Implementation of Safety Policy in Girls' Boarding Secondary Schools in Bungoma East District, Kenya: Challenges and Strategies

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Abstract
This study sought to establish challenges faced in implementation of safety policy in girls boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District, Kenya. The study population comprised of 14 principals, 14 boarding mistresses, 276 teachers, four Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, 14 Board of Governors and 14 Parents Teachers Association chairpersons. Saturated sampling technique was used to select 13 principals, 13 boarding mistresses and three Quality Assurance and Standards Officers. Board of Governors and Parents Teachers Association chairpersons were selected through purposive sampling technique while 92 teachers were selected through simple random sampling technique. Data collection instruments included questionnaires and interview schedules. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyze data through descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts, frequencies, percentages and graphs and content analysis to establish patterns and trends as themes and sub themes emerged. Some of the major findings of the study indicated that the Ministry of Education funded only 23% of provincial boarding schools in acquisition of fire-fighting equipments yet safety policy implementation is a lot more for schools. Financial constraints and sometimes mismanagement and inadequate community support were major challenges faced in implementing safety policy. Strategies varied from financial sourcing, capacity building to expert consultation. The study concluded that lack of both financial and human resources failed Quality Assurance and in carrying out regular assessment, monitoring and evaluation of implementing safety policy in girls boarding secondary schools. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education increases its budgetary allocation to cater for safety policy implementation while other relevant stakeholders step in to assist schools implement safety policy to the letter.
Keywords: safety policy, implementation, challenges faced, strategies, girls' boarding

1. Introduction

Educational institutions have in the recent past become unsafe grounds for students and their property contrary to parents' expectations. Invasions and unsuspected arsons are on record in Africa, Asia and South America for high incidences of death related fires in boarding schools. The report indicated that these states either lacked inspection units or simply failed in their fire inspection duties in school fire safety (Fire Administration National Data Centre -FANDC, 2007). In May 2012, 122 girls in Afghan school were hospitalized after they were allegedly poisoned in class through a type of spray by suspected Taliban and Terrorists. The situation was reported serious of the 40 girls exhibiting symptoms of dizziness, vomiting, headache, loss of consciousness and trauma. A similar case was reported in April 2012, where 170 women and girls were hospitalized after drinking apparently poisoned well water at school (Paton, 2012, May 23rd). The two incidences are an indication of security lapses in school and possible lack perimeter wall. In July 2004, Indian school fire killed 90 pupils because of overcrowding, lack of emergency doors and firefighting equipment in school (Reuters, 2004).

In Nigeria, 23 girls lost their lives in a dormitory fire when a kerosene lantern overturned (CBS News, 2001; The Independent, 2001). It was however not clear why the girls could not evacuate themselves or be evacuated. Fire outbreaks are fierce tragedies in Uganda. For instance, in Budo junior girls boarding secondary school 20 girls lost their lives because of dormitory fire. The affected lacked provisions for a house mother who should remain close to students at night as they are needed at anytime. Investigations revealed that classrooms were converted into dormitories without consulting the district engineer and the health officers. The state of the perimeter wall was wanting as it had gaps through which outsiders found their way to school. The presence of gaps in the fence failed the management in their duty to provide safety to the girls. The school operated without systems such as attendance register and occurrence book to monitor the performance and effectiveness of the security personnel. It was due to these shortcomings that two security guards were reported absent on the fateful night (Mzungu, 2008).

Kenya has not been spared of such incidences either. The National Council of Churches of Kenya- (NCCK, 1992) study reported the death of 19 girls and 79 girls seriously injured following a boys' raid on a dormitory at St Kizito secondary school in Meru District. The level of dormitory safety, security lapses, matron's house provisions and lack of perimeter wall were issues that raised questions. A fire tragedy led to the death of 27 girls

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in Bombolulu girls boarding secondary school in Coast province (Oriang, 2001). Reports indicated that the disaster occurred because the girls were locked in a congested dormitory; windows had grills and due to security lapses. In Bungoma East District unsuspected arson and rioting students in collaboration with support staff burnt down the school administration block in Milo mixed boarding (Obala, 2007) and Ndivisi mixed boarding secondary schools where property worthy thousands of shillings was lost in the inferno. St Mary's Webuye and St Cecilia Misikhu girls' boarding secondary schools were invaded by thugs respectively (D.E.O, 2008) due to poor fencing systems and security lapses.

