

Effect of Security Personnel in Provision of Quality Education in Public Secondary Schools in Embu County, Kenya

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Abstract:- Provision of quality education requires a multidimensional approach incorporating other players in the subsector including security personnel. Quality education needs a safe and secure environment. This study assessed the effect of security personnel in providing quality education in 165 public secondary schools of Embu County, Kenya. The main objective of the study was to investigate the effect of security personnel in provision of quality education in public secondary schools in Embu County, Kenya. Institution theory by Meyer and Rowan was adopted. This study involved descriptive survey design and utilized qualitative research method. Stratified, purposive techniques were used to select the sample size. Data was collected by observation, use of open-ended questionnaires, and in-depth interview. Pretesting of instruments was done to determine validity and reliability. A sample size of 20% was used for population above 50, 30% for any category above 10 but not exceeding 50. Census was used for cases below 10, All principals, one student per school and all security personnel in public secondary schools were targeted. Results were presented using tables, pie charts and graphs. Relevant authorities were sought permission to collect data for the study. Findings indicated that security personnel were very important in providing conducive environment for learning, more than half of them were not trained, terms of service were not clear. The research recommends that: security personnel should be trained and involved in school administration, policy should be reviewed to spell clear terms of employment and further studies in other education institutions like special education and polytechnics.

Keywords:- Security Personnel, Quality Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Quality Education refers to a mode of learning in which habits, skills and knowledge of categories of people are transferred from one person onwards through teaching, research and training as expected by the society. Quality education can also mean holistic education where psychomotor skills, attitudes, moral values and cognitive domains are developed according to the expectations of the society. In order to achieve quality education a safe and secure environment is required, United Nations Children

Education Fund (UNICEF, 2010). In 2021, the Ministry of Education (MoE) through the permanent secretary in a circular dated 9th November 2021, directed the regional and county directors countrywide to urgently convey board of management (BoM) in meetings to discuss the discipline of students and share resolutions with the county Education Board for necessary action. He further directed the BoM to work closely with officers of interior and co-ordination of national government to ensure adequate and enhanced security is provided in schools. This was as a result of general outcry by stakeholders that learning was disrupted by frequent strikes in schools.

A. Statement of the Problem

Teachers and trainers are responsible for impacting knowledge, skills and competences. However, the role of ensuring the success of the exercise, will depend on the safety of the security of a particular institution where learning is taking place. Provision of quality education has been affected adversely in several schools in Kenya and Embu County in particular due to matters related to security. In the last five years, a number of schools have faced unrest and smuggling in of drugs into the school, among others, hence affecting teaching and learning outcomes. The problem, therefore, is assessment of the effect of security personnel in provision of quality education in public secondary schools in Embu County, Kenya.

B. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study was to investigate the effect of security personnel in provision of quality education in public secondary schools in Embu County, Kenya.

C. Significance of the Study

The study evaluated the effect of duty performance of security personnel and provision of quality education in secondary schools, particularly in Embu County and other counties in general. The findings of the study informed both the county and national governments on the formulation of policies to deploy security personnel on appropriate jobs to ensure optimal utilisation of this cadre.

D. Justification of the Study

The issue of security in secondary schools is a global concern. A study conducted by Kirui et al. (2011) revealed that approximately 4,200 teachers who imparted knowledge

and 282,000 students were assaulted every month. The study further reviewed that in Kenya, security personnel were not conversant with vital strategies in handling security matters.

E. Scope of the Study

The study covered public secondary schools in Embu only. The study considered various contributions by security personnel related to quality of education among secondary schools.

F. Literature Review

This study was guided by Institutional Theory by Meyer and Rowan (1977).

