

**INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' STUDENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON
STUDENT RETENTION IN PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has never been presented for any academic award in any institution.

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DEDICATION

To my husband James Nyaga, children Githiri, Giita and Wambui. Daughters-in-laws Jennifer and Wangechi; Grandchildren Njambi, Githiri, Jesse and Mylee for their love and support.



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May God bless you all.

ABSTRACT

The Kenya secondary school education system, which lasts four years, faces challenges in retention rates, despite the government's policy of 100% student transition. The purpose of this study was to find out the influence of principals' student management practices on student retention in public, day secondary schools in Nakuru County. The specific objectives of this study were to: determine the influence of principals' student mentorship, motivation, disciplinary and financial support practices on student retention in public, day secondary schools in Nakuru County. The study was guided by Tintos' student integration theory. The mixed methods research approach was adopted using the concurrent triangulation research design. The target population was 38,863 comprising of 293 principals, 3962 teachers and 34597 students and 11 Sub-County Directors of Education. In total, 574 participants were involved in the study comprising of samples of 90 principals, 363 teachers, 110 students and the 11 Sub-County Directors of Education. The sample size was determined using Slovenes' formula. Interview schedules were used to collect qualitative data from Sub-County Directors of Education while questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from principals and teachers. Data from students was collected using focus group discussions. A pilot study of the instruments was conducted in 9 schools in Laikipia County; and a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.9 obtained for principals, and 0.88 for teachers. Qualitative data obtained was analyzed thematically and presented in direct narration form. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The null hypothesis was tested using linear regression models formulated to measure the extent to which principals' management practices influenced student retention. The study findings showed that the principals' mentorship ($r=0.359$; $p < 0.05$) principals' motivational ($r = 0.482$; $p < 0.05$), principals' disciplinary ($r=0.480$; $p < 0.05$) and principals' financial support practices ($r= 0.360$; $p < 0.05$) all had a positive correlation to student retention, as their p-values were below the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the four null hypotheses were rejected, thus implying that principals' student management practices had a statistically significant influence on student retention. Based on the findings, the study recommends that schools and educational authorities should implement tailored mentorship, motivational, disciplinary, and financial support practices to enhance student retention, particularly in Nakuru County Public, Day Secondary Schools. This study is significant because its findings provide invaluable insights for school principals, boards of management, teachers, and future researchers on strategies to enhance student management practices, mentorship, and retention in schools, while also contributing to the broader understanding of educational outcomes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
DECLARATION AND APPROVAL.....	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
ABSTRACT	v
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xv
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	6
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	7
1.4 Objectives of the study	7
1.5 Research Hypothesis	8
1.6 Justification of the study.....	8
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	9
1.8 Scope of the Study.....	10
1.9 Limitations of the Study	11
1.10 Delimitations of the Study.....	13
1.11 Assumptions of the Study.....	13
1.12 Operational Definition of Key Terms.....	14
CHAPTER TWO.....	16
LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.0 Introduction	16
2.1 Principals' Mentorship Practices and Student Retention	16
2.2 Principals' Motivation Practices and Student Retention	26

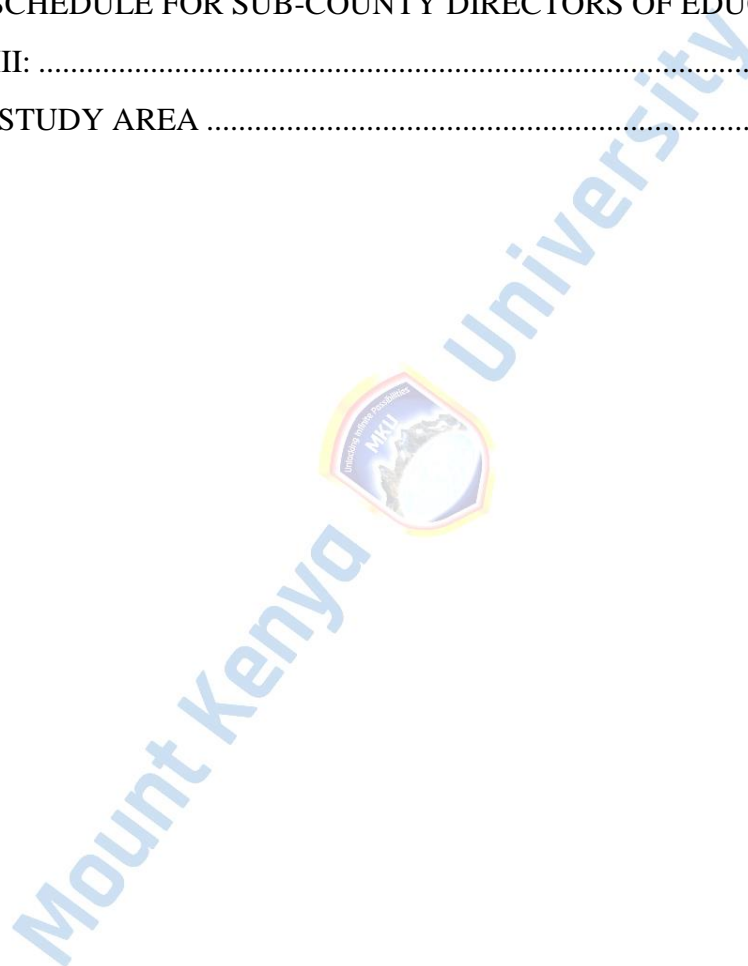
2.3	Principals' Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention	36
2.4	Principals' Financial Support Practices and Student Retention	44
2.5	Theoretical Literature	53
2.5.1	Tinto's Theory of Student Departure	53
2.5.2	Systems Theory	55
2.6	Conceptual Framework	57
2.7	Summary and Research Gaps	59
2.7.1	Research Gaps	59
2.7.2	Summary.....	62
CHAPTER THREE		66
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		66
3.1	Introduction	66
3.2	Research Methodology	66
3.2.1	Research Approach.....	66
3.2.2	Variable Description.....	66
3.3	Research Design	68
3.4	Location of the Study	69
3.5	Target Population	70
3.7	Sample Size	71
3.8	Construction of Research Instruments.....	74
3.8.1	Questionnaires for Principals	74
3.8.2	Questionnaires for Teachers	74
3.8.3	Focus Group Discussions for Students.....	75
3.8.4	Interview Schedules for Sub-County Directors of Education	76
3.9	Pilot Study	76

3.10.1 Validity	78
3.10.2 Reliability of Questionnaires	78
3.10.3 Credibility and Dependability of Qualitative Data.....	79
3.11 Data Collection Methods and Procedures	80
3.12 Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures.....	80
3.13 Ethical Considerations.....	84
CHAPTER FOUR	86
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	86
4.1 Introduction	86
4.2 General and demographic information.....	86
4.2.1 Response Rate	87
4.2.2 Demographic Characteristics.....	87
4.2.3: Length of Service in Current School.....	88
4.2.4 Levels of Subject Selection	89
4.2.5 Rating of Student Retention	90
4.3 Influence of Principals Mentorship Practices on Students Retention	92
4.3.1 Principal’s and Teachers’ Responses on Student Mentorship Practices	92
4.3.2 Descriptive Statistics for Principals Mentorship Practices.....	99
4.3.3 Qualitative Data Analysis.....	103
4.3.4 Correlations between Principals Mentorship Practices and Student Retention	108
4.3.5 Linear Regression Analysis of Principals Mentorship Practices on Student retention.....	109
4.4 Influence of Principals Motivational Practices on Students Retention	112
4.4.1 Responses on Principals Motivational Practices	112

4.4.2	Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Motivational Practices	118
4.4.3	Qualitative Data Analysis on Student Motivation.....	122
4.4.4	Correlation between Principals Motivational Practices and Average Student Retention.....	126
4.4.5	Linear Regression analysis on Influence of Motivational Practices and Student Retention	130
4.5	Influence of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Students Retention	133
4.5.1	Responses on Principals' Disciplinary Practices	133
4.5.2	Descriptive Statistics for Principals Disciplinary Practices	140
4.5.3	Qualitative Data Analysis.....	144
4.5.4	Linear Regression analysis of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Student Retention.....	148
4.6	Influence of Principals Financial Management Practices on Students Retention	152
4.6.1	Responses on Principals' Financial Management Practices	152
4.6.2	Descriptive Statistics for Principals Financial Management Practices	159
4.6.3	Qualitative Data Analysis.....	163
4.6.4	Correlations between Principals Financial Management Practices and Average Student Retention.....	167
4.6.5	Linear Regression analysis of Principals Financial Management Practices and Student Retention.....	169
4.6.6	Summary of Descriptive and Correlations Analyses.....	173
4.8	Multiple Regression Analyses	175
4.8.1	Model Summary	175
4.3	Beta Coefficients	180
CHAPTER FIVE		184
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		184

5.1 Introduction	184
5.2 Summary of the Result Findings	184
5.2.1 Influence of Principals’ Student Mentorship Practices on Students’ Retention 185	
5.2.2 Influence of Principals’ Motivational Practices on Students’ Retention..	186
5.2.3 Influence of Principals’ Students’ Disciplinary Practices on Students’ Retention.....	186
5.2.4 Influence of Principals’ Students Financial Support Practices on Students’ Retention.....	187
5.3 Conclusions	188
5.5 Recommendations	189
5.4.1 Recommendations for practice	189
5.4.2 Recommendations for policy.....	190
5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies.....	191
REFERENCES	192
APPENDICES	208
APPENDIX I: MKU INTRODUCTION LETTER	223
APPENDIX II:.....	222
MKU ETHICAL REVIEW PERMIT	222
APPENDIX III:	224
NACOSTI LETTER.....	224
APPENDIX IV:	225
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LETTER	225
APPENDIX V:	228
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.....	208
RESEARCH CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND SUB- COUNTY DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION.....	209
APPENDIX VII:.....	210
CHILDS’ CONSENT	210

APPENDIX VIII:	211
PARENT’S / GUARDIAN’S CONSENT FORM	211
APPENDIX IX:	212
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS	212
APPENDIX X:	216
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS	216
APPENDIX XI:	220
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SUB-COUNTY DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION	220
APPENDIX XIII:	228
MAP OF THE STUDY AREA	228



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Target Population	70
Table 2: Strata samples of SCDE, principals, teachers and students per sub-county	73
Table 3: Data analysis plan per research objective	84
Table 4: Response Rate	87
Table 5: Length of Service in Current School.....	88
Table 6: Subjects Selection Level	89
Table 7: Rating of Student Retention	90
Table 8: Descriptive Statistics on Principal's and Teachers' Responses on Student Mentorship Practices	93
Table 9: Descriptive Statistics on Principal's Student Mentorship Practices.....	100
Table 10: Correlations between Principals Mentorship Practices and Student Retention.	108
Table 11: Model Summary for Principals Mentorship Practices	109
Table 12: Analysis of Variance for Principals Mentorship Practices.....	110
Table 13: Beta Coefficient for Principals Mentorship Practices	110
Table 14: Principal's and Teachers' Responses on Student Mentorship Practices	113
Table 15: Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Motivation Practices.....	119
Table 16: Correlations between Principals Motivational Practices and Student Retention.....	126
Table 17: Model Summary	130
Table 18: ANOVA for Principals Motivational Practices.....	131
Table 19: Beta Coefficients for Principals Motivational Practices	132
Table 20: Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Disciplinary Practices	134
Table 21: Descriptive Statistics for Principals Disciplinary Practices	141

Table 22: Correlations between Principals Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention	147
Table 23 : Model Summary for Principals Disciplinary Practices	149
Table 24: ANOVA for Principals Disciplinary Practices.....	150
Table 25: Beta Coefficients for Principals Disciplinary Practices	151
Table 26: Descriptive statistics on Principals' Financial Management Practices.....	153
Table 27: Descriptive Statistics for Principals Financial Management Practices	160
Table 28: Correlations between Principals Financial Management Practices and Student Retention.....	168
Table 29: Model Summary for Principals Financial Management Practices	169
Table 30: ANOVA for Principals Financial Management Practices.....	170
Table 31: Beta Coefficients for Principals Financial Management Practices	171
Table 32: Summary of Descriptive Statistics	173
Table 33: Model Summary	175
Table 34: Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)	177
Table 35: Beta Coefficients	180

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Principals' Management Practices and Retention of Students in Secondary Schools.....	57
Figure 2: Principals responses on Student Retention Rate over the years	90
Figure 3: A comparison of Correlations between Principals' Student Management Practices, and Student Retention	174



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFMLTA	Association of French Teachers in Australia
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity
FDSE	Free Day Secondary Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FPE	Free Primary Education
FTSE	Free Tuition Secondary Education
G/C	Guidance and Counselling
GPE	Global Primary Education
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KUCCPS	Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service
LW	Living Well
M. Ed	Master of Education
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NER	Net Enrollment Ratio
NESSP	National Education Sector Strategic Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations

OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBIS	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
PPMCC	Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient
SCDE	Sub County Director of Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SSE	Subsidized Secondary Education
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UK	United Kingdom
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor



Mount Kenya University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents introduction and the context of the study under the following sub-headings: the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and objectives of the study, the hypothesis of the study, the justification and rationale for the study, the scope and significance of the study, its limitations and delimitations, and operational definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

The global landscape of education has increasingly emphasized student retention as a key performance metric within secondary schools. Recognizing that higher retention rates often correlate with improved academic performance, many countries have adopted comprehensive strategies to enhance educational access and completion (Adlof, Kim & Crawley, 2023). In the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, low dropout rates in secondary education contribute to economic and social benefits, including higher levels of skills and knowledge essential for participation in a knowledge-based economy (OECD, 2018). For instance, Norway, Canada, and the United States have achieved 100% enrollment rates, signifying effective education systems that prioritize accessibility and commendable retention rates (OECD, 2017). These trends underscore the importance of understanding the factors that influence student retention, particularly the practices employed by school principals in fostering a supportive and conducive learning environment.

Globally, effective student management practices are recognized as critical for enhancing retention across educational contexts. These practices encompass a range of strategies, including proactive communication, supportive mentoring, and tailored academic programs that address students' diverse needs. In Europe, Finland is renowned for its holistic approach to education, which prioritizes student well-being and includes personalized learning experiences to keep students engaged (Sahlberg, 2019). In the United States, initiatives like early intervention programs and comprehensive advising systems have been implemented at institutions such as Georgia State University, significantly improving graduation rates (Buchanan, 2020). Similarly, Malaysia's focus on student engagement through co-curricular activities and mentorship programs has shown promising results in retention (Shakari, 2021). These diverse strategies reflect a global recognition of the importance of student management practices in fostering retention across educational systems.

Effective implementation of these practices is critical to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally within the school environment. School management practices, as defined by Siebers et al. (2015), are techniques and innovations employed by managers to increase the efficacy of work systems. In the UK, for instance, Duarte et al. (2019) focused on operations management, performance monitoring, and talent management as principal management practices, finding that these have a significant impact on student outcomes, although their study did not specifically address student retention.

Education systems across Africa encounter significant challenges, with a large percentage of secondary-age children still not enrolled in school. Reports highlight that

around 50% of secondary-age students in sub-Saharan Africa are out of school (Global Partnership for Education, 2019). In countries like Nigeria and Ghana, the establishment of supportive learning environments and the utilization of technology in education are essential student management practices aimed at combating high dropout rates (Owusu-Agyemang, 2022). A study by UNESCO (2023) from Nigeria, Malawi, and The Gambia reveals that enhancing student engagement and overcoming barriers such as poverty and cultural norms are critical for boosting retention (Rolleston, 2016). These findings underscore the importance of examining how principals' management practices impact student retention, as these insights can guide educational reforms and interventions across the continent.

In Kenya, the education sector has witnessed significant growth at all levels since the country's independence in 1963 (Ngina, 2024). The introduction of the 100% transition policy, which mandates that all students who complete their primary education transition to secondary school, has led to a surge in enrollment numbers. This policy aligns with the government's Vision 2030, aiming to transform Kenya into a newly industrialized, middle-income country with a high standard of living for all citizens. Secondary education is particularly significant due to its connection with higher education, training, and the job market. However, challenges persist in student retention, with the Ministry of Education (2020) reporting an average retention rate of 82% at the secondary level. Factors contributing to students dropping out include early marriages, economic hardship, and inadequate support systems within schools, highlighting the essential role of school principals in managing student experiences and promoting retention.