Although the government formulated the safety policy and decisively enforced the directive for implementation in 2001, unsuspected arson, invasion and congestion in dormitories have continuously been reported in girls' boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District. The fencing structures were unmaintained where outsiders with ill intentions creep in school. The government later revised the safety policy in 2008 to address safety issues in boarding secondary schools but still effective translation of the theory part of the policy into practice was wanting. It was however not clear the strategic options schools have in place for future disaster risk reduction in girls boarding secondary schools. This motivated the researcher to conduct a study to establish challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls boarding secondary schools and strategic options for future disaster risk reduction.

1.1 Research Questions
The following research questions guided this study:-
(i)   What are the challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls' boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District, Kenya?
(ii)   What are the strategic options school management has put in place for future disaster risk reduction in girls boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District, Kenya?

2. Literature Review
2.1 Challenges Faced in Implementing Safety Policy Secondary Schools
Stroud, Stallings and Korbusieski (2006) study on the implementation of science laboratory safety program in North Carolina Schools indicated that laboratory safety is one area that knowledge of the facility requirements is vital. They observed that nearly 60% of principals had low knowledge in science laboratory safety such as types of goggles and maintenance requirements for eyewashes and showers. Precise measurement during construction would require some knowledge and skills however this study established that majority of principals were not conversant with laboratory design such as square footage requirements. In such circumstances, school principals would fail to implement laboratory safety to the letter hence compromising students' safety. Tromp (1987) in his study in Ohio, United States established that 16.5% of principals indicated that resistance to change was one of the major challenges that hampered change in implementation and resistance to change was noted among 64% of the principals camouflaged under attitudes. Implementation to safety policy is about change of several aspects to enhance safety and where there is resistance little or nothing is achieved regarding implementation.

Elberlein (2009) study regarding "incidents and accidents" in implementing the safety regulations prescribed by South African schools concluded that the Department of Education inadequately supported schools regarding assessment, monitoring and training on school safety legislature. Safety policy implementation requires skills and continued assessment and monitoring to ensure the right procedures are followed in the implementing processes however such limited support was a challenge to the school management

Uganda has had several of boarding secondary school fire disasters where lives and property has been lost. An inspection report on by the Ministry of Education (MOE) shortly after St Leo Junior Academy in Masaka District, revealed that 50% of secondary schools failed to implement the set minimal operational, safety and security guidelines. Although the Directorate of Education Standards is mandated to carry out inspection at least once in a year, the report indicated that the inspectors were overwhelmed with departmental workload and insufficient resources (Ssenkabirwa, 2012). The fact that school inspectors failed to carry out regular inspection as required provided an opportunity for school management to fail in implementation of safety and security guidelines in boarding secondary schools in Uganda.

Wainaina (2012) study on safety measures in secondary schools in Kikuyu district, Kiambu County Kenya established that lack of funds and capacity building was major barriers principals faced in implementation of safety policy. She observed that safety policy implementation requires major modifications of the existing buildings, acquisition of safety equipments such as fire-fighting equipment, and fitting besides capacity building for school community. Omolo and Simatwa (2010) study of the assessment of the implementation of safety policies in public secondary schools in Kisumu East and West Districts, Kenya revealed that 86.67% of head teachers decried inadequate funds, 26.67% lack of skills and 6.67% poor coordination from the MOE regarding safety policy issuance. The study further established that 100% of QASOs cited lack of cooperation from head teachers and negative perceptions towards QASOs' assessment and Monitoring and Evaluation reports. Kukali's

(2010) study revealed that financial resources and its management were cited as factors influencing implementation of safety policy in secondary schools. The category of teachers and QASOs argued that funds may be adequate but management was wanting. To this end, safety policy implementing was not a priority after all. While these studies addressed various aspects of school safety, none of them looked at challenges faced in safety policy implementing in girls boarding secondary schools.

2.2. Strategic Options for future Disaster Risk Reduction in Secondary Schools

According to Stroud et al (2006), principals need training in implementation of science laboratory safety so as to acquire knowledge and skills required for implementation. Among other strategies were involvement of professionals to assist the school administrators and other stakeholders enlist science laboratory safety requirements and create awareness through workshops for all. Most studies have reported congestion in dormitories, classrooms and laboratories which must be decongested by all means. Bray (1999) survey conducted in Cambodia revealed that 40% of the schools in the country received school buildings from politicians while in another instance, politicians paid for school building constructions. Such initiatives would help in putting up more physical infrastructure to decongest facilities.

