **162. Good results and good diet are twin sisters.**

This graffiti was found scribbled on the wall of a dining hall in a mixed secondary school. The writer appeared to challenge the administration of the school to provide them with a good diet if they want them to perform well in examinations. It seemed to suggest that good diet and good results go hand in hand.

#### **159. Matron is a girl friend 2 Depa!!!? (Matron is deputy's girlfriend)**

The graffiti was collected from the wall of a laboratory in a boy's secondary school. The writer uses a full sentence to declare to the readers that the deputy principal and the school matron are lovers. Whether the statement was true or not, the fact is that students discussed the social lives of their teachers amongst themselves.

### **200. Tutor and Carol this is not your bedroom!!!!?**

This graffito that was found scribbled on a door of a cubicle in a computer room in a mixed secondary school. The tutor in this case the computer teacher appeared to have had an intimate relationship with a form four student named Carol in this particular room. This intimate and illicit relationship between the tutor and the student appeared to be captured by the word “*bedroom*”.

This graffito simply showed that intimate relationships between teachers and students still existed in some schools. This kind of relationship between the teacher and the student has serious consequences on the performance of the concerned students. In situations where male teachers engaged in sexual and love relationships with female learners they set a very bad example as such moves are tantamount to abuse of office and they are gross acts of corruption and immorality (Leach 2002; Human Rights Watch 2001).

### **197. I Love sex due to it’s products.**

This graffito was written in form of a sentence. The author outrightly declared his love for sex due to its products. Though there is an error in the use of *it’s* instead of possessive form *its* the message is passed across. Love and sex are common topics for discussion amongst students who are adolescents and experiencing changes in their bodies. Though this graffiti glorifies sex for its products, students should be guided and counselled to understand that sex goes with responsibility. If one acts irresponsibly by engaging in pre-marital sex, it could lead one to contracting the dangerous HIV/Aids or affecting his/her study.

### **18. Good things come to those who strain.**

The above graffito was also written in form of a sentence and was found on a desktop in a girls' secondary schools. The author of this graffito used a sentence to declare to others that those who worked hard in their studies are the ones who reap the fruits of success. The writer appeared to encourage other students not to lose hope but work hard as there were good things awaiting those who persevered along the academic journey.

### **135. chopa chopa AKI HOMO (Chopa chopa believe me he is a homosexual)**

#### **74. Fuck him hard**

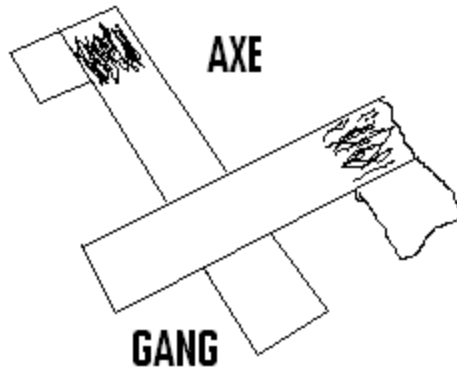
This is graffito that was collected from the dormitory of a boys' school. The authors wrote these on the wall of a cubicle encouraging one to fuck the other hard. The use of pronoun *hjm* in graffito **74. Fuck him hard** is an indicator of homosexuality. Though the writers of these graffiti are unknown, it cannot be disputed that they tried to express what was in their mind through the secrecy offered by the anonymity of the graffiti writing. The above graffiti suggest that cases of homosexuality do exist in this school, though the exact degree may not be known.

#### **4.3.4 Graffiti in Form of Words and Drawings.**

The study also found out that students wrote graffiti texts in form of scribbled words accompanied by a sketch or a drawing. This type of graffiti accounted for 16 out of 200 (8%) of the two hundred graffiti sampled. This shows that students use their artistic skill to pass their messages across in graffiti. Interestingly, about 180 out of 200 (90%) of the two hundred sampled graffiti with words and drawings were

written by boys. This shows that girls rarely used their artistic skills to communicate in graffiti.

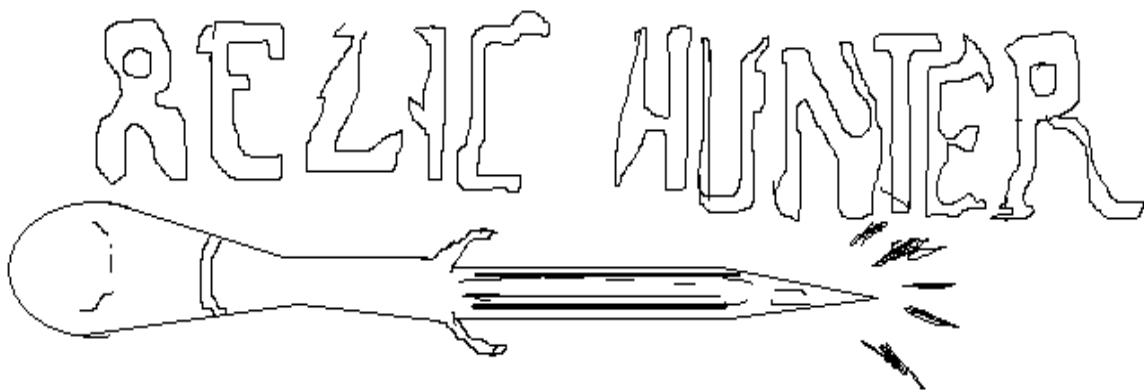
129



This graffiti with drawing indicating crossed axes represents a group whose members called themselves AXE GANG. The graffiti was collected from a desktop in a boys' secondary school. Most of the members of this notorious students' 'gang' was popular with harassment of form ones and sneaked contraband materials into the school. The group used this tag for identification purposes. According to Hoffman (1996),

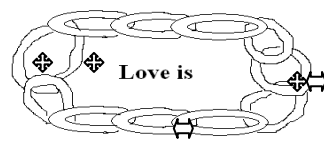
“the assignment of status to young males based on toughness and fighting skills was an enduring theme of gang life. Gangs present an opportunity for involvement in peer groups during adolescent development. Gangs are social groups that value a display of masculinity, risk taking, and autonomy. Violence is part of the collective identity of the gang and its members.”

152



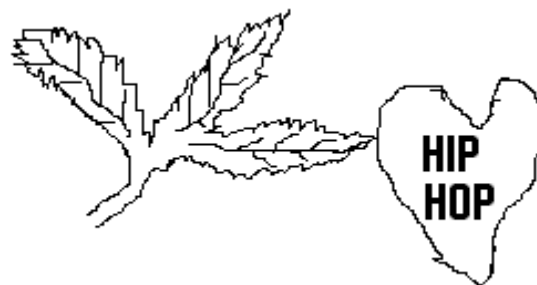
The graffito **NO 152** was picked from the wall of a dormitory in a boys' school. The author uses his artistic skills to write the title of a movie which involves fighting with swords. This shows the author likes this movie and that is why he has dedicated his time to cut these letters.

185.



The graffito **NO. 185** was found on the desktop in a mixed day secondary school. The author seemed to suggest that love was a chain that it had no end. The chain indicates that love is unexplainable or indefinable and the spikes refer to the pain that occurs in ones heart once love is lost. This message is reinforced by the message contained in the graffito **180 love is blind**.

186



This graffito **NO. 186** was collected from the walls of a boys' classroom. It indicates a drawing representing a plant cannabis sativa (bhanga), a scribbled writing hip hop inside a pictorial representation by the heart shape (widely accepted as a symbol of love). The writer of this graffiti declares his love for hip hop type of music and bhanga. Most of the youths are known to be lovers of hip hop music and some are

known to abuse drugs. The picture of bhang shows that some students abuse it. These graffiti carried related message concerning drug abuse amongst students in schools;

**50. PLIZ NO SMOKING IN DIS CUBE**

**95. GANJA Planter**

**88. NGANJA FARMER**

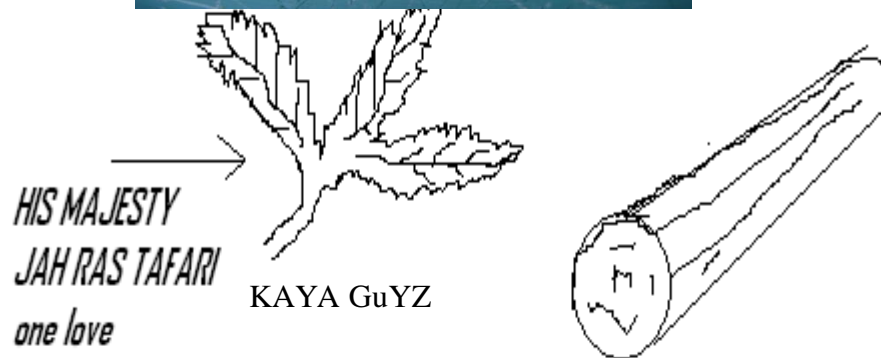
**102. KAYA BASE**

**125. fagilia pub**

137.



124.



These clearly show that students use these drugs and most likely this affect their performances in schools. It could be one of the leading causes of strikes in our schools. The writing KAYA GuYZ with a mixture of capital and small letters is meant to attract the attention of the readers. So the students indication that they really engage in drugs taking like cigarettes, bhang and alcohol is clearly displayed in this graffiti.



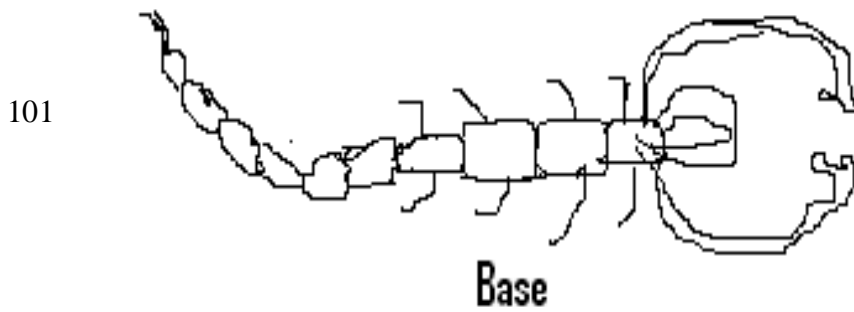
### 198. TUME CHILL

This graffito was found in the class in a mixed secondary school. The author declares that he/she has abstained from sex and most likely encourages others to follow suit. This graffito reinforces the idea that discussion about sex is a common thing amongst students.

89.



This graffito was written on a table in the laboratory in a girls' school. Wasp is the nickname given to a slim brown lady teacher who is a strict disciplinarian. According to the students they metaphorically refer to her as a wasp which is a slim insect that stings because she is slender and her punishments are a force to reckon with. The severity of the punishments given to the students by this teacher was likened to the painful stings of a wasp.



This graffito **NO.101** was found on the wall of a class in a boys' school. It is a marking for a territory for a group that called themselves scorpion.

The study noted that students used graffiti to express themselves especially their thought, feelings and needs. In most schools students applied various languages ranging from Vernacular, Kiswahili, English and Sheng in order to communicate their thoughts. Graffiti writing was found to be of vital importance because students raised issues that they would not openly discuss. Some of these issues were too personal to be put in the public domain but this was made possible through the anonymity and secrecy provided by graffiti. The table4.1 below shows opinions on whether graffiti writers in school are known. The table below shows that **67 out of 100 (67%)** of the student respondents disagreed that graffiti writers in schools were known and only **7 out of 100 (7%)** of the respondents agreed that graffiti writers were known.

