Research Article

INFLUENCE OF AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP ON STUDENT UNREST IN PUBLIC BOARDING SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BUNGOMA COUNTY IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of autocratic leadership on student unrest in public boarding secondary schools in Bungoma County. Ex-post facto research design was adopted. The target population was 76 deputy principals, 152 teachers and 3,040 form four students in public boarding secondary schools. Multistage sampling was used in this study where schools were clustered into two categories. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 12 schools and 480 form four students from the categories. Purposive sampling was then used to select 12 deputy principals in charge of administration, 24 heads of boarding sections and teachers in charge of guidance and counselling departments in the schools. Descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies and means and inferential techniques of one way ANOVA and the independent samples t-test statistics were conducted to compare differences between the two independent groups of schools. The study established that schools in which the principals' used autocratic leadership style were found to have more cases of student unrests.

Keywords: Autocratic Leadership, Influence, Student Unrest, Boarding Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Generally, autocratic leaders do not adopt other members' ideas, suggestions and opinions in the organization. When a leader embraces autocratic approach in leadership, subordinates tend to dislike the leaders which lowers the morale of the members of the organization. According to Myron (2009), the leader "is a know it all and views other members as having nothing to contribute to the growth of the organization". In this type of leadership, subordinates are compelled to obedience, leading to frustrations and unhappy as they work. This may result in defiance, tension and disrespect towards the leaders hence unrest in the organization. Though the current study was undertaken in public boarding secondary school organizations rather than business enterprises, they however point to some considerations for benefits of autocratic leadership in schools. Some autocratic practices can build trust for school leadership among students which could help to stem indiscipline and unrest. Al-Safran *et al.,* (2014) established a strong relationship between the principals' use of autocratic leadership style with positive environments and school outcomes in Kuwait as opposed to the USA where other management styles were found to be positively related with higher school tranquility and outcomes. Using descriptive statistics and inferential technique of one way ANOVA, Al-Safran *et al.,* (2014) established that the principal's leadership style was found to be very different between Kuwait and USA schools. Kuwait schools' principals are autocratic in their leadership style, while their USA counterparts tend to be integrative. Though Kuwait school principals were found to be autocratic in nature, data indicated that a cooperative school environment showed higher school outcomes. The study therefore suggested that the USA model of school leadership is inapplicable in a culture similar to Kuwait. Hence the researchers noted that there are no universal or appropriate leadership styles for all cultures. The study was longitudinal, relying on data gathered in USA and Kuwait

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through TIMSS (The Third International Mathematics and Science Study) in 1995 to investigate the research questions. The methods of data collection used were time consuming and expensive. Furthermore, the data generated from 1995 until the time the study was conducted is obsolete as cultures could have changed by 2014. The current study used primary data collected from schools using survey method within a county to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership styles used by principals in relation to student unrest. While the previous study considered cultural differences, the current study assessed autocratic leadership in relation to student unrest, whereby it was found to be ineffective in managing unrest. Ziduli et al (2018) used a case study research design which was phenomenological in nature with an interpretive-constructivism approach which was conducted to investigate Leadership Styles of Secondary School Principals in Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Using purposive sampling, 6 out of 39 secondary school principals were included in the study and subjected to open-ended interviews to collect data in order to determine the best basic leadership styles that can be used by principals for effective management of secondary schools in Cape Province. Data collected revealed that democratic and autocratic leadership styles were used by successful rural secondary school principals while laissez-faire leadership style adversely affected the discipline of schools leading to a poor academic culture. The nature of the research design could not clearly bring out differences in use of different leadership styles and hence the current study adopted an ex-post-facto design which is accurate in order to bring out comparisons among two distinct groups of schools vis a vis the leadership style of the principal with no manipulation of the variables. The current study found that autocratic leadership style adopted by principals had positive relationship with cases of student unrest. Inecky & Ushe (2020) investigated effects of autocratic and authentic leadership styles on teacher motivation in selected primary schools in Botswana using a descriptive survey design. The study comprised a population of 100 teachers and sampled 80 respondents. Using Pearson correlation the study establish relationship between leadership style and teacher motivation in the selected schools, the findings revealed that there