Studies by Makoa (2004) on implementing HIV/AIDS policy in Lesotho and Kiniale (2000) cited in Musomi (2008) indicated that implementation process not only called for investment and expenditure but also for attitudinal and institutional change. Head teachers are charged with the responsibility of changing attitudes of the collaborative group and creating awareness that leads to teamwork. The school management must work out ways and means to change school community attitudes towards safety policy implementation through PTA meetings, education/academic days in school.

Wainaina (2012) study recommended that school principals put necessary measures in place to ensure safety and health standards are implemented to the letter. She called on the government together with other stakeholders to provide adequate funding for the implementation of safety policy. Migiro (2012) study findings regarding the implementation of safety standards in public secondary schools in Borabu District Nyamira County, Kenya recommended that schools form safety committees, train staff on disaster management and involve the community in school safety programs. The study further recommended that the MOE should up their program on assessment. Okeno (2011) argues that achievement of quality secondary education in Kenya is part of the second goal in Millennium Development goals (MDGs) and central in the government plan for Economic Recovery Strategy. To realize the MDG goals, the government strategies include collaboration with the private sector, unilateral agencies besides embracing cost sharing policy with Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and communities to facilitate provision of school facilities.

According to Mutulis and Oketch (2009) 70% of fire in Kenyan institutions is associated with electric short circuits and this forms basis for the need to use specialists in wiring. To this end, one of the strategies to curb frequent school fires caused by electric faults was for schools to seek for professionals/experts such as individual electricians or companies such as Kenya Power Limited. Kukali (2010) study established that most schools were trying to discourage students carrying lanterns to school for use in dormitories as that was risk. Schools therefore tried to install electricity as a measure to minimize fire disasters. These studies hardly addressed strategies in girls' boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East district, a gap that the current study attempted to fill.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Research design is an outline; plan or scheme used to generate answers to research problems and intends to facilitate research in an efficient possible way to yield maximum information (Orodho, 2004). This study adopted both descriptive and *Ex-post facto* survey designs.

According to Kothari (2004), descriptive survey concerns predictions, narration of facts and characteristics about individuals, groups or situations. Descriptive survey design was used because it is fast, inexpensive and an efficient way of assessing information about the population (O'Leary, 2006). Cohen and Morrison (2000), state that the intention of a survey research is to gather data at a particular point in time and use it to describe the nature of existing conditions.

Ex post facto research design is where the researcher has no control over variables and only reports what has already happened or is happening. The researcher seeks to measure such items as frequencies, preference of people and also seeks to discover the causes or differences in schools where evidence exists prior to onset of the study (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). *Ex Post facto* design was adopted for this study in establishing the challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls boarding and the strategic options schools have put in place for safety policy implementation.

3.2 The Study Area

This study was carried out in girls boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District, Kenya (Figure 1).
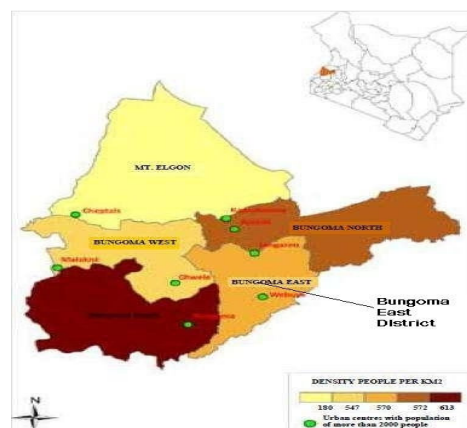
Figure 1: Map of Bungoma County showing Bungoma East District- Study Area

Bungoma East district had 30 secondary schools out of which six were girls' boarding, six mixed boarding, two girls boarding private and three mixed day boarding. Girls' boarding schools for the purposes of this study included mixed boarding which were sampled for the study due to their vulnerability to safety across the country. The district borders Bungoma North to the North- East, Kimilili district to the North, Bungoma Central to the North-West and Bungoma South to the South- West. The district is home to the Bukusu and Tachoni sub-tribes of the greater Luhya community of Western Kenya. Major economic activities include sugarcane and maize farming (Daily Nation. (2011 March, 24th). The district is home to the collapsed Pan Paper Mills. Through rural electrification, most parts of the District are well toned with power supply.

3.3 Study Population

Study population is the total number of subjects that are of interest to the researcher (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This study population comprised of 14 principals, 14 boarding mistresses, 276 teachers, 14 Board of Governors (BOG), 14 PTA, 276 teachers and four Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs).

