

Mitigation Measures To Minimize The Problem Of Juvenile Delinquency Among Secondary Schools Adolescents In Mumias Sub-County, Kakamega County, Kenya

Margaret M Mayieka

Dr. Enock Obuba, PhD

Scholar, Faculty of Education, Media and Human Resource Management,
Kisii University

Abstract: *The growing rate of juvenile delinquency has turned into a noteworthy social concern internationally and locally. For more than two decades, this has greatly undermined the adolescents' socialization. In this regard, the parents, teachers and general public's efforts to curb the problem has not been impressive, hence the present study sought to explore the mitigation measures to minimize the problem of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in Mumias sub-county, Kakamega County, Kenya. The study adopts descriptive survey research design to explain the various study variables. In obtaining the required sample size, the study used cluster sampling, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques. The target population of this study was 102 guidance and counselling teachers and 567 class teachers. The sample of the study consisted of 81 guidance and counselling teachers and 227 class teachers. Data was collected using questionnaire and interview schedules. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. The study established that the possible intervention strategies to curb the incidences of students' indulgence in various delinquent behaviours included the improvement of parenting practices; sensitization of parents on way of identifying delinquent behaviours; the use of mentoring programs and public awareness and education; and teacher support for delinquent students. The findings of the investigation might be important to secondary school overseers, the parents or guardians, teachers among other partners in giving them cutting-edge information on the measures to curb juvenile delinquent behaviours among adolescents.*

Keywords: *Counselling, Delinquency, Guidance, Juvenile, Mitigation*

I. INTRODUCTION

Schools are the ones that provide formal education, an essential process that every individual needs to experience in life today. Education therefore ought to be far reaching, comprehensive and not simply mere transcription of thoughts and mastering skills of answering question at the end of the course (Werunga, Ngome & Munialo, (2016). Accordingly, formal education's aim is to mould desirable practices among the students and blurring the bad ones. However, this key part of Education has not been completely accomplished as the students' conduct in schools is a common issue influencing secondary schools in many countries on the planet (Yahaya,

Ramli, Hashim, Ibrahim, Rahman, & Yahaya, 2009). Therefore, currently many secondary schools are day by day dealing with inappropriate behaviours among students.

On the society's moral values, Agbowuro, Oriade, Umeh and Solomon (2016) observe that in each and every community, there are set of laws and guidelines governing the behaviours of its members. A contravention of these set standards usually leads to the indulgence of antisocial behaviours. They further explain that juvenile delinquents are minors between the ages of ten and eighteen who violates the set moral standards. Also according to the Thesaurus dictionary online (2016), juvenile delinquencies are behaviours indulged by children or youths that are manifested

by the violation of law, unrelenting malice, noncompliance, or intractability as to thwart correction by parents or guardian, teachers or any adults and to constitute a matter for by the minor or juvenile courts.

Internationally, there has been a growing worrying trend of delinquent behaviours among secondary school adolescents. These behaviours have been identified as a major problem affecting adolescents and the implementation of educational policies in many developed and developing nations. This is because the delinquent behaviours affect peer relations, teachers and parents (Sailor, 2010). In this regard, Clark (2013) observed that students' involvement in deviant behaviour has been a major challenge to policy makers because it disrupts teaching and learning process in schools. Scaggs (2009) further pointed out that the students who engaged in delinquent behaviours became a burden to school authorities due to the waste of valuable time used to solve indiscipline cases which interferes with school processes, academic performance and interpersonal relationships among teachers and students.

Robert, Zhang, and Truman (2012) in their report on the indicators for crime and safety noted that 85% of state funded schools in America recorded at least one occurrences of stealing that had occurred between 2009– 10 school year. Another review by Josephson Institute Center for Youth Ethics (2012) announced that one out of three boys and four girls conceded stealing something in 2012. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data in the United States of America from 2000 to 2011 further indicated that 45% of all vicious crimes and 56 % of all property crimes arrests were carried out by people younger than 25 years old.