was a negative but non-significant correlation between the autocratic leadership style and motivation of the selected primary school teachers covered in the study. It was therefore concluded that autocratic leadership was accepted by the teachers as it neither motivated nor demotivated them. The use of a descriptive survey design may have limited the study ability to establish clear influence of autocratic leadership style used by the managers. The use of ex-post-facto design by the current study enables it bring out clear differences between the impact of autocratic leadership style used by principals among Entropy schools and Negentropy schools. The study established a negative relationship between autocratic leadership and student unrest. A study by Aruzie et al (2018) in Ghana on the impact of leadership styles on teaching and learning outcomes revealed that most headmasters embraced autocratic leadership styles in managing student behaviour. The study which was qualitative used purposive sampling where two (2) headmasters of the two schools, 48 teachers and 40 students were selected for the study. The study used descriptive method of data analysis from which the findings indicated that although respondents perceived autocratic leadership style by headmasters as wicked and selfish, it was used where there was the need for an urgent solution or response to an issue and the head master had no time to consult subordinates. The study further explained that autocratic style was used at times, to curtail lengthy discussions and address discipline issues among students. The use of qualitative methods of study and non-probability sampling techniques lends the study to biasness and hence limits predictability of findings to similar circumstances elsewhere. Consequently, the current study used both qualitative and quantitative approach to research on leadership styles and their influence on unrest among secondary schools. The use of descriptive methods of data analysis also limited the precision of the study findings hence reducing the ability to generalize the study findings. Hence the current study used the inferential technique of ANOVA and independent samples t-test alongside descriptive techniques to arrive at conclusions, which makes the findings more reliable for generalization. In an investigation of the influence of leadership styles on students' unrests in Secondary Schools in Sheema District, Ayebare (2018) adopted a cross-sectional design in which 237 respondents from 3 schools were sampled for study. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics used were frequencies, percentages and mean. The study findings revealed that Autocratic and laissez faire leadership style had a positive and significant influence on students' unrests while democratic leadership style had a negative influence on students' unrests. Thus, it was concluded that laissez-faire leadership style and autocratic leadership style were the most prominent factor that influenced students' unrests; and democratic leadership style was the least factor that contributed to students' unrests. However, the scope of the study was so limited with sampling of only 3 schools. This limits the predictability of findings to other regions due to sampling bias. Hence the current study enlisted schools from a larger region of Bungoma County with more schools and respondents included in the study. A related study by Kanana (2012) on the influence of head teachers' leadership styles on discipline of secondary school students used a descriptive survey design. The target population for the study was secondary school students, head teachers and teachers in the nine public schools in Central Division of Isiolo District, Kenya. The study used both quantitative data and qualitative data to arrive at the findings that authoritative leadership

had the greatest effect on student discipline followed by transformational leadership, then democratic leadership while situational leadership had the least influence on students discipline at the school. From the findings the study also concludes that the schools mainly have discipline problems like fighting, drug and alcohol abuse and bullying. While the study focussed on minor school discipline problems, the current study assessed the influence of principals' leadership styles on student unrest which is a major discipline problem that has serious costs on the education set up in the country. The study was also carried out in a limited area which was Central Division of Isiolo District, which renders the study vulnerable to sampling bias hence limits the generalizability of the findings. The current study covered Bungoma County which is a wide and more representative area of Kenya. Kibanya (2018) sought to investigate the effect the principals' leadership style on students discipline in secondary schools in Nyeri central sub-county. Using a descriptive survey research design in which 10 schools were selected using purposive sampling, 153 students and 52 teachers were selected using simple random technique from the selected schools, the study established that principals mostly adopted autocratic leadership style and totally disregarded other forms of leadership styles like democratic and transformational. It was hence concluded that conclusion was that autocratic leadership style had a negative effect on discipline management and could, therefore, be attributed to many discipline cases in schools that resulted into student unrest. The study focussed on a small region which is Nyeri Central Sub County which limits the generalizability of the findings to larger regions. The current study hence focussed on a wider scope of Bungoma County to address the sampling bias associated with the narrow scope. A study by Kiprob (2015) on the influence of head teachers' leadership styles on students' discipline in Kericho Sub-County, Kericho County established that autocratic leadership was used by head teachers in secondary schools to control discipline among students. The study used descriptive survey design in which, from the 9 schools, 9 head teachers, 99 teachers and 90 students were selected using purposive sampling technics. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis was conducted to arrive at conclusions. A majority of teachers sampled from the study disagreed (75.0%) that the autocratic leadership style is necessary in order to enable people to work as expected. They indicated that autocracy can affect students' discipline and has always led to unrests in schools. From the findings of the study, it was also established that the common discipline problems experienced in schools are examination cheating (37%), drug abuse (17%) and absenteeism (25%). The study was conducted in Kericho Sub-county of Kericho County which is a smaller area which makes its findings not to be generalized to larger areas with accuracy. The current study however, was done in Bungoma County which is a vast region and hence its findings can be generalized to other regions with precision.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceptions of teachers on autocratic attributes