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample is a set of subjects selected from a larger population for a survey (Kombo & Tromp, 2006) while sampling technique is a process through which the researcher selects a number of people or objects from a study population that is representative of the universe (Orodho & Kombo 2002). All the 13 principals, 13 boarding mistresses and three QASOs were sampled through census/ saturated processes. Census/saturated sampling technique is a complete enumeration of all items in the universe in which no element is left to chance with highest accuracy of data obtained (Kothari, 2004).

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 13 BOG and 13 PTA chairpersons to take part in the study as respondents. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defines purposive sampling technique as a method that allows the researcher to use subjects that have the required information regarding the objectives of the study. Purposive sampling method was appropriate on the basis that the respondents were part of the school management system and would provide the information on the challenges faced.

Orodho (2004) observes that simple random sampling technique is a method in which each and every item in the population is given an equal chance of inclusion in the sample. For a larger population, the raffle type of simple random sampling is appropriate. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 92 (30%) teachers to participate in the study as respondents.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Methodological triangulation approach combining dissimilar methods such as interviews and self administered questionnaires were used for data collection. The strategy has the advantage as flaws of one method are in most cases strengths of another and therefore enables the researcher to achieve best of each as their unique deficiencies are overcome (Karsenti et al, 2011; Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

Structured method of face-to-face interview is ideal in a descriptive study as it is more economical and provides a safe ground for generalization. Unstructured interviews on the other hand are open and the interviewer has opportunities to probe the interviewee to elicit in-depth information and collect supplementary information such as demographic data (Kothari, 2004; Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

A questionnaire is an instrument used for collecting data over a large sample (Orodho, 2004); it upholds respondents' confidentiality (Kombo & Tromp, 2006); is economical on time and cost, can reach a sample in a geographically dispersed area and ensures dependability and reliability of results (Kothari, 2004). A self administered questionnaire was preferred.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher contacted respondents for introduction; explained the purpose of involving them as respondents

and the need to be honest in their responses. Pseudo names were used to assure respondents of anonymity and confidentiality on information they gave hence voluntarily make informed decisions (Mugenda & Mugenda 1999; Orodho, 2004). Questionnaires were self administered among boarding mistresses, BOG chairpersons and teachers. Interviews were held with principals, PTA Chairpersons and QASOs.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is an examination of data collected in a survey or experiment in which deductions and inferences are made by extracting important variables to the study and detecting anomalies (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Makhanu and Kamper (2010) state that "descriptive survey is often preferred due to its objectivity in data collection, quantifies variables and describes phenomena using numbers to characterize them. Quantitative data was keyed in and analyzed using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in form of graphs, tables, frequencies and percentages. Data from interviews was transcribed and turned into themes for findings of the study (Cresswell, 2006) and organized according to research objectives as themes and subthemes emerged. Raw data was edited to improve quality for coding and all responses were categorized according to research objectives. Qualitative data collected from open-ended sections of questionnaires was analyzed on an ongoing process as themes and subthemes emerged (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999; Kombo & Tromp, 2006) to determine emerging patterns and trends. Descriptive statistics was used to describe and present summaries of basic features of data in the study and present quantitative descriptions in manageable and intelligible manner.

4. Results

This chapter presents results of the study per objective as responded to by various respondents.
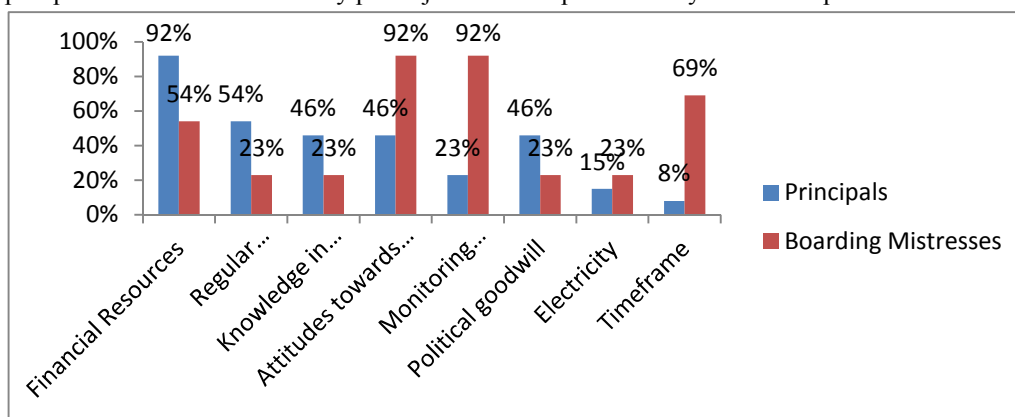

Figure 2: Principals' (13) and boarding mistresses' (13) views on challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District, Kenya

