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The Relationship between Principal Leadership Style and Student Discipline Problems in Secondary Schools

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Abstract:

The aim of this article is to explore, in a sample of secondary schools in Bungoma and Kakamega Counties of Kenya, if there is a relationship between school leadership, particularly the principal leadership style on students' discipline problems. The study adopts mixed-methods, combining the analysis of questionnaire surveys (teachers and students), structured open-ended interviews (from District Quality Assurance Officers –DQASOs) and focus groups (of parents). This study reports results from the questionnaire surveys of teachers and students, interviews analyses of DQASOs, and the focus group of parents. Analysis of the data collected indicated that school principals used all the leadership styles of the Full range leadership Model but especially Transactional and Passive-Avoidant Leadership styles. It was also observed that all categories of discipline problems were experienced in schools with Routine Discipline Problems occurring more frequently. A correlation analysis of principal leadership styles and student discipline problems seems to indicate that Transactional and Passive-Avoidant Leadership styles increases discipline problems in secondary schools. It is recommended that for optimal functioning of secondary schools, principals strive to use all the leadership styles of the Full Range Leadership Model contextually.

Keywords: *Principal, student, leadership style, discipline problems, secondary schools*

1. Introduction

Internationally, there seems to be the feeling that school leadership is an extremely important variable that can make all the difference in schools. Several studies (Leithwood, Mulford&Silins, 2004;Robinson et al., 2008; Day, Sammons, Leithwood, Hopkins, et al, 2011) have shown that there is a positive, though indirect, effect of school leaders, including principals, on students' outcomes. These studies also conclude that this influence is mostly indirect, achieved through actions that the principals take concerning school conditions, classrooms conditions and teachers, which in turn will indirectly influence students' learning.

1.1. Conceptual Model

The conceptual model (Figure 1) which provided the framework for the study was adapted from the one presented by Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom and Anderson (2004) in which school leadership directly influences school conditions, classroom conditions and teachers, that in turn influences students' learning indirectly. In the model, principal leadership is hypothesized to influence student discipline. Principal leadership is defined as Transformational, Transactional and Passive-Avoidant and student discipline as Severe, Serious and Routine. Transformational Leadership includes the following five leadership styles: Idealized Influence (Attributed), Idealized Influence (Behaviour), Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Individualized Consideration. Transactional Leadership encompasses Contingent Reward and Management-by-exception (Active). Passive-Avoidant Leadership includes Management-by-exception (Passive) and *Laissez-faire*.

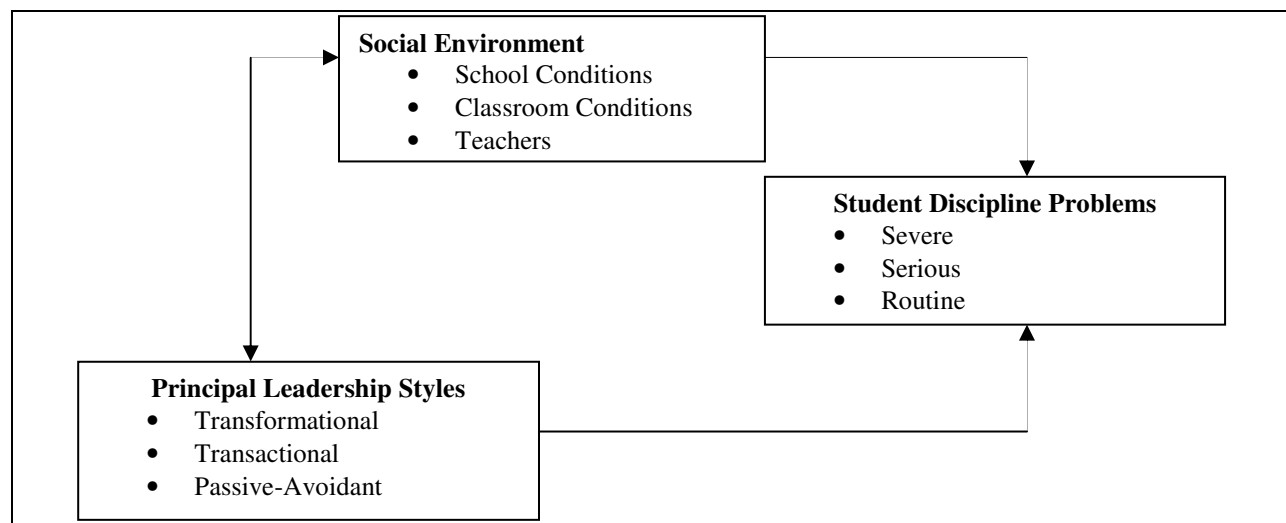


Figure 1: A Conceptual Model Showing the Interaction of Variables
Source: Adapted from Leithwood, et.al (2004)