The teachers in charge of guidance and counselling and boarding department heads were also required to rate their opinion against statements indicating autocratic attributes associated with principals in their schools. Their responses are presented in table 1

Table 1. Teacher responses on principals' autocratic leadership attributes

STATEMENT	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Σfi	$\Sigma fiwi$	$\dfrac{\Sigma fiwi}{\Sigma fi}$
Principal is generally very strict	-	7	-	12	3	22	55	2.50
Principal allows very little criticism	-	10	1	6	5	22	60	2.73
Principal takes most decisions independently	5	7	1	9	-	22	74	3.36
Principal relies on few cronies to take decisions	10	3	-	6	3	22	77	3.50
Principal is mostly bureaucratic	6	9	2	5	-	22	82	3.73

Source: Field data (2020)

From Table1, a majority of teachers represented by 15(68.2%) disagreed that principals are generally strict while only 7(31.8%) agreed that principals in their schools are generally strict. The mean for weighted average for the statement was 2.50 which imply that the principals in the area under study were generally not strict to teachers. On whether the principal allows very little criticism, there was a fairly divided opinion with a proportion of 11(50%) disagreeing that the principals of schools studied allows very little criticism while 10(45.5%) agreeing with the statement and 1(4.5%) indicating not sure with the statement. The weighted average was at 2.73 which indicate that principals in the schools generally allow criticism from members. When required to rate opinion on whether principals in the schools takes most decisions independently, a fairly larger proportion of 10(54.5%) agreed with the statement while 9(40.9%) disagreed and only 1(4.5%) indicated not sure about the statement. The weighted average for the statement was 3.36 which show that there was generally a slight agreement among the teachers that principals implement suggestions from teachers in school operations. Further the teachers were required to rate their opinion on whether principal of the school relies only on few cronies to take decisions. A majority represented by 13(59.1%) agreed with the statement while 9(40.9%)

disagreed. The weighted average for the statement was 3.50 which indicated that generally teachers agree that principal relies on few cronies to take decisions in their schools. On whether the principal is mostly bureaucratic, a larger majority of the teachers represented by 15(68.2%) agreed to the statement while 5(27.3%) disagreed and 2(9.1%) indicating not sure about the statement. As a result the weighted average was 3.73, which imply in most boarding secondary schools teachers felt principals were mostly bureaucratic in Bungoma County in their operations. The above analysis demonstrates that majority of the principals of boarding secondary schools in the area under study exhibited some level of autocratic practices in their schools which infers the existence of autocratic leadership styles among the principals in such schools. The responses of the teachers were aggregated to develop an index that shows the autocratic attributes of principals in the schools under study. The index had values ranging from 5 to 25 where a value of 5 was lowest rating for autocratic attributes by the principal while a value of 25 was the highest rating for the principals' autocratic attributes. Any values above the mean of 15 are judged to be high rating for autocratic attributes in the principals' leadership style. The descriptive statistics were presented in table 2

Table 2.Descriptive statistics for principals' autocratic leadership attributes

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TAutoIndex	22	12.00	21.00	15.8182	2.83912
Valid N (list wise)	22				

Source: Spss Output (2020)

From table 2, the ratings of teachers in the area in this study indicated that to some level, principals of boarding secondary schools exhibited autocratic leadership practices ($m = 15.8182, sd = 2.84$).

The influence of principal's autocratic leadership style on student unrest in public boarding secondary schools

The third objective of this study was to determine the influence of the principals' use of autocratic leadership style on student unrest in public boarding secondary schools in Bungoma County, Kenya. In this objective the researcher sought to find out the opinions of teachers and students from Negentropy schools which are schools that have never had reported cases of unrest in the past four years at all and from Entropy schools which are schools that have had at least two or more unrest cases in the past four years. A descriptive summary of their responses were therefore presented separately as follows:

Descriptive analysis of Negentropy public boarding secondary schools

Questionnaires were administered to teachers and students in schools which had been reported to have had no cases of student unrest at all in the last four years. They were required to rate their opinions on a five point likert scale against some statements on their principal's leadership practices which could enable the researcher establish whether or not autocratic leadership style was used. Their responses are presented in table 3

Table 3.The responses of participants in Negentropy schools on principals' leadership style.