In Nigeria, Muhammed et al (2010) noted that youths in the nation are more often than not associated with armed robbery, cultism, kidnapping, abuse of drugs and other criminal conduct. In supporting this reality, the Imo state commander of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) deplored that the youths were the most associated with illegal drugs use and dealing, examination malpractice, alcoholism, forgery, rape, social violence, armed robbery, absence of respect for the elders and different various social ills (Nkwopara, 2011). In the light of the disgusting issues of juvenile misconduct in Nigeria and Owerri Municipality, researchers and concerned residents have ascribed the menace to different factors, for example, destitution, peer pressure, instability in families, abuse of drugs et cetera (Nwankwo et al 2010). However, the study did not explore the measure that can be employed to curb the problem which was the concern of the present study.

Throughout the last two decades, the government of the Republic of Kenya has recognized Education as a fundamental right and an intense instrument for national development and reduction of poverty (Ministry of Education, 2011). For that matter, the government has endeavored to address the issues inherent in education framework through Committees and Task Forces with the aim of enhancing the quality of education. For example, in Session Paper No. 1 of 2005, the government committed itself to giving an education framework that ensures quality and importance of education to each Kenyan child (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

To guarantee order, discipline and smooth running of school, each school in Kenya has an set of tenets and controls which act as a code of discipline to guide and govern the suitable and unsuitable conduct of students, failure to which is viewed as misconduct (Werunga, Ngome and Munialo, 2016). In spite of the effort that has been put to improve conduct in schools, research has demonstrated that students' involved in different delinquent practices in schools is still a major issue influencing the school life for many, students (Grant, Potenza, Krishnan-Sarin, Cavallo, and Desai, 2011). What's more, Hamasi (2010) reported that despite the measures put in place by the Ministry of Education to shape students' behaviour and practices, schools and government's effort to mitigate the behaviour problem in school has not been that successful.

Further, in Kenya, deviant behaviour has been a major challenge in secondary schools. In recent years, school strikes have been associated with drug abuse, truancy and bullying. Peer pressure and media influence have been featuring in the list of motivators regarding drug abuse, which increases the chances of students' bullying and truancy (Nyaga, 2015). Studies on students' indiscipline have been carried out in Kenya. Kyalo (2010) conducted a study on managing students discipline problems at Yatta district secondary schools. In his study, he looked at students discipline at individual level. Kahindi (2012) carried out a study that targeted secondary schools in Kaloleni district, and identified the common indiscipline cases. These were disobedience to authority, lack of courtesy and respect. He reported that the factors that contributed to school unrest were as a result of poor parenting, peer pressure, laxity of teachers, inadequacy of facilities for the proper implementation of the curriculum, harsh and unjustified punishments and drug abuse. However, these studies did not investigate the measures that should be employed to curb the problem.

From the Department of Children's Services Database of 2010, the number of children in conflict with law has risen significantly in the past two decades. The current wave of unrest in Kenyan secondary schools is an indication of a serious problem of juvenile delinquency that is, children in conflict with law. Hence, the researcher is of the opinion that this might affect learning and students' academic performance in secondary school. Therefore, the present study attempts to establish the mitigation measure that may curb students' indulgence in various delinquency behaviours in Mumias sub-county, Kakamega County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Nigeria, Philomena (2014) conducted a study to investigate into the impact of juvenile delinquency on academic performance of junior secondary school. The study used a sample size of 80 students. The researcher made the following recommendations among others to curb juvenile delinquent behaviours: Delinquent students should be shown love by teachers as this will instil value and self esteem in the students which will in turn enhance learning. Teachers should not neglect delinquent students in the course of teaching but rather try to understand each student as an individual and treat each in a unique way. Counselling units should be set up in all

secondary schools in Zaria educational zone. Also, school authorities should always seek the support of parents in formulating policies.