Principals who cited financial resources (92%), regular assessment (54%), knowledge in safety policy and attitude towards safety policy (46%), lack of specialist and political goodwill (23%), electricity (15%) and timeframe (8%) as challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls' boarding secondary schools. Boarding mistresses on the same question cited lack of financial resources (54%), regular assessment and lack of knowledge in safety (23%), attitude towards safety policy and none involvement of specialists (92%), political goodwill (46%), lack of electricity (23%) and timeframe (69%) as challenges faced in implementing safety policy. Figure 3 presents teachers' views on challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East, District, Kenya.
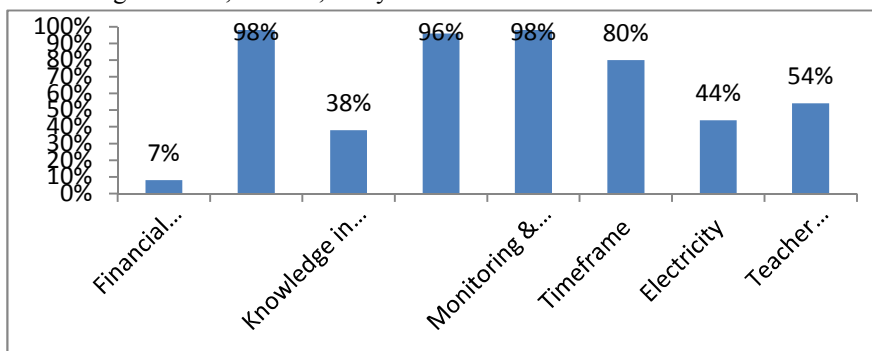

Figure 3: Teachers' views on challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls' boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District

There were only 7% of the teachers who indicated that financial resources was a challenge, irregular assessment and M & E (98%), inadequate knowledge in safety policy matters (38%), negative attitudes towards safety policy (96%), time frame (80%), electricity (44%) and teacher motivation (53%).

Table 1: QASOs' Views on Challenges Faced in Implementing Safety Policy in Girls Boarding Secondary Schools in Bungoma East District

Challenge	(f)	(%)
Funds and its management	4	100
Assessment	4	100
School community attitudes	4	100
Training	4	100
Monitoring and Evaluation	3	75
Timeframe	2	50
Electricity	1	25

An overwhelming 100% of QASOs cited funds and its management, assessment, school community attitudes and training, 75% cited M & E, 50% electricity and 25% timeframe as challenges faced in implementing safety policy.
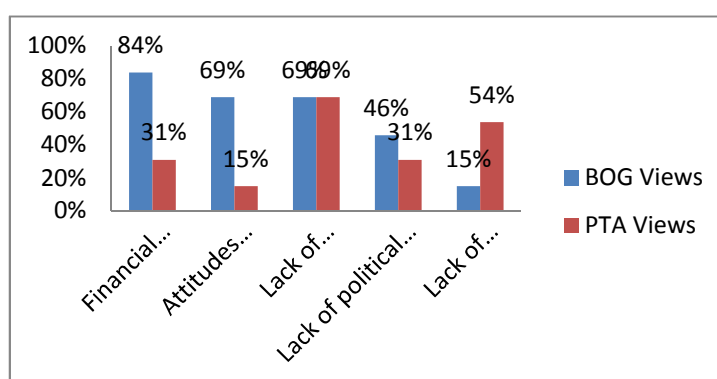

Figure 4: BOG' and PTAs' chairpersons' views on challenges faced in implementing safety policy in girls boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District

There was 84% of BOG chairpersons who cited financial management, 69% cited attitudes towards safety policy and lack of knowledge in safety, 46% lack of political goodwill and a paltry 15% cited lack of electricity. For PTA chairpersons, 31% cited financial management, 15% cited attitudes towards safety policy, 69% said lack of knowledge in safety, 31% said lack of political goodwill and 54% listed lack of electricity.