G. Institutional Theory

Institutional theory states that within the organization, the environment has a direct effect on the development of formal organizational structures. This theory was founded by Meyer and Rowan (1977) and later proved to be popular in organisational management. It was applied in various studies including Mohamed (2017) who argues that organizational formations depend on shared beliefs. According to Scott (2004), institutions should abide by the rules and belief systems that prevail in their environment, in order to succeed. Ideally, secondary schools are institutions that focus on a culture of instilling knowledge, skills and competences aimed at producing holistic individuals. Syllabuses are not covered effectively and by extension, the moral character of learners is affected adversely. This is in agreement with Kirui et al. (2011). Security personnel should therefore, be motivated and involved in issues pertaining a secure and safe environment for proper learning to take place.

United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2022), insecurity affects learners and schools, in that the government and parents incur extra costs for maintaining security and physical safety of learners. It further affects learning and teaching outcomes for the staff and students. A number of scholars have conducted studies about security personnel in provision of quality education especially in developed countries and African countries. However, many of them approach the topic from the point of view of financing secondary education focusing mainly on wage bill per cadre, as reflected in the works of Bako (2020). He further argues that security personnel are vital in the development, growth and implementation of plans to create a sense of safety within secondary schools.

In South Africa, Mgadla X. (2014), conducted a study on basic security and safety status of physical environments in schools and recommended that there should be planned surveillance and collaboration with stakeholders. However, it did not investigate on other duties by security personnel in relation to the security roles with provision of quality education. This study specifically focused on the effect of security personnel in provision of quality education in Embu County in Kenya.

School safety is essential and an integral part of teaching set-up, leading to a safe learning school climate and creates skills and competences by the learner, retention and

completion of the study and finally improves the quality of education. Syllabuses are not covered effectively and by extension, the moral character of learners is affected adversely. Kirui, (2011). Therefore, the effect of security personnel in provision of quality education in public secondary schools cannot be underrated. This is supported by Opondo et al. (2015) who argue that operating a pool-proof security system in a school creates a secure environment for learning and teaching allowing learners to concentrate in their studies and eventually do well in their exams.

According to Opondo et al. (2015), security personnel work under poor conditions, such as low motivation, inadequate working tools and low pay. Therefore, government should take responsibility for all security personnel employed in educational institutions and consider reviewing policies to improve their salaries and working conditions. The Government of Kenya further recommends that every school should provide a learner-friendly environment, free of drugs and substance abuse (MoE, 2021). This can be implemented by trained and motivated security personnel.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Research Design

This study incorporated descriptive survey design since it allows the researcher to analyse the whole population using a sample as a representation. This research design is considered relevant for this study as it allows the use of thematic methods to collect data such as questionnaires, observation, document analysis and interviews. The design assists the researcher to obtain a large number of respondents and inspect a wide range of policy implementation issues (Sharma, 2019). Furthermore, as supported by Kothari (2014), the descriptive survey design will be appropriate because it is concerned with collection, analysis and presentation of information that was or is already available.

B. Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Embu County, which is located to the East of Mt. Kenya, whose pinnacle cuts through the county's eastern boundary. It is surrounded by many counties, including Kirinyaga to the west, Tharaka-Nithi to the north, and Kitui to the East.

C. Target Population

The target population included the principals, students' representatives and security personnel in public secondary schools in Embu County. Each school is headed by one principal. Hence, all principals in public secondary schools were targeted.

D. Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A sample size of 20 percent was used for population above 50 characters, was used in this study, as proposed by Khan (2020). The study also drew a sample of 30 percent from any category with the population above 10 but not exceeding 50 characters. Nevertheless, in the case of national schools (two schools), census was used.

This study employed stratified and purposive sampling technique. All public schools were classified according to the categories and types; national boys’ schools and national girls’ schools, county boys’ schools and for girls, and then sub-county schools for both boys and girls (mixed schools). Any school considered for sampling had done Kenya Certificate for Secondary Examination (KCSE) for at least five years. Depending on the numbers, a representative sample was selected to represent the target population. The sample sizes were drawn per category of schools depending on the number in that category.

E. Sampling of Schools

The researcher listed down all the schools according to their categories. More importantly, the representative sample percentage varied from 10 (census) for very small population to 30 percent for large population categories. Public secondary schools were classified as national, extra county, county and sub-county schools (Basic Education Act, 2013). This categorisation and establishment are both analysed in Table 1.