In Nigeria, Joy and Azuka (2011) carried a study to explore socio-cultural factors that predisposed secondary school adolescents to delinquent behaviour. The survey adopted an ex-post-facto design. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to obtain 246 students within the ages of 14 to 20 from six senior secondary schools. The instrument for data collection was a Questionnaire on Adolescent Delinquent Behaviour (QADB). To curb the problem, it was recommended that the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should organize workshops for adolescents on cultural diversity. The need to harness culture as an instrument for developing socially acceptable behaviour should be emphasized. Subsequently, through these seminars and workshops, the negative peer influence will be drastically be reduced and this will in turn improve the tone of schools.

In Kenya, Kamau (2011) conducted a study to assess parental factors influencing delinquency among secondary school girls in boarding schools. The Social leaning theory and attachment theory were used to give a theoretical and pragmatic explanation of the position of both the parents and their children. To curb delinquency behaviours among secondary students, the study recommended that parents should have warm communicative with their children, reward good behaviour and punish their children reasonably. This study provided a wealth of findings relevant to the current study. However, the study focused exclusively on secondary school girls without analysing the delinquent behaviours among boys. The proposed study fills this gap.

In Kenya, Omboto, Gerald, Odhiambo and Ayugi (2013) conducted a study on the factors that were influencing youth crime and juvenile delinquency. To curb the problem, the study found out that parents must be responsible for their children up to the time when they would be in the a position to take care of themselves. This involves providing for their children's material needs and giving them moral guidance. Despite this study providing a wealth of insights relevant to this study, it employed a single method of data collection contrary to the current study which uses multiple approaches in data collection, analysis, and presentation. This provides a deeper understanding into the phenomenon under study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Secondary school adolescents' involvement in various delinquent behaviours is a big threat to the Kenyan society. This is because they destabilize the students' learning and socialisation processes. In school situation, they lead to wastage of valuable study time due to punishments and other corrective measures that are imposed on these students. The behaviours also decrease the chance of a student completing secondary education. This has been of great concern to teachers, parents, and policy makers. According to Vision 2030, the Government is committed to adding the funding in the learning institutions, employing more teachers and improving school monitoring mechanisms to ensure quality of basic education in all learning institution in order to support activities under the economic pillar. These efforts of the

government may become futile unless the issue of delinquent behaviour is addressed. The rising trend of antisocial behaviours among students threatens to jeopardize the realization of the national goals of education and development. Between 2010 and 2017, Kenyan secondary schools have experienced the highest number of student unrest cases. This prompted the researcher to find out the mitigation measures that can be used to curb the problem of delinquent behaviours among adolescent in secondary schools in Mumias sub-county, Kakamega County, Kenya.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore the mitigation measures to minimize the problem of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design was found appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect qualitative information by interviewing and administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. The design is also ideal because it allow the collection of information about people's opinions and habits (Orodho, 2009).

The target population comprised of 54 guidance and counselling teachers and 218 class teachers. The study employed cluster, purposive and simple random sampling design. Cluster random sampling was used to select schools from various geographical divisions. Cluster sampling ensured that all the geographic divisions were equally represented in the sample hence improve the validity of the study findings. Purposive sampling technique was also used to sample guidance and counselling teachers. This was because the guidance and counselling teachers were in a better position to assess the students' indulgence in various delinquent behaviours. The sample size for the study comprises of 54 Guidance and Counselling Teachers and 218 Class Teachers.

Data was collected using questionnaire and interview schedules. As per Orodho (2009), questionnaires are the most productive methods for reaching many respondents within a limited time frame. The questionnaire was utilized to gather data from class teachers and guidance and counselling teachers. Part A of the questionnaire looked at the demographic data of the respondents and Part B consisted of those issues identified with the research questions. Interviews included discussions that are utilized to discover individual information, understanding, attitudes, positions, or opinions utilizing the list of questions already prepared (Orodho, 2009). The study utilized both in-depth interviews and focused group discussions. This enabled the development of a detailed description of the varied and multi-dimensional world of the interviewees (Shapira, Arar and Azaiza, 2010). Analysis of data included the process summarizing, sorting, rearranging and ordering gathered raw data as per the objectives and research questions that guide the study (Mbwesa 2006). Thematic Analysis was utilized to analyze the qualitative data collected.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