Table 2: Principals' views on Strategic Options towards Disaster Risk Reduction in Girls' Boarding Secondary Schools in Bungoma East District

Strategic Options	(f)	(%)
Prioritized implementation of safety policy in the school strategic plan	13	100
Regular health inspection of premises and students	13	100
Students encouraged to report matters of safety to authority	13	100
Ongoing renovations to address emergency outlets	13	100
Creating awareness to parents, school and neighboring community	13	100
Parents urged to support safety policy implementation	13	100
County government to support safety policy implementation	13	100
Ministry of Education to support safety policy implementation	13	100
Reinforce fencing mechanisms and secure gate	11	85
Hire security personnel from reliable security firms	9	69
Adequate physical infrastructures to ease congestion	8	62
Internal appointment of teacher in charge of school safety	7	54
School bus fixed with speed governor	7	54
Install fire-fighting equipment	6	46
Fire drills done twice a term	4	31
Employed permanent school electrician	2	15
Installed surveillance cameras	2	15

Table 2 shows how schools have strategized variously for disaster risk reduction in boarding secondary schools. An overwhelming 100% of principals indicated that they had prioritized implementation of safety policy in the school strategic plans; there was remarkable regular health inspection of premises and students, students were encouraged to report matters of safety to school authority, renovations to address emergency outlets were

ongoing, creating awareness to parents, school and neighboring community, urge parents to support safety policy implementation, expected county government and the MOE to support safety policy implementation. Reinforced fencing mechanisms and secure gates was reported by 85%, 69% strategies included hiring of security personnel from reliable security firms, 62% listed adequate physical infrastructures to ease congestion, 54% made internal appointments of teachers in charge of school safety, fixed speed governors on school buses, 46% installation of fire-fighting equipment, 31% indicated regular fire drills while only 15% cited employment of school electrician and install surveillance cameras.

Table 3: QASOs' Strategic Options towards Disaster Risk Reduction in Girls' Boarding Secondary Schools in Bungoma East District (n=3)

Strategic Options	(f)	(%)
Regular assessment	3	100
Monitoring and Evaluation	3	100
Sensitization through seminars and workshops on safety policy	3	100
Working with Public Health officers	3	100
Working closely with public works, registered architects, Quantity surveyors and contractors in site planning, design, Construction and maintenance of school buildings	3	100
Working closely with Ministry of Water officials	3	100

There was perceived unanimity among QASOs where 100% indicated regular assessment, M & E, create awareness through seminars and workshops on safety policy, working with public Health officials, working closely with professionals/experts such as public works, registered architects, quantity surveyors and contractors in site planning, design, construction and maintenance of school buildings and Ministry of Water and irrigation officers.

5. Discussion

The issue of students' safety and more so girls in learning institutions is a matter that attracts the unanimity of all stakeholders' opinions that indeed serious safety nets are a must. This study established that principals were faced with various challenges in implementing safety policy in girls' boarding secondary schools. An overwhelming 92% of principals and 84% of BOG chairpersons indicated that lack of financial resources in implementing the safety policy was an impediment as it requires a lot of funds for innovation and renovations. The boarding mistresses (54%) indicating that the exercise was demanding in terms of finances. This study findings concurred with Otieno, (2013); and MOE, (2000) indicating that school principals and BOG are responsible for management of various aspects of school life including schools resources and finances among others. This gives them an upper hand in understanding the school budget which they are mandated to discuss and approve. The PTA is a major funding body of various school infrastructural projects however only 31% said financial resources as a challenge. Both QASOs and teachers were of the view that funds were adequate but decried financial mismanagement. This study finding concurred with the Government of Pakistan in collaboration with UNESCO (2003) study which revealed that insufficient financial management and outdated procedures adversely affected implementation of education programs and projects in Pakistan.

Although QASOs (100%) and teachers (92%) cited regular assessment as a challenge justifications of their argument was divergent. While QASOs decried shortage of personnel to carry out regular assessment, they concurred with the teachers that principals did not implement assessment reports to the letter. Teachers also viewed the exercise as in futility for it lacked the seriousness it deserved on the part of the principals. Principals (54%) on the other hand indicated that assessment of schools is important at all times but did not help in the implementation of safety policy. Reports were copied to schools on what and how safety policy implementation should be done but did not provide resources for implementation. This was shared by 23% of boarding mistresses indicating that boarding section get guidelines on what is expected but depended on the school administration to do it.

In this study 46% of principals, 23% of boarding mistresses, 69% of both BOG and PTA, 38% of teachers cited lack of knowledge in safety policy among the management. The study established that some safety policy guidelines were funded by the PTA body and Constituency Development Fund (CDF). Respondents said that it was important for such funding bodies to be knowledgeable enough on the importance of safety policy in girls' boarding secondary schools. Although Kukali (2010) study finding revealed that the basic aim of safety education is to make persons aware of the dangers of everyday life and ways of coping with them, the school community was short of knowledge in safety policy. For instance the management argued that to some parents, it defeats logic to put up a perimeter wall round a 20 acre piece of land, teachers houses, seek professional input in site selection, development and maintenance when to them a school bus or teaching learning material should

ideally be a priority. Teachers and QASOs on the other hand observed that principals lack knowledge on safety policy requirements as well since majority of them had never seen the safety policy guideline. For instance knowledge on use of firefighting equipment and fire drills was found lacking among the school community members.