In Nakuru County, where this study was situated, the challenges impacting student retention mirror broader national trends but are compounded by local socio-economic factors. According to statistics from the Nakuru County Education Office (2021), the retention rate stands at about 87%, indicating that approximately 12% of students enrolled do not complete their secondary education. Investigations into the reasons for dropout have identified issues such as teenage pregnancies, poverty, and familial instability (UNICEF, 2022). Previous studies indicate that school principals play a pivotal role in addressing these challenges through effective student management practices, including mentorship, motivation, and appropriate disciplinary approaches (Njangi, 2019; Mbiyiwe, 2013). Despite this, there is a gap in empirical evidence linking specific management practices of principals to student retention in public day secondary schools, thus underscoring the need for further research in this area.

Research on the influence of principals' student management practices on retention is limited, particularly in the Kenyan context, where existing studies have often overlooked this crucial relationship. For instance, Arop et al. (2019) focused on management strategies impacting academic achievement without directly addressing student retention. Similarly, Mphale (2014) suggested that factors beyond the school's control, such as family background, significantly influence retention rates, highlighting the necessity for a broader collaborative framework involving parents and the community. Therefore, this study aims to fill the identified gaps by exploring the specific influence of principals' management practices on student retention in Nakuru County. This research will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how effective leadership can create a supportive educational environment conducive to sustained enrollment and learning.

Student retention is a crucial indicator of educational success, reflecting a student's ability to continue their academic journey from Form One to Form Four at the same institution. It fosters continuity, stability, and strong bonds between students, teachers, and the institution. Consistent enrollment levels create a conducive environment for students to thrive and grow, reinforcing the institution's reputation (Arop et al., 2019). Principal student management practices encompass a wide range of strategies and techniques designed to support and enhance the overall academic and behavioral development of students. These practices include effective classroom management strategies, individualized learning approaches, and proactive communication between teachers, students, and parents (Wakaraka & Mugwe, 2023). Additionally, they emphasize promoting student engagement and motivation, fostering a strong sense of community, and providing ongoing support to address challenges that may impact student success (Asih & Hasanah, 2021).

Awuor (2018) established that drug abuse, poverty, pregnancies, and early marriage were all contributing factors to low student retention in a study on student enrollment and retention in Nakuru County. Phiri (2022) found a connection between student retention and the availability of textbooks, lab accessibility, and computer integration in the classroom. However, Phiri (2022) and Awuor (2018) did not assess how principals' strategies for encouraging and disciplining students as well as offering financial support affected student retention in Nakuru County. The need for the current study resulted from the lack of conclusive research data on the impact of principals' student management practices on student retention, particularly in public day secondary schools.

This study, therefore, concentrated on strategies utilized by school principals to improve student retention through student management practices. By investigating the various strategies used by principals to promote students' continued attendance and well-being in the learning environment, the study aims to provide insights into the factors influencing student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. Understanding how these practices are implemented and their impact on student outcomes is crucial for improving educational policies and interventions aimed at increasing academic achievement and ensuring sustained student enrollment. As such, examining principals' student management practices forms an essential part of broader research on enhancing retention rates and ensuring overall student success within the educational system (Jura & Bukaliya, 2022).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In an ideal scenario, students in Kenyan secondary schools should remain in their original schools for the entire four-year duration of their secondary education. To enhance student retention, the government has implemented various initiatives, such as Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE), Subsidized Secondary Education (SSE), policies targeting drug and substance abuse, and affirmative action for girls' education. Despite these efforts, statistics indicate that students' retention rate is still not at 100% in secondary schools. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, in 2022, the national student retention rate at the secondary school level in Kenya stood at an average of 82%. Statistics from Nakuru County Education Office shows that student retention rates at secondary school level between 2018-2022 were 87%, 89%, 89%, 88%, and 87% respectively; giving an average retention rate of 88%. This implies that on average, 18% of students in Kenya and 12% of students in Nakuru County did not

complete their secondary education as expected. These statistics indicated that the resources invested by government, parents and donors to provide secondary education for these students were wasted; and the aims, goals, and objectives of education for the individual, community, and nation as a whole remains unfulfilled. Existing empirical information from the background of this study showed that most researchers had focused on other factors that had affected student retention in schools such as teenage pregnancies, early marriages, child labour, parental insecurity and financial constraints. There is hardly any conclusive study available on the influence of principals' student management practices such as mentorship, motivation, discipline and financial support on student retention; especially in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County, hence the need for this study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of principals' student management practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were to:

- i) Determine the influence of principals' student mentorship practices on student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.
- ii) Establish the influence of principals' student motivational practices on student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

- iii) Determine the influence of principals' student disciplinary practices on student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.
- iv) Establish the influence of principals' student financial support practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

This study tested the following null hypothesis:

- i) **H₀**: Principals' student mentorship practices have no statistically significant influence on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya
- ii) **H₀**: Principals' student motivational practices have no statistically significant influence on students' retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya
- iii) **H₀**: Principals' student disciplinary practices have no statistically significant influence on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County
- iv) **H₀**: Principals' student financial support practices have no statistically significant influence on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County

1.6 Justification of the study

The commitment of government and other stakeholders in the provision of resources for secondary education sub-sector would not be realized unless deliberate efforts were taken to ensure all students transit from one level of secondary school to the next. This

study would contribute to the existing literature on principals' management practices that can enhance student retention especially in public day secondary schools.

Research on student retention links student retention to other factors and there was hardly any attempt to relate principals' student management practices such as mentorship, motivation, discipline and financial support to student retention in secondary schools. This study would therefore add to the existing body of knowledge in the area of student retention by assessing the influence of principals' management practices and student retention.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The information obtained from this study is useful to school principals, board of management, teachers and future researchers in this field. School principals and their boards of management could use the findings of this study to adopt appropriate student management practices in their schools. Moreover, the findings from this study can significantly influence the way principals approach mentorship, motivation, discipline, and financial support strategies for managing student affairs. Principals can leverage these innovative strategies to foster a conducive atmosphere for student growth and development in schools. By creating a nurturing and supportive environment, principals can positively impact student retention. Teachers would directly benefit from the improved principals' student management practices because they were directly involved in managing students in the schools.

Furthermore, the enriched empirical data generated by this research will serve as a valuable resource for researchers looking to investigate deeper into the jurisdiction of principals' student management practices. The insights garnered from this study can not

only contribute to the existing body of knowledge but also shed light on how these practices influence student retention rates, particularly in public day secondary schools. Researchers can find this information particularly enlightening as they continue to explore ways to improve educational outcomes and student retention within the education sector.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. Public day secondary schools play a crucial role in the education system, catering to a significant portion of the student population. This study focused on public day secondary schools in Nakuru County to assess the influence of principals' student management practices on student retention. The choice of public day secondary schools is justified by their accessibility to a wide range of students, often including those from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, making them an ideal setting to examine the influence of various management practices on student retention. Furthermore, understanding the effects of principals' mentorship, motivation, discipline, and financial support practices within this context can provide valuable insights into improving student retention strategies in schools.

The study used Tinto (1975, 1993) student integration theory to assess the influence of principals' management practices of mentorship, motivation, discipline and financial support on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. The participants of the study were SCDE, school principals, teachers and students in selected schools drawn from the 11 sub-counties in Nakuru County.

The methodological scope of this study employed a mixed-methods research approach, guided by the philosophical foundation of pragmatism. The purpose was to collect and integrate both quantitative and qualitative data, thereby allowing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem without being restricted by issues of truth and reality. Specifically, it utilized the concurrent triangulation mixed-methods research design to improve the validity and reliability of data on student retention in Nakuru County public day secondary schools by integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches within the same study.

The study used a combination of cluster method, proportionate sampling, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling techniques to select the sample population. The sample population consisted of 363 teachers, 90 principals, 11 Sub-County Directors of Education (SCDE), and 110 students. The number of schools selected from each sub-county was determined using proportionate sampling. The SCDE and students provided qualitative information, while principals, and teachers, provided quantitative information. The SCDE and students provided qualitative information obtained by use interview schedules and focus group discussion respectively while principals and teachers provided quantitative data through questionnaires specifically developed to answer the research questions. Data was collected in schools during official school hours and all information was obtained for a period of one school term (3 months) in the year 2022.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

1. The study encountered a limitation due to the insufficient availability of local literature on the influence of principals' student management practices on

retention. To address this, related literature was reviewed from broader contexts to provide a clear background and clarify the study variables. The analysis and discussion were then conducted with reference to this wider body of literature to strengthen the study's conclusions.

2. The study's examination of principals' student management practices was limited by the complexity and variability of these practices, which are influenced by specific factors and circumstances within individual school contexts. This complexity posed a challenge in capturing the full scope of the practices through a single research design. To mitigate this, a mixed method approach was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative designs to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the study variables.
3. The busy schedules of principals, teachers, and students were initially seen as a potential limitation, as they could have made scheduling interviews challenging. However, this issue was effectively managed by booking appointments well in advance and rescheduling as needed to accommodate participants. As a result, this did not significantly impact the data collection process, and the interviews were conducted as planned.
4. The study did not include all principals, teachers, and students from public day schools, which could be considered a limitation in terms of achieving full representation. However, rigorous sampling methods and techniques were used to ensure minimal sampling errors and to provide an adequate representation of the overall population, thereby reducing the potential impact of this limitation on the study's findings.

1.10 Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited to only four principals' student management practices that were adapted from Tinto(1975, 1993) student integration theory. Thus, other student management practices applicable in schools were not explored. Additionally, the study focused on principals, teachers and students in public day secondary schools only in Nakuru County and SCDE as the key participants. Thus, principals, teachers and students in boarding and private schools did not participate in the study. Consequently, any generalization made on the basis of the findings of this study was done with caution because the findings applied only to the context in public day secondary schools.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study

This study assumed that teachers and students would accurately describe their principals' management practices in student mentorship, student motivation, student discipline and financial support. This study also assumed that students could express themselves on how principals' management practices influence their retention in schools. The study further assumed that the school-maintained records of student retention.

1.12 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Student Retention	Refers to the ability of public secondary schools to attract learners for enrollment in form one and complete form four in the same institution.
Completion Rate	Refers to the percentage of students of the same cohort who successfully complete the form four course in the same school where they were enrolled in form one.
Concurrent Triangulation Mixed- Methods Research Design	Refers to a specific approach where both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed concurrently (at the same time) and then compared or triangulated to provide a more comprehensive and robust understanding of the research problem.
Student Management Practices	Are innovative methods, strategies or programmes that are developed by principals to ensure that students enrolled in their schools are retained without interruptions until they complete their form four course. These practices include mentorship, motivation, discipline and financial support.
Student Mentorship Practices	Principals' activities aimed at guiding, teaching, influencing, and supporting students such role modeling and career guidance and counseling
Student Motivation Practices	Activities of principals to encourage students to develop goals, academic and social commitments in school such as extracurricular activities and academic incentives

Student Disciplinary Practices Refers to the specific actions and strategies implemented by principals to manage student behavior in schools. This includes the Communication of rules and regulations, guidance and counseling, and involvement of parents/guardians.

Student Financial Support Refers to activities of principals aimed at supporting needy children to develop goals, academic and social commitments in the school through bursaries, scholarships, lunch programmes, school uniforms, sanitary towels, etc.



Mount Kenya University

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature which is organized according to research objectives notably: Principals' management practices, student retention, influence of principals' mentorship practices on student retention; influence of principals' motivational practices on student retention; influence of principals' disciplinary practices on student retention; and influence of principals' financial support practices on student retention. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as summary and research gaps are then discussed at the end of this chapter.

2.1 Principals' Mentorship Practices and Student Retention

The influence of principals' mentorship practices on student retention is crucial, as inclusive educational processes that recognize diverse student backgrounds are essential for fostering a supportive learning environment (Crosling, 2017). Effective mentorship can help address risk factors like academic challenges, psychological issues, and financial constraints, which are significant contributors to student dropout (Shakari, 2021).

Fulk (2020) investigated the use of mentorship as a retention strategy among Caucasian principals. The findings suggested that pre-constructed, theoretical challenges for their mentor to go through with them were of little benefit to the principals. They discovered that in comparison to hypothetical difficulties, the day-to-day features of the job produced considerably more organic challenges that gave greater opportunity to exercise analytical and problem-solving abilities. Admiration for their mentors' work,

faith in their accomplishment, the capacity to approach a subject from a different angle, and systemic understanding were all traits that the principals considered to be beneficial. The study, however, did not look at the influence of mentorship practices and student retention.

Grande et al., (2018) investigated how students and professionals in computer education may have role models who represent diverse ways of engaging in the field and/or career. Their findings contradicted traditional notions of role models as individuals who set the standards, instead portraying them as capable of changing on many scales (including none) depending on their amount of authority. Students, professors, and other professions serve as role models. The researchers argue that role models' potential must be viewed in terms of how computer engagement is formed in social interaction. Another study conducted by Anachuna and Obi (2021) in Nigeria, focused on principals' mentorship practices for teacher retention. Anachuna and Obis' study established that there were no formal structures in schools to guide principals in the provision of mentorship services to teachers. Mentorship relationships were encouraged after normal school hours and teachers chose their own mentors who had no formal training in mentorship. The findings in Anachuna and Obis' study were in line with assertions by Raschdorf (2015) that for mentorship relationships to be more effective, they should not be restricted to formal visitations. This study looked at teacher retention and not student retention.

Poolos (2019) defines student retention as efforts and strategies to anticipate and identify student needs prior to high school enrollment. Conventionally principals are responsible for student personnel management in their schools. Thus student

mentorship was an important principals' management practice that had the potential to influence retention of students throughout their secondary school education cycle. Poolos (2019) further observes that one of the recommended strategies to increase teacher-student interaction is to assign teacher advisors, or mentors to students and can also advice on subject selection. The role of the principal was not only to mentor but to create a school environment in which teachers and students can freely engage in both formal and informal mentorship activities. Effective mentorship could perhaps adopt the retention strategies suggested by Beatty-Guenter (1994) that seeks to sort students into categories, connect students to the schools, support the students by meeting their needs, and transform both the students and the schools.

McMullen and Eaton (2021) conducted a study that is the impact of a school-based intervention on life skills in secondary schools in Uganda, from the perspectives of teachers and students. This was a qualitative study embedded within the cluster-controlled intervention trial Living Well. The intervention included experiential learning for both students and teachers; consequently, this study considers their understanding and perspectives. A generic phenomenological approach was used to collect data in order to consider the lived experience of the teachers and students who completed the Living Well intervention and to identify any shared experiences. Life skills are the psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable people to effectively deal with the challenges and demands of daily life. Life skills education programmes are intended to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychosocial skills in a manner that is developmentally and culturally appropriate, thereby contributing to social, emotional, and behavioural development (Kanyi et al., 2019).

Decision-making, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, empathy, emotional management, conflict resolution, and assertiveness comprise life skills. The development of life skills requires a classroom environment that is safe and conducive to the practice and reinforcement of these skills (Kanyi, 2019). All of the teachers praised the overall impact of the Living Well (LW) program on their students. When asked to elaborate, the most common response was an impact on the emotional health and well-being of the students. They delighted in describing and discussing their emotions, which led to a personal awakening. It touches them on a profound level, and we learn that it has altered their lives (Teacher B). One was suicidal, but through the program and subsequent follow-up he was able to open up and share his struggles with me. His lifestyle has changed (Teacher E). Three teachers described how students are now better able to articulate their emotions. (Teacher B). Two of the teachers reflected on the fact that behavioural problems are frequently the result of underlying social or emotional issues and stated that schools and communities had not previously considered this.

FMLTA (2019) and Ongige et al., (2020) concluded that teacher retention could be achieved through both formal and informal mentorship activities. Studies in social interaction in schools seem to focus on principal leadership, collaboration from teachers, professional development, school environment and culture, and school organization. There was inadequate evidence in literature on how principals' mentorship practices influence student retention especially in secondary schools.

Principals as school administrators should be at the top of the ladder in providing mentorship services in their schools. Mentorship was usually a multi-faceted process that involves guiding, teaching, influencing, and supporting (Njangi (2019). In a school

set-up, the principals can mentor their deputies who will in turn mentor their heads of departments. Teachers would receive their mentorship services from their heads of departments and finally, students would be mentored by their teachers. However, mentorship does not necessarily follow such a formal structure and therefore it was not unusual to find principals providing mentorship services directly to their students or teachers.