The study presents results related to the objective of the study which sought to establish mitigation measures to minimize the problem of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools. To achieve this, qualitative data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules from respective respondents. Generally, the respondents observed that the problem of juvenile delinquency in Secondary Schools remained to be a social issue because there were many students who were found to indulge in various forms of delinquent behaviours within schools, in home and within the community. Further, the respondents observed that the Problem of Juvenile Delinquency was a multidimensional social problem that required an integrated approach from all key actors to curb the vice. The possible intervention strategies on how to curb the problem were analysed and summarised based on the following sub-headings:

IMPROVEMENT OF PARENTING PRACTICES

The study established that parental factors were found to influence delinquency among secondary students as it was observed by one of the class teachers that most parents were failing in their roles of nurturing the appropriate behaviours which enhanced pro-social behaviours. Some of the extract from the class teacher includes:

To reduce cases of delinquent behaviours in our school, parents need to evaluate their roles and failures so as to restore and maintain discipline in schools. Also they need to cooperate with teachers and the school administration order to understand and help the students out of the delinquent problems they may be involved in (class teacher 4)

Parents should exercise authority over their children, be communicative, get emotionally close to their children, set rules for them, mentor and supervise their activities as well as be consistent in instilling discipline to their children as well as creating substantial amount of time to spend with them, this will help minimize the delinquent problems in secondary school. (Class teacher 7)

During the interviews with the deputy principal, it was established that the school administrators needed to assess the commitment of parents and use all possible ways to compel and involve them in maintaining non-delinquent students and high standard of discipline in schools which also help to improve academic performance.

SENSITIZATION OF PARENTS ON WAY OF IDENTIFYING DELINQUENT BEHAVIOURS

It was suggested by one of the deputy principle that for secondary school to reduce cases of delinquent behaviours, School administrators need to organize for family life talk from experts to be presented to parents/guardians on a chosen parent meeting. This will help sensitize the parents on various areas where they fail.

THE USE OF MENTORING PROGRAMS

In order to potentially lower the juvenile delinquency rate, it was established that school and family should introduce mentoring program and services that will mainly focus on promoting growth in personal and social responsibilities among students; discouraging illegal use of drugs and alcohol, violent behaviour, use of dangerous weapons, promiscuous behaviour, and other criminal, harmful, or potentially harmful behaviour; discouraging involvement in gang activities; and encouraging youth to set goals and make plans for the future.

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

The study established that to reduce cases of delinquent behaviours in secondary schools, there was need for the schools, churches, government and voluntary organizations to educate the localities regarding the harmful effects of drugs and other substances. They should distribute pamphlets showing how anti-social acts destroyed individuals and their learning.

TEACHER SUPPORT FOR DELINQUENT STUDENTS

The study established that students needed teachers' support so has to cope well with peer and personal factors that lead adolescent to act in delinquent way. This would eventually promote good holistic development and life skills among adolescent. Some guidance and counselling teacher had this to observe;

Delinquent students should be shown love by teachers as this will instil value and self esteem in them which will in turn enhance learning and reduce cases of delinquent behaviour (guidance and counselling teacher 14).

Teachers should not neglect delinquent students, in the course of teaching but rather try to understand each student as an individual and treat him or her as such (Guidance and counselling teacher 4).

There should be counselling unit in all educational zone where students can go to and present their problems for appropriate guidance (guidance and counselling teacher 7).

The school authorities should always seek the support of parents in formulating policies for effective communication with the parent and acquaint them with the school affairs, detailed and constant information about the failure and success of their children which will help parent to understand, appreciate and cooperate with the school authorities (Guidance and counselling teacher 9).

Government should make funds available to sponsor teachers' attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops on students' delinquent behaviour management and teacher-student relationship (Guidance and counselling teacher, 5).