**Table 4.2 Opinion on whether graffiti writers are known**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	32	32.0
Disagree	35	35.0
Undecided	19	19.0
Agree	7	7.0
Strongly agree	6	6.0
Missing	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

From **Table 4.2**, it can also be observed that 19 out of 100 (19%) of the students respondents were indecisive on whether graffiti writers were known. The reason for this could be that some people may not be aware of the seriousness of graffiti writing as an important channel of communication.

Graffiti writings in most of the schools that the researcher visited gave an impression of what type of the school it was in terms of problems and needs the students were experiencing. Where the student had good relationships with the administrators and teachers, graffiti suggesting that were visible and where students had problems graffiti indicative of that could be clearly seen.

Graffiti writings were found in various locations in schools. About 35 out of 200 (17.5%) of graffiti sampled were found in dormitories. Most of the dormitories were open like a hall while others were partitioned into cubicles. Graffiti that were sensitive appeared in dormitories that were not partitioned because it would be difficult to locate the authors in case the teachers wanted to punish the writers. Since graffiti writing was discouraged in school, the students who lived in each cubicle could be easily located in case sensitive graffiti was written where they lived.

Desktop and classroom graffiti were classified together and accounted for 40 out of 200 (20%) of graffiti collected. Most of the graffiti found in this location ranged from mathematical calculations, names of celebrities, nicknames, signatures and drawings. This location accounted for the highest number of graffiti writing because of its proximity with the students who are the writers of graffiti. Graffiti written in the

toilets, ablution and latrines were 20 out of 200 (**10%**) of graffiti sampled. Some of them were writings on sexual organs, obscenities and performance while others were positive as they cautioned other student to use the toilets properly.

The graffiti found in laboratories were 25 out of 200 (**12.5%**) graffiti sampled. This was the place that each class visited at least twice a week for science practical lessons. Of these about 70% were on sex and relationships while the rest were general comments on learning subjects, nicknames, teachers, general statements and slogans. The graffiti below were collected from a toilet in a boys' secondary school.

**23. B careful**

**stop using the toilet like a cow**

**72. Kumya kwa uajibikaji ( Use the toilet well)**

**35. Use your geometry**

Graffiti that were collected from dining halls were 35 out of 200 (**17.5%**) of the sampled graffiti. It was noted that there were some similarities between graffiti found in the classrooms and those found in the dining hall suggesting that some dining halls were also used as study rooms .However, about **55%** of these graffiti related to food. They mostly touched on both the quality and quantity of the food offered.

**40. Manze maliza tuendee paper 2 (Friend finish we go for second helping)**

**162. Good results and good diet are twin sisters**

**183. Dip imezidi (food served is not enough for sometime)**

The first graffito **No. 40 Manze maliza tuendee paper 3** suggested that the food offered in this school was more than enough and that students could go for more if they wished. The second **No. 162. Good results and good diet are twins.** Was also collected in a dining hall of in a girls' secondary school seemed to advise the

administration to give them a good diet so that they could perform well in their examinations. The third graffito **No. 183.Dip imezidi** was a complaint from one of the students that the food served was very little in the plate and that it had continued for some time.

Most schools did not have libraries but they had what could be referred to as book stores cum study rooms. Graffiti collected from this area were 25 out of 200 (**12.5%**) of all sampled graffiti. Students scribble personal comments or statements on the reading lockers and the adjacent walls may be due to boredom after serious study. A good number of students even sought solutions for personal problems through the use of graffiti. One student would state a problem and others would come write a string of solutions either positive or negative. This was to a large extent used by girls and this kind of graffiti assumed some sort of conversation or dialogue. On one of the reading lockers a graffiti writer had written the graffito below.

**149. During preps I read and erect like hell**

**Please advice!**

**Fuck your BUKZ**

Graffiti writing sampled from computer rooms were 20 out of 200 (10%) of all graffiti collected for the purpose of this study. It was also noted that only 40% of the schools chosen for the study had computer rooms. Graffiti found in this location had striking semblance with those found in classrooms.

Finally, it was noted that graffiti was in abundance in most secondary schools and communicated different social messages. Some of the graffiti writing were simple

while others were complex and needed to be decoded for the messages to be understood.

#### **4.4 Graffiti Communicative Strategies used by Students**

This section deals with the communicative strategies used by the graffiti authors in secondary schools to pass their messages across.

##### **4.4.1 Humour**

This communicative strategy was used by students in graffiti writing to elicit laughter. Some students just wanted to make fun and make others laugh.

##### **70: WARNING**

**Lack of sex leads to**

**Blurred vision.**

The above graffiti was collected from the laboratory of a boys' secondary school. Though it is a misconception, the writer is aware that what he stated was not true but wanted to make fun that if one failed to engage in sex he would have blurred vision.

##### **22. Wewe ni mnono mpaka ukijump kwa conclusion unavunjika.**

**(You are so stout that if you jump to a conclusion you injure yourself )**

##### **71. Don't allow missionaries; they may be having a mission.**

##### **9. 3K club. Kula kucheza Kulala**

##### **16. We mend broken love.**

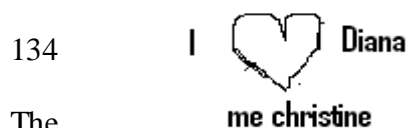
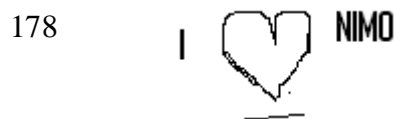
**Pliz try us**

**NEVER**

The writer of this graffiti **No. 16** that was collected from a mixed secondary school claimed that he/she was able to reconcile two lovers whose love has gone sour. The writer wanted to be humorous that he/she did the work of repairing broken relationships yet it may be something the writer may not have been able to do. It brings out the issue of students intimate relationships especially in mixed schools. The word “NEVER” written by a different writer in capital letters appears to emphasize what the first writer had claimed to able to do was impossible.

#### 4.4.2 Symbolism

Symbolism is also a communicative strategy that graffiti writer use to communicate their message. Symbols are used to express deep concepts and ideas by graffiti writers.



The sketch or drawing of a heart is generally used to symbolize love.<sup>134</sup> the first writer uses the drawing to declare his love for Nimo which is the short form for a kikuyu girl’s name (Wairimu).The second writer understands what the symbol means and below it scribbles “me Christine “meaning he loves Christine.

#### **4.4.3 Irony**

Graffiti writer in schools also use irony to communicate their messages **136. five STAR HOTEL**. This graffito was found on the wall of a dining hall in a girls' school. The writer ironically tried to contrast the food that was being served in the school dining to those that were served in a five star hotel.

#### **156. White house**

This graffito was written on the wall of a dormitory that was somehow neglected for along time without paint and the floor was bad shape. The writer tried to contrast this dormitory with the white house that housed the sitting president of the United States of America. In this case the writer appeared to complain to the school administration to improve the condition of this dormitory.

#### **4.4.4 Imagery**

Graffiti writers also used imagery to pass their messages by comparing what they communicate with known images. Mostly students appeared to use metaphors to communicate their thoughts

#### **154. NGHETTO IN HELL**

#### **6. TANAD slaughter house**

#### **40. Manze maliza tuende paper 2(finish we go for the second helping)**

#### **179. WELCOME TO HELL 2W**

#### **69. MONO ni ngui ( A mono is a dog)**

In the above graffito **179. WELCOME TO HELL 2W** found on a wall in a class in a mixed secondary school likened class **2W** to hell due to noise making that

originated from that class. The last one **69. MONO ni ngui (mono is a dog)** was an insult towards form ones, the writer likened the form ones to a dog which eats dirt and could be bitten at will. This out rightly showed that students in upper classes hated form ones and this hatred sometimes led to their molestation.

#### **4.4.5 Taboo words**

Students used taboo words to communicate in graffiti. Taboo words are words that have restrictions in their usage and as such they are not supposed to be used in public. These are words that refer to sexual organs or actions. They could simply pass as obscenities.

**80. Useless asses**

**86. Arsenal ni MATAKO (Arsenal are asses)**

**149. During night preps I read and erect like hell.**

**Please advice!**

**Fuck your bukz**

This graffiti No. 149 was found in a toilet in a boys' school. It was written by two writers one seeking advice concerning a problem he was having during night preps. The second writer advises the other to fuck his books. The word *fuck* which refers to a sexual act which is a taboo word. The graffiti takes the form of conversation or dialogue

**84. she goat- senye ya she – goat ni tamu (she goat sexual organ is sweet)**

**145. Matejo NI kihii (matejo is uncircumcised lad)**

Matejo is the nickname given to the deputy principal of a boys' school because of his long hair. The writer claims that he is uncircumcised. This word *kihii* is a kikuyu

derogatory word for an uncircumcised lad and is a taboo word especially when it is directed to an adult. In most cases deputy principals are fully responsible for disciplining students and this could be the reason why the student had probably been punished by him had decided to hit back by insulting him.

#### **4.4.6 Short forms, Acronyms and Abbreviations**

Students also use short forms, acronyms and abbreviations as a communicative strategy in graffiti writing. These short forms, acronyms and abbreviations are used in graffiti writing because the graffiti writers are in a hurry to communicate for fear of being noted.

**8` Enjoy luv Hear! love base -use *luv* instead of love**

**38 Aspire 2B morrows` Ocampo—use 2B instead of *to be***

**150 Am proud of my virginity**

**Who asked U?**

**What a mile!**

**148. I HATE ALL FORM 3**

**Why?**

**Coz of their things – used coz instead of because.**

**37. VOTE POISON 4 DH—used 4 DH instead of Dining Hall.**

*Clipping* of words is also a form of short form used by students in writing of graffiti.

This term refers to words that are shortened with no loss in their original semantic value. However, clippings give a colloquial or familiar flavour to one's speech, something that appeared common with graffiti written by students.

**146. SUE is a hoe that can never say no.** This graffito was found in a toilet in a mixed secondary school. There is some form of clipping as the writer had intended to write the word *whore* which pronounced almost the same as the *hoe*. (*Ho*) *hoe* has lost the initial *w* and the vowel /*o*/ is realized as [ow].

**174. CHEM my subject**

The above graffito was found on a desk top in class in a boys' secondary school. The graffiti writer declares his love for chemistry which could be his favourite subject. The word **chem** is a clipping of the word **chemistry** because **-istry** which is the second part of the word is left out. This form of writing was common with graffiti writing by students.

*Acronyms.* These formations are made up of the initial letter or letters of successive terms. Acronyms abound in English since speakers of that language are fond of their use. The graffito below **160.acronym FBI** was found in the library in a girls' secondary school and it appears to encourage students to be focused in their studies so that they can achieve more than they can imagine.

**160. Focus**

**Beyond**

**Imagination.**

**193. HAKUNA KULALA (NO SLEEPING)**

**P- pray**

**U- until**

**S- something**

**H- happens**

### **103. Don't**

**Eat**

**And**

**Rest**

Graffito **103** was found in class in a boys' school written as an acronym **DEAR** and appeared to encourage students to eat and work hard in their studies.

*Abbreviation.* Students also wrote graffiti in form of abbreviations. These abbreviations appeared in the form of symbols, letters, and pictures which represented whole words. Pictures and numerals as representations for words were also observable in graffiti writing by students.

### **178. I ♥ NIMO**

The shape of the heart in the graffito found above symbolizes love. The graffito was found in a class in a mixed secondary school. It was a declaration of love one had for Nimo.