Magut and Kiharas (2019) in Nairobi County, Kenya posit that new student orientation is critical in facilitating learners' adaptation to a new learning environment. This implies that acquainting students with school routines and reducing student-administration conflicts may result in frequent and avoidable disciplinary measures. Additionally, they observed that orientation helps students acclimate to a new learning environment. However, their study did not relate orientation with student retention. Through mentorship activities, principals were able to develop team culture and vision among teachers and students and direct factors relating to school climate, safety, turnout, and school accomplishment in a way that enhances student retention (Schargel et al., 2007) According to Thoonen et al., (2012) principals' mentorship practices can influence the students' decision to either stay or drop out of school. Hallinger and Heck(2014) also observed that the influence of principals on teachers and learning conditions in school makes it possible for principals to effectively guide students.

Tumuhimbise (2019)'s study in Private and Government Secondary Schools in Kabale District, Uganda, acknowledges the role of parental involvement and community sensitization, often part of mentorship programs, in supporting economically challenged students, but stops short of linking these to retention outcomes. Oyugi

(2016) touches on mentorship practices like guidance and counseling but focuses more on their role in creating a supportive environment rather than directly on retention. The existing literature suggests that while mentorship is integral to effective school leadership, its specific influence on retention, particularly in public day secondary schools, requires further investigation to establish a clear connection.

In Kenya, studies by Mbiyiwe (2013) and Awuor (2018) highlight how economic hardships and inadequate resources persistently impact student retention, despite efforts such as government subsidies. Principals who implement strong mentorship programs can mitigate these challenges by providing guidance and support tailored to students' individual needs, thereby enhancing retention rates. Njangi (2019) highlights that mentorship, alongside leadership and target setting, has a considerable influence on students' academic performance, which indirectly suggests a potential positive effect on retention. However, the study does not explicitly connect mentorship to retention, leaving a gap in understanding this relationship. Arop et al. (2020) reinforce the importance of leadership techniques, which could include mentorship, in improving student outcomes, yet their focus remains on academic achievement rather than retention.

Maina and Kariuki (2021) studied the influence of career guidance programmes on change of study programme among students in Kenyan educational institutions. The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey method; the study concluded that career guidance programmes had a positive and significant influence on students' change of programme of study. In particular, career day/exhibition/conference, guest speakers' talk and career information from universities, KUCCPS website and google

search were found to be the key influential factors of change their programmes of study among first year undergraduate students. Kariithi, Kimani and Mukolwe (2022) conducted a study on the mentorship interventions as predictors of discipline among public secondary school students in Kiambu County, Kenya. Different ways in which the school administration was involved in mentorship programmes included awareness of mentorship programmes in the schools, involvement in the initiation of mentorship programme, creation of a structured mentorship programmes in the schools , assistances issues arising from mentorship programmes, provision of supervision roles, assisting in determining the criteria used to allocate mentor/mentees, establishing goals for mentorship programmes and having meeting with students to ensure the goals were met. Mentorship programmes in schools were found to help students formulate solutions to them. However, this study did not look at the influence of mentorship programmes on student retention.

A study by Omondi (2020) emphasizes the importance of student orientation in public-day secondary schools, noting that conducting orientation sessions helps to familiarize new students with the school's routines and expectations. These sessions, which typically involve the presentation of key school policies and procedures, have been shown to ease the transition process, thereby increasing student comfort and belonging (Ngoya, 2021). The familiarity that new students develop with the school environment can significantly influence their retention rates, as they feel more connected and engaged from the outset (Mugo, 2019). Additionally, the preparation that orientation provides enables students to understand the academic and social dynamics they will encounter, reducing feelings of disorientation and anxiety (Owino, 2018). Consequently, schools that prioritize effective orientation strategies are likely to

witness improved student retention outcomes (Wanjohi, 2022). Therefore, fostering a supportive environment through orientation aligns with mentorship practices that are crucial for student retention.

A study by Nyang'au (2021) illustrates that introducing staff from various departments during orientation plays a vital role in shaping students' understanding of departmental expectations and support systems. By familiarizing students with faculty and staff, schools reinforce the sense of community and accessibility, which can positively impact students' motivation and engagement (Obara, 2020). When students can relate to their teachers and counselors, they are more likely to seek assistance, answer questions, and participate actively in their educational journey, thus contributing to higher retention rates (Kibera & Makori, 2021). Furthermore, establishing these initial connections can foster an environment where students feel supported and guided, leading to enhanced academic performance and greater educational commitment (Mugambi, 2022). Research suggests that a collaborative rapport between students and school staff is essential for nurturing students' long-term commitment to their education (Kamau, 2019). Therefore, schools that effectively introduce staff are more likely to create a supportive atmosphere conducive to student retention.

A study by Kiptoo (2023) highlights that schools that support orientation for subject selection significantly aid students in making informed career choices. This strategic support helps students connect their interests and strengths with available subjects, thereby promoting academic satisfaction and success (Masaku, 2021). By involving students in the decision-making process regarding their academic paths, the school empowers them to take ownership of their education, which significantly enhances their

retention (Obiri, 2022). When students feel invested in their academic journeys, they are more likely to remain engaged throughout their schooling (Irungu, 2020). Furthermore, aligning subject selection with career aspirations can lead to a more engaged and motivated student body, as learners see a direct link between their education and future opportunities (Nyang'au & Muthoni, 2018). Hence, comprehensive support for subject selection can be a critical mentorship practice that fosters student retention.

A study by Mwita (2021) underscores the significance of inviting professional speakers during career days as a motivational strategy for students. These events introduce students to various career paths and provide insights from practitioners, bridging the gap between education and the labor market (Kamau, 2021). Exposure to real-world experiences and success stories can awaken students' aspirations and fuel their ambition, making their educational efforts feel more pertinent (Wambua, 2023). Moreover, engaging with professionals can enhance students' understanding of the skills required in different careers, thereby strengthening their commitment to their chosen paths (Njoroge, 2022). The presence of role models can act as a powerful mentorship tool, inspiring students not only to persevere in their studies but also to plan strategically for their futures (Karanja, 2019). Therefore, career-day initiatives, bolstered by professional speakers, contribute significantly to student motivation and retention in schools.

A study by Aoko (2022) indicates that schools that support life skills training create an enabling environment for students, which play an influential role in their retention rates. Life skills programs equip students with essential coping mechanisms, conflict

resolution strategies, and interpersonal skills, enabling them to navigate the challenges of adolescent life (Mwangi, 2021). By fostering these competencies, schools contribute to students' overall well-being, making them feel more capable and confident, which directly impacts their decision to stay enrolled (Elimu, 2020). Furthermore, the skills acquired through such training can help reduce instances of dropout due to personal or social issues, as students learn to manage stress and build supportive relationships (Kamau, 2022). Research has shown that a well-rounded education that includes life skills training enhances students' emotional intelligence, which is crucial for long-term academic engagement (Ogonda, 2019). In this respect, life skills initiatives serve as a fundamental mentorship practice that significantly contributes to student retention.

A study by Wekesa (2023) explores how schools ensure students acquire skills that allow them to integrate into society after completing their studies, emphasizing its critical role in enhancing retention. Preparing students for societal integration not only focuses on academic excellence but also on developing practical skills necessary for employment and citizenship (Osoro, 2021). Schools that emphasize both academic and life-oriented skills help students perceive a clear purpose for their education (Obere, 2022). This perspective fosters a greater commitment to their studies, as students see how their current educational experiences shape their future roles in society (Kipkoech & Kipruto, 2019). Additionally, effective educational programs that prepare students for real-life challenges build a sense of community and belonging, making students less likely to disengage (Munyao, 2021). Thus, integrating skill development into the curriculum emerges as a pivotal mentorship practice that influences student retention rates positively.

2.2 Principals' Motivation Practices and Student Retention

Motivation has been defined differently by different scholars. For instance, Asih and Hasanah (2021) posited that motivation is the force that directs students to achieve their anticipated goals for schooling. Motivation in this study refers to activities of principals aimed at encouraging students to develop goals, academic and social commitments in school such as extracurricular activities and academic incentives. There is a large body of research-based information available in literature on theories of motivation. According to Kariuki and Mbugua (2018) motivation is the heartbeat to students' retention because it keeps learners active and alive to remain at school until completion (p.2317). Studies on motivation and student retention include: (Ajoke et al., 2015; Kelmendi & Nawar, 2016; Waigwa, 2016; Ongige et al., 2020).

Suleiman et al., (2019) investigated the impact of extracurricular activities on academic achievement in secondary schools in Malaysia's Kwara State. Interview and observation approaches were utilized to acquire pertinent data from the participants. The observation approach was utilized to supplement the results of the interview. Students' academic progress was impacted by extracurricular services, according to the data. The findings are consistent with those of Gikonyo et al. (2022), who discovered that co-curricular activities improved academic performance, social skills, and mental health among Kenyan secondary school students. In addition; their findings indicated that a lack of extracurricular facilities and employees was one of the problems impeding the successful delivery of extracurricular services. According to the report, schools should provide enough extracurricular facilities (such as a football pitch, volleyball court, and a hall for social events).

In Nigeria, Ajoke et al., (2015) evaluated the impact of co-curricular activities on the success of Senior Secondary School students. Press club and Literary and Debating Society are the variables to examine, as well as their engagement duration and academic accomplishment. Eight of the seventeen secondary schools are chosen at random, each with one hundred pupils. The data gathering questionnaires include questions about students' personal information as well as twelve questions on the press club, literary society, and debating society. The mock examination results suggest that co-curricular activities have a positive substantial impact on senior secondary school pupils' academic success in English. The survey also indicated a lack of commitment and encouragement on the side of school administration and instructors, as well as poorly designed programs and a lack of financial support from the school authorities. Their research, however, did not examine into the influence of these motivation components on student retention.

Philemon and Mkulu (2020) explored the impact of motivation on students' retention in Public secondary schools in Rorya District, Tanzania. He adopted the mixed methods research approach using the sequential explanatory research design. The study was guided by Maslow's needs hierarchy theory of motivation. The findings indicated that motivation significantly influenced secondary school students' retention and recommended that all educational stakeholders should actively participate in motivating students by ensuring a safe and secure environment to complete studies. Principals of secondary schools are key stakeholders in secondary schools hence the recommendation by Philemon and Mkulu (2020) falls directly on them. Students can be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. According to Oyiego et al., (2022) intrinsic motivation is in built in human beings and is adopted from birth or early childhood and

plays an important role in an individuals' physical, social and cognitive development. Kelmendi and Nawar (2016) analyzed the relationship between motivation and student retention among university students in UK. The analysis confirmed that there is a relationship between motivation and student retention, and extrinsic motivation had a larger impact. This finding is specifically significant to principals as they innovate ways of motivating their students with the aim of retaining them. Principals' management practices that are found in literature include developing student recognition schemes, academic incentives, and extracurricular activities. However, this study was conducted in U.K universities and not in Kenya.

Kouzes and Posner (2017) principals who hold high expectations for, and believe in their students helps them to develop self-confidence, courage and volition to live up to the principals' expectations (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Specifically, Kouzes and Posner (2017) assert that:

Believing in others is an extraordinarily powerful force in propelling greater performance celebrations and rituals, when done in an authentic way and from the heart, build a strong sense of collective identity and community spirit that can carry a group through extraordinarily tough times (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

These assertions compel principals to develop innovative ways of appreciating students' contributions and to create a culture of celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community among the students. Appreciation should not only be placed on academic excellence alone but also on non-academic activities. The principals should celebrate student success passionately and work to develop a strong identity among students and teachers that will hold them together as a school even during difficult times.

Ongige et al., (2020) studied the relationship between student motivation practices and students' retention in public secondary schools in Kisii County. The study was guided by Vroom's expectancy and McGregor's X and Y theories. The findings show that student motivation practices positively correlated with student retention in public secondary schools ($r = .717$). Kirondo (2014) examined the strategies that teachers use to create, maintain and protect motivation in classroom settings in Kinondoni municipality, Tanzania. The study adopted the mixed methods approach and established that open exchange of ideas, accepting mistakes and supportive environment were used as strategies of motivating students in classrooms. Student motivation was hampered by poor mastery of content, large class sizes, and lack of teaching aids.

Waigwa (2016) investigated the impact of motivating tactics on secondary school chemistry students' performance in Thika-East District, Kiambu County, Kenya. The study's main findings were that the most commonly used motivational strategy by Chemistry teachers promoted extrinsic motivation, that using motivational strategies improved learners' performance in secondary school chemistry, and that there was no significant difference in the effect of motivational strategies on the performance of boys and girls in secondary school chemistry. The study concluded that the application of motivating tactics led to improved student performance in secondary school Chemistry. The study, however, did not look at how these tactics influence student retention. The studies by Ongige et al., (2020) and Kirondo (2014) are specifically important for principals whose management practices should target the motivation levels of students. Kirondos findings also emphasize the need for principals to motivate teachers as well since they play a crucial role in motivating students in classrooms. Thus as principals

innovate ways of ensuring that students are motivated by providing academic incentives and recognition they should also broaden the scope to cover the teachers so that the benefits of such strategies on student retention can be maximized.

Jepkoech, Muriel, and Ogoti (2015) emphasize that principals' efforts to foster open communication, provide bursaries, and enhance school culture significantly contribute to retaining students in secondary schools. These practices create an inclusive environment where students feel valued and supported, thereby reducing dropout rates. However, Awuor (2018) presents a contrasting view, noting that government subsidies, while intended to motivate students to stay in school, had an insignificant impact on retention in Rongai Sub-County. This suggests that motivational practices may need to be more targeted and holistic to effectively enhance retention. Oyugi (2016) adds that the provision of sanitary towels, guidance, and a secure environment—motivational strategies aimed at addressing specific student needs—positively affects retention, especially among female students. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of motivational practices but also highlight the complexity of effectively implementing them to achieve desired retention outcomes.

Okindo et al., (2020) conducted a correlational study to examine the relationship between principals' transactional leadership style and students' conformity to rules in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The target population for the study was 338 principals, 338 deputy principals, 3426 teachers, and 116,374 students in 338 public secondary schools. The respondents reported that principals call attention to what students can get for tasks they have accomplished. These findings suggest that principals in the studied schools use transactional leadership style to manage students'

behaviour through motivating behaviour with rewards and punishments. The results showed that 68.3% of the respondents stated that principals provide rewards or recognition when students reach their goals, while 65.9% of the respondents stated that principals tell students what to do if they want to be rewarded. These findings suggest that principals in the studied schools set standards and expect behaviour from their students, which aligns with the principles of transactional leadership style.

Overall, the study indicates that principals in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya use transactional leadership style to enhance students' conformity to school rules. The findings are consistent across both teachers' and principals' data, suggesting that this is a commonly employed leadership style in the schools studied. The study recommends that principals should provide rewards and recognition constantly to students who conform to school rules, while using reprimands for those who do not. However, principals should also be cautious when meting out punishment to students, as it may trigger non-conformity to school rules. Finally, the study recommends that suspension, and even repeated suspension, should be used as a tool for dealing with students demonstrating chronic behaviour problems that disrupt the school climate.

Waweru and Orodho (2014) investigated how school principals' management practices affect students' academic achievement in national exams in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. A descriptive correlation research design was used in this study. 26 principals from public secondary schools in Kiambu County were chosen using a combination of stratified and basic random selection approaches. Most of the identified management factors, such as effective human and physical resource planning,

organizational strategies, curriculum leadership, control measures, and students' academic achievement, were found to be linked in most of the county's best performing schools. These management strategies were rarely applied in the county's low-performing schools.

Lwakasana & Getange (2017) studied the effects of income generating activities in public secondary schools in Transmara Sub-County, Narok County, Kenya. The population for the study comprised of all principals, teachers and bursars and used combinations of purposive and stratified random sampling techniques to select a sample of 13 principals, 322 teachers and 13 bursars. Using primary data, the study revealed that income from income generating activities eased burden on parents, increased enrolment in schools, improved academic performance and was used to motivate both students and teachers. Such income was used to cater for physical facilities, and cater for bursaries for needy students. Based on the findings, the study recommended that IGAs should be encouraged and enhanced to support the academic, cater for needy students and improve physical facilities on schools.