Change is resistible and this was evident within the school and without the school community of the current study findings. Respondents said that principals' attitude towards safety policy implementation was negative because of the financial implications and the processes of consulting experts in implementation of some guidelines yet schools operated on thin budgets. Teachers were not supportive as safety policy implementation was viewed as a management exercise.

Monitoring and Evaluation of safety policy implementation was basically lacking in secondary schools. The QASOs blamed it on the MOE for lack of personnel and adequate financial resources at the district to carry out M&E of safety policy implementation inputs and processes. Teachers and boarding mistresses found lack of M& E as a loophole for the management to prioritize safety policy implementation. A paltry 23% of principals were of the view that lack of M&E led to the delay in putting up some guidelines in place that require some expert input. Lack of M&E failed identification of inadequacies in inputs, process review and making of summative statements about the outcome regarding safety policy implementation. These findings concurred with Nabris (2002) who stated that evaluation is only effective where there are sufficient human, financial and other valuable logistic resources.

The CDF since initiation in 2003 has played a significant role in infrastructure development and maintenance in Kenyan schools. However the study findings point out that political goodwill had a bearing on use of CDF towards safety policy implementation. Respondents argued that most beneficiaries of CDF were those who supported the incumbent Member of Parliament. It was therefore not obvious that politicians supported safety policy implementation through CDF. This study finding partially disagreed with Bray (1999) survey in Cambodia which revealed that 40% of schools received school buildings from politicians while in another instance, politicians paid for school building constructions.

Although rural electrification project is gaining ground in Bungoma East district, this study revealed that 31% of schools lack electricity power supply. In some schools, students were forced to carry kerosene lamps to school despite the dangers involved. Although in Nigeria 23 girls were burnt to death in a dormitory when a kerosene lamp overturned, some of the schools in Bungoma East don't seem to have learnt from the fateful situation. Boarding mistresses observed that without electricity it was not easy to manage some areas in school. For instance most schools used borehole water and with unmaintained fences, outsiders found their ways to the compound which risked water safety. Ensuring students security at night was not guaranteed as thugs easily cropped in dark areas while security personnel kept off for fear of the unknown.

Timeframe in policy implementation is very important as it ensures implementation process is within given time. Deadlines and ultimatums are characteristic of communications in Kenyan schools as a way of keeping the concerned on toes. While QASOs confirmed lack of specified timeframe in implementing the safety policy, only 8% of principals and 80% of teachers cited timeframe as a challenge towards safety policy implementation. The idea of introducing deadlines is to accompany some form of punishment and discipline to ensure that implementation is within schedule. It was this failure to set specified timeframe that gave implementing bodies and persons basis to adopt a snail pace so much that over a decade down the line, girls' safety in boarding secondary schools was still a thorny issue. Principals were seemingly under no pressure to implement the safety policy within some period of time although Republic of Kenya, (2001) emphasized implementation to the letter.

Safety policy implementation calls for corporate responsibility however 54% of teachers cited lack of teacher motivation as a challenge. They observed that there was lack of team work in the implementation of the safety policy which had a negative impact on implementation. Teacher monetary motivation in Kenya from time memorial increasingly dominated the public domain. While teachers are well placed to sabotage or harmonize school activities in Kenya, this study established that lack of monetary motivation adversely affected teachers' participation in safety policy implementation.

Studies by Makoa (2004); and Kiniale (2000 cited in Musomi, 2008) indicated that implementation process not only called for investment and expenditure but also for attitudinal and institutional change; where head teachers are charged with the responsibility of changing attitudes of the collaborative group and creating awareness that leads to teamwork. However the current study established that principal's duty to change teachers' expectations and bring them on board to be part and parcel of the implementation team lacked in practice. The safety policy was an initiative towards disaster risk reduction in boarding secondary schools in Kenya. This study established that principals put various strategies in place as a measure towards disaster risk reduction in boarding schools. Majority of schools prioritized safety policy implementation in their school strategic plans to guide implementation.