The present findings are supported by those of Philomena (2014) who conducted a study to investigate into the impact of juvenile delinquency on academic performance of junior secondary school in Nigeria. The study established that to curb juvenile delinquent behaviours: Delinquent students should be shown love by teachers as this will instil value and self esteem in the students which will in turn enhance learning. Teachers should not neglect delinquent students in the course of

teaching but rather try to understand each student as an individual and treat each in a unique way. Counselling units should be set up in all secondary schools in Zaria educational zone. Also, school authorities should always seek the support of parents in formulating policies.

The findings are in consistent with a study in Nigeria by Joy and Azuka (2011) who carried a study to explore socio-cultural factors that predisposed secondary school adolescents to delinquent behaviour. To curb the problem of juvenile delinquent behaviours, it was recommended that the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should organize workshops for adolescents on cultural diversity. The need to harness culture as an instrument for developing socially acceptable behaviour should be emphasized. Subsequently, through these seminars and workshops, the negative peer influence will be drastically be reduced and this will in turn improve the tone of schools.

V. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study established that the problem of juvenile delinquency in Secondary Schools remained to be a social issue because there were many students who were found to indulge in various forms of delinquent behaviours within schools, in home and within the community. Further, it was established that the Problem of Juvenile Delinquency was a multidimensional social problem that required an integrated approach from all key actors to curb the vice. The possible intervention strategies included the improvement of parenting practices; sensitization of parents on way of identifying delinquent behaviours; the use of mentoring programs and public awareness and education; and teacher support for delinquent students.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings of this investigation are essential for Kenyan Education framework because reducing the instances of delinquent behaviour secondary schools will positively affect the long enduring enduring challenges secondary education segment in Kenya. Additionally, the obtained outcomes could form the in building up a theoretical model for studying both the direct and indirect impacts of the fore-said factors in enhancing education standards in Kenya. By and large, these findings could be used as a guideline for teachers, Educational experts and curriculum developers in creating and using Educational policies, methodologies and activities that could help in enhancing secondary Education. The research findings at long last fill the current gap in other research done to identify the factors contributing to the current patterns of adolescent participation in different delinquent behaviours. This clears the way for more detailed national and international research.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made with the view of minimize the problem of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools.

- ✓ Government should make funds available to sponsor teachers' attendance conferences, seminars and workshops on students' managements and teacher-student relationship.
- ✓ The teachers should ensure that parents are sensitized on appropriate parenting practises that are perceived to improve students' social competencies and reducing behaviour problems among students.
- ✓ The Parents should assist the teacher by ensuring that there are follow-ups of their children's developmental challenges related to behaviour problems in school.
- ✓ The parents should not leave the burden of disciplining, guiding and counselling their children to the teacher. However, they should complement their efforts by supporting the children whenever they are away from school.
- ✓ Parents should take a leading in supporting their children's development of various pro-social behaviour because they are the first Educators to mould, train and expose their children to various nurturing practices.
- ✓ For further study, the study recommends an additional research to be conducted in another location to confirm these findings and investigate whether the findings have any implications with Kenyan students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I most sincerely acknowledge fellow scholars whose research findings and thoughts supported my study to this end. I herby recognise their efforts and appreciate their work and contribution to the pool of knowledge and academic world.

REFERENCES

- [1] Agbowuro ,C Oriade L. Taiwo, U Mary N and Solomon S (2016) The Dilemma of Juvenile Delinquency among Government Secondary Schools in Jema'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State Nigeria. International Journal of Academic Research in Education and Review Vol. 4(3), pp. 96-102.
- [2] Clark, D. (2013). Childhood Antisocial Behaviour and Adolescent Alcohol use Disorder. New York. University of Pittsburgh.
- [3] Grant, E., Potenza, N., Krishnan-Sarin, S., Cavallo, D., & Desai, R. (2011). Stealing among high school students: Prevalence and clinical correlate. Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, 39(1), 44-52.
- [4] Hamasi, L. H. (2010). An investigation of students' perception towards the effectiveness of the alternative methods of maintaining discipline in public secondary schools in Maseno division, Kisumu District, Kenya (Unpublished master's thesis). The Catholic University Eastern Africa, Nairobi
- [5] Joy Efe gwrene Okarie and Azuka N. G. Alutu (2011) Socio-Cultural Factors Predisposing Secondary School Adolescents To Delinquent Behavior: A Study Of Students From Uvwie Local Government Area, Delta