The model postulates that principal leadership creates a social environment which will affect the discipline of students. A Principal's leadership style may also directly determine the type of student discipline problems. Iyaya et.al (2015) in determining the influence of principal leadership style on teacher outcomes, found that Transformational Leadership had a large positive relationship on the movement of outcome scales. Management-by-exception (Active) was seen to have a small positive relationship with outcome scales while Management-by-exception (Passive) and *Laissez-faire* showed a large negative relationship with outcome scales. The influence of leadership on school environment has been ably determined by others such as (Barker, 2001 and Bulach et al. 1995). McManus and Reynolds (1989) found the school's social environment to be one of the most significant in-school factors that influence school discipline.

2. Methodology

2.1. Principal Leadership Style

Teachers in 36 selected schools were asked to respond to a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire -MLQ 5X (Bass and Avolio, 1995) intended to establish the type of leadership employed by secondary school principals. SPSS data were collected from 62 teachers who responded to the questionnaire. The survey questions of the MLQ measured both perceived behaviours and attributes in the full range of leadership factors associated with Transformational, Transactional and Passive-Avoidant Leadership styles. Four items correspond to each of the nine leadership style scales as indicated. To identify the frequency of a particular leadership behaviour, teachers responded to a likert scale of 1-4 showing how often a principal displayed a certain type of behaviour. The coding was as follows: 0- Never, 1-Once in a while, 2-sometimes, 3-fairly often, and 4-frequently if not always.

2.2. Student Discipline Problems

Data for determining discipline problems were collected from a sample of 297 respondents who were Form four students from Bungoma and Kakamega Counties in Kenya. This represented 82.50% of the expected total sample size of 360 respondents initially determined. The selected students were asked to respond to a questionnaire labeled Student Discipline Questionnaire -SDQ (Appendix IV) intended to find out types of discipline problems experienced in secondary schools. Likert type scale with the following five responses was used to find out the occurrences of different discipline problems: 0-Never, 1-Once in a while, 2- At least once in a month, 3-At least once a week, and 4-Daily. Discipline problems were categorized as Severe, Serious and Routine. The survey was pilot tested.

2.3. Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

2.3.1. Principal Leadership Style

Using SPSS 16 analysis was undertaken to validate the MLQ questionnaire. The scales used needed to consistently reflect the construct they were measuring. Cronbachs alpha tested results for internal reliability. All 45 variable items were tested producing a computed alpha coefficient of 0.913. Cronbachs alpha of 0.913 represents an acceptable level of internal reliability. Cronbach (1951) and Grayson (2004) agree that Cronbachs alpha should be applied separately to the items within each scale. In this article, therefore, consideration of each behavioural scale was presided with an assessment of the reliability of the items relating to the scale. Each leadership scale is measured by four highly inter-correlated items that are low in correlation with items in the other eight scales and have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of at least 0.70. Nunnally (1978) maintains that an alpha value of 0.70 is an acceptable reliability coefficient.

2.3.2. Student Discipline Problems

An extensive literature review on student discipline was done to identify the relevant content, which identified the indicators of student discipline problems. This was then built into developing the items for the questionnaire. The research tool was piloted to ascertain its validity, reliability and practicability. To test the validity of the research instrument, two schools in Kakamega South District were used for a pilot study. A total of 20 respondents constituting 10 students from each school were randomly sampled for the pilot study. These schools did not participate in the actual study. The responses and information collected were used to clean the questionnaire items and hence eliminate unclear questions from the instruments before the actual study. The validity of the instruments was ensured by giving them to specialists in the faculty of Education and Social Sciences and the Centre for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. They read the instruments and made amendments and modifications accordingly. Their recommendations were incorporated in the revised instrument.

Using SPSS 16, analysis was undertaken to validate the SDQ questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha tested results for internal reliability. All 28 variable items were tested producing a computed alpha coefficient of 0.890 which represents an acceptable level of internal reliability. Severe Discipline Problems (SDPs) scale was measured by eight items; Serious Discipline Problems (SRDPs) and Routine Discipline Problems (RDPs) scales are measured by ten items each.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Leadership Styles

The descriptive statistics giving a summary of the mean item scores are shown in appendix II. Appendix II represents the ratings by the sampled teachers (herein referred to as raters). The standard deviation has been taken as the measure of distributions of the frequencies.

3.1.1. Idealized Influence (Attributed)

Idealized Influence (Attributed) (IIA) measures the degree by which staff wish to be professionally associated with the principal. Items 10, 18, 21 and 25 measured this scale (Appendix II). Reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.826 which was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability with relatively high correlations. Reliability would not be strengthened by the removal of any variable statement.