**191. Appreciate what u have & what u are made of. BY D.T** was collected from a wall of a library in a mixed boarding secondary school. The symbol **&** has been used instead of '**and**' and it is one of the peculiarities of graffiti writing used by students.

These *short forms ,acronyms and abbreviations* are indication of the limited time the writers have to communicate and secrecy involved in graffiti writing for fear of being punished. The students applied the above communication strategies to communicate their thoughts.

## **4.5 Messages Recurring in Graffiti in Schools**

Through the use of the English language, Kiswahili, vernacular and Sheng (a mixture of two or more of the listed languages) the students communicate various messages that appeared recurring in most school. They were messages on *sex and love, spiritual statements, relationships, drugs, attack to the administration and teachers, nickname and students' complaints (students welfare issues) and general comments.*

#### **4.5.1 Graffiti with Messages on Sex, Love, Relationships and Admiration**

Graffiti with love messages were also evident in schools. Topics to do with love and relationships are popular topics amongst students who are adolescents and try to discover their self identity. The students do not feel free to discuss these topics with their parents or teachers and that is why they take the advantage of the secrecy of expression offered by graffiti writing. Through the use of graffiti they are able to express their feelings and even seek advice from their friends.

**46. if a man is interested in U he will stick around**

**U drop it not.**

**47. Am a lonely chick please God give me a dude (Am lonely chick please God give a lover)**

**48. I know u r the queen of my heart.**

**122. I HAVE A RITE TO WALK NAKED**

**192. I love sex Due to it's products.**

**200. Tutor and Carol this is not your bedroom!!**

**180. love is blind.**

**178.**



**126. I live distress life there bcoz of you.**

**79. Kibe we love u.**

This graffito **79. Kibe we love u** was collected from a classroom in a girls' secondary school. It is an open declaration of a student love for their biology teacher for teaching them well and making them succeed in exams. The use of a plural personal pronoun *we* instead of a singular personal pronoun *I* is an indication that teacher **Kibe** is loved by many students.

**134. I  Diana**

**Me christine.**

**87. Sex ussually succeed at night.**

**75. Gavin Turkana ako na MANZI msamburu.**

**amejaribu ( Gavin Turkana has a Samburu girlfriend and he has tried)**

**58. NEVER take lyfe seriously after all nobody cares.**

**I mean fuck hard die smart.**

**49. Condom, sex, always.**

**114. she-goat allow me to F\*\*# you so that we can both fit in the society.**

The graffito **NO.114. She-goat allow me to F\*\*# you so that we can both fit in the society** was collected from the laboratory in a boys' secondary school. She-goat is a nickname given to a female teacher. The writer fantasizes having a love affair with the female teacher. Of all graffiti that were collected with messages related to love and sex, 92% were collected from school laboratory.

The most interesting observation is that some students especially in boys' school wrote graffiti about their *admiration* of female teachers. These could be due to the fact that there are no other female in the vicinity.

**117. Nguvia ana watoto watatu,**

**Pliz avoid her. (Nguvia has three children, please avoid her)**

*Nguvia* is the name of a newly employed young female teacher in a boys' school. Some boys in class started *'booking'* her as their *'girlfriend'* as was the habit in this school and it is from the argument that ensued in class that one of them wrote the graffiti warning others to avoid her.

Discussions about a newly posted teacher in a school are common thing with some students trying to dig out the previous history and personal lives of the teachers.

**4.5.2 Graffiti with Spiritual Messages**

Some graffiti found in schools contained messages that were religious or spiritual in nature.

**68. Do not pay attention in everything people say Eccl 7: 21**

**45. UA knowledge without God is superstitions.**

**63. WORK AND YOU WILL**

**EARN A LIVING**

**IF YOU SIT AROUND TALKING YOU WILL BE A POOR**

**Prov 14.Chapter 23**

**193. HAKUNA KULALA (NO SLEEPING)**

**P-pray**

**U-until**

**S-something**

**H-Happen**

**83. The Messiah is coming.**

**155. Trust in Jehovah & you will be a winner.**

**116.Way to heaven .**

**184. JAH BLESS MAN.**

This shows that religious issues are some of the things that occupy the minds of students and they opt to express them in graffiti.

#### **4.5.3 Graffiti with Messages on Role Models and Celebrities**

Graffiti referring to the role models and celebrities were also found in abundant in schools. These celebrities help open up students mind to their future careers.

**14. Nameless (Musician)    182.BUMING LOVE 100 %**

**85. ROLNALD.**

**164.Realmadrid—christian Ronaldo**

**168.chelsea Bloody.**

#### **INDIANA JONES**

**170 CHUCK**

**NORRIS**

**7. ARSENAL**

**The GUNNERS.**

**171. BOB Marly    BRUCE LEE    SAMO HUNG    JOHN CENA**

**172. Mighty Hiele**

**KING KONG silasie**

**177. MAN-U KEEPS DAH FIRE BLAZING!!!!.**

**38. Aspire 2B morrow`s Ocampo.**

**29. You have inspired me PLO Lumumba.**

These are some of role models that some students admire as people or teams that inspire them due to their determination or achievement in life. The role models range from musicians (*Nameless*) and football icons (*Ronaldo*) film actors *chuck norris*, *Bruce lee* to known motivation speaker and the former director of kacc *DR P.L.O Lumumba*. Students from this graffiti appear to admire these people for their indisputable success in their fields.

#### **4.5.4 Graffiti with Messages on Food**

Food is also an issue that keeps on recurring in most schools. Most students at their age are adolescents who are growing up and as such their bodies demand for much food is indisputable. Most students in schools sometimes complain that food is badly cooked or is not enough .This sometimes leads to strikes in some cases. These are some of the issues that should be addressed when raised by students.

**52. Kula kupasuka sende (Eat until you burst your bottoms)**

**34. SISINO kwa ngima ni shafu (Something dirty/strange in the ugali)**

**33. Manze jo zembe kama ya kamiti (Friend ugali like that served at kamiti prison)**

**40. Manze maliza twende paper 2 (Friend finish we go for the second helping)**

**44. Wakitunyima nyama lazima tupate maPROTEIN “s-e-ms” (If they deny us meat we shall get proteins ‘s-e-ms’)**

**99. MOTTO JENGA MWILI (Be healthy)**

**183. Dip imezindi- (The food served is not enough)**

#### **4.5.5 Graffiti on Messages on Drugs**

Issues concerning drugs also appear recurrent in graffiti. Students were found to communicate messages that suggest drug taking in the schools. Drug taking in schools is the major cause of problems that schools face. Students decline in academic performance and there is increase in truancy and strikes once students engage in drug taking.

**125. Fagilia pub**

**92. GANJA PLANTER**



**HIP  
HOP**

**78. smoking BASE**

**97. SMOKING RUINS YOUR BODY**

**50. PLIZ NO SMOKING IN DIS CUBE**

**102. KAYA BASE**

**59. GANJA SMOKER day & night**

**94.**



**KANe**

### **137. GANJA FOR SURVIVAL**

From the above graffiti it is clear that cigarettes, alcohol and bhang are commonly abused drugs in secondary schools. Sandhu & Aspy (2000) reported that

“to soothe the pain of loneliness, neglect and emptiness, abused and neglected adolescents were subject to violence, and they abused drugs and alcohol to a much greater degree than other adolescents. Several studies have reported findings that confirm a positive correlation between substance abuse and negative effect. This negative affect includes feelings such as anger, anxiety, and alienation.”

### **4.5.6 Graffiti with Messages on Music and Television Programmes**

Issues to do with music and television programmes also appeared to reoccur in graffiti in schools. This is clear that students have interest in entertainment especially through popular television programmes.

**24. Yori Yori is the name of luv.**

**181. in the name of**



**65. DJ AFRO KWA MASKANI**

**MORE FIRE 4EVER**

**60. REMEMBER ME: Lucky Dube**

**15. Tahidi High**

The above graffiti show that issues to do with entertainment are of importance to the students and should not be down played because they help the students to relax and ease boredom.

#### **4.5.7 Graffiti with Message on Emerging Issues**

Students also write graffiti texts with messages on current affairs and it is an indication that they are aware of what happens around them and also in the diaspora.

##### **107. WORLD SAFER without osama Bin Laden**

This graffiti was collected from a wall in the dining hall in a boys' dormitory. The writer could have been prompted to write this graffiti after the death of Osama Bin Laden who was a terrorist and responsible for many bombings and killings of innocent people in many parts of the world.

##### **105. HAGUE**

This is a graffiti that was found in a class in a boys' school. It refers to the town that houses The International Criminal Court in The Netherland. Some Kenyan politicians have been summoned to appear before it to answer charges against them on post election violence that occurred in 1997.

#### **4.5.8 Graffiti with Messages on Political Issues**

Students also write graffiti with political messages. Just like in every society politics cannot be detached from students' lives in schools. In some schools where they elect their prefect and house representatives democratically, students are given campaign period by the school administration to sell their policies or ideas to others.

##### **103. VOTE POISON 4DH**

### **3 State house 2012**

#### **62. Asante kwa kura yako**

The graffito **37. VOTE POISON 4DH** was collected from the wall of a dining hall in a mixed secondary school. The writer appears to appeal to other students to vote for Poison who has given his candidature for the post of a dining hall prefect.

#### **4.5.9 Graffiti with Messages relating to Students' Dissatisfaction with the Authority.**

When the students feel dissatisfied with the decisions made by of the school authority especially those that affect their welfare, they resort to graffiti writing to express themselves for fear of being victimized if they spoke openly. Some school authorities sometimes use some students as informers to act as undercover police and inform the authority on what the students say and do. This creates mistrust between the students and the administration. So students resort to graffiti as the only option where they can air their grievances without being noted. Abel & Buckley(1992) in Gadsby (1995). According to a research conducted in the U.S.A., some universities now recognize the importance of graffiti in informing them of important social issues and problems faced by students at these institutions.

The graffiti below showed that students openly express their discontent with the authority through the use of graffiti.

#### **36. Ngobit (mahugu)**

**we don't have a lab technician**

**What a shame!**

The writer of this graffito expresses her dissatisfaction that their school does not have a lab technician. In this graffito the writer appeals to the administration to address the problem the school is facing by employing a laboratory technician.

**43. A state divided against itself is defeated united.**

The above graffito **43. A state divided against itself is defeated united** was collected from a classroom wall in a boys' classroom. The writer appeared to persuade other students to participate in an impending strike. Through the use of this graffito the students are encouraged to remain united so that the strike can succeed.