- State. Knowledge Review Volume 23 No. 3, December, 2011
- Kahindi, Z. (2012). The Causes of Students' Unrest in Kaloleni Secondary School in Kilifi District Coast Province, Kenya. Unpublished Master's Project, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya.
- [6] Kamau Nduta Susan (2011) Parental Factors Influencing Delinquency Among Secondary School Girls In Boarding Schools: The Case Of Schools In Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. Ma Research Project University Of Nairobi.
- [7] Kyalo, K. A. (2010). Management of Students Discipline Problems in Public Secondary Schools in Yatta District. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya.
- [8] Mbwesa, K .J. (2006). Introduction to management research, a student hand book. Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Nairobi, Kenya.
- [9] Ministry of Education (2011) A report on poor on the causes of performance in Mathematics and sciences in KCSE Examination in Kenya . Naiorobi. Kenya
- [10] Muhammed, A., Salawu, B., Adekeye, D, Ayinla, S. & Adeoye, M. (2010). The nexus between family instability and youth crime: Evidence from Nigeria. International Journal of Human Development and Information System, 2 (2), 41-53.
- [11] Nkwopara, C. (2011). Drug barons convert government farms into Indian hemp farms. Daily Vanguard, pp 36-37.
- [12] Nwankwo, B., Nwoke, E., Chukwuocha, U., Obanny, A; Nwoga, K., Iwuagwu, U. & Okereke, C. (2010). Prevalence and predictors of anti-social behaviours: A cross sectional survey of adolescents in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal, South East Nigeria. Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences, 7(2) 129-136.
- [13] Nyaga M N. (2015) Contributions Of Selected Microsystems To Antisocial Behaviours Among Adolescents In Secondary Schools In Manyatta Sub-County, Embu County, Kenya. Phd Thesis In Educational Psychology In Kenyatta University
- [14] Omboto. J O, Gerald O. O, Odhiambo O, Ayugi, M E (2013) Factors Influencing Youth Crime And Juvenile Delinquency. International Journal Of Research In Social Sciences Vol. 1, No.2
- [15] Orodho, J. (2009). Elements of Education and Social Sciences, Research Methods, 2nd Edition, Maseno: Kenezja Publishers.
- [16] Oxford English dictionary online. (2010). Retrieved from https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/oxford-Dictionary_of_english
- [17] Philomena Member Solomon (2014) Impact Of Juvenile Delinquency On Academic Performance Of Junior Secondary School Social Studies Education Students In Kaduna State. M.Ed Thesis.
- [18] Republic of Kenya (2005). Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005: On A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- [19] Robert, S., Zhang, J., & Truman, J. (2012). Indicators of school crime and safety: 2011. (NCES 2012-002/NCJ 236021). National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Justice programs, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.
- [20] Sailor, G. (2010). Preventing Antisocial Behaviour in the Schools. Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis, 28, 467-478.
- [21] Shapira, T. Arar, K. & Azaiza, F. (2010). Arab women principal's empowerment and leadership in Israel. Journal of Educational Administration. 48 (6), 704-715.
- [22] Thesaurus dictionary online. (2016). Retrieved from [http://www.dictionary.com/browse/juvenile delinquency](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/juvenile%20delinquency)
- [23] Werunga R. K, Ngome K. C & Munialo C, (2016) Stealing Among Students in Single Sex Public Boarding Secondary Schools in Kenya: A Problem Behavior International Journal of Education and Social Science www.ijessnet.com Vol. 3 No. 4; April 2016
- [24] Yahaya, A., Ramli, J., Hashim, S., Ibrahim, M., Rahma, R. R., Yahaya, N. (2009). Discipline problems among secondary school students in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. European Journal of social Sciences, 11(4), 659- 675.