Raters were able to identify characteristics of attributed idealized influence with their principals' leadership styles. All principals demonstrated some ability to display power and confidence, to get their staff to have some pride through their mutual association, and to go beyond self-interest for the good of the school. They considered principals to be transformational on only one item (number 25). For one to be transformational, he/she must score in the range of >3.0 to <3.35 (See Research Validated Benchmark Appendix I). The mean score for IIA (raters) is 2.56.

3.1.2. Idealized Influence (Behaviour)

Items 6, 14, 23 and 34 were designed to test the degree by which the principal can be counted upon to take the right action, and to demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral behaviour. At .829 Cronbach's Alpha was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability with relatively high correlations. The mean score on IIB of 2.803 (Appendix III) suggests that the principals are on average strong in this area. The teachers rated the principals as transformational on only item 34. Raters were able to identify characteristics of idealized influence (Behaviour) with their principal. Idealized Influence (Behaviour) style was seen to be displayed fairly often than Idealized Influence (Attributed) behaviours. It was also displayed more often in schools than other organizations (Compare Appendices I&III).

3.1.3. Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational Motivation (IM) measures the principals' ability to sell the school's vision of the future to colleagues so that they would follow. In considering the reliability of the IM data, at .802 Cronbach's Alpha was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability with relatively high correlations.

As Appendix II illustrates, items 9, 13, 26 and 36 all part of the inspirational motivation scale scored relatively high across the schools. Overall variable (9) – 'talks optimistically about the future' had the highest mean score of the thirty-six behaviour variables rated by teacher respondents. Overall, the range of means across the variables (from 2.88-3.22) were relatively high and demonstrated that the principals in the schools that responded, were relatively strong in motivational behaviours. The average mean of 3.038 is in the range for transformational leadership as can be seen in Appendix I. The teaching staff therefore, averagely considers principals to be transformational in Inspirational Motivation behaviours.

3.1.4. Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation (IS) measures those behaviours by staff that increase their understanding of the problems that schools face in achieving the school targets and vision. Items 2, 8, 30 and 32 measured this leadership style (Appendix II). A test of reliability on the IS variables produced a Cronbach's alpha of .903 which was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability.

The impact of principals on the intellectual stimulation of their staff was relatively lower than on the other transformational scales considered to this point. The strongest results were recorded in response to the statement that the principals re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate (item 2). On overall, the teachers did not consider the principals to be

transformational in IS skills. Intellectual Stimulation was also displayed less often in schools than other organizations (Compare Appendices I&III).

The standard deviation measurements were larger than those previously reported (Appendix II). The dispersal of the values illustrates an inconsistency of response by raters with the full range attitudinal measurements being used. This would appear to indicate a degree of selectivity on the part of the principals actively involved in stimulating efforts to be innovative and creative to a portion of their staff.

3.1.5. Individualized Consideration

Individual Consideration (IC) measures the extent to which principals treated followers as individuals and how much mentoring orientation the principal had for the teaching staff. Items 15, 19, 29 and 31 measured this leadership style. At .812 Cronbach's alpha was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability. However, it was noted that item 15 'spends time teaching and coaching' had a very low correlation with other items. There is a possibility that the teacher raters assumed this to mean that the principal spent time in the classroom teaching, rather than spent time with the staff coaching them. The deletion of this item returns a Cronbach's alpha of .881, which is still considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability.

The strongest results were recorded in response to the statement that the principals treats others as individuals rather than just as a member of the group (variable 19). The standard deviation also shows a large dispersal of the data across the 0-4 range. This may imply that the principal was selective towards those staff with the potential capacity to develop and support school improvement.

Findings from this study indicate that Individual Consideration is not as strong in schools as behaviours associated with Inspirational Motivation and Idealized Influence. However, it appears to be stronger than Intellectual Stimulation. This finding disagrees with the research validated benchmark whereby Intellectual Stimulation is considered as being stronger than Individual Consideration (Appendix I).

3.1.6. Contingent Reward (CR)

Measures the extent to which leaders set goals and make rewards contingent on satisfactory performance. Contingent Reward involves the principal agreeing with, or directing, the staff on what needs to be done, and making it clear what the rewards will be for satisfactory outcome. Items 1, 11, 16 and 35 were used to measure the leadership style Contingent Reward. At .857 Cronbach' alpha was considered to represent a satisfactory reliability with high correlations. The reliability could however be strengthened to .871 by the removal of item number 11; 'Discusses in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets'. Most of the principals were rated by their staff to fairly often display strong transactional qualities. The strongest response was noted for variable 35, and suggested that their principals expressed satisfaction when others meet expectations.