Principals also stressed on regular health inspection of premises and students to help the school management

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identify areas that might cause disasters such as water source, boarding facilities in terms of adequacy to avoid congestion and good ventilation, students' food and hygiene standards to be observed. The QASOs in their strategies indicated closer working relations with public health officers and Ministry of water. Congestion in dormitories was blamed on the death of 27 girls in Bombolulu girls boarding (Oriang', 2001) while seven boys lost their lives for consuming dirty water in Bungoma, Kenya (Kasumba, 2004). Schools were on an ongoing exercise to renovate buildings to address building safety which include emergency exits, removal of grilles from windows and doors, installation of doors that open outwards and installation of firefighting equipment among others. It was however noted that all these could not be done at once but in piecemeal. Both categories of respondents said that the work further involved use of experts such as public works, registered architects, quantity surveyors and contractors in site planning, design, construction and maintenance of buildings. The strategy was timely as fierce fire tragedies in one of Ugandan girls boarding secondary school saw the demise of 20 girls. Investigations revealed that classrooms were converted into dormitories without consulting the district engineer and the health officers whose technical and professional advice was otherwise most essential at the time (Mzungu, 2008).

Most of the respondents reported lack of knowledge in safety policy among both school community and parents as major project financiers. In their strategies both the principals and QASOs indicated that creating awareness to students, parents, school and neighboring community through seminars and workshops was a crucial aspect of knowledge acquisition on safety policy. Students would be taken through fire drills, warning signs to look out for in the school such as hanging electric wires and cracks in walls among others. This strategy concurs with Onderi and Makori (2012; 2013) study findings stating that PTA roles among others included raising funds for various school projects, management of school finance and looking after the welfare of the school community.

Financial constraints were cited as a challenge by all respondents where the school management must properly strategize to source for funds. This study revealed that County government and MOE were the major strategic options as indicated by principals and QASOs. Such funding would also facilitate QASOs to carry out regular assessment and M&E of the implementation process. The strategy resonated well with earlier study findings by Kukali (2010) which established that the MOE funded 23% of provincial schools currently known as County schools for the acquisition of fire extinguishers only.

Disasters reported in boarding secondary schools were sometimes blamed on outsiders who invade schools at night. The schools' fencing systems was in the pipeline especially in schools with weak structures however it was not clear whether this would include perimeter wall. Hiring of security personnel from reliable security firms plus installation of surveillance cameras beefed up security to keep off night intruders.

Since the recent past, many students are losing their lives through school bus road accidents. To this end, school management strategies included fitting school buses with speed governors and insuring them. School drivers undergo intensive vetting exercise during interviews touching on driver's possession of PSV qualifications, valid driving license, experience and a certificate of good conduct to qualify for employability. This was to comply with the MOE safety standards Manual for schools in Kenya (MOE, 2008). The safety standards in school are under the observance of the internally appointed teacher in charge of school safety as was reported in 54% of schools. The department was meant to be supported by students who were encouraged to report any safety concerns.

6. Conclusion

This study noted that both convergent and divergent issues emerged regarding challenges faced in implementing safety policy among respondents. Most of the challenges identified were convergent, however, the strength given to each challenge varied from respondent to respondent. Reasons attributed to cited challenges were divergent as managers were defensive and finger pointing while teachers' and partly PTA chairpersons' arguments were causal effect in nature. This therefore implied that challenges cited by principals were about perceptions and the implication on their management. Based on the findings, this study concluded that lack and or inadequate financial resources and mismanagement influenced implementation of safety policy in girls' boarding secondary schools in Bungoma East District. The QASOs as agents of MOE failed to carry out their duties that entailed assessment and M&E during the implementation process, consequently principals relaxed in putting more effort to implementation. The input into implementation was inadequate in terms of material and financial resources. The process lacked necessary M&E procedures due to inadequate personnel and none implementation of assessment recommendations. The product of safety policy implementation was finally unsatisfactory causing discrepancies between policy as stated and policy as implemented. The fencing structures in girls' boarding secondary schools do not provide adequate security to girls in boarding secondary schools. Schools had good strategies regarding disaster risk reduction in girls boarding secondary schools however, just like the good safety policy guideline and safety standards manuals, it was not clear if the strategies will work out for schools.

7. Recommendation

This study recommended that the MOE needs to provide school management with adequate financial support to facilitate construction of perimeter walls and electric fencing to enhance security in girls' boarding secondary schools. With the new Constitution that advocates for devolution, the County government should support schools financially and materially on safety policy implementation. More staff is needed at the district level to enhance, assessment and M&E of school safety policy implementation. The government should have a clear policy on girls' safety in secondary schools rather than the current general one. The school management should make consultations with professionals and experts to come up with strategies focusing on disaster risk reduction in girls' boarding secondary schools.

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