Table 1: Categories of Government Secondary Schools in Embu

Type of School	Number	Percentage	Sample
National	2	100	Census
Extra County	23	30	7
County	24	30	8
Sub-county County	116	30	35
Total	165		60

F. Sampling of Principals

Table 2 shows sampling of principals of government secondary schools in Embu. Each school has one principal and hence their number is equal to the number of schools per each category. Sampling of principals was similar to that of

school such that all principals of national schools were selected while those in county schools were sampled at thirty percent. Similarly, principals of sub-county schools were sampled at thirty percent.

Table 2: Sampling of Public Secondary School Principals

Category of school	Number of schools	Number of principals	Percentage	Sample
National	2	2	100	Census
Extra county	23	23	30	7
County	24	24	30	7
Sub-county	116	116	30	35
Total	165	165		51

G. Sampling of Students

For students’ population, one senior student (mainly the president) was selected per category of schools through purposeful sampling. Thus, there were a total of 165 students

selected through purposeful sampling. The researcher made a deliberate attempt to cover all sub-counties for fair representation and more accurate information.

Table 3: Sampling of Students of Public Secondary Schools

Category of School	Number of Schools	Number of Students
National	2	2
Extra County	23	23
County	24	24
Sub-county	116	116
Total	165	165

H. Sampling of Security Personnel by Category of Secondary Schools

Different categories of secondary schools have varying numbers of security personnel depending on their establishments. Nevertheless, each established public secondary school had its security personnel. In such a

situation, schools were classified as outlined under subsection 3.5 in accordance with the Basic Education Act, 2013. From this arrangement, a sample of schools was drawn from each category and then sampling of security personnel was conducted per each category. In this case, schools were selected per category using random sampling.

Table 4: Sampling of Security Personnel by Type of School

Type of School	Number in the Category	Security personnel establishment per school Category	Total number of security personnel in the school category	Sampling Percentage	Sample Size
National	2	28	12 (6x2)	30	4
Extra County	23	18	115 (5x23)	20	23

County	24	13	72 (3x24)	20	14
Sub-County	116	6	232 (2x116)	20	46
Total	165		431		87

The sampling of categories of security personnel is analysed in Table 4. Here a sample of 30 percent of security personnel was drawn from national schools. For county and sub-county schools sampling was done at 20 percent as supported by Gay and Airasian (2003) in Khan (2020) who claim perhaps the sample size for descriptive research ought to be approximately 10% to 20% of the population.

I. Instrumentation

Data was collected by using open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews. For school principals, data collection was done by use of in-depth interviews while questionnaires were administered to students and security personnel.

J. Pretesting of Research Instruments

The study was carried out to assist in assessing the quality of data collection instruments in two public secondary schools. Two experts who are the research supervisors from Kenya Methodist University School of Education were consulted to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. In addition, the researcher ascertained that the items adequately covered the research objectives. The results of the pilot study were used to check for and correct any ambiguity.

The research instruments were above 0.7 which is the accepted level based on Cronbach coefficient which is the recommended level for pilot study.

K. Data Collection Procedure

The research permit was obtained from the NACOSTI after obtaining a letter of introduction from Kenya Methodist University. Permission was also sought from Embu County Commissioner, the County Director of Education, and principals of sampled schools to conduct research. The researcher informed the principals of the selected schools using mobile phone and booked appointments to deliver the questionnaires and conduct interviews. The researcher personally visited the selected schools in order to establish personal connection with the school authorities for the purpose of data collection. The researcher then distributed the questionnaires to the participants and once filled they were collected. Efforts were made not to interrupt the normal running of institutional programmes.

L. Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed in accordance to Taherdoost (2016), where the data was organized into patterns, categories and descriptive units in order to have relationships between them and conclusions were drawn.

M. Analysis of Qualitative Data

The data were entered into the computer using STATA version 17. The generated results were presented using narratives, tables, percentages, and graphs to facilitate interpretation of the findings. In order to represent actual situation, citations, interpretive and narrative reports were written down. Collected data was analyzed and interpreted in relation to the research questions, and conclusions drawn in relation to research objectives.