Despite the switch from transformational to transactional leadership styles, the CR mean score is higher than for IS and closely related to those of IC. Appendix IV also reveals a high correlation between CR and all of the transformational leadership behaviours ranging from .611-.776. These results are significant with $p = 0.01$ level. The mean for CR scale 2.398 is in the range of 2-3.25 as shown in the research validated benchmark (compare Appendix I with III).

3.1.7. Management-by-exception (Active)

Active Management-by-Exception (MBEA) measures those behaviours of the principal that closely monitor staff performance and keep track of mistakes. The principal arranges to actively monitor deviances from standards, mistakes, and errors in colleagues, and takes corrective actions as necessary. A reliability test on MBEA variables was undertaken and at .773 Cronbach's alpha was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability.

MBEA as a transactional characteristic was seen in a much greater intensity than may have been expected. The raters' mean score of 2.175 are shown in Appendix III. The range validated by Bass and Avolio (2003) is 1-2. The total means reported for variables 4, 22, 24, 27 (Appendix II) are, in every case, higher than that range. All of the principals were seen to be actively monitoring mistakes on a fairly often basis. It was thus observed that all the principals in the study have a measure of rating that is stronger than other organizational leaders in displaying MBEA attributes (Bass & Avolio, 2003). Variable 4 centered on focusing attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards was the most frequently observed characteristic. The standard deviations were also relatively larger illustrating an inconsistency of response by raters with a big range of attitudinal measurements being used. This may suggest a degree of selectivity on the part of the principals actively involved in tracking the mistakes and deviations of some of their staff.

3.1.8. Management-by-exception (Passive)

Management-by-Exception – Passive (MBEP) measures the degree of awareness of performance problems. A high score suggests that the principal is unaware of performance problems until they are brought to their attention and that they may not be fully engaged in the day-to-day situations. It also suggests an environment of negative feedback and punishment. Passive Management-by-exception implies waiting passively for deviances, mistakes and errors to occur before taking corrective action. Items 3, 12, 17 and 20 exemplified this leadership style. At .851, Cronbach's alpha was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability.

Given the passive nature of the leadership quality, effective leaders would be expected to score low. The range for MBEP according Bass and Avolio (2003) is 0-1 (See Appendix I). The average mean score for raters in this study was 1.033 (See Appendix III). The teachers in this study, therefore, considered the principals to possess strong MBEP attributes than other organizational leaders.

3.1.9. Laissez-faire

Laissez-faire measures the extent to which the principal chooses not to guide performance when the situation would warrant (Smith, Matkin& Fritz, 2004). Items 5, 7, 28 and 33 measured this leadership style. A high score suggests that the principal avoids leadership; showing passive indifference about the task and subordinates. The reliability test on LF produced alpha at .923 which was considered to represent a satisfactory measure of reliability.

The mean scores for the *Laissez-faire* variables (5, 7, 28 and 33) are displayed in Appendix III as 0.793. The Bass and Avolio (2003), Research Validated Benchmark presents a range of 0-1 for the *Laissez-faire* scale (See Appendix I). Against this benchmark, the means appear to fall in that range; in fact, the average mean for the four variables is 0.793. On average, the raters indicated that the principals once in a while employ *Laissez-faire* leadership.

3.2. Types of Discipline Problems Experienced in Secondary Schools

The SDQ (Appendix V) was a questionnaire designed to collect the information on the types of discipline problems that commonly occur across the thirty six secondary schools. Frequency of behaviour was measured across a Likert scale of 0 – 4 with 4 being the strongest.

Table 1 indicates that all the three categories of discipline problems are experienced in secondary schools of Bungoma and Kakamega Counties in varying degrees. SVDPs occur less frequently than SRDPs. RDPs occur most frequently compared to the other two. The standard deviation shows a larger dispersal of data across the 0-4 range with RTDPs. This may imply that the occurrence of Routine Discipline problems is not consistent across all the schools that were involved in the study.