In Kenya, co-curricular activities are recognized as essential for holistic student development. Studies have shown that active participation in these activities can significantly enhance student retention in schools. For instance, a study by Kimanzi (2022) highlighted that schools which encourage students to engage in sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities tend to have higher retention rates. This is because such activities foster a sense of belonging and community among students, which is crucial for their overall satisfaction and commitment to the school.

According to Muthee (2020), schools that promote active participation in co-curricular activities tend to have higher retention rates because these activities help students to feel more connected to the school environment, thereby reducing dropout rates. In Nakuru County, public day secondary schools have increasingly recognized the importance of encouraging students to actively participate in co-curricular activities as a strategy for enhancing student retention. Co-curricular activities provide students with opportunities to develop social skills, leadership qualities, and a sense of belonging, which are crucial for their overall development and engagement in school. Rewarding students who excel in co-curricular activities is another practice that has been shown to positively influence student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. Recognizing and rewarding students for their achievements in sports, arts, and other extracurricular activities not only motivates them to continue participating but also enhances their self-esteem and commitment to their studies. Kariuki and Mugo (2019) found that schools that implement reward systems for co-curricular excellence see improved student morale and a reduction in absenteeism, which ultimately contributes to higher retention rates. The rewards act as an incentive for students to stay in school and strive for excellence in both academic and non-academic pursuits.

Academic performance is a critical factor in student retention, and schools in Nakuru County have adopted various strategies to recognize and reward exemplary academic achievement. Awards and recognition ceremonies for top-performing students serve as a motivational tool that encourages students to put in more effort in their studies. Research by Njoroge (2018) highlights that students who are acknowledged for their academic success are more likely to remain in school and complete their education. The positive reinforcement provided by such awards contributes to a culture of academic

excellence and fosters an environment where students feel valued and supported in their academic endeavors.

Regular academic advising sessions have been identified as an essential practice in promoting student retention in public day secondary schools. These sessions provide students with guidance on how to improve their academic performance and address any challenges they may be facing in their studies. In Nakuru County, schools that consistently organize academic advising sessions have reported higher retention rates. Mwangi (2021) emphasizes that academic advising helps students to set realistic academic goals, understand their strengths and weaknesses, and develop effective study habits, all of which are crucial for academic success and retention. Acknowledging students with good behavior openly is another practice that has been linked to improved student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. Positive behavior reinforcement, such as public acknowledgment, helps to create a supportive school environment where students feel respected and valued. According to Wambugu (2020), schools that openly recognize good behavior among students foster a sense of discipline and responsibility, which in turn encourages students to remain in school. Such practices contribute to building a positive school culture that promotes student retention.

Assigning responsibilities to students with good behavior is also a common practice in Nakuru County's public day secondary schools aimed at enhancing student retention. By entrusting well-behaved students with leadership roles and responsibilities, schools help to build their confidence and leadership skills, which are important for their personal development and engagement with the school community. Wanjiru (2019)

notes that students who are given responsibilities are more likely to develop a strong sense of belonging and commitment to the school, leading to higher retention rates. This practice not only rewards good behavior but also empowers students to take an active role in the school community, further reinforcing their decision to stay in school. According to Muiruri (2019), recognition and rewards for achievements in sports, arts, and other extracurricular domains can motivate students to remain engaged and committed to their education. This practice not only boosts the morale of the students but also encourages others to participate actively, thereby enhancing overall student retention. The research concluded that rewarding students who excel in co-curricular activities is a common practice in many Kenyan schools.

Awarding students for exemplary academic performance is another strategy employed by schools to improve student retention. Research indicates that recognition of academic excellence can significantly impact students' motivation and persistence. A study conducted in Kirinyaga County found that schools which regularly award top-performing students tend to have lower dropout rates. This is because such awards serve as an incentive for students to strive for academic success, thereby increasing their commitment to their education. Regular academic advising sessions are crucial for student retention in Kenyan schools. These sessions provide students with guidance on how to improve their academic performance and set realistic educational goals. According to a study by Kimanzi (2022), schools that organize frequent academic advising sessions tend to have higher retention rates. These sessions help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions about their academic paths.

Acknowledging students with good behavior is an effective strategy for enhancing student retention. Positive reinforcement through public acknowledgment can encourage students to maintain good conduct, which in turn creates a conducive learning environment. Research by Muiruri (2019) suggests that schools which openly acknowledge and reward good behavior tend to have higher student retention rates. This practice not only promotes discipline but also fosters a positive school culture. Assigning responsibilities to students with good behavior is another practice that can positively influence student retention. When students are given leadership roles or responsibilities, they feel valued and integral to the school community. This sense of responsibility and belonging can significantly reduce dropout rates. A study in Nakuru County by Njihia and Mungai (2019) found that schools which assign responsibilities to well-behaved students tend to have higher retention rates, as these students often act as role models for their peers.

2.3 Principals' Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention

Dimov et al., (2017), attempts to define discipline. They argue that the meaning of discipline can be explained from positive and negative perspectives. In the negative perspective, discipline 'means to control, to punish, to be submissive to rules and authority, to suspend and expel' (Dimov et al., 2017). According to Dupper (2010) the negative perspective meanings of discipline are in most cases attempts to solve and control school indiscipline or misbehavior. also identified two approaches used to define discipline: traditional view and progressive view. The traditional view suggests that to discipline children is necessary adult control and influence so that children can develop self-control. The progressive view considers children as being naturally good and therefore no action should be taken to discipline them since they will learn self-control on their own, through their development and self-experience (Dimov et al.,

2017). The definitions emanating from Dimov et al., (2017) seem to explain the root cause of the disciplinary issues in our educational institutions today. The progressive meaning of discipline seems to have been adopted by parents who bring up their children as ‘naturally good people’ who will learn how to control themselves naturally as they grow. Indeed, attempts by principals to discipline students in schools have sometimes resulted in strong protests from parents of concerned students. The government of Kenya has so far proscribed corporal punishment in Kenya schools.

These arguments are particularly important to principals and deputy principals who are usually charged with the responsibility of maintaining discipline in their schools. The traditional view of discipline according to Dimov et al., (2017) is applicable given the prevailing situation in educational institutions and especially in secondary schools. Secondary school students are still minors since most of them have not attained the age of majority which 18 years in Kenya and are therefore under control of adults. Principals should innovatively develop mechanisms that will ensure that students are disciplined such developing safe and secure schools, effective communication of school rules and regulations and a fair student disciplinary process.

Ilyasin (2019) perception on discipline states that:

Discipline is an accurate control mechanism towards our body. Through discipline, our physics is trained to be ideal and skillful. Moreover, discipline is a repeat examination and correction in order to build dexterity character which automatically works in our physics. In addition, discipline increases our skills, power, and physically functions as well as driving our body to the essence of being useful for other creatures and follows every rule set. In other words, not only to increase physical health and power, discipline can also make people be conquered (Ilyasin 2019).

Ilyasin (2019) argues that disciplined persons should not have to be “slaves” to do whatever other people ask them to do, but should have self-control over themselves.

The implications of this argument to principals are that they should strike a balance between the traditional and progressive perspectives of discipline when devising mechanisms to enhance student retention in their schools. Management practices that adopt the traditional perspective of discipline would be advisable so long as they do not contravene government policy on student discipline. Available literature studies identify management practices on discipline such as use of school rules and regulations, school safety and security and fair disciplinary processes. Empirical studies on strategies used in schools to manage student discipline include: (Prasetyarini et al., 2020; Emekako, 2016; Uzoechina et al., 2015; Anayo 2014; Nthiga, 2014; Apondi, 2014).

Prasetyarini et al., (2020) studied strategies used by teachers to cope with discipline problems in selected schools on central Java, Indonesia. The study employed qualitative research approach and used data from interviews as primary source of information that was analyzed and interpreted. The common disciplinary problems facing teachers were noisy classrooms, wrong or incomplete attributes and lateness. Teachers used corrective, assertive and preventive disciplinary control measures. The study recommended setting up of classroom rules. Emekako (2016) studied disciplinary measures used by secondary school teachers by investigating how teachers administer these discipline measures in the verge of sustaining a peaceful and disciplined learning environment. The selection of participants was established through stratified random, convenience and purposeful sampling techniques. Empirically, descriptive and inferential statistics and content analysis informed the findings of this study. It emerged from this study that despite the varieties of disciplinary measures available to teachers after the abolishment of corporal punishment, teachers still put to use only a few of the

available measures and this had an effect on student retention. The study also reports that most of these measures are not very effective and suitable as corporal punishment.

Uzoechina et al., (2015) investigated teachers' awareness and usage of non-violent strategies for the maintenance of discipline in Nigerian Secondary Schools. 200 teachers were selected for descriptive survey out of 996 teachers. Stratified random sampling was used such that the schools were stratified into co-educational and single-sex schools, and from each randomly selected school, 10 teachers were selected. The study found that there exist significant differences in levels of awareness and usage of non-violent discipline strategies among teachers in single-sex and coeducational secondary schools. Students have to notice empathy on the part of teachers, even when errant, and possibly are told the consequences of repeating such errant acts in situations where they had not been pre-warned. Corporal punishment scars, maims and at times kills students and should be stopped in Nigerian schools, and when this is likely to trigger dropout intentions. The study however, did not how these non-violent strategies contribute towards student retention.

Owan and Agunwa (2019) in a Nigerian researched on teachers' job performance in terms of instructional delivery, attendance to classes, note writing, and record keeping is highly connected to principals' supervisory, leadership, and communication competencies Teachers' work performance in terms of instructional delivery, attendance to classes, note writing, and record keeping is significantly influenced by the supervisory, leadership, and communication abilities of principals (Owan & Agunwa, 2019). Other factors influencing secondary school students' academic achievement include disciplinary control, classroom management, and instructors' motivation. In

Nigeria's Cross River State, Arop et al., (2020) evaluated school management practices, teacher effectiveness, and students' academic achievement in mathematics. Arop et al. (2020) found a strong correlation between effective student discipline management and improved academic performance, which indirectly supports student retention. The study underscores that when students are disciplined and the school environment is well-managed, they are more likely to remain in school.

Similarly, Magero (2020) emphasizes the importance of guidance and counseling (G&C) as a disciplinary tool in addressing student behavior, suggesting that effective G&C contributes to reducing student misbehavior and potential dropouts. This aligns with Oyugi's (2016) findings that a safe and secure environment, supported by consistent disciplinary practices, positively impacts student retention. Njangi (2019) also touches on the role of leadership in discipline, indicating that principals who effectively manage student discipline through mentorship see better academic performance, which may translate into higher retention rates. However, the connection between disciplinary practices and retention is not always direct; for instance, Waweru and Orodho (2014) discuss the role of curriculum leadership and control measures in student achievement, which can indirectly influence retention. Thus, while the literature acknowledges the importance of disciplinary practices, it also suggests a need for a more nuanced understanding of how these practices specifically influence student retention.

Magero (2020) explored the challenges of establishing guidance and counselling initiatives in public secondary schools in Kenya's Lugari sub-county. G&C teachers, according to the study, were overburdened with tasks because the majority of them had

dual responsibilities, such as being class teachers and game teachers, in addition to conducting their respective lectures in their teaching topics. As a result, their contribution to G&C was limited, which contributed to student misbehavior. The study revealed that G&C teachers were dealing with personal concerns such as grief, family status, and past life experiences, which influenced how they handled their counselling jobs. The study suggests that school principals provide maximum support to G&C instructors in order to maintain secondary school discipline through counselling.

Anayo (2014) examined strategies adopted by teachers in disciplining students in Langata District of Nairobi. The mixed methods research paradigm was adopted and the results showed that there was no significant difference in strategies used by male and female teachers and between the private and public schools. The findings revealed cognitive and supportive strategies were found to be as very effective while punitive strategy as moderate. This was so due to the government ban of corporal punishment and as such, teachers face great challenges in discipline students. Often, students do not change with the kind of punishments given to them. Nthiga (2014) investigated strategies adopted in enhancing learners' retention in public secondary schools, in Embakasi district, Kenya. Using regression analysis, the study established that discipline predicted student retention. The study identified behaviour problems, absenteeism, and lack of parental support on student disciplinary programmes as the disciplinary issues confronting these schools.

Apondi (2014) investigated several kinds of communication in Nairobi schools. The survey discovered that school parliaments or barazas, assembly hall announcements, members of the students' council, and reporting to appropriate authorities are all

employed in schools. Notice boards, suggestion boxes, and end-of-year reports are among the communication methods used at secondary schools in Nairobi County, as are school calendars, minutes, internal memos, students' notice boards, and message boxes. One of the tasks of members of the students' council, according to the research, is to express the students' requirements to the appropriate authorities. Complaints about the amount of food given to students, missing lessons by some teachers, absenteeism, harsh punishment, a list of areas in which students want the school to improve, changes in the school routine, and the welfare of the members of the students' council are just a few of the needs communicated.

Literature reviewed shows that student discipline is a global issue of concern despite of the numerous strategies put in place to manage it. An important issue of concern for principals that discipline should be inculcated from the students themselves and mechanisms to involve them in maintaining it could be ideal. Literature shows that principals have devised innovative disciplinary practices including developing clear communication of rules and regulations, involving students in managing discipline through student leaders, and ensuring that schools are secure and safe for students. However, studies on how these disciplinary practices influence student retention especially in day secondary schools are inconclusive. A study by Kamau (2020) found that involving learners in the creation of school rules and regulations is a key practice for enhancing student retention in Kenyan secondary schools. Engaging students in these decision-making processes instills a sense of ownership and responsibility, leading to greater adherence to the rules and fostering a positive school environment. Schools that incorporate students' input into rule-setting typically experience fewer disciplinary issues and higher retention rates, as students are more inclined to follow

rules they helped create. This participatory approach not only cultivates a sense of community but also empowers students to actively contribute to maintaining a conducive learning environment, which is crucial for their ongoing engagement and retention in school.

A study by Ndegwa (2019) found that providing students with copies of school rules and regulations during admission is an essential practice in managing student behavior and promoting retention in Kenyan secondary schools. By ensuring that students are fully informed of the expectations and guidelines from the start of their school journey, schools can better maintain order and discipline. Clear communication of rules at the outset helps prevent misunderstandings and potential conflicts that could lead to disciplinary actions or student dropouts. When students are aware of the rules from the beginning, they are more likely to adhere to them, reducing the risk of expulsion or withdrawal due to behavioral issues, thereby contributing to higher retention rates.

A study by Muriithi (2021) found that organizing guidance and counseling sessions for students with social problems plays a significant role in improving student retention in secondary schools. These sessions offer crucial support to students facing personal challenges that may hinder their academic performance and overall well-being. Schools that provide regular guidance and counseling services often report higher retention rates, as these services help students cope with issues such as peer pressure, family conflicts, and emotional stress. By addressing the social and emotional needs of students, schools create a supportive environment that encourages them to remain in school and complete their education, rather than dropping out due to unresolved personal issues.

A study by Wanjiku (2020) found that peer counseling is a valuable strategy for enhancing student retention in Kenyan secondary schools. Involving students in helping their peers navigate personal and academic challenges allows schools to leverage the influence of peer relationships to create a supportive and inclusive environment. Schools that support peer counseling programs tend to see lower dropout rates, as students are often more comfortable confiding in and seeking help from their peers. Peer counseling not only fosters a sense of belonging among students but also empowers them to actively participate in shaping a positive school culture, which is critical for their retention and success in school.

A study by Mutua (2018) found that regularly reporting and informing parents and guardians about students' disciplinary issues is a key practice in Kenyan secondary schools that positively impacts student retention. Effective communication between the school and home ensures that parents are aware of any behavioral concerns and can work together with the school to address them. Schools that maintain open lines of communication with parents regarding disciplinary matters often experience higher retention rates, as early parental intervention can prevent minor issues from escalating into more serious problems that could result in a student's withdrawal. This collaborative approach creates a stronger support system for the student, both at school and at home, which is vital for their continued engagement and success.

2.4 Principals' Financial Support Practices and Student Retention

Slanger et al., (2015), claimed that institutional support, financial aid conditions, and overall quality of instruction influence retention. According to Beatty-Guenter (1994) retention theory schools should develop student support mechanisms to ensure that their needs are understood and addressed accordingly. (AFMLTA, 2019) observe that

students leave school due to a combination of personal and school related factors such as lack of school fees, poor academic performance, family issues, career indecision, medical reasons and inadequate participation in extra-curriculum activities. In a study by Haverila et al., (2020) student retention was highly influenced by finance-related factors.