N. Quantitative data analysis

Questionnaires were sorted out to ensure only the completed ones are analysed while incomplete ones were discarded. The study variables were assigned different codes and defined accordingly before formulating equations or models showing causal relationships between independent and dependent variables. Once coded, various diagnostic tests were conducted to eliminate any type of biasness. Such tests included, multicollinearity autocorrelation, normality, heteroskedasticity and linearity. These tests enabled the researcher to establish the suitability of the collected data in satisfying various assumptions.

Hypothesis testing was later done through regression analysis using Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Method. The model to be tested is formulated as follows:

$$QE = \alpha + \beta_1 + ESP + \mu \dots\dots\dots 1$$

Where:

- QE - Quality Education
- α - Constant
- β_{1...4} - Coefficient
- ESP - Effect of Security personnel
- μ - Disturbance Term

The coded data inputs were fed into the computer statistical package using appropriate commands, and through this process, the output data was analysed and the results interpreted.

O. Ethical Consideration

The researcher strictly observed all legal and ethical considerations as expected in conducting research. The researcher sought permission to conduct study from NACOSTI and other relevant authorities.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic data on total number of principals and students interviewed from various categories of schools were as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Demographic Data on Principals and Students Characteristics

Respondent	School Category (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Period of Stay
Principal	County - 13.33%	43.33%	56.67%	less than 1 - 25% 1 to 5 - 53.33% Above 5 - 21.67%
	Sub-county - 71.67%			
	Extra county - 11.67%			
	National - 3.33%			
Students	County-12.82% Sub-county- 73.85% Extra county- 12.31% National-1.03%	50.77%	49.23%	Form 4 - 64.10% Form 3 -29.74% Form 2 - 6.15%