	Severe Discipline Problems (SVDPs)		Serious Discipline Problems (SRDPs)		Routine Discipline Problems (RTDPs)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Never	186	70.2	83	32.8	43	20
Once in a while	64	24.2	107	42.3	54	25.1
At least once a month	13	4.9	58	22.9	58	27
At least once a week	2	.8	5	2.0	55	25.6
Daily	0	0	0	0	5	2.3
Total	265	100	253	100	215	100
Missing	32	10.8	44	14.8	82	27.6
Total	297	100	297	100	297	100
Mean	1.36		1.94		2.65	
	.613		.797		1.133	

Table 1: Types of Discipline Problems Experienced in Secondary Schools
Source: Field Data

The findings of this study agree with Simatwa (2012) findings on the study of management of student discipline in secondary schools citing the case of Bungoma County. He found that infractions experienced in secondary schools in Bungoma County included: noise making, vandalism of school property, drug abuse, drug sale, theft, absenteeism, sneaking, disobedience, lying, possession of weapons other than firearms, possession of inflammable substances, physical attacks, fighting, lateness, indecency, bullying, negligence of class work and assignments, unrest, and sexual harassment. He also found that intolerable infractions such as drug sale and abuse, rioting and possession of inflammable substances were experienced less frequently, but their effects were quite devastating as they resulted in loss of lives, valuable time and property.

3.3. Focus Group Discussions with Parents

Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with parents revealed that there are discipline problems in secondary schools. Discipline problems identified includes strikes, absenteeism, rudeness, burning dormitories, sneaking from school, noise making, students loitering in market places aimlessly and possession of illegal substances. All the four groups indicated that the three categories of discipline problems occurred in secondary schools. These problems, parents indicated that they are caused by teachers who were not disciplined; teachers who are tired and do not want extra responsibility; rigid principals who do not listen to students, principals who are slow to make decisions and take action; home background, students who are given a lot of money, and a poor diet. According to FGDs, discipline problems cause damages, property loss, loss of lives, injury and most of the time parents are forced to incur extra costs to pay for damages.

3.4. Interviews with District Quality Assurance Officers

DQASOs revealed that there are discipline problems in secondary schools in Bungoma and Kakamega Counties of Kenya because students break school rules. In particular, the following discipline problems were identified: truancy, absenteeism, strikes, sneaking from schools, theft, fighting. The causes of discipline problems were cited as stemming from home background, adolescence and peer influence. According to DQASOs, discipline problems result in poor standards. Guidance and counseling was singled out as most effective in resolving student discipline problems. One remarkable finding with the DQASOs was that secondary schools have school

rules which when applied consistently, yielded good results. DQASOs also pointed out that there was need for frequent review of school rules with the input of all stakeholders involved.

Both interviews with DQASOs and FGDs with parents showed that Routine Discipline Problems occurred most frequently compared to other discipline problems. Nasibi (2003) observes that in spite of the vital role discipline plays in influencing education outcomes, indiscipline among students in secondary schools is common. Documented causes of student indiscipline broadly include unfavorable students' personal characteristics, socio-economic background and the school environment (Nasibi, 2003).

Student indiscipline causes major setbacks to economic and social development, and in many instances, human suffering and death. Ali et al. (2014) noted that the current economic woes arising from corruption, robbery, assassinations, and smuggling in Nigeria are progenies of school indiscipline. The severity and frequency of student indiscipline has been increasing significantly. Disruptive, violent, and misbehaving students affect everyone in the school. The Carnegie commission (1988) as cited in Mukuria, (2002) reported that discipline problems increase the levels of student dropouts, absenteeism, and suspensions. Indiscipline is an issue of great concern because it does not discriminate. It transcends the boundaries of race, gender and class. The impact has serious implications for schools. Teachers have less time to deliver teaching and have difficulties in effectively managing classroom discipline. The implication is that the quality of education is impaired.

4. Relationships between Principal Leadership Styles and Student Discipline Problems

To establish a relationship between principals' leadership styles and student discipline problems, results for Principal leadership style and the results for student discipline problems were further subjected to Correlation analysis. The three Spearman Correlation coefficients were calculated using SPSS version 16 to determine the degree of linear relationship between the variables and results are as shown in Table 2.

	Transformational	Transactional	Passive/Avoidant	
Routine	Spearman Rho (r)	-0.221	-0.315*	0.103
p-value		0.196	0.042	0.533
Serious	Spearman Rho (r)	-0.069	-0.033	-0.085
p-value		0.634	0.814	0.548
Severe	Spearman Rho (r)	-0.025	-0.221	-0.138
p-value		0.868	0.116	0.339

Table 2: Relationships between Principal Leadership Styles and Student Discipline Problems

Source: Field Data

Key

$\alpha = 0.05$

$p < 0.05$ – Significant

$p > 0.05$ – Not significant

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.1. Results and Discussion

Results as summarized in Table 2 indicate that Transformational Leadership seems to be negatively correlated to discipline problems. The p-values of greater than 0.05 indicate that the relationship is however not significant. The relationship between Transactional Leadership style and discipline problems is also in the negative direction. The correlation is significant with RDPs showing a p-value of less than 0.05. With SRDPs, the relationship is also not significant. Passive-Avoidant Leadership style indicates a positive correlation with RDPs while it is negative with SRDPS and SVDPS. However, the relationships are not significant. Generally, it is observed that leadership styles tend to correlate negatively to discipline problems. Passive-Avoidant which in part represents the absence of leadership tends to increase discipline problems.

Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) determined that a secondary school principal must embody, at the minimum, the Transformational Leadership factors of Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration the secondary school is to be responsive to the changes required in a twenty-first century educational climate.

In this study, the findings according to teachers' perceptions indicated that principals in Bungoma and Kakamega Counties employed Transactional and Passive-Avoidant leadership styles; strong characteristics of Contingent Reward and Management-by-Exception leadership styles were exemplified. Some features of Transformational Leadership were present especially in the Inspirational Motivation scale. A significant correlation between Transactional Leadership and Routine Discipline problems indicates that Transactional Leadership style is highly present in principals of Bungoma and Kakamega Counties. Insignificant relationships may imply that Transformational and Passive-Avoidant leadership styles may not be strong in secondary school principals of Bungoma and Kakamega Counties. However, a positive correlation with Passive-Avoidant, though insignificant, implies that the presence of this style increases Routine Discipline problems.

Bass (1985b) refers to Transactional Leadership as lower order improvement. Transactional leaders generally experience marginal improvement that occurs through an exchange process: a transaction in which followers' needs are met if performance measures up to the expectations of their leader. Sergiovanni (1990) and Bass (1985a) believe that transactional practices can be useful in accomplishing daily routines of a business, but that they do not stimulate improvement. According to Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, & Dennison (2003), transactional leadership 'is mired in daily affairs' p. 15; it 'is short term and hard data oriented', p. 15. The above

arguments may explain why the strong presence of transactional leadership in principals of Bungoma and Kakamega Counties does not seem to stem out indiscipline in secondary schools. Transactional leadership ability to get deeply involved with daily affairs makes principals using this leadership style to concentrate on routine discipline problems which occur on a fairly often basis; hence a significant correlation. Since, Transactional Leadership does not seem to stimulate improvement; discipline problems continue to occur in secondary schools of Bungoma and Kakamega.

Otieno (2012) found that most principals in the Nyanza Region of Kenya were high on what he referred to as initiating structure (Management-by-Exception and *laissez-faire* in this case). The principals were not supportive and showed little respect for teachers rendering teachers to high levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment. Consequently, this will no doubt impact negatively on the discipline of students. Quinn (2005) and Mukuria (2002) found that principals in schools with high rates of discipline referrals were generally transactional leaders. Costellow (2011), reported that principals at schools with poor culture tended to focus on stability, control and predictability; characteristics of transactional leaders whose goal is to maintain the status quo by focusing on the bottom line.

Leithwood (1992) describes the typical school as a Type 'A' organization with centralized and controlling leadership. Maintaining differences in status among staff and administrators, and retaining the right to decide how employees, resources, and professional development activities are managed, but has been shown to decrease productivity. Despite its proven ineffectiveness, the author declared that many managers or administrators resort to this behaviour because for some it is natural, easy, or it satisfies the need for power. On the other hand, Transformational Leadership in schools deals with finding a way to become successful in collaboratively defining the essential purpose of teaching and learning and then empowering the entire school community to become energized and focused (Liontos, 1992). Bass (1985b) suggested that higher order improvements can only come from Transformational Leadership and as Leithwood (1992b) observes, transformational leadership provides an incentive for people to strive to improve what they are doing. Later Bass (1999) observed that for optimal functioning of an organization, a leader should be both Transformational and Transactional.

The research design adopted was not able to prescribe a one right style best suited to bring about good discipline in secondary schools. Eden (1998) suggested that transformational leadership is effective when it incorporates transactional leadership practices that are sensitive to teachers and accepted by them. The FRLM, on which this study was based, stresses the need to apply leadership styles that befit the changing school situation. Bass & Avolio (2004) maintain that FRLM provides a greater chance for finding the right combination for any situation at hand. Secondary school principals, therefore, should understand that every school is a unique complex structure which should be managed contextually.