**139 .memo-24<sup>th</sup> October sato strike**

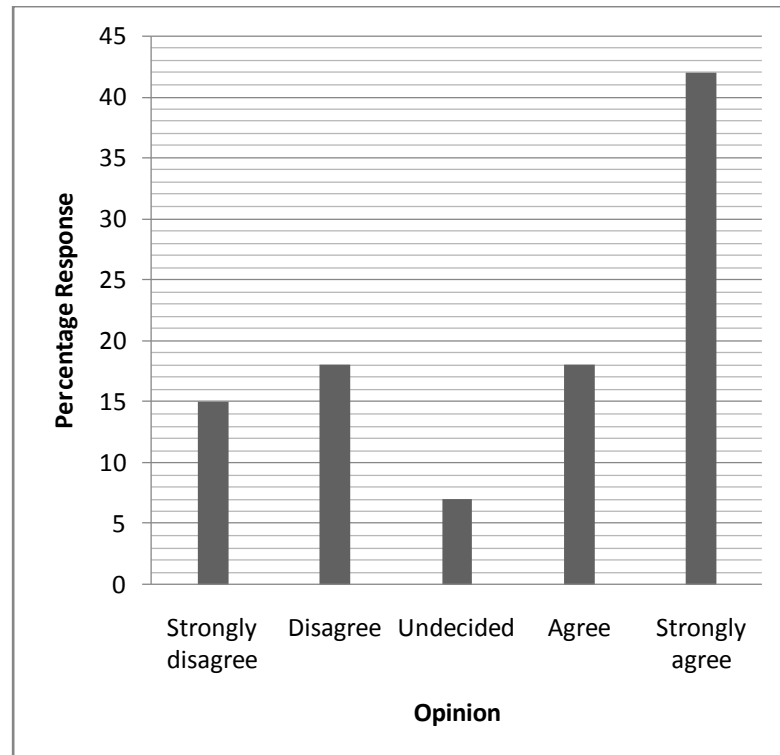
**138. HAKI AFISA HAKUNIAMBIA ALINIVUNJA VIBOKO EIGHTEEN KISHA  
AKAONGEZE MAKOFI NILIJARIBU KUWATULIZA LAKINI  
NIKAONGEZE NYAHUNYO TATU.**

“ ATI KIJANA MANG’AA UNAPIGA DOMO KUMBAVU NJINGA”

(GOMEZ)

(The officer did not tell me he gave me eighteen strokes of the cane then he added some slaps. I tried to cool him without success, instead he added three lashes saying you arrogant and stupid boy who are you talking to ?)

Student in secondary schools used graffiti writing to express various opinions on matters that affected them. These problems ranged from personal problems to issues affecting them as a group especially to do with the school administration. The figure below shows the opinion of student respondents on whether problems to do with their welfare are expressed through graffiti writing.



**Figure 4.1**  
**Graph showing opinion that problems are expressed in graffiti**

About 42 out of 100 (42%) of the students interviewed strongly agreed that they express their problems in graffiti while only 15 out 100 (15%) strongly disagreed that graffiti did not assist in expressing their problems. These findings of the study agrees with Yieke (2003), in a study conducted on graffiti in Kenyan universities suggested that graffiti should never be ignored by those in authority if they wanted to know the sentiments and needs of the students.

#### **4.5.10 Graffiti with Messages on Remembrance of Persons**

Students use markings on the wall to leave marks indicating they were there. This is a common feature of messages communicated in graffiti by student. Students appeared to derive pleasure in marking areas to indicate that they also at sometime

visited the place. These students do not want to be forgotten once they have left the school.

**151. IN MEMORY OF OUR MAN KABUTHU THE AKA JOHN KABUTHU**

**152. IN LEMEMBERANCE of man kiige**

**72. Matoo was (never) HERE 2011/3/14**

**81. Kimwaki was here**

The above graffiti is a proof that student scribble their names on the walls in order to be remembered by others that they were at one time in those places they have scribbled their names.

#### **4.5.11 Graffiti with Messages that Suggest Occurrence of Bullying in Schools**

Students also used graffiti to bully others especially those in the lower forms. Cases of bullying if they go unchecked may have serious consequences especially when classes decide to confront each other. The Graffiti below were collected from classes in a mixed secondary school.

**163. MONO DOG**

**69. MONO ni Ngui (Form ones are dogs)**

**176. You mono you are HOT SEXY GIRL**

**For more information contact 0752311626**



#### **26. 2010 `MONO WAFALA ( 2010 mono foolish)**

#### **113. Gichini is HIV<sup>+</sup>**

The graffito **NO. 113 Gichini is HIV<sup>+</sup>** was found in the laboratory in a girls' secondary school. Though it could be true or not, it constitutes a psychological harassment that could affect the social life of the concerned teacher or student.

#### **4.5.12 Graffiti with Messages on Territorial Markings**

Students tend to organize themselves into groups dictated by their common interests and behavior. Some students use graffiti to mark their territory for identification by others. It will be noted that each territory is inhabited by students with similar characteristic.

#### **195. F.B.I's BASE**

#### **123. Mono BASE**

#### **130. CHELSEA basement**

#### **67. Man U Base**

**82. Ghetto massive**

**120. Kuboeka zone**

**118. Ghetto tambulance**

The above graffito **118. Ghetto tambulance** was written on a corner on the wall of a classroom in mixed secondary school. There was a group in this class that identified themselves using this tag.

#### **4.5.13 Graffiti with Messages on Slogans and General Comments**

It was also found out that students wrote graffiti to give slogans and make general comments. These comments were meant to encourage other students to work hard while others cautioned them on vices like laziness. Some graffiti in this category also touched on general behavior.

**23. Be careful**

**Stop using the toilet like a cow.**

**142. Choose knowledge rather than the finest gold**

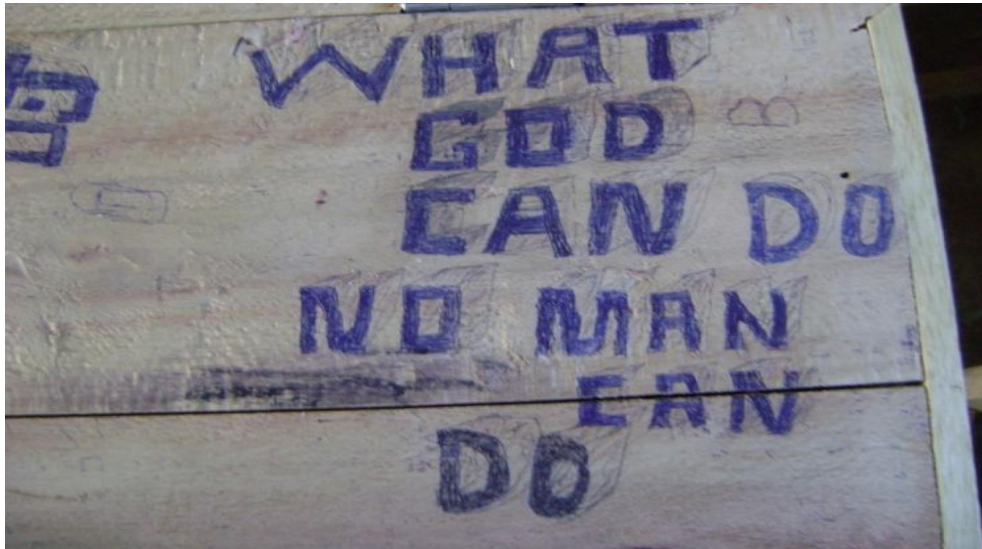
**143."DISPLINE THE GREAT WEAPON"**

**PLAY UNTILL SOMETHING HAPPENS**

**by 607**

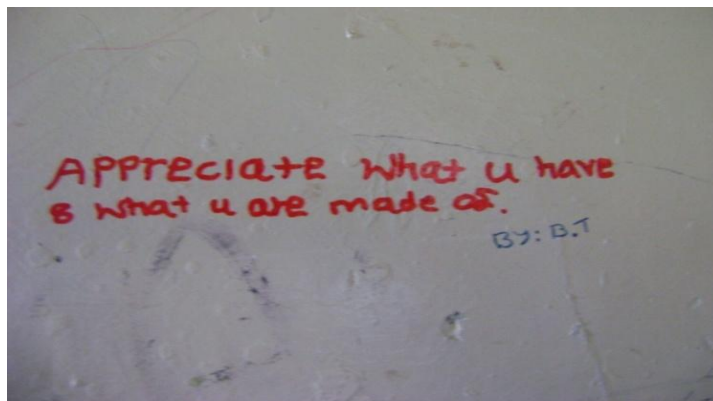
**187. REJOICE comes after suffering**

**161. swim at your own risk.**



The above graffito **NO. 37** was collected from a desktop in a girls school. The writer declares that no one could be in a position to do what God was capable of doing. This is a slogan that is commonly used to show that God is the most powerful Supernatural being that cannot be compared with any man.

191



The above graffito

191.

“**Appreciate what u have & what u are made of. BY D.T**” was collected from a wall of a library in a mixed boarding secondary school. The writer of this graffito was trying to persuade other students to be contented with what they had and to believe in themselves.

#### **4.6 How the Administration Viewed Graffiti Writing in Schools**

The researcher also gathered opinions from school heads on how they viewed graffiti writing in their schools. It was found that 6 out of 10 (**60%**) of the ten head teachers interviewed believed that graffiti was a nuisance in school and that it made the walls of the school appear dirty. Only 7 out of 10 (**70%**) of these head teachers interviewed believed that graffiti should be stopped by all means because it made the schools incur a lot of expenses in repairing the school premises.

About 4 out of 10 (**40%**) of the head teachers interviewed believed graffiti writing was a good channel for communication between the students and teachers. This is because students could express their thoughts freely and the administration could address them, however, they were of the opinion that a designated place be found for the students to write graffiti instead of defacing the walls. This was in agreement with the research that was done in American Universities that found graffiti as an important avenue for the students to address their problems. About 9 out of 10 (**90%**) of these head teacher respondents concurred that students communicated various messages with the administration using other avenues of communication. They listed the avenues below as the ones they used to get information from students.

1. Use of class meetings
2. Through teachers
3. Through prefects
4. Through writing notes
5. News briefs during assembly
6. Writing on the blackboard

7. Through use of class teachers
8. Through use of support staff
9. Through use of students informers/ spies
10. Use of students' barazas

Only 3 out of 10 (**30%**) of head teachers interviewed confirmed they used students' informers to get secretive information from the students. About 7 out 10 (**70%**) of head teachers interviewed described the relationship between the administration and prefects as close and friendly. The head teachers interviewed also gave varied reasons on why they believed students resorted to graffiti communication strategies in their schools. They gave the following as the reasons for graffiti writing.

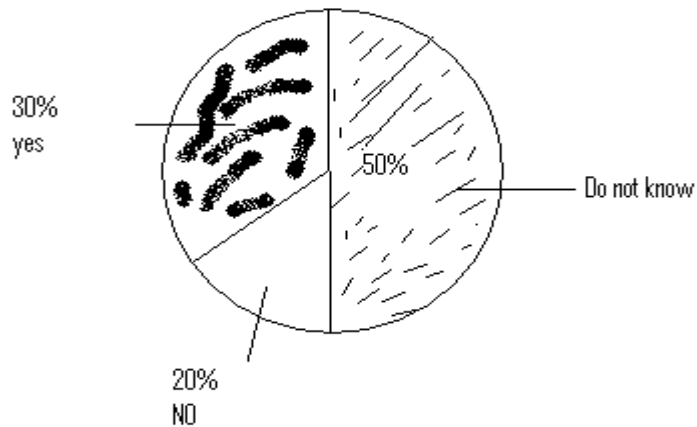
1. Students being afraid of the teaching staff.
2. Lack of satisfaction of students' needs.
3. Due to perceived high hardness of the school principals and teachers.
4. Fear
5. Isolation
6. Lack of alternative.
7. Lack of open forums to express themselves.
8. Lack of suggestion boxes.
9. Naivety.
10. For identification purposes.
11. Shyness
12. To conceal their identity while communicating sensitive information..
13. To express attitude.

From the above information it can be concluded that majority of school principals were aware that students write graffiti but did not recognize it as an important communication strategy in their schools. This made them dismiss and discourage students from writing on the walls due to cost implications in repainting the walls at the expense of the social messages communicated by the students.