Tumuhimbise (2019) in Uganda highlights that the absence of financial support mechanisms, such as bursaries and scholarships, leads to low retention rates among economically disadvantaged students. The study also established that there were no guidance and counseling services and bursaries provided to economically challenged children. This study did not look at the influence of principals' management practices on student retention. This finding is echoed by Awuor (2018), who notes that government subsidies alone are insufficient to retain students, suggesting that additional financial support practices by school principals are necessary. Jepkoech, Muriel, and Ogoti (2015) discuss the role of bursaries and grants in enhancing retention, emphasizing that financial support is a key factor in ensuring that students, especially those from low-income backgrounds, can continue their education.

In Kenya a study by Njangi (2019) assessed the influence principals' management practices of leadership, target setting and mentorship on student performance on Kirinyaga County. The study established that the three practices influence students' academic performance to a greater extent. However, Njangis' study did not relate these principals' management practices to student retention. Another study by Jepkoech, Muriel and Ogoti in Aldai Sub-County established that principals employed strategies of free communication, provision of bursaries and grants, enhancement of school

culture and rising of school motivation levels to ensure they retained their students. Oyugi (2016) also assessed management practices that influenced retention of girls in Suba Sub-County. The management practices considered in this study were provision of sanitary towels, guidance and counselling, donor support and safe and secure environment. The study found that all the four management practices positively affected student retention.

Oyugi (2016) further corroborates this by showing that financial support practices, including the provision of sanitary towels and donor support, significantly improve retention rates among female students in Suba Sub-County. These studies collectively underscore that financial support practices are not just beneficial but essential for retaining students, particularly in public day secondary schools where economic barriers are more pronounced. However, Ng'ethe (2004) raises concerns that despite such efforts, retention rates remain a challenge, indicating that financial support must be part of a broader, more integrated approach to be fully effective. Musee (2018) investigated the factors that influence principals' administrative performance in Kenya's Mwingi East Sub-County, Kitui County. The study employed a descriptive research survey design. Using primary data, the study discovered that a lack of human resources and insufficient physical resources limited the principal's ability to complete administrative tasks, which had an impact on how school administrators performed. Despite the study's recommendation that the government provide adequate resources for principals to function, it failed to address the issue of student retention.

Bekidusa and Kisimbii (2020) studied the influence of school feeding program on the retention of learners in public primary schools. This study was conducted through a

descriptive survey research design. The results show school feeding programmes are often designed to enhance academic performance and cognitive development. Improved nutritional status of school-age children leads to better attention and cognition, and thus, better educational outcome. School feeding can improve attentiveness in class by reducing short-term hunger many children come to school on an empty stomach, yet they remain surrounded by the distracting and disturbing facets of the crisis. However, the study was carried out in primary schools and not in secondary schools. Moreover, the focus of the study was on student performance and on student retention.

Kiiru et al., (2020) studied lunch program management and its influence on educational outcomes at Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya's public day secondary schools. The study's key results on the achievement of educational outcomes; there were shortcomings in tracking and assessing educational outcomes because most schools have a food safety plan, because improved educational outcomes. The study however, focused on how lunch programme affected educational outcomes and not on student retention. Awuor (2015) looked at the nature and impact of resource mobilization strategies like user fee, state subsidy, student labour, community funds, NGO funds, income generation activities and school foundations on internal efficiency measured in terms of the levels of retention, repetition and performance of students. According to the findings, schools that charge and collect more fees do better academically. The schools also had a high rate of retention and low wastage, indicating a high level of internal efficiency. It was discovered that receiving a government subsidy through the FTSE program improved internal efficiency by lowering both dropout and repetition rates. As a result, it had better instructional facilities, which translated into high exam achievement. Foundations and endowments, despite being underutilized, have a

favorable impact on school retention rates by offering scholarships to brilliant and disadvantaged students. Student performance as a measure of internal efficiency exhibited a positive link with all of the resource mobilization techniques studied, according to the regression analysis results. All of the tactics in question have a favorable link with retention rates, with the exception of community funds, which have a negative relationship.

A study by Mutuku (2020) on the impact of income-generating projects in public secondary schools in Kenya found that schools initiating such projects can better support needy students, thereby enhancing student retention. These projects, which may include activities like farming or small-scale businesses, provide additional funds that can be used to subsidize school fees, purchase learning materials, or cover other essential needs for disadvantaged students. By addressing these financial challenges, schools create an environment where students are less likely to drop out due to economic difficulties, thereby improving overall retention rates. Mutiso et al., (2019) looked at school management practices as a predictor variable in the adoption of safety standards in Machakos County public secondary schools. The qualitative data from open-ended questions was evaluated thematically and presented using descriptive statistics, and the quantitative data was studied using descriptive, correlation, and regression analysis. The findings demonstrated that school management methods in the County, such as proper funding and system support, had a substantial impact on the coordination of safety standard implementation, assessment, and control in public secondary schools. The findings, however, revealed that the school leaders lacked security measures and efficient methods of sensitizing students.

A study by Waweru (2019) on the mobilization of funds within school communities to support needy students revealed that schools that actively engage in fundraising activities often see improved student retention. The study highlighted those efforts such as harambees (community fundraisers), seeking donations from local businesses, and engaging alumni networks can generate significant resources to assist students in need. This communal approach not only provides financial support but also fosters a strong sense of collective responsibility and belonging, which encourages students to remain in school despite financial challenges. A study by Njoroge (2021) on the awareness of bursaries and scholarships in Kenyan secondary schools emphasized the critical role of communication between schools, parents, and students. The study found that when schools ensure that parents and students are well-informed about available bursary and scholarship opportunities, the likelihood of students dropping out due to financial reasons significantly decreases. Schools that provide guidance and support in the application process for these financial aids help to remove financial barriers, allowing more students to continue their education.

A study by Mwangi (2018) on school partnerships with organizations and government agencies for bursaries and scholarships found that such collaborations are vital for improving student retention in Kenyan secondary schools. The research demonstrated that schools that establish and maintain relationships with external bodies are more successful in securing financial aid for their students. This support helps to alleviate the financial burdens faced by needy students, reducing the chances of them dropping out and thereby contributing to higher retention rates. A study by Kimani (2019) on the flexibility of payment options for feeding programs in Kenyan secondary schools found that allowing installment payments significantly enhances student retention. The study

indicated that when schools permit parents to pay for feeding programs in installments, it eases the financial strain on families, ensuring that students have access to school meals. Regular access to meals is crucial for student attendance and participation, which in turn promotes higher retention rates by addressing one of the key factors that can lead to absenteeism and eventual dropout.

A study by Njuguna (2020) on alternative payment methods for feeding programs in Kenyan secondary schools found that schools accepting in-kind payments, such as farm produce or labor, contribute positively to student retention. This flexible approach allows families who may not have cash resources to still fulfill their obligations, ensuring that their children can participate in essential school services like feeding programs. By accommodating various forms of payment, these schools create a more inclusive environment, reducing the likelihood of students dropping out due to financial constraints. Musee (2013) analyzed factors influencing allocation of bursaries to students in public secondary schools in Central Division, Machakos District. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between student's performance and bursary allocation. The bright children from poor families were benefiting more from bursary allocation than those who were not bright. It was finally established that there was a significant relationship between political patronage and bursary allocation. The politicians were interfering with the appointment of the bursary committee members as well as the allocation of the bursaries. The study however, did not look at the influence of bursaries on student retention.

According to Paul (2020) constituency Bursary Fund is not serving its purpose. They posit that, since the bursary fund is under the direct control of members of parliament,

it has been transformed into a political instrument, thus compromising its effectiveness. This effectiveness is hampered due to; firstly, the parliamentarians give bursaries to friends and political supporters who are not necessarily needy. Secondly, the parliamentarians split the fund into tiny amounts so as to reach as many people as possible. This makes the fund inadequate hence lowers retention rate (Onuko, 2012). Funding of needy students is often inconsistent from the national level and this disrupts the learning programme when learners are sent home to collect fees. Students under the bursary scheme are likely to drop from school altogether. Richard et al.,(2019) observes that, the process of sending money from the central government to the constituencies then to schools takes long. By the time learners get the money, many would have been sent away from school or had lost quite some time in trying to access the funds.

Richard et al., (2019) states that given the relatively high fee levels in secondary schools, it is evident that the set minimum bursary award is far below the fees charged, leading to some beneficiaries dropping out. Over the years, there has been a general decline in the amounts allocated for the fund by the treasury since 2006. There is substantial evidence in the literature that the government of Kenya introduced secondary school subsidies, coupled with the increased availability of bursaries from the CDF have helped ease the financial burden of secondary schools despite the recent reductions in secondary school fees, these fees still present a major financial obstacle. The sorting process according to Beatty-Guenter (1994) model generates information of new students that is useful to principals in developing appropriate student support mechanisms. Available literature shows that principals support their students in academic activities but they often overlook non-academic activities (Bradley & Conway, 2016). In an effort to support students especially those with school fees

challenges, principals should seek help from potential support agencies from the public and private sectors. The funds should not only be used for school fees but for all academic and extra-curricular activities as per the unique needs of the school dictates.

Mbuva (2011) studied student retention in Australia and established that for students to stay on in school there is need to have a supportive staff to focus on students as individuals and check on the academic needs. School principals are thus responsible for ensuring that schools have teachers who are responsive to student needs. Other school staff such as the bursars, account clerks, matrons, nurses, technicians, librarians, messengers and watchmen equally plays an important complementary role in student retention. It is incumbent upon the school principal to spearhead not only the financial support mechanisms for needy students but also ensure that all stakeholders of the school are involved so to provide the necessary goodwill for success.

The prevailing economic situation in Kenya seems to suggest that retention of students in public day secondary schools is likely to depend on the principals' ability to mobilize school fees for needy students. Even if the government fully pays schools fees through the Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) programme, additional costs such as food, transport and uniform appears to affect many students. Although there is numerous empirical evidence of principals' student support especially in academic activities, there is hardly any information on how the principals' practices in financial mobilization students influence retention in secondary schools.

2.5 Theoretical Literature

This study is supported by the Tinto (1975) Theory of Student Departure, and the systems theory by Ludwig von Bertalanffy developed in the 1950s.

2.5.1 Tinto's Theory of Student Departure

This study was grounded on Tinto's Theory of Student Departure. Tinto's Theory of Student Departure, initially developed in 1975 and further refined in 1993, posits that a student's decision to leave or stay in an educational institution is primarily influenced by their level of assimilation into both the academic and social aspects of the institution. According to Tinto, students who form strong connections with their peers, faculty, and the broader school community are more likely to persist in their studies, as these connections foster a sense of belonging and commitment to the institution. The theory emphasizes the importance of student engagement in both formal academic activities, such as classes and studying, and informal social interactions, such as extracurricular activities and peer relationships. This dual assimilation process is critical in reducing the likelihood of student departure and improving retention rates in educational institutions (Tinto, 1975; Tinto, 1993).

In Tinto's Theory of Student Departure, the aspect of departure refers to the process by which students decide to leave or drop out of an educational institution before completing their studies. Tinto suggests that student departure is influenced by a combination of academic, social, and personal factors. These include the student's integration into the academic and social systems of the institution, their interactions with faculty and peers, and their overall satisfaction with the college experience. When students feel disconnected or unsupported in these areas, they are more likely to depart from the institution. The theory emphasizes the importance of fostering a supportive

and engaging environment to reduce the likelihood of student departure. The relevance of Tinto's Theory of Student Departure is crucial to understanding the objectives of the study aimed at assessing the influence of principals' student management practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. Tinto's theory highlights the significance of academic and social assimilation in fostering student retention, which aligns with the study's first objective of determining the influence of principals' mentorship practices. By mentoring students, principals can enhance their sense of belonging and assimilation within the school environment, thereby reducing the likelihood of departure. This connection is particularly relevant as mentorship programs can address the personal and psychological needs of students, ensuring they remain engaged and motivated to complete their education (Metz, 2004).

Furthermore, Tinto's emphasis on the role of social integration through positive interactions with peers and faculty supports the study's second objective, which is to establish the influence of principals' motivational practices on student retention. Motivational practices, such as rewarding academic achievements and fostering a supportive school culture, directly contribute to students' social integration. When students feel recognized and valued, their commitment to staying in school increases, aligning with Tinto's argument that student retention is closely tied to the level of student involvement and institutional support (Samoila & Vrabie, 2023). The third objective of the study, which seeks to determine the influence of principals' disciplinary practices on student retention, also finds relevance in Tinto's theory. Tinto notes that negative interactions or lack of support can lead to student departure. Effective disciplinary practices that are fair and supportive, rather than punitive, can help maintain a positive school environment, reducing conflicts and fostering a sense of

security among students. This approach ensures that students remain engaged in their academic pursuits, reducing dropout rates (Nicoletti, 2019).

Overall, Tinto's Theory of Student Departure provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the various factors that influence student retention. The study's objectives align well with the theory, as they all focus on the principal's role in enhancing student integration, motivation, and discipline, which are critical to ensuring that students remain in school and complete their education (Tinto, 1975). In other words, this study applies Tinto's framework to assess how principals' management practices; such as mentorship, motivation, discipline, and financial support—influence student retention in Nakuru County's public secondary schools. By addressing academic, social, and financial factors, the study provides a comprehensive approach to understanding and enhancing student persistence and completion in these educational settings.

2.5.2 Systems Theory

Systems Theory was first formally developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the 1950s, though the foundational concepts can be traced back to earlier interdisciplinary works. Bertalanffy's Systems Theory posits that systems are complex entities composed of interrelated parts that work together as a whole. The theory asserts that understanding the behavior of a system requires an analysis of its components and their interactions within the larger system. It emphasizes that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, meaning that the system's overall behavior cannot be fully understood by analyzing individual components in isolation (Bertalanffy, 1968). In the context of secondary schools, Systems Theory provides a framework for understanding how different management practices and organizational structures interact to influence

student outcomes. For principals, this means recognizing that student management practices, such as mentorship, motivation, discipline, and financial support, do not function in isolation but as part of a larger educational ecosystem. Effective management requires a holistic approach that considers how these practices interrelate and contribute to the overall health of the school system. For instance, a principal's mentorship program (a component of the system) affects not only individual student development but also the overall school climate, which in turn impacts student retention.

The theory relates to principals' student management practices by highlighting the importance of viewing these practices as interconnected elements within the school's educational system. For example, mentorship practices are not only about individual guidance but also about integrating students into the broader school community, which influences their engagement and retention. Similarly, motivational practices such as rewards and recognition impact not just student performance but also their commitment to the school, affecting the overall system's effectiveness in promoting student success (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). Thus, principals need to continuously assess and adjust their management practices based on feedback from students and staff to maintain an effective educational system. Disciplinary actions, financial support, and motivational strategies should be regularly evaluated and refined to ensure they contribute positively to the system as a whole. By applying Systems Theory, principals can adopt a more dynamic and integrated approach to managing student needs, thereby improving retention and overall educational outcomes.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is as shown in Figure 1.