STATEMENT	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Σfi	$\Sigma fiwi$	$\dfrac{\Sigma fiwi}{\Sigma fi}$
Students involved in making decisions concerning the school	88	56	16	50	31	241	843	3.49793
Students allowed freedom to carry out school activities	45	89	0	71	36	241	759	3.149378
Easy to approach the principal	68	80	13	54	26	241	833	3.456432
Principal always explains decisions on school issues affecting students	71	98	5	36	31	241	865	3.58921
Principal lenient	40	90	5	55	51	241	736	3.053942

Source: Field Data (2020)

When the respondents were required to rate opinion on whether principal involves them in making decisions concerning their school, a very large proportion represented by 144(60%) agreed with the statement while 81(34%) disagreed and 16(7%) indicated being not sure about the statement. With a weighted average of 3.50 it was clear that majority of the respondents in schools which had never experienced unrest, agree that their principal involves them in making decisions concerning the school hence implying the principal was not autocratic. When required to rate their opinion on whether the principal allowed students freedom to carry out school activities, there was a fairly divided opinion among the students with a majority of 134(56%) agreeing while 107(44%) disagreeing with the statement. The weighted average for the statement was 3.15 which indicated that generally principals in schools that were calm had generally allowed students freedom to carry out school activities. The teacher and student respondents were also asked whether it was easy to approach the principal. Majority of them represented by 148 (61%) agreeing with the statement, while 80(33%) disagreeing and 13(5%) were not sure, giving a weighted average for the statement of 3.46. The responses in this case indicate that students in schools that did not experience unrest found it easier to approach their principals whenever there was need implying majority of principals in such schools were less autocratic. Further the respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on whether principal explains decisions on school issues that affected them. A total of 169(70%) respondents agreed while only 67(28%) disagreed to the statement and only 5(2%) indicated not being sure. The weighted average for the statement was 3.59 which imply general agreement with the statement among the respondents in schools that did not experience unrest hence principals of such schools usually explains decisions that affect them hence they are less autocratic. Further the respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on whether the principal was lenient to students. A total of 130(54%) respondents agreed while 106 (44%) disagreed to the statement and only 5(2%) indicated not being sure. The weighted average for the statement was 3.05 which imply general agreement with the statement among the respondents in schools that did not experience unrest hence principals of such schools are generally lenient to students hence they are less autocratic.

Aggregation of variables of autocratic leadership style for Negentropy public secondary schools

The ratings for each respondent on the various indicators of principals' autocratic leadership in the Negentropy public boarding schools were summed up to obtain an index which measured level of autocratic leadership practice. The index ranged from 5 to 25 where an index of 5 implied lowest rating on principal's autocratic style (Principal is more autocratic) and an index of 25 imply highest rating (Principal is less autocratic). The descriptive statistics for autocratic leadership indices in Negentropy schools are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for autocratic leadership indices in Negentropy public boarding Schools

School Groups	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Negentropy	241	7.00	24.00	16.7469	3.57162	.23007

Source: Spss Output (2020)

Table 4, shows that both students and teachers in Negentropy public boarding schools had a fairly high rating for their principal's autocratic leadership with a means of 16.7469 and standard deviation = 3.57162. Hence principals in Negentropy schools demonstrated limited autocratic leadership practices. Interviews held with the Deputy Principal revealed mixed responses. When asked whether strictness by principal towards students guaranteed calmness in the school or could lead to unrest, Deputy N4 and N6 remarked the following: Too much freedom to students can be dangerous. Some students take advantage of the freedoms to cause chaos in the school. Nobody can control them. Deputy Principal N2 and N3 noted: Students in this school are very sensitive to being strict to them. It just builds tension. I think when the principal allows students to express themselves it makes them more disciplined than if she became strict to them. The findings from the interview suggests that the school administration in institutions that had no student unrest embrace limited autocratic leadership practices in managing affairs of the students.

Descriptive analysis of Entropy public boarding secondary schools

Questionnaires were administered to teachers and students in schools which had been reported to have had cases of unrest in the last four years. They were required to rate their opinions on a five point likert scale against some statements on their principal's leadership practices which could enable the researcher establish the level to which autocratic style was used. Their responses are presented in table 5.