#### **4.7 Gender Difference in Graffiti Writing in Schools**

About 60 out of 200 (**30%**) of sampled graffiti texts collected were picked from services written by girls while the boys accounted for 80 out of 200 (**40%**) of the graffiti sampled. The rest 60 out of 200 (**30%**) of graffiti sampled were collected in areas frequented by both genders especially in mixed secondary schools. This variation occurred due to having very few separate gender schools in the district. Around 6 out of 10 (**60%**) of the sampled secondary schools were mixed day and boarding secondary schools. Only 4 out of 10 (**40%**) were single sex schools.

Only 6 out of 20 (**30%**) of English teacher respondents agreed that girls and boys wrote graffiti on the same issues, while 4 out of 20 (20%) of the English teacher respondents disagreed on their similarities. About 10 out 20 (50%) of the English teachers respondents did not respond to the question as most likely they were not aware of their differences and similarities.



**Figure 4.2**  
**Opinion on Gender difference in graffiti writing**

Graffiti collected from various surfaces written by different gender confirms that both boys and girls write graffiti on similar issues but slightly differ on style of communicating in graffiti each gender use. Issues to do with love, sex, nicknames, hobbies, personal comments and attack on the school administration appear to recur in both gender. Below are some of graffiti collected from locations written by different gender.

**25. Am proud of my virginity**

**Who asked U?**

**What a mile!**

**28. I don't understand why I am so unfortunate**

**Becoz you like it.**

**27. Am I cursed?**

**By who?**

**Born to suffer oh.**

The above graffiti were collected from a library in a girls' secondary school. The graffiti writers appeared to seek advice on personal problems they were facing. Girls are able to express personal feelings through graffiti more than boys. The major difference between boys and girls graffiti was also captured in the use of language. Girls' graffiti appear to be more interactive and interpersonal. One would raise an issue or a question and the other girls would provide a series of responses. About 60 out of 100 ( 60%) of graffiti collected from surfaces written by girls appeared to be in dialogue form.

Most graffiti written by girls were not accompanied by symbols and drawings. About 95% of graffiti collected with symbols were picked from boys schools and only 5% were picked from girls' secondary schools. This was another difference that was noted between graffiti written by both gender.

The research also found that graffiti regarding love, sex and relationships written on both genders differed. Graffiti written by boys appeared to refer to sexual act, sexual organs and performances of sexual acts in a rather open and direct manner. For instance the graffiti below were collected from boys' schools.

**84. She goat-senye ya she goat ni tamu (she goats sexual organ is sweet)**

**127. FUCK YOU**

**58. NEVER take lyfe seriously after all nobody cares**

**I mean fuck hard die smart.**

**147. HOT sex girls mbona mnapenda kundinya?**

**Kwa sababu pako na murio sana**

**-kaboye (why do you like to fuck?**

**Because that place is sweet-kaboye)**

Graffiti relating to sex, sexual organs and sexual performances written by girls appeared to take a different style of writing. Girls preferred to express themselves in a *romantic* and *gentler* manner. Boys wrote graffiti on sexual organs, sexual performances and sexual conquests while girls' graffiti dealt with relationships. Girls' graffiti appeared to be more interpersonal while boys' were individualistic.

Girls also appeared to avoid use of open and direct words while referring to sex. Girls appeared to use euphemism to replace taboo words in their graffiti referring to sex. The graffito below was collected from a dormitory in a girls' school.

**148. I HATE All Form 3**

**Why ?**

**Coz of their things**

This is a graffito collected from a library of a mixed school. It could have been most likely written by a girl who claims to hate all form three students because of their "things" *things* is euphemism for *penis*.

**47. I Am a lonely chick please God give me a dude**

This is a graffito that was picked from a toilet in a girls' school. The graffiti writer replaced u the word "lover" with 'dude'

**44. Wakitunyima nyama lazima tutapate maPROTEIN 's-e-ms'**

(if they deny us meat we must get proteins from "s-e-ms")

This is a graffito that was collected from the dining hall in a girls' school where the writer threatens the school administration that if they refuse to give them meat they

will get proteins from 's-e-ms' referring to (*sperms*) The writer of this graffito avoids to use the direct word but instead omits some letters in the word. This was common with graffiti that were written girls.

#### **4.8 Influence of Graffiti on the Learning of English Language in Schools**

Several ways were identified in which graffiti was noted to influenced teaching and learning of English in schools. To be precise 12 out of 20 (**60%**) of the teachers interviewed indicated that learning of English in schools was influenced by graffiti writing. Though there could be other causes of poor English mastery in class like use of *Sheng* (colloquial) and SMS texting, graffiti writing was said to be one of the causes.

Most of English teacher respondents concurred that influence of graffiti writing were captured in composition writing. Most of grammatical mistakes written in graffiti in classes were reflected in composition writing.

#### **8. enjoy luv Hear! love base.**

The words *luv* should have been written as *love* and *hear* should be *here*.

This clearly shows that some students confuse the homophones hear and here.

#### **25. lyfe ni hard (life is hard continue with the struggle**

**Hold it tight because it is full of obstacles)**

**Is full of obstacles.**

This graffiti writer has a misspelt word *lyfe* instead of *life*. This is a common peculiarity in graffiti writing styles ( sociolinguistic mode of communication) where

letters are deliberately omitted, interchanged or mixed (small and capital letters) in order to attract the attention of the graffiti readers. This over use of graffiti writing styles through deliberate or erroneous omission of letters in words was reflected in writing of composition as errors according to 12 out of 20 (**60%**) of the English teacher respondents..

Students also wrote graffiti in *Sheng* (colloquial) that affect their composition writing and language mastery. About 10 out of 20 (**50%**) of respondents agreed that graffiti affected composition writing.

**55. Tusome tuwe sonko** (lets us learn we become rich).*sonko* is the *sheng* word referring being rich. Use of words written in sheng was a common feature in composition writing.

Graffiti writing has also *influence* on learning of English language in that students' weaknesses in spelling and usage of words are revealed. About 10 out of 20 (50%) of the teacher respondents were of the opinion that students level of mastery of language spelling vocabulary and sentence construction could be established through observation and analysis of graffiti written in their schools.

### **98. Danger Trudgedy**

### **139. Memo 24<sup>th</sup> octomber sato strike. (The word October is misspelt)**

The graffiti above **NO 139** was picked from a class in a mixed secondary school. Through this graffiti students' mother tongue interference could be easily noted

through misspelling of the word *October* by adding bilabial nasal /m/ before bilabial plosive /b/ sound.

**143. “DISPLINE THE GREAT WEAPON”**

**PLAY UNTIL SOME THING HAPPENS**

**by 607.**

There are errors of omission in the words-*DISPLINE AND UNTILL*.

There is also confusion in the use of homophones in English amongst students that is also captured in Graffiti writing.

**122. I HAVE A RITE TO WALK NAKED.**

The correct word should be *RIGHT* and not *RITE* though they are homophones.

Mother tongue interference was also captured in Graffiti writing which affected the learning and teaching of English in schools. This mostly happened in spoken and written English in school.

**54. IDLE mind is THE DEVILS WORKERSHOP.**

The word workshop is *misspelt* through addition of *-er* to form a compound noun workshop.

Use of **short forms** and **ampersands (&)** appeared common in graffiti and that this affected writing in English compositions. The grammar is mostly affected when students resort to use of short forms in composition writing..

**155. TRUST IN JEHOVAH & U WILL BE A WINNER.**

**191. Appreciate what U have and what u are made of BY DJ**

**U is used instead of you and & instead of and.**

**149. During preps I read and erect like hell**

**Please adduce!**

**Fuck your BUKZ**

The word BUKZ is used instead of BOOK.

Student weaknesses in *pronunciation* of English in word is also captured in graffiti.

**41. Mavocabulary**

**Chow, nyama shoma**

**cugar chame on u**

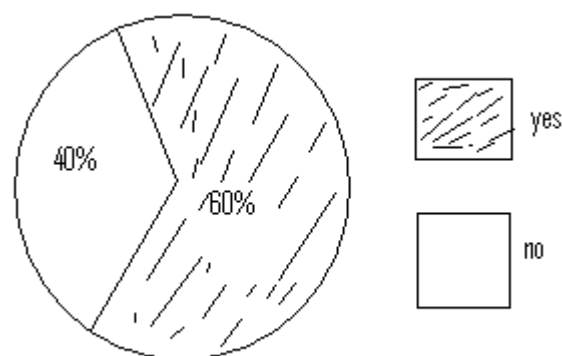
**fiching.**

The above graffito **NO. 41** was collected from the laboratory in girls' secondary school. The writer appeared to make fun of some students or even teachers with difficulties in pronunciation of /s/, /sh/ and /ch/ sound.

Some student pronounce the words, CHOW INSTEAD OF SHOW, CUGAR INSTEAD OF SUGAR, FICHING INSTEAD OF FISHING, NYAMA SHOMA INSTEAD OF NYAMA CHOMA, (ROAST MEAT), CHAME ON U INSTEAD OF SHAME ON YOU.

Once these students are mocked on the word and their weaknesses exposed they shy away from speaking English in school.

It has been found that graffiti writing in school by student has both positive negative effect on learning of English language in school.

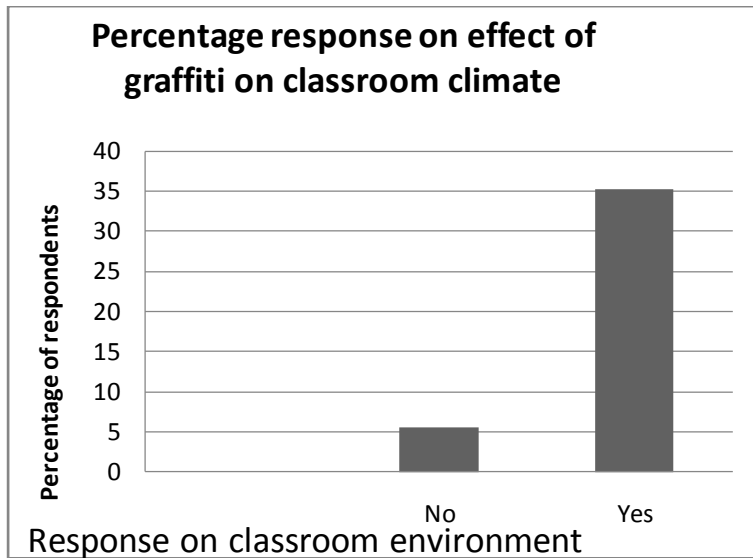


**Figure 4.3**  
**Influence of graffiti on learning of English in Schools**

From above pie chart 12 out of 20 (**60%**) of the English teacher respondents interviewed agreed that graffiti influence learning of English language while 8 out 20 (**40%**) of the respondents disagreed that graffiti writing in schools had any effect on learning of English in schools.

#### **4.9 Effects of Graffiti Writing on Classroom Learning Environment**

About 7 out of 20 (**35%**) of the English teachers interviewed confirmed that some graffiti text affected classroom learning environment. Only 1 out of 20 (**5%**) of the respondents were of the opinion that graffiti did not affect classroom learning environment at all. About 12 out of 20 (**60%**) of the English teacher respondents did not respond to the question. Of those English teacher respondents who were of opinion that graffiti writing affected classroom learning environment, about 4 out of 7 (**57%**) of them said that graffiti writing affected classroom learning environment both positively and negatively. Most English teacher respondents were of the opinion that positive graffiti on wall like those that encouraged other student to work harder reinforced learning.