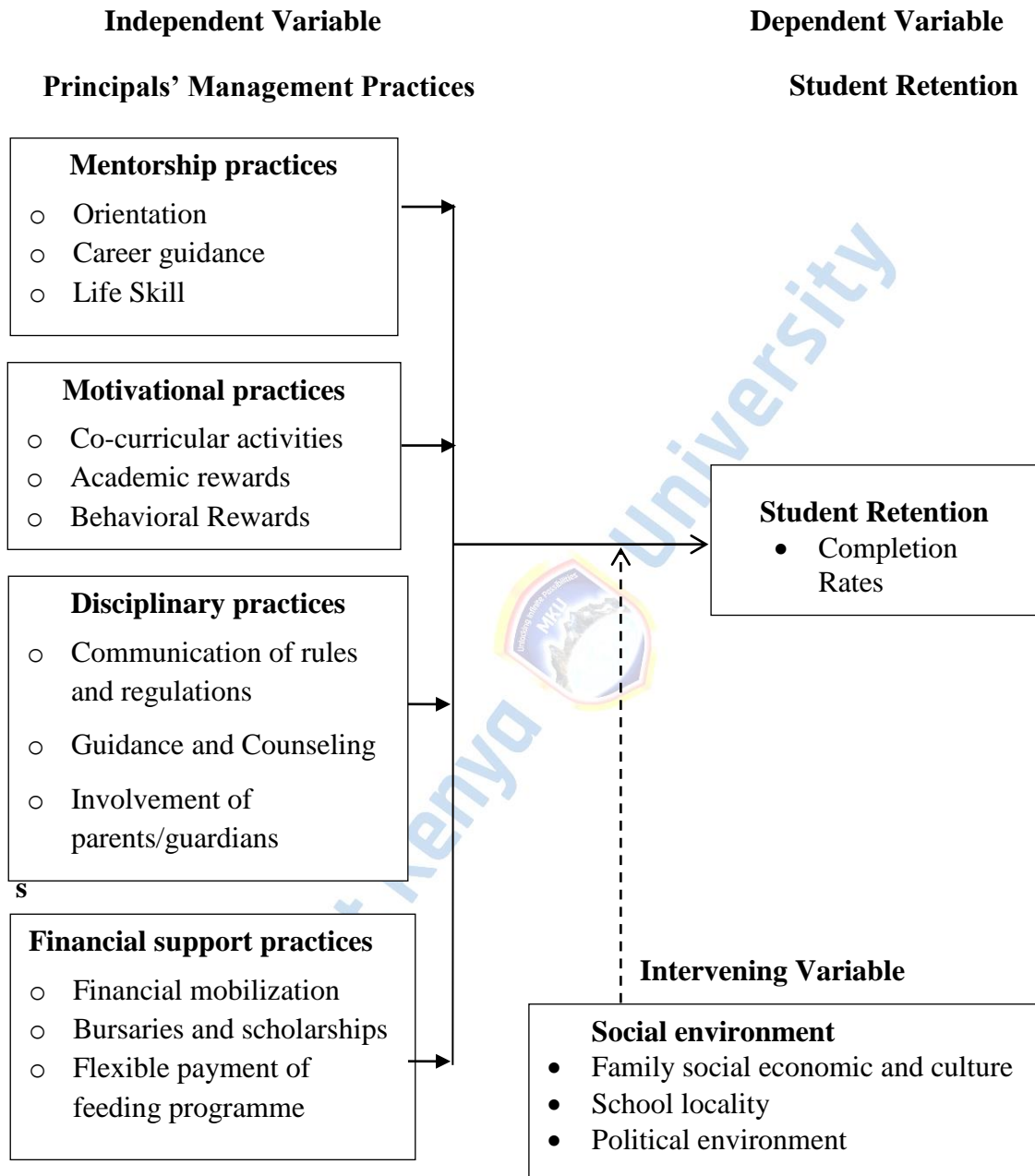


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Principals' Management Practices and Retention of Students in Secondary Schools

Source: Author, 2022

The conceptual framework of this study, as illustrated in Figure 1, highlights the intricate relationship between principals' management practices and student retention, showcasing how various independent variables impact the dependent variable. The independent variables encompass a range of management practices categorized into mentorship, motivational, disciplinary, and financial support practices. Each category plays a vital role in fostering an environment conducive to student retention. For instance, mentorship practices such as orientation, career guidance, and life skills education equip students with essential tools for navigation and success. Simultaneously, motivational practices, including co-curricular activities and academic and behavioral rewards, engage students and reinforce their commitment to academic goals.

Furthermore, disciplinary practices contribute to establishing a structured and supportive atmosphere in schools. Effective communication of rules and regulations, along with guidance and counseling, ensures that students understand expectations and feel supported in their educational journeys. The involvement of parents and guardians in the disciplinary process reinforces a community approach, fostering trust and collaboration between schools and families. Collectively, these management practices are fundamental in influencing student completion rates, as they create a holistic support system that encourages students to remain engaged in their education. The framework also acknowledges the intervening variable of the social environment, which significantly influences the effectiveness of these management practices on student retention. Factors such as family socioeconomic status, cultural context, school locality, and the broader political environment can either enhance or hinder the impact of principals' practices. For example, students from more stable socioeconomic

backgrounds may experience greater support and resources, while those from disadvantaged areas might face challenges that complicate their educational experience. Understanding these dynamics is essential, as it allows educational stakeholders to tailor management practices accordingly, ensuring that all students receive the support they need to thrive and ultimately succeed in completing their education.

2.7 Summary and Research Gaps

The Literature reviewed in this chapter culminates into this section that presents the summary and identified research gaps.

2.7.1 Research Gaps

The literature review has shown that there are various studies on the role of mentorship in education, but none of them specifically focused on the influence of principals' mentorship practices on students' retention. Most of the studies were conducted in different contextual settings, such as Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Australia, and the United States, which may limit the generalizability of their findings to the Kenyan context (McMullen & Eaton, 2021; Fulk, 2020; Poolos, 2019; & Grande et al., 2018). Furthermore, most of the studies concentrated on the mentorship of teachers or professionals, but not students, who are the main beneficiaries of education. Therefore, there was a need for a mixed-methods study to examine how principals' mentorship practices influence students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The literature review on objective two, explored the influence of principals' motivation practices on student retention, and revealed research gaps. Most of the studies on motivation have focused on academic activities and not student retention (Kirondo,

2014; Suleiman et al., 2019). Studies have also been done on how motivation is influenced academic performance by the availability of resources, the quality of teaching and learning, the school culture (Ajoke et al., 2015; Kelmendi & Nawar, 2016; Philemon & Mkulu, 2020). These studies did not look the influence of student motivation on student retention. There is a need to use mixed methods to gain a deeper understanding of how principals' motivation practices affect students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, their sense of belonging and identity, their academic aspirations and achievements, and their decisions to stay in school (Oyiego et al., 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Literature review on objective three indicates that, there is a limited amount of research that examines the influence of Principal disciplinary practices on student retention. Although some studies such as those of Prasetyarini et al., (2020); (Prasetyarini et al., 2020; Ilyasin 2019); Dimov et al., (2017); Emekako, 2016; suggested that teachers disciplinary practices can influence student retention. Most of the studies focused on teachers' disciplinary practices rather than principals'. Principals are the key leaders and decision-makers in schools and their disciplinary practices may have a different impact on students' retention than teachers'. Nakuru County is an area with different socio-economic and cultural characteristics. The disciplinary practices and challenges faced by principals and students may vary depending on the context and environment. The review shows that most of the studies used quantitative methods rather than mixed methods. Quantitative methods may not capture the depth and richness of the experiences and perceptions of principals and students regarding disciplinary practices and retention. Mixed methods may provide more insights and understanding of the phenomenon. Therefore, there is a need for a study that will address these gaps and

provide more comprehensive and contextualized information on the influence of principals' disciplinary practices on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

The literature review on Objective Four, which explored the influence of principals' financial support practices on student retention, revealed research gaps. While some studies such as those of Haverila et al., (2020); Paul(2020); Bekidusa and Kisimbii (2020); Kiiru et al., (2020); Awuor (2015); and Richard et al.,(2019) suggested that financial factors, such as lack of school fees or inadequate financial support, contribute to student dropout, there is a need for more research on how principals' financial support practices specifically influence student retention in secondary schools. The review shows that there are various factors that influence student retention in different educational programs such as school feeding programs, bursary allocation, resource mobilization strategies, and institutional support. However, none of these studies focused on the role of principals' financial practices on student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature regarding how principals can use financial practices as a tool to enhance student retention. Moreover, most of the studies used descriptive or correlational designs, which limit the causal inference and generalizability of the findings. There is a need for more rigorous and experimental studies to test the effectiveness and influence of mentorship interventions on student retention outcomes. Additionally, most of the studies were conducted in primary schools or higher education institutions, which may have different characteristics and challenges than public-day secondary schools. There is a lack of evidence on how financial practices can be adapted and implemented in

public-day secondary schools, especially in Nakuru County, Kenya, where there may be unique socio-economic and cultural factors affecting student retention.

2.7.2 Summary

The literature on principals' management practices as independent variables in enhancing student retention is not extensive. A number of practices have been identified in student academic performance and not in student retention, including operations management, performance monitoring, target setting, talent management, leadership techniques, conflict management, teacher motivation, supervision, student records management, communication, guidance and counseling, provision of bursaries and grants, school culture, donor support, and secure environment. Various studies have demonstrated the positive impact of management practices on student performance, but not their influence on student retention. The current study filled this gap by investigating the influence of mentorship, motivation, discipline, and financial support practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

Student retention is the ability of a school to keep students enrolled from admission to completion. The ability of a school to retain students is expected to be influenced by the management practices adopted by principals. Student integration theory suggests that students who are retained in schools develop connections with their principals, other students, teachers, and members of the school community. Studies have identified several factors that account for why students drop out of school, including academic background, inability to make sound ethical decisions, lack of interest in academic studies, and financial constraints. Limited research has been conducted on student

retention in Kenya, and existing studies have identified various factors that negatively influence student retention, such as female genital mutilation, religion, early marriage, tribal animosity, pastoralism, financial constraints, bad government policies, administrative issues, inadequate resources, and poor student-teacher relations.

The influence of principals' mentorship practices on student retention is an important area of study. Mentorship is a multi-faceted process that involves guiding, teaching, influencing, and supporting students. Through mentorship activities, principals can develop a team culture and vision among teachers and students and improve school environment, safety, turnout, and school accomplishment, in a way that enhances student retention. Studies have found that principals' mentorship practices can influence the students' decision to either stay or drop out of school. However, research on the influence of mentorship practices on student retention is limited. Effective mentorship practices could potentially adopt the retention strategies suggested by Beatty (1994) that seek to sort students into categories, connect students to the schools, support the students by meeting their needs, and transform both the students and the schools.

Motivation directs students to achieve their goals and is crucial for student retention. Several studies have investigated the impact of extracurricular activities and co-curricular activities on academic achievement, but there is inadequate evidence on the influence of these activities on student retention. Empirical studies have found a positive correlation between motivation and student retention, with extrinsic motivation having a larger impact. Some empirical studies suggest that there are innovative ways of motivating students should be developed, including developing student recognition schemes, academic incentives, and extracurricular activities. Studies further suggested

that Principals should also appreciate non-academic activities and create a culture of celebrating the values and victories of students. Finally, it has concluded in various studies that teachers play a crucial role in motivating students, and that principals should motivate teachers as well.

The literature reviewed highlights the importance of discipline in schools, with two approaches of defining discipline, in a traditional and progressive view. The traditional view emphasizes adult control and influence, while the progressive view believes that children are naturally good and will learn self-control on their own. The negative perspective of discipline is associated with attempts to control school indiscipline or misbehavior. Empirical studies have identified management practices on discipline, such as the use of school safety and security, and fair disciplinary processes, with a focus on non-violent strategies. Teachers have employed corrective, assertive, and preventive disciplinary control measures due to a government ban on corporal punishment in Kenya. Discipline has been found to predict academic performance, with behavior problems, absenteeism, and lack of parental support being disciplinary issues confronting schools. There is a need for innovative disciplinary practices that involve students in maintaining discipline, such as developing clear communication of rules and regulations, involving students in managing discipline through student leaders, and ensuring that schools are secure and safe for students.

The impact of financial support practices on retention of students in Public Day Secondary Schools was conceptualized as independent variables and included; financial mobilization, bursaries and scholarships and flexible payment of feeding programme. Consistency in provision of financial support services puts emphasis on availability of

the funds that is in relation to specific schools' mobilization of funds that are frequently provided as bursary and scholarship allocations to needy students. Background of students lays emphasis on the influence of financial support services on the level of student academic performance and there was need to establish whether it can also, influence student retention.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter expounds the procedure that was followed to generate data from the research questions which was used to test the stated null hypothesis. Specifically, this chapter presents the research approach, research design, location of the study, target population, sampling technique and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Methodology

3.2.1 Research Approach

This study adopted a mixed-methods research approach which according to Creswell (2014) involved the collection and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data in a study. This study was therefore based on the philosophical foundation of pragmatism. Pragmatism is a deconstructive paradigm, or way of carrying out research, that encourages applying the mixed methods approach in a study to sidestep the touchy issues of truth and reality (Feilzer, 2010) . The researcher in the mixed methods approach, bases the investigation on the premise that the best way to gather various types of data is to give a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative data alone.

3.2.2 Variable Description

The independent variables in this study are categorized into principles' management practices, which include mentorship, motivational, disciplinary, and financial support practices. Mentorship practices encompass elements such as orientation programs,

career guidance, and life skills education, which are designed to support students in their personal and academic development. Motivational practices involve co-curricular activities, academic rewards, and behavioral rewards that enhance student engagement and bolster a sense of achievement. Disciplinary practices consist of effective communication of rules and regulations, guidance and counseling services, and the active involvement of parents and guardians, which create a structured learning environment. Financial support practices address crucial resources like financial mobilization, bursaries, scholarships, and flexible payment options for critical services such as feeding programs, significantly affecting students' ability to remain in school.

The dependent variable, student retention, is operationalized through completion rates, which reflect the percentage of students who successfully finish their education within the expected timeframe. An important intervening variable within this framework is the social environment, which comprises family socioeconomic status, cultural contexts, school locality, and the political environment. Each of these elements can either positively or negatively influence the effectiveness of principals' management practices on student retention. For instance, students from families with higher socioeconomic statuses may benefit more from mentorship and financial support practices, while those in challenging social environments may require additional resources and interventions to ensure their educational success. Thus, understanding the variable descriptions is crucial for accurately interpreting the research findings and for stakeholders aiming to implement strategies that promote student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

3.3 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design is a quantitative research method used to systematically collect data from a specific population through structured questionnaires or interviews to describe the characteristics, attitudes, opinions, or behaviors of that population (Creswell, 2014). This design allows researchers to gather a large volume of information across various respondents, providing a comprehensive overview of the subject under investigation. By focusing on quantifying phenomena and identifying patterns, descriptive surveys enable researchers to analyze and interpret data effectively, facilitating the generation of insights that can inform decision-making or policy development (Salkind, 2010).

This design facilitated the gathering of a comprehensive range of data from a diverse array of respondents, each representing different backgrounds and perspectives. This approach enabled the research to delve deeply into participant insights, allowing for a thorough analysis of response frequencies and the identification of significant patterns within the data. Furthermore, this design facilitated a detailed examination of the respondents' viewpoints regarding the crucial interplay between principal student management practices and their impact on student retention. Through this analysis, the researcher gained valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics that influence student retention and the effectiveness of key Principal student management practices, shedding light on potential areas for improvements and further research considerations (Kothari, 2004).

3.4 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Nakuru County, Kenya which is located about 165 Kilometers (km) to the North West of Nairobi. The County has a general population of 2,162,202 people as reported in the 2019 National Census. Nakuru is a cosmopolitan county, with a population comprising of several ethnic communities and some foreign nationals. The study included all of Nakuru's sub-counties, including Naivasha, Gilgil, Nakuru East, Nakuru West, Nakuru North, Kuresoi North, Kuresoi South, Molo, Njoro, Rongai, and Subukia. The county's public secondary schools were distributed throughout the County's rural and urban districts.

Nakuru County was selected as the location for this study on the influence of principals' student management practices on student retention in public secondary schools due to its unique educational context and its significance as a representative sample of a diverse set of public-day secondary schools in Kenya. Nakuru County's educational landscape offers a mix of urban and rural schools, with varying socioeconomic backgrounds, making it an ideal setting to examine the impact of principals' mentorship, motivational, disciplinary, and financial support practices on student retention in a broad and comprehensive manner. This diversity allows for a robust analysis of the different factors that may affect student retention, providing valuable insights and recommendations that can potentially be applied to similar educational settings across the country. Additionally, the county has witnessed significant growth in school enrolment and changes in educational policies, highlighting the need for effective management practices to address challenges related to student retention (Okere, 2018).