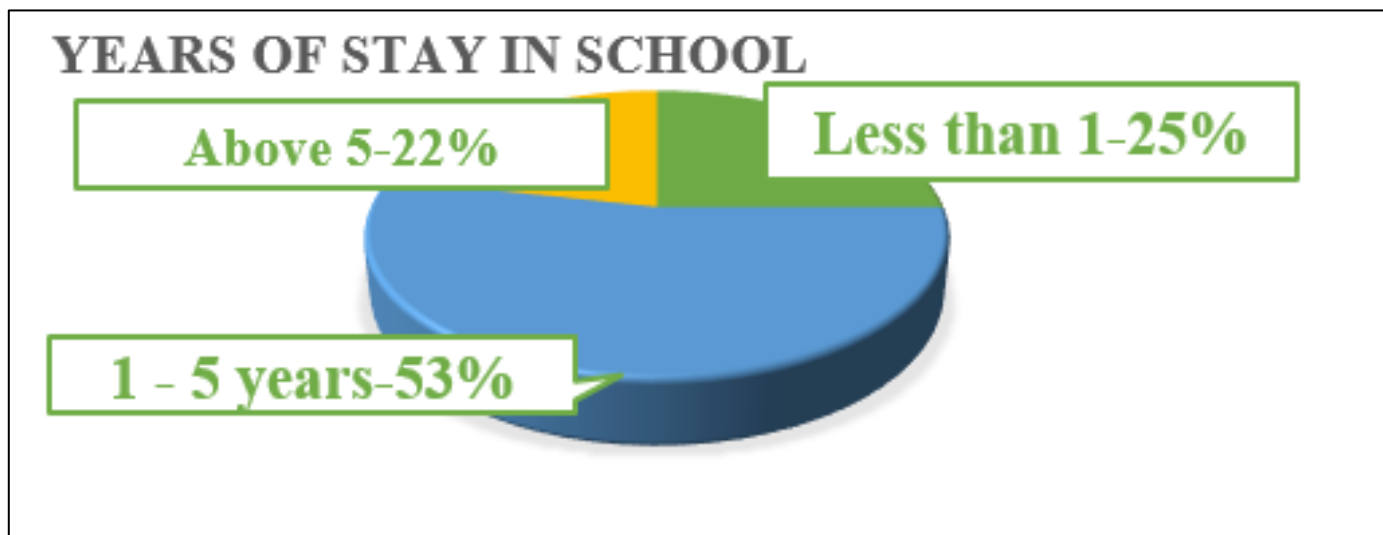


Fig 1: Demographic Data on Principals' Period of Stay in School

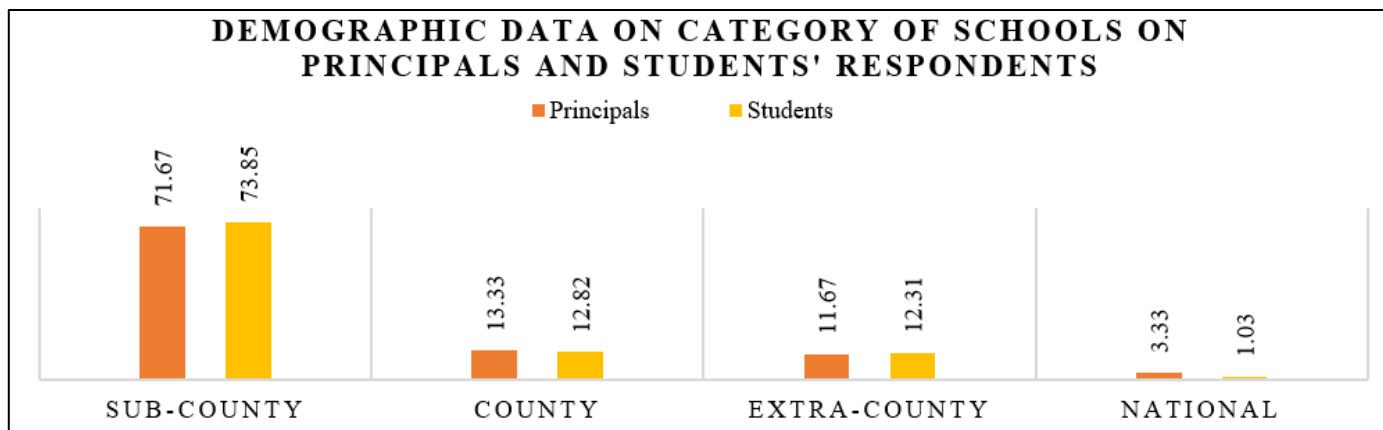


Fig 2: Demographic Data on Category of Schools on Principals and Students' Respondents

A. *Determining the Importance of Security Personnel Participation in Security and Environment on Provision of Quality Education*

To assess whether the security personnel was influential in providing quality education, the principals and students were asked to rate whether the security provided was very important or not important. Results showed that 85% of the principals rated security as very important while 15% rated it as not important. Further, 70% of the students rated security as very important while 30% rated it as not very important. Table 7 shows the principal-student response on the importance of security in the provision of quality education.

- **Note:** To avoid biases in response, security personnel were not asked to respond to this question as it involved their credit directly.

Table 6: Principal-Student Response on the Importance of Security in the Provision of Quality Education

Respondent	Security Importance in the provision of quality education
Principals	Very important- 85% Not important- 15%
Students	Very important- 70% Not important- 30%

B. Examining Other Duties Performed by Security Personnel

The findings on other duties performed by the security personnel in provision of quality education included but not

limited to guidance and counselling as found in Table 8. The findings showed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that security personnel were instrumental in guidance and counselling.