**Figure 4.4**  
**Effect of graffiti on classroom climate**

The graffiti below are examples of graffiti that were said to have positive effect on classroom learning environment. These graffiti were 15 out of 200 (7.5%) graffiti sampled for the study.

**188. STRUGGLE TODAY**

**Celebrate tomorrow**

**18. Good things come to those who strain.**

**53. I love mao ( I love mathematics)**

**174. CHEM my subject**

**55. Tusome tuwe sonko ( Let us learn we become rich)**

**63. WORK AND YOU WILL**

**EARN A LIVING**

**IF YOU SIT AROUND TALKING YOU WILL BE A POOR**

**prov 14. Chapter 23**

**2. Class motto; Success is a journey not a destination.**

**30. Intelligent Girls work hard**

**90. Competition is the order of the day**

**63. WORK AND YOU WILL**

**EARN A LIVING**

**IF YOU SIT AROUND TALKING YOU WILL BE A POOR**

**prov 14. Chapter 23**

**187. REJOICE comes after suffering**

The above graffito **NO. 187 REJOICE comes after suffering** was picked from a class in a girls' secondary school and it served as a reminder to students in this particular class to concentrate in their studies so that they can rejoice once they succeed in their academics

There was general consensus among English teacher respondents that the presence of graffiti writing in the classroom written in vulgar language created an atmosphere of an indisciplined class and this affected the morale of teachers hence delivery of content. Most of the teacher respondents were of the opinion that graffiti referring to sex, drugs, hate, conflict and insults had a negative influence on classroom learning environment. The graffito below was collected from a form two class in a mixed secondary school. 2 out of 2 (**100%**) of English teachers interviewed in this school cited this graffito as one of the types of graffiti writing that irritated them and made them have very low opinion about the class thus affecting classroom learning environment.



The above graffiti were found in classes in mixed secondary schools and they contained obscene drawings and writing.

The graffiti below were also found in classes and according to 16 of 20 (80%) of English teacher respondents agreed had a negative effect on classroom learning environment. Apart from giving the classes negative publicity and impression they also reflected cases of sexual harassment and bullying in these classes.

**176. You mono you are HOT SEXY GIRL**

**For more information contact 0752311626**

**86. Asernal ni MATAKO**

**87. Sex usually succeed at night**

**69. MONO ni Ngui (Form ones are dogs)**



#### **26. 2010 MONO WAFALA**

The graffiti below were found in a class in a mixed secondary school. The first graffiti **No. 179 WELCOME TO HELL 2W** metaphorically refers to a class 2W as hell due to the noise, chaos and trouble that originate from that class. This outrightly shows that the said class could be problematic. This assertion is reinforced by graffiti no **137. GANJA FOR SURVIVAL** that suggest that cases of drug abuse could be rampant in the same class. The use of the word **SURVIVAL** is an indication that use of bhang could be continuous.

**179. WELCOME TO HELL 2W**

**137. GANJA FOR SURVIVAL**

#### **4.10 Discussion**

The discussion below is on the study findings.

##### **4.10.1 Types of Graffiti Writings used by Students in Secondary Schools.**

From the analysis of the study data, it was found that students use different graffiti texts to pass their messages ranging from single words, phrases, sentences. They also

used a combination of words and drawings. These findings are in agreement with Ponyton (1989) who argued that we can account for a considerable amount of what any instance of language means by examining the structure of the text and particular choice of words used. This assertion that suggests that the meaning of graffiti is attributed to the choice of words used, the structure and also the type of sentences in the graffiti texts

It was also found that students widely used graffiti to communicate their thoughts amongst themselves and with the school administration. Students used different languages to communicate their ideas ranging from vernacular, English, Kiswahili and sheng. Graffiti texts were in plenty in areas that were frequented by learners like the toilets, dormitories, dining halls, laboratories, classroom walls, on desks and lockers. Graffiti texts found in different locations appeared to carry different messages, for instance graffiti texts found in the laboratories appeared to carry messages on sex, love and relationships while those found in classrooms mostly referred to nicknames, celebrities and territorial markings. All these graffiti writings found in different locations played a significant role in communicating students' hostilities, fantasies, frustrations and interests.

#### **4.10.2 Communicative Strategies used by Students in Graffiti Writing**

The study also sought to establish the communicative strategies used by students in graffiti writing. The study found humour, symbolism, irony imagery, short forms, acronyms and abbreviations as strategies used by students to communicate their feelings about themselves and the outside world. It was noted that some graffiti

messages were written in these codes or in a cryptic manner and that they had to be read keenly to be understood. Students used these strategies to communicate messages on celebrities, food, drugs, television programmes, emerging issues, political philosophies, religion, sports, dissatisfaction with the authority, territorial markings sex, slogans and general comment.

Graffiti written by students is rich in information and depicts thoughts and feelings which may express group as well as individual identity. Alonso (1998) sums up this important role of graffiti. He asserts that graffiti analysis can serve as an excellent tool in understanding behavior, attitudes and social processes of certain segments of society.

#### **4.10.3 How the School Administration Responds to Graffiti Writing**

The study tried to find out how the school administration responded to graffiti writings by their students. The study found that school administration mostly relied on; teachers, prefects, class meeting, suggestion boxes, students informers, students' barazas and support staff to communicate with students. Most of the school administrators did not view graffiti writing as an important means of communication between the administration and the students. As a result of this, they did not take keen interest to the graffiti texts written in their schools. Majority of the school administrators viewed graffiti writing as a nuisance, adolescents' jokes and as a display of indiscipline behaviour.

Hougan (1972) asserted that when some events or problems trouble the community, these anxieties manifests themselves in graffiti. He also suggested that people in

authority would learn more from reading restroom walls than by taking a poll. It is for this reason that school administrators should have keen interests in the kind of graffiti written in their schools and try to address the issues raised by the students.

There were also some school administrators who viewed graffiti as a positive strategy for the students to express their needs and interests. The study got varied opinions on how the school administration viewed graffiti writing in their schools. This finding agrees Varneecdoe & Gopnik (1990) who saw graffiti as a composite phenomenon, part childish prank, part adult insult. This assertion was contrary to Abel & Buckley (1977) who took a different stance on graffiti writing by describing it as a psychological phenomenon, “a form of communication that is both personal and free of everyday social restraints that normally prevent people from giving uninhibited reign to their thoughts”.

#### **4.10.4 Gender Difference in Graffiti Writing in Schools**

The study found out that both boys and girls wrote graffiti on similar issues but differed on the style of writing. Most of graffiti texts written by boys were written in declarative form (statements) while girls’ graffiti were conversational. One girl would write a question to seek opinion of others and a series of responses would follow from different readers giving their own opinion. This was evident by the graffiti writings with different handwriting that came below the question posed by the first graffiti writer. It was also found that girls appeared to be careful in the use of offensive words in their graffiti writing while boys appeared to be direct and open as far as use of taboo words was concerned. One interesting finding of this study is that

in both genders, majority of sex related graffiti and use of vulgar words were found in the laboratories and not in the toilet.

The study also established that graffiti written by girls were rarely accompanied by drawings as was the case with graffiti written by boys. These findings concurs with the findings of Bruner & Kelso (1980) who reviewed various quantitative studies on graffiti in restrooms and concluded that there were indeed differences based on gender. In their study, they found out that male and female restroom graffiti differed in two major respects. The first is that women's graffiti are more of a dialogue. One woman would raise a question and others would provide a string of responses and serious replies. Men wrote graffiti on sexual conquests while women wrote on friendships and relationships Cole (1991). Hentschel (1987) also used the gendered approach to analyze latrinalia and came to much the same conclusions as Bruner and Kelso.

#### **4.10.5 Speculation on how Graffiti is likely to Influence the use of English Language in the Classroom**

The findings of the study were that graffiti texts influenced the learning of English language and classroom learning environment. It was established that graffiti writing affected the writing of compositions and also helped to identify students' weaknesses with regard to language use like pronunciation of words. Influence of graffiti writing that was captured in composition writing was rampant errors of omission and commission, mistakes in the use of homophones, use of ampersands, short forms, abbreviations and mistakes in the use of possessives and contractions. Poor mastery of pronunciation of words was also reflected in the nature of graffiti writings that

students wrote. The study also found that the presence of graffiti writing in the classroom written in vulgar language created an atmosphere of indiscipline in class and this was likely to affect the morale of teachers hence delivery of content.

This study attempted to speculate on how graffiti writing was likely to affect learning of English language in the classroom. Graffiti studies done earlier, found graffiti to be a useful tool in the study of comprehensions and novels. The study dealt with application of graffiti text coding in classroom learning. According to (Buehl 2004), Graffiti Text coding involves highlighting or marking a spot in a paragraph and then jotting a symbol in the margin to indicate the kind of thinking that was elicited at that point of reading. It focused on thinking such as making connections to background knowledge and experiences, posing questions, identifying confusions, making inferences, determining importance, and summing up key ideas.

(Buehl 2004) found that graffiti text coding enabled students to become accustomed to listening to their inner dialogue about a text as they read and this made the students become involved in summarizing material in their own words thus helping them to remember as well as understand. Though both researchers went different ways in looking at the application of graffiti writing in learning of English language, there is no doubt that graffiti can be an important participatory strategy for enhancing learning.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations emanating from the findings of this study.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

From the analysis of the study data, it was noted that students communicated through graffiti in the form of single words, phrases, sentences and in form of combinations of drawings and words. It was also established that graffiti were written in different languages in schools ranging from vernacular, English, Kiswahili and Sheng in order to communicate their thoughts. Graffiti communicative strategies were identified as humour, symbolism, irony, imagery, taboo words and in short forms, acronyms and abbreviations. The study also found out how different school administrators responded to graffiti writings in their schools differently. It was also established that there were different messages that were communicated. Graffiti writers in schools communicated messages on sex, love, spiritual statements, relationships, food, drugs, attack on the administration, nicknames, students' complaints and general comments. It was also established that there was significant gender difference between graffiti texts written by boys and those written by girls. The influence of graffiti on learning of English language in schools was also discovered.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were arrived at, with regard analysis of graffiti texts and their influence on learning of English language in secondary schools in The Larger Laikipia East District.

- i. Students communicate their thought and feelings using different types of graffiti.
- ii. Students used varied communicative strategies in their graffiti writings.
- iii. Graffiti is viewed differently by school administration.
- iv. There was striking gender difference in graffiti writing.
- v. Graffiti influenced learning of English language in secondary schools.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

The findings of this study suggest that the analysis of graffiti writings in secondary schools can provide valuable information about the nature of our institutions and areas of weaknesses in English language learning. The researcher makes the following recommendations basing it on the findings and conclusions of this study:

- i. Graffiti writing be recognized by school administrations as an important communicative strategy and designated places be allocated for graffiti writing by students.
- ii. Issues raised by students in graffiti to do with hatred, conflict and dissatisfaction with the school administration be addressed to avoid strikes or unrests in schools.
- iii. Students play participatory role in the management of schools and choosing of prefects in a democratic ways instead of use of spies/informers and imposed prefects in running of schools.

- iv. The English teachers should identify students' weaknesses in language use through observation and analysis of graffiti writings in their schools.