3.5 Target Population

According to Saunders et al., (2009) and Cooper & Schindler (2014) target population in research means the total number of individuals, objects, or any other subject of concern, which by virtue of a common characteristic is of interest to the researcher and may lead to obtaining relevant information regarding the phenomenon under study. The target population for this study was the principals, teachers and students of all the 293 public day secondary schools and all the Sub-County Directors of Education (SCDE) in Nakuru County. The total target population of 38,863 comprised of 293 secondary school principals 3,962 teachers, 34597 form four students and 11 Sub-County Directors of Education (SCDE as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Target Population

Sub Counties	Schools	SCDE	Principals	Teachers	Form 4 Students	Total
Nakuru East	16	1	16	475	3252	3844
Nakuru West	9	1	9	220	1785	2015
Njoro	40	1	40	384	2618	3043
Gilgil	34	1	34	483	7231	7749
Naivasha	33	1	33	465	3799	4298
Nakuru North	26	1	26	449	3565	4041
Molo	28	1	28	344	3120	3493
Rongai	38	1	38	381	2465	2885
Subukia	20	1	20	211	2215	2447
Kuresoi South	26	1	26	285	1883	2195
Kuresoi North	24	1	24	255	2664	2944
Total	293	11	293	3962	34597	38863

Source: County Education Office- Nakuru (2022)

3.6 Sampling Procedure and Technique

Sampling is a procedure of selecting subjects in a defined population. The sampling method which was used to select respondents for this study was cluster method,

proportionate, simple random sampling techniques, and purposive sampling technique. Schools were clustered into the 11 sub-counties in Nakuru County. The number of schools sampled in every sub-county was determined using proportionate sampling. Simple random sampling was used to select individual schools to participate in the study. Simple random sampling technique utilized in selecting teachers and purposive sampling method was used to select principals and SCDE to make up the required number of respondents who would take part in the study (Orodho, 2009).

The utilization of purposive sampling in selecting principals and Sub-County Education Officers (SCDE) for this study was justified based on the need to obtain expert insights and specialized perspectives related to school management and educational policies. Principals and SCDE possess in-depth knowledge and firsthand experience in school administration and policy implementation, rendering them key informants who can provide valuable insights into the research objectives. This deliberate selection of knowledgeable individuals' complements the broader sampling methods used for schools and teachers, allowing for a well-rounded and comprehensive understanding of the research topic, thus justifying the purposive sampling technique in this mixed-methods study.

3.7 Sample Size

A sample is a representative group drawn from the study population. The sample is the one that participates in the study by providing data to answer the research questions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). This study adopted multi-stage sampling where schools, principals, teachers and students were sampled at different stages. Stage 1 comprised of schools, stage 2 the principals and stage 3 teachers and stage 4 students.

Stage 1: Sampling of Schools

A total of 90 schools representing 30% of the schools were selected for study. 30% is the recommended population proportion for survey studies (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). The sample population selected represented the 11 respective sub-counties. The number of schools from each cluster (sub-county) was selected using proportionate sampling technique.

Stage 2: Sampling of principals

All Principals from randomly selected schools qualified to participate in this study. Therefore, 90 principals were selected through purposive sampling.

Stage 3: Sampling of teachers

The probabilistic sampling was undertaken for the total 3962 teachers. That sample size for this study was determined using Slovenes sample size determination formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size,

N = Total population (3962)

e = Error tolerance level (5 %)

$$n = \frac{3962}{1 + 3962(0.05)^2} = 363$$

Given that the total population was 3962 and error tolerance adopted was 0.05, the aggregate sample size determined using Slovenes' formula was 363 of teachers.

Stage 4: Sampling of students

Krueger and Casey (2009) advocate student focus group discussion to range between six to ten students. Simple random sampling was used to select one school in every sub-

county. Form four students who joined the school in form one and have been in the school for four years were randomly selected to participate in the study. Ten students from one school per Sub-County were randomly selected for the study forming a sample of 110 students across the county. Consideration was made in mixed schools to have gender equity thus 5 girls and 5 boys per school.

Sampling of SCDE

All the SCDE participated in this study since there was only 1 officer in each sub-county.

Table 2: Strata samples of SCDE, principals, teachers and students per sub-county

Sub Counties	SCDEs	Principals	Teachers	Students	Total
Nakuru East	1	6	44	10	61
Nakuru West	1	3	20	10	34
Njoro	1	12	35	10	58
Gilgil	1	9	44	10	64
Naivasha	1	9	43	10	63
Nakuru North	1	9	41	10	61
Molo	1	9	32	10	52
Rongai	1	12	35	10	58
Subukia	1	6	20	10	37
Kuresoi South	1	6	26	10	43
Kuresoi North	1	9	23	10	43
Total	11	90	363	110	574

Source: Researcher (2022)

Table 2 shows the total sample size of 396 respondents comprising of SCDE, principals, teachers and students per Sub-County in the Public Day Secondary Schools in each of the 11 Sub-Counties of Nakuru County. The SCDE provided qualitative

information while principals, teachers and students provided quantitative information.

3.8 Construction of Research Instruments

Data was collected using the following instruments: questionnaires for principals, teachers, focus group discussion for students, and interview schedules for SCDE staff. Questionnaires were useful in collecting large amount of data whereas interview Schedule covered the classified and more detailed information about the area of study (Kothari & Garg, 2014).

3.8.1 Questionnaires for Principals

Principals were asked to answer retention rate questions as key informants which were scored in percentages as indicated in the Design Institute of San Diego retention rate table of percentages (University of San Diego, 2023). Section A sought demographic information about the principals' work experience. Sections B sought information on student retention rates, C through E were five-point Likert and rating scale to collect information about the four study objectives.

3.8.2 Questionnaires for Teachers

Teachers were asked to complete five-section closed-ended questionnaires. Section A aimed to collect demographic information on teachers' work experience. Sections B to E used a five-point Likert rating scale to collect information about the four study objectives.

3.8.3 Focus Group Discussions for Students

Focus groups are used in groups to acquire opinions, values, and beliefs, as well as to learn new things or review services or programmes (Ingram & Steger, 2015). In small-scale evaluations, the decision to interview individuals or groups was simply logistical (Krol et al., 2014). Because the researcher wished to obtain a range of thoughts and information to inform a larger-scale quantitative investigation, focus groups were judged to be a suitable data collection strategy (Ingram & Steger, 2015). Because the researcher wished to obtain a range of thoughts and information to inform a larger-scale quantitative investigation, focus groups were judged to be a suitable data collection strategy (Ingram & Steger, 2015). Focus groups, in particular, allowed us to hear important learners' viewpoints based on their experiences. Eleven student focus group discussions were held across the county, with one focus group discussion held in each sub-county and involving ten students. There is no agreement in the qualitative research methods literature on the optimal number of focus groups (Guest et al., 2017). According to Krueger et al. (2009), focus groups involve discussions among members on a specified subject being moderated by the researcher.

This research aimed to gain in-depth insight into the influence of school management practices on student retention. Therefore, selecting students who were actively involved in the educational system and were likely to provide valuable perspectives was critical. The decision of 10 students per focus group discussion (FGD) was deemed appropriate since it found a compromise between ensuring a varied variety of opinions while retaining a reasonable group size for meaningful conversations. It enabled a strong interchange of ideas while also allowing the researcher to conduct many FGDs across different sub-counties in order to gather a wide range of experiences and viewpoints,

making it a successful technique for this research. Participants will always be able to contribute useful information and voice their own ideas and opinions throughout the focus group discussion (Hinton, 2018).

3.8.4 Interview Schedules for Sub-County Directors of Education

The interview schedule for the SCDE comprised of thirteen open-ended questions. It contained information about respondents' demographics and other questions related to the four objectives of the study.

3.9 Pilot Study

Piloting is testing of research instruments to make sure their validity and reliability are in order. Piloting is often viewed synonymously with a “feasibility study intended to guide the planning of a large scale investigation, always precedes and is closely related to a larger study (Eldridge et al., 2016; Thabane et al., 2010). In effect, piloting comprises of a risk mitigation strategy to reduce the chance of failure in a larger project (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Pilot testing allows the researcher to ensure whether respondents understood the instructions and questions contained in the research instruments or not. Orodho (2009) noted that piloting helps in determining the effectiveness of the instruments used in collecting data to address the study objectives and it also helps in testing instruments' reliability.

A pilot test was conducted prior to conducting the study of principal management practices on student retention in Nakuru Day secondary schools, and to evaluate participant recruitment procedures, survey questionnaire usability, and data collection processes. The piloting was conducted specifically to look into specific aspects of research instruments and research design. It was also useful in identifying and

organizing various factors influencing students' decisions to discontinue or continue their educational programmes (Lancaster, Dodd, & Williamson, 2004). The pilot study aligned the research instruments and design with the main research, with the primary goal of identifying issues that could jeopardize the research and determining the feasibility of the study (Malmqvist, Hellberg, Mölls, Rose, & Shevlin, 2019). Piloting was carried out in Lakiya County. It is one of Kenya's few cosmopolitan counties, reflecting all of the characteristics that the researcher sought in Nakuru County. The county was thus appropriate for piloting the study because it reflected the diversity and characteristics of the target population.

The pilot examined quantitative as well as qualitative data where 10% of the population was sampled for use. Gillham (2000) observes that it is good to carry out piloting of about 10% of the sampled respondents. Simple random sampling methods were utilized to obtain 67 respondents. Only nine public day schools were chosen at random and used for piloting. A total of 9 principals, 36 teachers, 2 focus group discussions and 2 SCDEs of education were chosen for the pilot. The meeting with the principals of the schools was scheduled one month in advance. The researcher administered the questionnaires and conducted the interviews. All questionnaire flaws, such as ambiguous phrases and unclear items, were revised and corrected. Items in the interview guides that were unclear during the interviews and focus group discussions were also identified and reviewed.

3.10 Testing for Validity, Reliability, Credibility and Dependability of Research Instruments

The sub-section covers validity of research instruments, and reliability of questionnaires. Additionally, it also covers credibility and dependability of qualitative data.

3.10.1 Validity

Validity tests the accuracy in which the instrument is designed to measure the concepts as required (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The instruments that were validated were the questionnaires for principals and teachers, interview schedule for SCDE and focus group discussion for students. The studies considered both content and construct validities (Avolio & Sivasubramani, 2003). Content and construct validity of the research instruments was determined through consultation with the university's supervisors to critique and validate before the tool was applied (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). The measure of questionnaire validity was to help to improve the quality of the questionnaires because validity would be threatened if the questionnaires missed some aspects or included irrelevant aspects (Gathii et al., 2019).

3.10.2 Reliability of Questionnaires

Reliability of data collection instrument refers to the consistency of the instrument in measuring the concepts being studied with accuracy (Dikko, 2016). It focuses on the degree to which practical values are consistent across tests (Orodho, 2009). Reliability of questionnaires was determined using the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient method to establish the internal consistency and general congruence using data obtained from the pilot study.

$$\text{Cronbach Alpha } \alpha = k \times \bar{c} / \bar{v} + (k-1) \bar{c}$$

Where k refers to the number of scale items

\bar{c} refers to the average of all covariance between items

\bar{v} refers to the average variance of each item.

Gall, Borg and Gall (2002) recommend the method in situations when the data tool is administered only once and has closed ended multiple response items. According to Orodho (2009), a correlation coefficient of more than 0.7 is sufficient for assessing the accuracy of the study instrument. The reliability coefficient of 0.9 was obtained for principals' and 0.89 for teachers' questionnaires. The reliability results from Cronbach alpha test demonstrated enhanced clarity and consistency in the instruments, thus ensuring the quality and reliability of the data collected for the research.

3.10.3 Credibility and Dependability of Qualitative Data

The credibility and dependability of the interview schedules and focus group discussion were determined through consultation with the university's supervisors. An interview is a person-to-person verbal communication in which one person asks the other person questions intended to get information under investigation. The researcher ensured that the language used during the interviewer was appropriate in relation to the vocabulary of the group of people being studied. After piloting, the researcher adjusted the language of questions to match the social background of respondents' age, educational level and social class. The interview schedule for Sub-County Directors of Education and the interview guide for students in the focus group discussions (FGD) were reviewed and areas of weaknesses addressed after piloting.

3.11 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

An introduction letter was obtained from the University (Mount Kenya University) for purposes of introducing the researcher to the respondents and the relevant authorities. Before a researcher was allowed to conduct the study in the sampled schools, a permit was obtained from the National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), which was included in the university introductory letter to the school principals. The data collection questionnaire was self-administered. Throughout the data collection period, appointments were arranged early enough to ensure that the respondents were available. The actual data collection exercise was planned in such a way that it was continuous for two months.

3.12 Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

The collected data were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Information from the interview schedule was analysed qualitatively using content or thematic analysis methods as suggested by Clarke and Braun (2013) and Moira, and Brid (2017). For the purpose of content analysis, the researcher developed themes from the qualitative data collected on the management practices and retention of selected principals in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated to determine the response rate to the questionnaire and the percentage of schools in which certain student management practices were implemented. This helped to generate reports for further statistical analysis. For inferential statistics, an assessment of the normality of the data was made as a prerequisite for parametric tests before

parametric tests were used. Parametric tests are preferred over nonparametric tests because parametric tests are powerful in data analysis (Mishra et al .2019).

In the quantitative analysis, both descriptive and inferential statistics were computed after classifying, cleaning, coding, and analyzing the data collected using the questionnaire. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC) and regression coefficients were calculated; as Chee (2015) argues, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient measures the strength, direction, and probability of a linear relationship between each of the student management practices and retention; according to Schober et al. (2018), Pearson correlation coefficients between 0 and 0.29 are negligible, 0.1 to 0.39 are weak, 0.4 to 0.69 are moderate, 0.7 to 0.89 are strong, and 0.9 to 1 are very strong. To check whether the correlation coefficients obtained were statistically significant, the p-values were compared with the significance level (0.05). Whenever the p-value was less than the significance level, the correlation coefficient was said to be statistically significant.

Regression analysis was conducted to model the correlation between retention rates and each independent variable to determine the predictive ability of each student management practice on student retention rates. As stated by Williams et al. (2013), multiple regression assumptions were considered. The assumptions include the existence of a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables, a normal distribution of residuals, the fact that independent variables are not highly correlated, the existence of at least two independent variables, and the complementarity of variables. The coefficients of determination from the regression analysis were calculated to determine the proportion of variation in student retention explained by

variation in student mentoring, motivation, discipline, and financial practices. The student retention was based on the idea of Culver and Nicholas (2020) of persistence plus progression that equals retention. In conducting this regression analysis, the following regression model was used:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where,

Y = Student retention

β_0 = Constant term (predicted value of dependent variable if the composite of independent variable (principals' management practices) is zero)

β_1 = Contributions of principals' mentorship practices on retention of students

β_2 = Contributions of principals' motivational practices on retention of students

β_3 = Contributions of principals' disciplinary practices on retention of students

β_4 = Contributions of principals' financial support practices on retention

X_1 = Principals' mentorship practices

X_2 = Principals' motivational practices

X_3 = Principals' disciplinary practices

X_4 = Principals' financial support practices

ϵ = Standard error (other variables that may affect retention of students but are not included in the model and was assumed not to interfere with student retention e.g. Government Policies)

Four variables of principals' student management practices were evaluated in terms of their predictive power on student retention. The standard multiple linear regression models were used to determine R-Square (R^2) which was the coefficient of determination of the amount of variability explained in retention of students by principals' student management practices. The model was established by the regression

weight (Beta) which was the amount of contribution of a variant of principals' management practices while holding other variables constant (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The analysis of beta weight (β) made it possible to determine which of the principals' management practices had a larger contribution on student retention. The beta weight also indicated the change in principals' management practices for every unit change in student retention. The significance of each beta coefficient was established at $\alpha=.05$ level of statistical significance (Creswell, 2014).