Table 7: Students, Principals and Security Personnel Responses on Security Personnel Participation in Guidance and Counselling

Respondent	Minimizing emotional and psychological trauma among special needs students	Helping students to develop knowledge, skills, and sound moral values	Helping students in growing up into self-reliant individuals	Helping students to shy away from drug and substance abuse
Principals	Strongly agree-90% Strongly disagree-10%	Strongly agree-85% Strongly disagree-15%	Strongly agree-90% Strongly disagree-10%	Strongly agree-95% Strongly disagree-5%
Students	Strongly agree-90% Strongly disagree-10%	Strongly agree-90% Strongly disagree-10%	Strongly agree-90% Strongly disagree-10%	Strongly agree-90% Strongly disagree-10%
Security personnel	Strongly agree-100% Strongly disagree-0%	Strongly agree-96% Strongly disagree-4%	Strongly agree-76% Strongly disagree-24%	Strongly agree-84% Strongly disagree-16%

C. Government Policies and Security Personnel in Provision of Quality Education

Since the operation of education institutions are guided and controlled by the government, it was vital to investigate if the government policies which controls security personnel in public secondary schools affect the provision of quality education. To achieve this, security personnel were asked

some of the legal administrative document which were used to protect their welfare in the schools, the findings showed that, 53% of security personnel reported to be unaware of these legal documents while 47% were found to be aware of these documents. Table 8 presents the findings on government policies and the role of security personnel in provision of quality education.

Table 8: Government Policies and the Role of Security personnel in Provision of Quality Education

Respondent	Awareness	Type of the legal document	Implementability	Importance rating
Security personnel	Agreed - 53% Disagreed – 47%	Constitution of Kenya- 46.67% Labour Act – 48.33% HIV act – 5%	Agreed - 28.33% Disagreed – 71.67%	Very supportive- 20% Poorly supportive- 65% Not supportive- 15%

IV. DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

85% of the principals and 70% of the students agree that the role of security personnel is very important in provision of quality education in public secondary school in Embu County. This is in agreement with Bako (2020), who argues that the security personnel are vital in the development and implementation of the safe school plans as they create a sense of safety within secondary schools.

Apart from guarding the school, 90% of both the principals and the students agree that the security personnel perform other duties such as guidance and counselling and environmental management specifically in: Minimizing emotional and psychological trauma among special needs students, Helping students to develop knowledge, skills, and sound moral values, Helping students in growing up into self-reliant individuals, Helping students to shy away from drug and substance abuse, Inculcating in learners’ value for good health, Creating and maintaining safe and secure environment that facilitates and enhances quality teaching and learning processes, and Improvement of standards of health and hygiene in school, among others. This is in agreement with Unison (2020) who argued that security personnel are stars in their work environments as they also help in other various

activities in the institutions thus helping to create a learner friendly environment.

This is attributed by the fact that students interact frequently with the security personnel and that most of the security personnel are drawn from the locality hence they are intrinsically motivated to care for their property and their children. They also act as role model to the learners.

There is no clear policy regarding the welfare of security personnel in schools especially in terms and conditions of employment. Security officers are employed by BoM and their salaries vary depending on the category of the school and schools’ ability to pay. Government Circular, (MoE 2021), allows the secondary school BoM to employ the security personnel by their ability to pay and those who can multitask.

Most of security officers are not trained and majority are old men neighboring the schools, except for National and Extra-County schools, who have employed services of security firms who are also semi-trained. This was reviewed by the principals and the security officers. It is also further in agreement with Mgadla X. (2014) who in his study found out that most of the security officers were not trained and further recommended for training of such cadre.

V. CONCLUSION

From the findings, it was concluded that security personnel affect learners and schools as well as the learning and teaching outcomes for the staff and students.

The security personnel are important in the running and facilitation of quality education. The study further concluded that the security personnel also partake in other duties that are not clearly defined in their terms of employment. It was concluded that members of security personnel are not employed by the government, thus, their remuneration depends on the will of the Board of Management of a particular institution

Therefore, the effect of security personnel in provision of quality education in public secondary schools cannot be underrated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the government should formulate and review policies to deploy security personnel on appropriate jobs to ensure optimal utilisation; security personnel should be trained on relevant knowledge and skills in order to handle sophisticated, dynamic and digital fields related to security. School administration and management should involve the security personnel on specific areas of concern. The research recommends further research in other educational institutions and on other members of support staff. Duties of the security personnel should be clearly defined for accountability.

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