#### **5.4 Areas for Further Study**

This research has not exhausted everything that relates to the study of graffiti. The graffiti researchers can now use these findings as a stepping-stone to research more into this field. The following areas warrant further investigations.

- i. A research to establish the cause in shift in location of graffiti with vulgar language in schools from toilets to laboratories should be carried out. Most of them were found to occur in laboratories rather than in the toilets.
- ii. A comparative study should be conducted to establish whether there are similarities or differences between graffiti written in primary and secondary schools and even at the universities.
- iii. A study should be carried out to establish whether graffiti writing has any influence on learning and teaching of other aspects of English language learning apart from writing and pronunciation.

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## APPENDIX A

### SAMPLED GRAFFITI TEXT

- 1.No Rules
2. Class motto; Success is a journey not a destination.
3. State House 2012
4. Korna Mbaya
5. I  Girls. RASTAMAN  
NEVER DIES.
6. TAND D slaughter house
7. **ARSENAL**  
The Gunners.
8. Enjoy luv Hear! love base.
9. 3K Club Kula Kucheza Kulala
10. The highway of “I don’t care” takes you to a great city of “I wish I cared”.
11. We must learn how to live together as brothers or perish together as fools
12. If Depressed DEEP  
REST is the BEST
13. In the name of 
14. Nameless
15. Tahidi High
16. We mend broken love.  
Pliz try us  
NEVER
17. Don’t mess up with love
18. Good things come to those who strain.

19. U suck mother!  
@ # ? \* ?

20. I  my locker

21. If u r successful u create false friends but true enemies

22. wewe ni mnono mpaka ukijump kwa conclusion unavujika (You are so stout that when you jump at a conclusion you injure yourself)

23. B careful  
stop using the toilet like a cow.

24. YoriYori is the name of the luv.

25. Lyfe ni hard  
Hold it tight  
Is full of obstacles



26. 2010 MONO WAFALA

27. Am I cursed?  
By who?  
Born to suffer oh!

28. I don't know why I am so unfortunate  
BECUZ YOU LIKE IT

29. You have inspired me PLO Lumumba

30. Intelligent Girls work hard

31. KEEP QUIET BRAINS AT WORK

32. Unafikiria? Think twice pliz en have your own principles.

Don't follow the majority  
coz you'll end up being loose.

33. Manze jo zembe kama ya kamiti (Friend, ugali like that served at Kamiti Prison)

34. SISINO kwa ngima ni shafu zana (Something strange in the ugali)

35. Use your geometry

36. Ngobit (Mahugu)  
we don't have a lab technician.  
What a shame!

37.



38. Aspire 2B morrow's Ocampo

39. Virginity is lack of opportunity but not dignity

40. Manze maliza tuendee paper 2 (Friend, finish we go for second helping)

41. Mavocabulary  
Chow Nyama shoma  
Cugar Chame on u  
Fiching

42. Business is a poor subject

43. A state divided against itself is defeated united

44. Wakitunyima nyama lazima tupate maPROTEIN  
"S\_e\_ms" (If they deny us meat we shall proteins) "S-e-ms"

45. UA knowledge without God is superstitions
46. If a man is interested in U he will stick around  
U drop it or not
47. Am a lovely chick please God give me a dude
48. I know u r the queen of my heart
49. Condom, sex, always
50. PLIZ NO SMOKING IN DIS CUBE
51. Nothing flourishes like de appearance
52. Kula kupasuka sende (Eat burst your bottom)
53. I love mao ( I love mathematics)
54. IDLE MIND IS THE DEVILS WORKERSHOP
55. Tusome tuwe sonko ( Let us learn we become rich)
56. LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE
57. POTASH BASE  
4 EVER MOREFIRE  
JAH BLESS
58. NEVER take lyfe seriously after all nobody cares  
I mean fuck hard die smart
59. GANJA SMOKER day & night
- . 60 .REMEMBER ME: Lucky Dube
- 61 MAY THOSE WHO  
ACCUSE OTHERS  
FALSELY NOT SUCCEED  
AMEN
- .  
62. Asante kwa kura yako ( Thank you for your vote)
63. WORK AND YOU WILL  
EARN A LIVING  
IF YOU SIT AROUND TALKING YOU WILL BE A POOR  
prov 14. Chapter 23
64. FUNDI wa viatu (cobbler)

65. D.J AFRO KWA MASKANI  
MOREFIRE 4 EVER
66. She-goat
67. Man-u Base
68. Do not pay attention to every word people say. Eccl 7:12
69. MONO ni Ngui (Form ones are dogs)
70. WARNING  
Lack of sex leads to  
Blurred vision
71. Don't allow missionaries; they may be having a mission
72. Kumya kwa uajibikaji ( Use the toilet well)
73. Niko eneo la bacteria (Am in the bacteria zone)
74. Fuck him hard
75. Gavin Turkana ako na MANZI msamburu  
Amejaribu (Gavin Turkana has a Samburu girlfriend a good trial)
76. SMOKING RUINS your body.
77. Matoo was (Never) HERE- 2011/3/11
78. Smoking BASE
79. Kibe we love u
80. Useless asses.
81. Kimwaki was here
82. Ghetto massive
83. The Messiah is coming
84. She-goat – senye ya she-goat ni tamu ( She- goats's sexual organ is sweet)
85. ROLNALD
86. Asernal ni MATAKO ( Asernal is an ass)
87. Sex usually succeed at night

88. NGANJA FARMER

89



WASP

90. Competition is the order of the day

91. A DROUTS MAN will crash at A STRAW

92. GANJA PLANTER



Hip

Hop

93. Blue *zli*

Jet lee

94. KANe



95. Chem-is-try

96. 2E motto

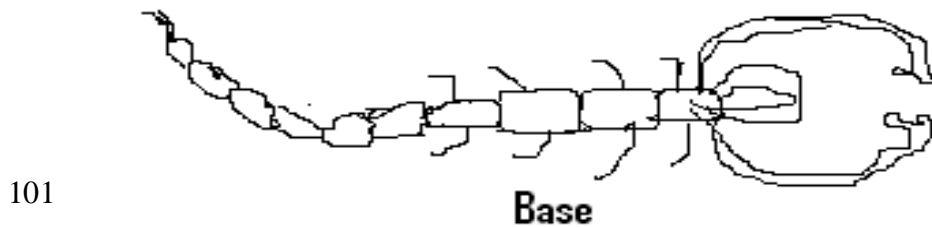
Ndaima tutashimba (Truly we shall be satisfied)

97. SMOKING RUINS YOUR BODY

98. Danger Trudgedy

99.MOTTO NJENGA MWILI

100. unaringa je umepimwa? (stop boasting have gone for VCT testing)



102. KAYA BASE

103. VOTE POISON 4 D.H

104. JAH BLESS

105. HAGUE

106. Do not follow me I am lost

107. WORLD SAFER without Osama bin Laden

108. Gusa hapa kama unayo (touch here if you have it)

109. I love my mum

110. I was Hea

111. ***NO Rules***

***Here***

112. *CHELSEA*

BLU3

113. Gichini is HIV<sup>+</sup>

114. She-goat allow me to F\*\*#you so that we can both fit in the society

115. Saddam was here

2010-2012

116. Way to heaven

117. Nguvia ana watoto watatu.

Pliz avoid her ( Nguvia has three children.please avoid her )

118. Ghetto tumbulance

119. *ARSENAL*

The Gunners

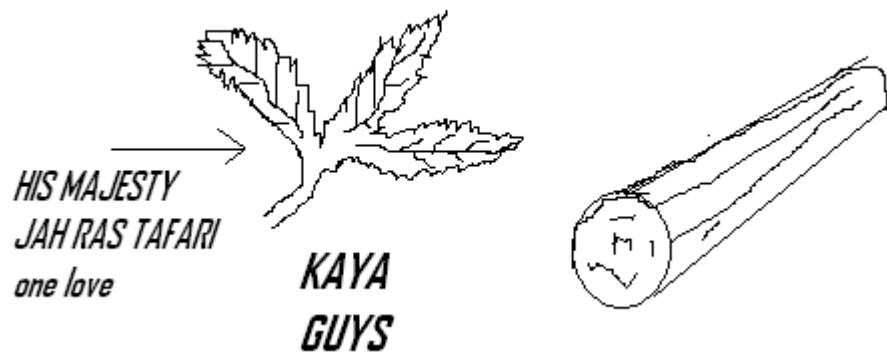
120. Kuboeka zone

121. Albino chillshill

122. I HAVE A RITE TO WALK NAKED

123. Mono BASE

124



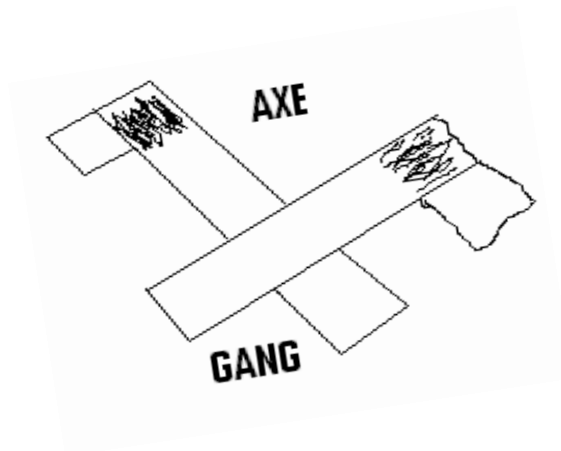
125 Fagilia pub

126.I live distress life there bcoz of you

127. FUCK YOU

128.GHETTO BASE

129.



130.CHELSEA basement

131.Yes WE CAN

132.You have inspired us PLO Lumumba

133. Don't

Eat

And

Rest

134. I  Diana

me Christine

135. Chopa Chopa AKI HOMO

136. Five STAR HOTEL

137. GANJA FOR SURVIVAL

138. HAKI AFISA HAKUNIAMBIA A LINIVUNJA VIBOKO EIGHTEEN KISHA  
AKAONGEZE MAKOFI NILIJARIBU KUWATULIZA LAKINI  
NIKAONGEZE NYAHUNYO TATU.

“ATI KIJANA MANG’AA UNAPIGA DOMO KUMBAVU NJINGA” (GOMEZ)

139. memo- 24<sup>th</sup> October sato Strike

140. Time flies but you are the pilot

141. SPECIAL DEDICATION from ( SOMANISO GOMEZ A MAN DIES LIKE A MAN  
NO MANWITHOUT AN ENEMY)

142. Choose knowledge rather than the finest gold.

143. ”DISPLINE THE GREAT WEAPON”

PLAY UNTIL SOMETHING HAPPENS

by 607

144. Mbuku

Bend over fuck them

145. Matenjo NI kihii

146 . SUE is a hoe that can never say no

147. HOT sex girl. Mbona mnapenda kundinya?

Kwa sababu pako na muriyo sana -Kaboye

(Why do you like to fuck?

Because the place is very sweet-Kaboye )

148. I HATE ALL form 3

Why?

Coz of their things

149. During preps I read and erect like hell

Please advice!