4.2. Summary of Research Findings

With regard to the leadership qualities of principals in secondary schools of Bungoma and Kakamega Counties, the main finding from the study suggested that all principals in the research project displayed both a range of transformational and transactional leadership qualities. The analysis of the findings however, shows that principals are not strong in transformational leadership and as such, cannot be regarded as transformational. The raters perceived principals to have below average skills in IIA, IB, IS, and IC. Principals were not seen to be consistent in their intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration of their teachers. Intellectual Stimulation was perceived by teachers to be the weakest transformational leadership style displayed by principals. They had relative strengths in transformational leadership characteristics associated with inspiring and motivating individuals. This ability to motivate was their strongest leadership quality and was strong in all schools. Compared to other organizational leaders, these principals cannot be said to be strongest in IM characteristics since all rater averages were below 3.5 allowed by the Research Validated Benchmark (Appendix I). Strong transactional qualities were evident in relation to the variables associated with Contingent Reward. Contingent Reward was a relatively strong characteristic of principals in secondary schools. With an overall mean for CR variables at 2.398 (in the range of 2-3.25 allowed), principals were seen to display a greater intensity of CR characteristics than those associated with Intellectual Stimulation (Appendix III). They were assessed to have relatively stronger behaviours in actively managing by exception than other leaders; in fact, the total means reported (Appendix II) were in every case higher than the range allowed (Appendix I). All Principals were seen to be actively monitoring mistakes on a fairly often basis. These findings on MBEA seem to suggest that the context facing secondary schools in Bungoma and Kakamega Counties is resulting in the possibility of a more direct instructional role being performed by the principal than may have been observed in other organizations or schools in other locations.

Other findings showed that teachers in the study considered principals to possess strong Management-by-Exception (Passive) attributes than other organizational leaders. The average mean score for the raters was 1.033 whereas the range allowed according to Bass and Avolio (2003) is 0-1. This finding suggests that the principals in the study wait passively for deviances, mistakes and errors to occur before taking corrective action. The raters indicated that the principals once in a while employ *Laissez-faire* leadership whereby they avoid getting involved.

The claims from the Focus Group Discussions and DQASOs that principals are dictatorial supplemented the findings from the raters using the MLQ. The principal with a dictatorial style is directing. He/she provides clear instructions and specific direction which is a characteristic of Contingent Reward. The leader takes the decisions and announces them, expecting subordinates to carry them out without question. This is a 'telling style' which is characteristic of Transactional Leadership. A telling style is appropriate if fast action is needed and follower input is not possible.

Parents and DQASOs advocated that secondary school principals should employ democratic type of leadership. This style is equivalent to the Transformational leadership style of Intellectual Stimulation. In Intellectual Stimulation, the leader seeks differing perspectives when solving problems; he/she gets others to look at problems from many different angles; and suggest new ways of

looking at how to complete assignments. Raters using the MLQ found Intellectual Stimulation to be the weakest transformational leadership style displayed by principals.

The study found that all categories of discipline problems (Routine, Serious and Severe) were experienced in secondary schools. On average, Routine Discipline problems occurred at least once a week while Serious Discipline problems occurred at least once a month. Severe Discipline problems on average seemed to occur once in a while. Transformational and Transactional leadership styles tended to be negatively correlated to discipline problems while Passive/Avoidant leadership style was found to be slightly positively correlated to discipline problems. However, the correlations were not significant. The correlation between Transactional leadership style and Routine Discipline problems was significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5. Conclusion

Results from this study have contributed to the body of knowledge on the relationship between principal leadership style and student discipline problems. While demonstrating that principals are proficient at using different styles of leadership, it demonstrates the need for those principals to be value driven, willing to go beyond self-interest, able to instill pride in others, able to get others to look at problems from many different angles and able to seek differing perspectives in solving problems. Principals in the study were not strong in Transformational leadership. However, they demonstrated strong Transactional and Passive-Avoidant characteristics.

The study found that all types of discipline problems occur in secondary schools. Because routine discipline problems occur on a fairly often basis, they should be considered to be serious as they waste learning time and defeat the purpose of schooling which is teaching and learning and may be antecedent to later school dropout and other negative social outcomes.

Finally, it is concluded that for effective principals, in turning around schools with discipline problems, transformational leadership behaviours should predominate. However, they should be able to switch styles depending on the context of the school hence utilizing styles of the Full Range Leadership Model.

6. Recommendations

Basing generalizations on the findings of this study, it was recommended that secondary school principals need to be:

Proficient at utilizing all the facets of the Full Range Leadership Model especially depending on the discipline problems occurring in the school

Able to mix their leadership styles including the use of instructional aspects of leadership where necessary

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Appendix I: Research Validated Benchmark

Factors	Research Validated Benchmark	All Raters Average
IIA		3.1
IIB		2.5
IM		3.2
IS		2.5
IC		2.4
TRANSFR	>3.0 to <3.75	2.7
CR	2-3.25	2.6
MBEA	1-2	1.9
TRANSAC		
MBEP	0-1	1.3
LF	0-1	0.8
PASSAVOID		

Table 1: The strongest leaders achieve all rater averages outcomes in excess of 3.5