Table 5.Responses for participants in Entropy schools on principals' leadership style

STATEMENT	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Σfi	$\Sigma fiwi$	$\dfrac{\Sigma fiwi}{\Sigma fi}$
Students involved in making decisions concerning the school	19	42	12	98	70	241	565	2.34440
Students allowed freedom to carry out school activities	24	56	10	97	54	241	622	2.580913
Easy to approach the principal	19	47	22	81	72	241	583	2.419087
Principal always explains decisions on school issues affecting students	29	56	20	79	57	241	644	2.67220
Principal lenient	21	34	13	103	70	241	556	2.307054

Source: Field Data (2020)

When the respondents were required to rate opinion on whether the principal always involved them in making decisions concerning the school, a very large proportion of 168(70%) disagreed with the statement while 61(25%) agreed and 12(5%) indicated being not sure about the statement. With a weighted average of 2.34 it is clear that majority of the respondents in schools which had experienced unrest, disagreed that the principal involved them in making decisions concerning the school hence implying that the principal practiced autocratic leadership. When required to rate their opinion on whether the principal always explained to them decisions on school issues affecting students, majority of the students represented by 151(63%) disagreed while 80(33%) agreed with the statement and a total of 10(4%) indicating not being sure about the statement. The weighted average for the statement was 2.58 which imply that students felt principals in Entropy schools were generally restrictive, which is an indicator of autocratic tendencies by the principals in such schools. The respondents were asked whether it was easy to approach the principal and majority of the respondents represented by 153(63%) disagreed with the statement, 66(27%) agreed while 22(9%) were not sure giving a very low weighted average for the statement of 2.42. The responses in this case indicate that students in schools that experienced unrest found it difficult to approach their principals whenever there was need, implying that majority of principals in such schools were autocratic. Further the respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on whether their principal always explained to them decisions on school issues affecting students. A total of 136(56%) respondents disagreed while only 85(35%) agreed to the statement and a total of 20(8%) indicated not being sure. The weighted average for the statement was equally low at 2.67 which imply that generally there was disagreement with the statement among the respondents in Entropy schools hence principals of such schools hardly explains decisions that affect students hence they had autocratic tendencies. The respondents were further required to rate opinion on the statement that their principal was lenient. A large proportion of 173(72%) disagreed while only 55(23%) agreed with the statement and a total of 13(5%) indicating being not sure with the statement. The weighted average was 2.31 which on average imply respondents felt the principal was less lenient which infer that the principal was autocratic in leadership approach.

Aggregation of variables of autocratic leadership style for Entropy public secondary schools

The ratings for each respondent on the various indicators of principals' autocratic leadership in the entropy public boarding secondary schools were summed up to obtain an index which measured level of autocratic leadership application. The index ranged from 5 to 25 where an index of 5 implied lowest rating on principal's autocratic style (less application of autocratic style) and an index of 25 imply highest rating (More application of autocratic style). The descriptive statistics for autocratic leadership indices in Entropy schools are presented in Table 6

Table 6.Descriptive statistics for autocratic leadership Indices in Entropy public boarding secondary Schools

School Groups	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Entropy	241	5.00	21.00	12.3237	3.33838	.21504

Source: Spss Output (2020)

The table shows that both students and teachers in Entropy public boarding secondary schools had very low ratings for their principal's autocratic leadership with low means of 12.3237 and a standard deviation of 3.33838. Hence principals in such schools demonstrated a higher level of autocratic leadership practices unlike in the Negentropy public boarding schools. Interview conducted on deputy principals in Entropy schools revealed that principals in their schools greatly embraced autocratic style of leadership. When asked whether strictness by principal towards students guarantee calmness in the school or it leads to unrest, deputy principal E2 and E6 noted that: The principal who left this school after the strike was secretive and very strict to students and teachers. He was feared and disliked by everybody. Students felt insecure and planned the strikes because they felt nobody could listen to them. Deputy Principal E6 remarked: The type of students that we had in this school required strictness by the principal. If he were not strict, they could have caused more damage. On whether the principal allows very limited freedom to students helps in ensuring student calmness in the school, deputy principal E4 and E5 had contrary opinions. They remarked: Students in this school are very difficult and allowing them freedoms is what has led to unruly behaviour and unrest in this school. Even the Bible teaches that 'spare the rod, spoil the child'. Deputy Principal E3 remarked: There is no way you can manage young people these days without being strict and uncompromising. Most young people will just turn against you unless you are very strict and keen. Responses from the interviews indicate that deputy principals and principals in the Entropy schools were in support of autocratic leadership styles to manage student behaviour, which on the contrary shows it could account for the escalation of student unrest in the schools.