Fuck your BUKZ

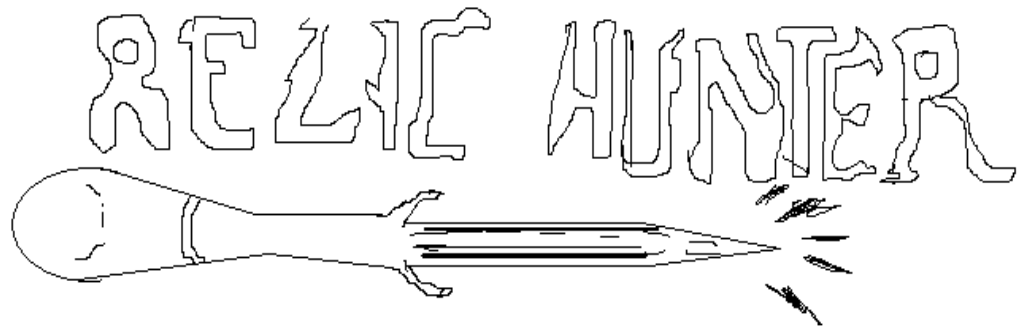
150. Am proud of my virginity

Who asked U?.

What a mile!

151. IN MEMORY OF OUR MAN KABUTHU THE AKA JOHN KIMANI

152. IN LEMEMBERANCE of man kiige



153

154. NGHETTO IN HELL

155. TRUST IN JEHOVA & U WILL BE A WINNER

156. White house

157. Fuck him hard

158. WELCOME TO KAMITI

159. Matron is a girlfriend 2 depa!!!?

160. Focus

Beyond

Imagination

161. swim at your own risk

162. Good results and good diet are twin sisters

163. MONO DOG

164. Real Madrid- Christian Ronaldo

165. James kariuki still u want 2 divorce me

Pliz dont

166.THE LION MASTER

BON

167. D.J

FLASH

KWENYE

Mix salalaa!

168.chelsea Bloody

169.LOV BASE SHORT BUT SWEET ( fuck

170.CHUCK NORRIS

INDIANA JONES

171..BOB Marly

BRUCE LEE SAMO HUNG

JOHN CENA

172.Mighty

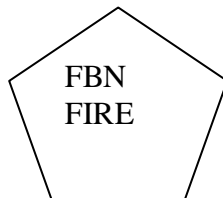
KING KONG

HIELE

SILASIE

173

BASE



174. CHEM my subject

175

LIZADE



BASE

176.You mono you are HOT SEXY GIRL

For more information contact 0752311626

177. MAN-U KEEPS DAH FIRE BLAZING!!!

178.I ♥ NIMO

179. WELCOME TO HELL 2W

180. love is blind

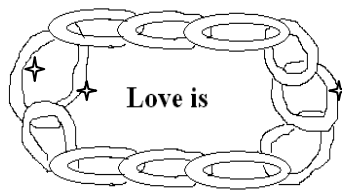
181.IN THE NAME OF LOVE

182. BUMING LOVE 100%

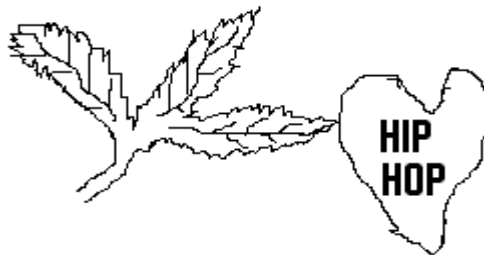
183.Dip imezidi

184.JAH BLESS MAN

185 Love is a chain



186.



187. REJOICE comes after suffering

188.STRUGGLE TODAY Celebrate tomorrow

189.SHame on you when you are writing nonsense

190.Fuck them using your long-----

191.Appreciate what you have & what you are made of. By D.T

192.Never regret anything that made you smile

193.HAKUNA KULALA ( NO SLEEPING)

P- pray

U- until

S- something

H- happens

194

NOTICE BOARD

PLEASE MADAM

OUR POSTER IS NOW

CHANGED USE THIS PINHOLE

195. F.B.I's BASE

196. Nyanyako ako chuo Amka asikupanish ( Grandmother is around wake up or be punished)

197.I love sex Due to it's products.

198



199

Get Rich or Die Trying



By Pitah

G-UNIT

200 .Tutor and Carol this is not your bedroom!!!!??

**APPENDIX B**  
**RESEARCH BUDGET**

Below is the approximate amount of money that was used by the researcher during the study.

<b>Item /description</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Totals in Ksh</b>
<b>Proposal Preparation</b>		
Typing	500 pages @ 30.00	15000
Printing	500 pages @ 10.00	5 000
Travelling	20 times @ 1000.00	20 000
Telephone bills	20 times @ 5.00	100
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>40 100</b>
<b>Piloting</b>		
Typing	100 pages @ 30.00	3000
Printing	100 pages @ 10.00	1000
Travelling	5 times @ 100.00	500
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>4500</b>
<b>Data collection</b>		
Travelling	10 times @ 500.00	5 000
Typing setting	4000 pages @ 10.00	40 000
Telephone bills	200 times @ 5.00	1 000
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>46 000</b>
<b>Thesis preparation</b>		
Printing	160 pages @ 10.00	1 600
Binding	6 booklet @ 300.00	1800
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>3400</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>94 000.00</b>	
<b>10 % contingency expenses</b>	<b>9400.00</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>103 400.00</b>	
<b>Source of funds: Self.</b>		

**APPENDIX C**

**INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO ALL SAMPLED SCHOOLS**

P. O. BOX 1792,

NYAHURURU.

10<sup>th</sup> June, 2012.

THE HEAD TEACHER,  
WIYUMIRIRIE SECONDARY SCHOOL,  
P .O. BOX 100,  
NDARAGWA.

Dear Sir,

**REF: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH**

I am Francis Gichuki Mwangi ID number 12527425 pursuing a Master of Education degree at Kenyatta University. I intend to carry out a research on graffiti writing in ten secondary schools in the Larger Laikipia East District in Laikipia County. I am glad to inform you that your school is one of the sampled schools for this research. I am therefore kindly requesting for permission to be allowed to collect research data from your school between 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 and 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2012.

Thanks in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Francis Gichuki Mwangi

## **APPENDIX D**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS**

Please respond to the questions below. Confidentiality will be maintained.

1. How does graffiti written by students in your school benefit the administration?
2. What kind of messages is expressed in graffiti in your school?
3. What is the role played by students in selection of school prefects.
4. What issues appear recurring in graffiti in your school?
5. How does graffiti affect teaching and learning of English in your school?
6. How does information reach you from students?

## **APPENDIX E**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS**

Please respond to the questions below honestly. Confidentiality will be maintained.

1. In which ways do students communicate with the administration?
2. Which ways do students communicate with teachers?
3. How would you describe the relationship between the administration and prefects on one hand and the students on the other?
4. Are students involved in crucial decision making that affect them?
5. Do graffiti in your school affect your teaching?
6. Why do you think students use graffiti as a mode of communication?
7. What types of graffiti are used by the students in your school?
8. What is unique about graffiti writing in relation to ordinary writings? Give examples.
9. Do girls and boys write graffiti on the same issues?
10. What influence does graffiti have on learning of English Language?
11. How does graffiti affect classroom learning environment?
12. Do graffiti writing in classrooms affect composition writing? If yes how?

**APPENDIX F**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

**Instructions**

This questionnaire aims at collecting views of the students about the writing of graffiti in school setting. You are kindly requested to provide the required information to the best of your knowledge. This information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

**NAME:** (optional) .....

**FORM**.....

**SCHOOL** .....

**TYPE OF SCHOOL** (tick appropriate) 1. DAY MIXED

2. MIXED BOARDING

3. BOYS'

4. GIRLS'

**GENDER** : Boy [ ]

Girl: [ ]

Below are statements against which you are to respond based on your opinion. To the right are responses and corresponding scores assigned to each statement. For each statement tick the most appropriate answer from the options given.

**SD-Strongly Disagree; D-Disagree; U-Undecided; A-Agree; SA-Strongly Agree.**

No	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
	Score:	1	2	3	4	5
1	Students communicate with both the administration and amongst themselves in graffiti					
2	Students use writings, drawings or sketches to Communicate in graffiti.					
3	Writers of graffiti in school are known					
4	Personally I have written graffiti in school					
5	I have seen abusive graffiti in school					
6	Graffiti affect my learning of language					
7	Some graffiti attack the school administration					
8	I hate graffiti written in school					
9	Writing graffiti in school can attract punishment					
10	Students express their problems in graffiti					
11	Graffiti is an effective communication strategy					
12	Graffiti is preferred more than Suggestion boxes as communication strategies in schools					
13	Graffiti in different locations in school differ					
14	School Administration should read the students' graffiti					
15	All students' graffiti have meaning.					
16	Some graffiti have hidden meanings.					
17	Students use different materials to write graffiti.					
18	Both boys and girls write graffiti.					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSE

## **APPENDIX G**

### **QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What makes you write graffiti?
2. How useful is graffiti communication in your school?
3. Does the authority take notice of the messages communicated through graffiti by you?
4. How does the authority respond to graffiti written in your school?
5. What other channels of communication do you use in school?
6. What styles do you use in graffiti writing in your school?
7. Do you use different styles for different messages when communicating in graffiti?
8. Are there specific times when you write more graffiti than other times?
9. Do both boys and girls write graffiti?
10. How do the graffiti written by both boys and girls differ?
11. Which main issues are recurrent in graffiti writing in your school?

## APPENDIX H

### GRAFFITI COLLECTION GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

The graffiti texts should be collected in areas frequented by students i.e toilets, dormitories, libraries, classes, desk tops, dining halls and laboratories. NB. Graffiti texts should be written or drawn as they appear.

	<b>GRAFFITI TEXTS</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>MESSAGE</b>	<b>INTERPRETATION</b>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				

13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

## APPENDIX I

### SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE LARGER LAIKIPIA EAST DISTRICT

SCHOOL	DIVISION	CATEGORY
1. Sweet Water Secondary School	Central	Mixed
2. Inoro Secondary School	Central	Mixed Day/Boarding
3. Garrison Secondary School	Central	Mixed Day/Boarding
4. St. Loise Secondary School	Central	Girls Boarding
5. Muramati Secondary School	Central	Mixed Day
6. Nanyuki Secondary School	Central	Boys Boarding
7. Temple Mount Secondary School	Central	Mixed Day/Boarding
8. Thingithu Secondary School	Central	Mixed Day
9. Likii Hill Secondary School	Central	Mixed Boarding
10. Laikipia Air Base Secondary School	Central	Mixed Day Boarding
11. Doldol Secondary School	Mukogodo	Boys Boarding
12. St.Francis Secondary School	Mukogodo	Girls Boarding
13. Wiyumiririe Secondary School	Lamuria	Mixed Day
14. Tigithi Secondary School	Lamuria	Mixed Day/Boarding
15. Male Secondary School	Lamuria	Mixed Day
16. Ngobit Boys Secondary School	Lamuria	Boys Day/Boarding
17. Ngobit Girls Secondary school	Lamuria	Girls Day/Boarding
18. St. Augustine Secondary school	Lamuria	Mixed Boarding
19. Ol Taveta Secondary school	Lamuria	Mixed Day
20. Tharua Secondary school	Lamuria	Mixed Day
21. Top Achievers Secondary school	Lamuria	Mixed Day/Boarding
22. Il polei Secondary School	Daiga	Mixed Day
23. St.Jude Secondary School	Daiga	Mixed Day/Boarding
24. Ngenia Secondary School	Daiga	Mixed Day/Boarding
25. Nyariginu Secondary School	Daiga	Mixed Day
26. Bingwa Secondary School	Daiga	Mixed Day
27.Endana Secondary School	Daiga	Mixed Day

**E<sub>ND</sub>**