Source: Bass and Avolio (1996/2003)

Appendix II: Descriptive Statistics – Statement Variables

Descriptive statistics (Raters only –teachers)			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. CR	59	2.32	1.306
2. IS	57	2.35	1.289
3. MBEP	60	1.43	1.477
4. MBEA	60	2.40	1.238
5. LF	60	.83	1.224
6. IIB	59	2.47	1.344
7. LF	59	.71	1.204
8. IS	60	2.22	1.474
9. IM	60	3.22	.922
10. IIA	60	2.28	1.485
11. CR	60	2.37	1.314
12. MBEP	58	.79	1.196
13. IM	60	3.07	1.148
14. IIB	60	2.90	1.231
15. IC	60	2.37	1.540
16. CR	59	2.24	1.478
17. MBEP	60	1.05	1.199
18. IIA	60	2.38	1.342
19. IC	58	2.67	1.356
20. MBEP	59	.86	1.293
21. IIA	59	2.56	1.193
22. MBEA	60	2.13	1.359
23. IIB	60	2.72	1.316
24. MBEA	60	2.10	1.285
25. IIA	59	3.02	1.122
26. IM	60	2.88	1.091
27. MBEA	60	2.07	1.287
28. LF	59	.68	1.090
29. IC	59	2.41	1.475
30. IS	59	2.12	1.543
31. IC	60	2.50	1.321
32. IS	60	2.27	1.351
33. LF	59	.95	1.292
34. IIB	60	3.12	1.195
35. CR	59	2.66	1.308
36. IM	58	2.98	1.132

Table 2

Appendix III: Rater Mean Scores

Factors	Mean
IIA	2.56
IIB	2.803
IM	3.038
IS	2.24
IC	2.488
TRANSFR	2.623
CR	2.398
MBEA	2.175
TRANSAC	2.286
MBEP	1.033
LF	0.793
PASSAVOID	0.913

Table 3

Key

IIA	Idealized Influence (Attributes)	IIB	Idealized Influence (Behaviours)
IM	Inspirational Motivation	IS	Intellectual Stimulation
IC	Individual Consideration	CR	Contingent Reward
TRANSFR	Transformational Leadership Scale	TRANSAC	Transactional Leadership Scale
MBEA	Management-by-Exception (Active)	MBEP	Management-by-Exception (Passive)
LF	<i>Laissez-faire</i>	PASSAVOID	Passive-Avoidant Leadership Scale

Appendix IV: Contingent Reward Correlation Analysis with other Eight Leadership Styles

		IIA scale	IM scale	IIB scale	IS scale	IC scale	CR scale	MBEA scale	MBEP scale	LF scale
CR scale	Pearson	.735**	.611**	.699**	.776**	.684**	1	.299*	-.558**	-.628**
	Correlation	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.024	.000	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	55	56	56	53	55	57	57	56	54
	N									

Table 4

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Key

IIA	Idealized Influence (Attributes)	IIB	Idealized Influence (Behaviours)
IM	Inspirational Motivation	IS	Intellectual Stimulation
IC	Individual Consideration	CR	Contingent Reward
MBEA	Management-by-Exception (Active)	MBEP	Management-by-Exception (Passive)
LF	<i>Laissez-faire</i>		

Appendix V: Student Discipline Questionnaire (SDQ)**INSTRUCTIONS**

This questionnaire is designed to provide information on the types of discipline problems that occur at your school.

To the best of your knowledge how often do the following types of problems occur at your school? Please tick in the appropriate box according to what applies to your school

0 – Never: 1- Once in a while: 2 – At least once a month: 3 – At least once a week: 4 – Daily

ITEMS		0	1	2	3	4	
1	Riots and strikes						Severe
2	Substance abuse (use of alcohol, cigarettes, dealing drugs, using drugs)						
3	Possessions of weapons						
4	Gang activities						
5	Robbery and theft						
6	Physical abuse of teachers by students						
7	Undesirable cult or extremist group activities						
8	Sexual misconduct (Lesbianism, homosexuality, engaging in sexual activities, rape)						
9	Fighting among students						Serious
10	Quarreling among students						
11	Vandalism						
12	Profanity						
13	Student bullying						
14	Cheating in examinations						
15	Student verbal abuse of teachers						
16	Absenteeism						
17	Homework not being done						Routine
18	Students sneaking from schools						
19	Indecent dressing						
20	Gossiping,						
21	Rumor mongering						
22	Tardiness,						
23	Class cutting,						
24	Students talking to each other during the lesson						
25	Students getting out of their seats during the lesson						
26	Class clowns						
27	Students with "Walkmans" (personal stereos)						
28	Students with mobile phones						

Table 5