Testing for the differences in ratings for the principals' autocratic leadership style

In order to isolate the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on student unrest in public boarding secondary schools, the study sought to verify the hypothesis which states as below

H_03:There is no statistically significant difference in the principals' use of autocratic leadership style among Entropy and Negentropy public boarding secondary schools in Bungoma County The study sought to verify the hypothesis in which an independent sample t-test was conducted on the computed autocratic leadership index for the Entropy and Negentropy public boarding secondary schools. The results of descriptive statistics of the test were presented in tables 7

Table 7.Descriptive statistics for Aggregated Autocratic Leadership Index

	School Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
AutoIndex	Negentropy	241	16.7469	3.57162	.23007
	Entropy	241	12.3237	3.33838	.21504

*AutoIndex- Aggregated Autocratic Leadership Index

Source: Spss output (2020)

The table 7 reveals a lower mean Autocratic Leadership Index for Entropy public boarding secondary schools at 12.3237 while the Negentropy schools recorded a lower index of 16.7469 indicating more use of autocratic style in leadership by the principals in schools that experienced unrest. The next part of the output consisted of the t-statistic, the degrees of freedom and the significance level which are presented in table 8.

Table 8.Independent samples t-test for Aggregated Autocratic Leadership Indices

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Interval Difference Lower	Confidence of the Upper
Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	.615	.433	14.046	480	.000	4.42324	.31492	3.80444	5.04203
			14.046	477.827	.000	4.42324	.31492	3.80443	5.04204

Source: Spss Output (2020)

An independent samples t-test comparing the mean of autocratic leadership index in Entropy and Negentropy public boarding secondary schools found a significant difference between the means of the two groups of schoolst (480) = 14. 046, p < 0.05. The mean of the Entropy schools was found to be significantly lower (m = 12. 3237, sd = 3. 33838) than the mean of the
Negentropy schools(m = 16. 7469, sd = 3. 57162).
The null hypothesisH03 stating thatthere is no statistically significant difference in the principals' use of autocratic leadership style among Entropy and Negentropy public boarding secondary schools in Bungoma County was thus rejected. Principals in schools that experienced student unrest (Entropy schools) were found to exercise more autocratic practices in leadership while those in calm schools (Negentropy) were found to have adopted less autocratic practices in their leadership. Hence student unrest in schools can be attributed to application of autocratic practices by principals in the schools under study. The findings of the current study contravenes theory X assumptions which maintains that members of the organization lack in initiative and must therefore be closely supervised and comprehensive systems of control put in place to manage them effectively. Data analysed reveal that principals in Entropy schools apparently adopted autocratic leadership style in managing school affairs which may account for the higher incidences of student unrest. The findings in Table 8 agree with those of Mutua (2010) which established that student unrests were more pronounced in schools where an autocratic form of leadership was exercised than in schools where democracy leadership was practiced. These were clear indicators that the leadership styles employed by head teachers could diffuse or abet student unrest.

The findings in Table 8 however contradict those from similar studies by Al-Safran et al (2014), Tian & Sanchez (2017). In a comparative study of the effect of principal's leadership style on school environment and outcome in Kuwait and USA, Al-Safran et al (2014) established a strong relationship between the principals' use of autocratic leadership style with positive environments and school outcomes in Kuwait as opposed to the USA where other leadership styles were found to be positively related with higher school tranquillity and outcomes. Al-Safran et al (2014) established that the principal's leadership style was found to be very different between Kuwait and USA schools. Kuwait schools' principals are autocratic in their leadership style, while their USA counterparts tend to be integrative. Though Kuwait school principals were found to be autocratic in nature, data indicated that a cooperative school environment showed higher school outcomes. The use of autocratic leadership style has been apparently embraced by many principals in secondary schools who are unaware of the negative effects of autocratic leadership on school environments. The attitude among the principals who believe that productivity can only be attained by exercising executive authority on subjects without considering their opinions, could account for the run-away student unrest cases in secondary schools in Kenya. Advocacy for autocratic leadership apparently stems from cultural aspects as demonstrated by Al-safran et al. (2014), Cheng et al (2003) and parents of some secondary schools. However, autocratic leadership in schools contributes largely to poor relations between school management, teachers and students which build up tensions and a negative school climate, often resulting in catastrophic student unrest situations like those manifested in Kenyan secondary schools.

Authors' Contributions

Author 1designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript under guidance and supervision of Author 2 and 3. Authors2 and 3 managed all the sections and approved the final manuscript.

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