The study should use correlations and regression analysis because these statistical methods are essential for examining the relationships and predictive influence of the study variables (Chee, 2015) (principals' student management practices on student retention). Correlation analysis will help determine the strength and direction of the association between variables, such as mentorship, motivational, disciplinary, and financial support practices, and student retention. Regression analysis, on the other hand, will enable the study to assess the extent to which each of these practices independently and collectively predicts student retention. This approach allows for testing the research hypotheses and provides insights into the specific contributions of each management practice, thereby helping to identify the most impactful strategies for improving retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

Table 3: Data analysis plan per research objective

Objective	Independent variables	Dependent variables	Data analysis
Objective 1: Influence of principals' mentorship practices on retention	Mentorship Practices	Student Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and percentages) • Pearson moment correlation • Regression analysis
Objective 2: Influence of principals' motivation practices on retention	Motivational Practices	Student Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and percentages) • Pearson moment correlation • Regression analysis
Objective 3: Influence of principals' disciplinary practices on retention	Disciplinary Practices	Student Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and percentages) • Pearson moment correlation • Regression analysis
Objective 4: Influence of principals' financial support practices on retention	Financial support practices	Student Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and percentages) • Pearson moment correlation • Regression analysis

Source: Researcher 2022

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues such as confidentiality and informed consent, openness, honesty, responsibility, physical and psychological protection, and explanation of study purpose should be considered when dealing with research participants (Gathii et al., 2019). Permission was sought to conduct this study from relevant authorities notably Mount Kenya University, NACOSTI and the Nakuru County Education Director. All persons and organizations who participated in this study were acknowledged while all scholarly

work used to advance this study was duly cited. The participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study. The participants' confidentiality and anonymity was assured as their identities were kept confidential and anonymous. Participants were not be subjected to any emotional stress because their cooperation was be obtained voluntarily. At every stage of the data collection process, the participants were given the free will to withdraw from the study. Given that the study participants included minors, a consent form was filled by the students and parents. Consent was also sought from principals, teachers and sub county directors of education before data collection.

Participants, who included principals, teachers, students and sub-county directors of education were treated with utmost respect and were made fully aware of their voluntary participation. Each of the participants including students were signed a consent form in order to uphold the required ethical standards in research. The parents or guardians of students who participated in this study sign the consent form to allow the researcher collect information from students who were under the age of 18 years. If any parent or guardian declined to consent, the student did not participate in the study despite signing the consent form and such a student was to be substituted with another whose parent or guardian had consent.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the data analysis, presentation, interpretation, and discussion of the study. The chapter offers comprehensive sections on data analysis using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics on the variables under study, using the technique from Chapter 3 as a guide. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of principals' student management practices student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. The chapter presents the findings on the four research objectives and their corresponding hypotheses, including determining the impact of principals' financial support practices on student retention, establishing the impact of principals' motivational practices on student retention, and determining the impact of principals' students' disciplinary practices on student retention. The hypothesis test for each aim is also included in the chapter. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered for the study. Data was gathered through questionnaires, interview schedules, and focus group discussions. While qualitative data was evaluated thematically and presented in direct narration format, quantitative data was assessed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

4.2 General and demographic information

The study sought to establish the general and demographic information which includes the response rate, length of service in their current stations and levels of Subject Selection.

4.2.1 Response Rate

A total of 453 research questionnaires were distributed to 90 principals and 363 teachers. Furthermore, 110 students participated in a focus group discussion, and 11 SCDE officers were interviewed. Table 4 summarizes the response rate.

Table 4: Response Rate

Category of Responses	Sample	Actual	Percentage
SCDEs	11	11	100%
Students	110	110	100%
Principals	90	87	96.70%
Teachers	363	340	93.66%
Totals /Averages	574	548	95.5%

Source: Researcher 2023

Table 4 shows that the average response rate is 548 (95.5%). According to Babbie (2020), a response rate of 50% is appropriate for investigation and recording, 60% is good, and 70% or higher is exceptional. Given this, the response rate was within the recommended range for research.

4.2.2 Demographic Characteristics

This section discusses the demographic characteristics of the study's respondents. This included time spent serving at the current school. There was information about career counseling, life skills teaching, subject selection, the presence of a disciplinary committee, the guidance and counseling department, the issuance of school rules and regulations, the presence of income-generating projects, and feeding programs, among other things. The data was important because it allowed the researcher to better

understand the impact of principals' student management practices on secondary day school student retention.

4.2.3: Length of Service in Current School

Principals and teachers were asked how long they had been at their current station. The researcher planned to collect data from respondents who had worked at the same station for more than four years. This was necessary to ensure that the data gathered accurately predicted students' retention rates over the four years of secondary school. Table 5 shows the response.

Table 5: Length of Service in Current School

	Respondent Type			
	Principals		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
4 to 5 years	8	9.2%	58	17.0%
6 to 10 years	42	48.3%	116	34.1%
11 to 15 years	30	34.5%	133	39.1%
16 or above years	7	8%	33	9.8%
Totals	87	100%	340	100.0%

Source: Researcher 2023

According to the results in Table 5, 8(9.2%) of the principals and 58(17.0%) of the teachers reported serving in their current school for 4 to 5 years. A total of 42(48.3%) of the principals and 116(34.1%) of the teachers had served for 6 to 10 years. Meanwhile, 30(34.5%) of the principals and 133(39.1%) of the teachers had been in their current school for 11 to 15 years, and 7(8%) of the principals and 33(9.8%) of the teachers had served for 16 or more years. These findings indicate that all respondents

had been at their current stations for more than four years. The majority had served for six to ten years on average, suggesting that they were well-versed in student retention concerns.

4.2.4 Levels of Subject Selection

The teachers were asked to indicate at what level students' subject selection was done in secondary schools. Subject selection is the first step in career choice and the level at which it is done can influence the type of career and subsequently the career pathways of the students. Subject selection in secondary schools is thus considered as one important aspect in career guidance. Table 6 indicates the responses of teachers regarding level of subject selection.

Table 6: Subjects Selection Level

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Form 1	11	3.2
Form 2	305	89.7
Form 3	24	7.1
Total	340	100

Source: Researcher 2023

According to the results in Table 6, the majority of teachers, 305(89.7%), stated that student subject selection was done in Form 2, 24(7.1%) indicated it was done in Form 3, and 11(3.2%) reported it occurred in Form 1. These results suggest that in most schools, students' subject selection is typically conducted at the Form 2 level. Subject selection is greatly influenced by perceptions of students on the perceived usefulness of the subjects in their future career. However, some of the perceptions are unfounded resulting to wrong career choices. That informs why most schools preferred allowing students select subjects in form two. That gave them time to experience most subjects

before making informed decision of whether to proceed with them or not at the end of form two. The subject selection by students' and the level at which it was done had implications on their retention (Palmer, Burke, & Aubusson, 2017).

4.2.5 Rating of Student Retention

The principals were asked to rate the student retention in their school, and the response was as provided in table 7.

Table 7: Rating of Student Retention

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20%	2	2.3
21%-40%	5	5.7
41%-60%	14	16.1
61%-80%	35	40.2
81% and above	31	35.6
Total	87	100

Source: Researcher 2023

Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses from principals regarding the student retention rates in their schools.

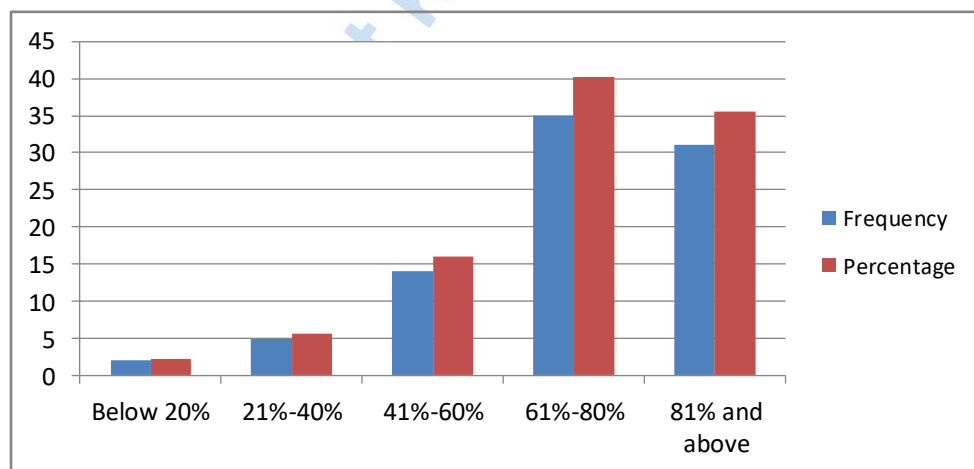


Figure 2: Principals responses on Student Retention Rate over the years

Source: Researcher 2023

The majority of principals 66(75.8%) reported that their schools had a student retention rate of 61% and above, while only a small percentage 2(2.3%) reported a retention rate below 20%. These results imply that Nakuru County public day secondary schools have relatively high student retention rates in general. The transition and completion rates noted in empirical assessments of Kenyan education are congruent with this. The reported retention rate of 2.3% of principals indicating a retention rate below 20% raises significant concerns, suggesting that while the percentage is small, it could point to critical underlying issues that merit further investigation. Such low retention rates are often indicative of systemic problems within the educational environment, including factors such as socio-economic challenges, inadequate support systems, or ineffective teaching practices (Schutz et al., 2020). A further investigation into these aspects could reveal vital insights necessary to enhance retention strategies and improve the overall educational experience for students. Therefore, while the percentage may seem marginal, it signifies a potential area for considerable concern that requires comprehensive examination in future studies.

These results are in line with those of a study by Limo and Muchimuti (2022), who discovered that Kenya's rates for moving from primary to secondary education have been rising gradually in recent years. The possible reasons for the high student retention rates reported by principals in this study could include improvements in the quality of education and increased access to secondary education. In recent years, the Kenyan government has implemented a number of policies aimed at improving the quality of education and increasing access to secondary education, such as the Free Day Secondary Education program (Ministry of Education, 2018). These initiatives may be contributing to the high retention rates observed in this study.

4.3 Influence of Principals Mentorship Practices on Students Retention

The first objective, to ascertain the effect of principals' mentoring techniques on learner retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools, is presented in this section. Principals' student orientation management practices, principals' student career guidance management practices, and principals' student life skill management practices were used to analyze the principals' student mentorship practices. The objective inspired the following null hypothesis:

4.3.1 Principal's and Teachers' Responses on Student Mentorship Practices

Table 8 presents data on Nakuru County. The table includes responses from both principals and teachers, reflecting their perspectives on various mentorship practices, such as orientation, career guidance, life skills training, and the acknowledgment of good behavior. The responses are categorized into different levels of agreement, including "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "Neutral," "Agree," and "Strongly Agree," with percentages provided for each category. This data is crucial for understanding how these mentorship practices impact student retention in the schools surveyed.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics on Principal’s and Teachers’ Responses on Student Mentorship Practices

Statement	Category	SD F(%)	D F(%)	N F(%)	A F(%)	SA F(%)
The School always conducts orientation for new students to familiarize with the school routine.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.3%)	1 (1.1%)	19 (21.8%)	65 (74.7%)
	Teachers	4 (1.2%)	8 (2.4%)	11 (3.2%)	108 (31.8%)	209 (61.5%)
The school always introduces staff from various departments who guide the students on the expectations of the department.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.1%)	41 (47.1%)	45 (51.7%)
	Teachers	10 (2.9%)	14 (4.1%)	30 (8.8%)	122 (35.9%)	164 (48.2%)
The school supports orientation for subject selection to guide students on career choices.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.3%)	36 (41.4%)	49 (56.3%)
	Teachers	5 (1.5%)	23 (6.8%)	25 (7.4%)	122 (35.9%)	165 (48.5%)
Professional speakers are always invited during career days to motivate students to pursue their career choices.	Principal	2 (2.3%)	3 (3.4%)	18 (20.7%)	41 (47.1%)	23 (26.4%)
	Teachers	11 (3.2%)	38 (11.2%)	41 (12.1%)	122 (35.9%)	128 (37.6%)
The School always supports life skills training to create an enabling environment for students to stay in school.	Principal	2 (2.3%)	0 (0.0%)	21 (24.1%)	38 (43.7%)	26 (29.9%)
	Teachers	16 (4.7%)	23 (6.8%)	47 (13.8%)	130 (38.2%)	124 (36.5%)
The School ensures that students are equipped with skills to enable them to integrate into society after completing their studies.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	7 (8.0%)	10 (11.5%)	33 (37.9%)	37 (42.5%)
	Teachers	4 (1.2%)	31 (9.1%)	39 (11.5%)	146 (42.9%)	120 (35.3%)

N = 87 Principals and 340 Teachers

Source: Researcher 2023

According to the data in Table 8, a significant majority of both principals and teachers believe that orientation is crucial, with 65 (74.7%) principals and 209 (61.5%) teachers strongly agreeing. Additionally, only 2 (2.3%) principals and 4 (1.2%) teachers strongly disagreed, indicating a minimal dissent regarding the importance of orientations. The neutral responses accounted for 1 (1.1%) from principals and 11 (3.2%) from teachers, reflecting a marginal segment undecided. Neutral responses may imply a lack of strong feelings or personal experience regarding the orientation process or the effectiveness of existing methods. These findings underscore the importance of orientation in public secondary schools, highlighting its role in helping new students adapt to the learning environment. By familiarizing students with school routines, orientation may also reduce the frequency of student-administration conflicts, thus minimizing the need for disciplinary measures. These finding aligns with the study by Magut and Kihara (2019), which also emphasized the positive impact of orientation on students' acclimatization to a new learning environment. These findings are also consistent with Omondi (2020), who emphasized the role of orientation in easing students' transitions and contributing to retention rates, underscoring the importance of structured orientation protocols in enhancing student comfort and engagement.

The results in Table 8 also show that 41 (47.1%) principals and 122 (35.9%) teachers agree that staff introductions are facilitated, with 45 (51.7%) principals and 164 (48.2%) teachers strongly agreeing. A total of 0 (0.0%) principals and 10 (2.9%) teachers strongly disagreed, suggesting broad consensus on the practice's value. However, the neutral responses of 1 (1.1%) principal and 30 (8.8%) teachers indicate varying perceptions and may reflect a lack of awareness or experience with departmental introductions. This high response means that when staff from different

departments meets students during orientation, it can help reduce student-teacher conflicts likely to arise from non-compliance with departmental expectations, thereby increasing student retention. Departments may have diverse expectations; for instance, the expectations of the mathematics department can be different from those of the language department. Orientation on departmental expectations thus helps students get adapted to the new learning environment, consequently increasing retention. Furthermore, the orientation of staff from various departments to students creates opportunities for mentorship that are beneficial to their interpersonal and student-teacher interactions. The interactions bridge the teacher-student divide, which aids in student engagement and retention. This aligns with Nyang'au (2021), who found that connecting students with staff reinforces community and accessibility, which are vital for student engagement and retention.



Statement 3 was “The school supports orientation for subject selection to guide students on career choices”. In response to this statement, 49 (56.3%) principals and 165 (48.5%) teachers strongly supported the school’s initiative to offer orientation for subject selection. There were no strong dissenters among the principals, but there were 5 (1.5%) who disagreed among the teachers, revealing minor disapproval. Additionally, the neutral responses from 2 (2.3%) principals and 25 (7.4%) teachers suggest some uncertainty in the perceived effectiveness of these orientations. Neutrality in this context may indicate that while the concept is understood, its implementation may not be fully experienced or appreciated by all staff. This result is in line with Kiptoo (2023), who highlighted the significance of guiding students in subject selection to enhance their educational commitment and retention through informed career decisions. The willingness and support given by principal on career guidance is an indication on

how the school managers value career guidance in schools as a tool for student retention. As indicated earlier; career guidance provides emotional resilience to students and increases their trust on the institutions in driving their career interest to the next level which has a positive effect on student retention.

The results are in line with by Mbindyo et al. (2021) that discovered subject selection advice played a significant role in influencing students' future job goals. Those of a study Furthermore, their research discovered that the majority of Kenyan secondary schools provided such guidance to their students, with subject teachers or guidance counselors serving as the primary sources of assistance. Thus, the current study findings emphasize the importance of subject selection processes, which include primary support for career guidance and student retention. The findings of the current study were similarly congruent with those of Jepkoech and Ogoti (2015), who reported that institutional assistance, including subject selection guidance, was crucial in maintaining students in higher education. The results of this study, however, were at odds with those of Nthiga (2014), who claimed that while there were strategies used to encourage student retention in public secondary schools in the Embakasi District of Kenya, career counseling and advising weren't among the most often used ones. This could signal that, while most school administrations and teachers value subject selection advice, it isn't always a top priority when it comes to student retention measures.

Professional speakers are always invited during career days to motivate students to pursue their career choices. The data indicates mixed responses, with 41 (47.1%) principals and 122 (35.9%) teachers agreeing that professional speakers are invited,

while 23 (26.4%) principals and 128 (37.6%) teachers strongly agreed. However, there were some dissenters, such as 2 (2.3%) principals and 11 (3.2%) teachers who were strongly against this statement. The neutral responses, which were 18 (20.7%) principals and 41 (12.1%) teachers, indicate a level of uncertainty about the regularity or quality of these career days. Such neutrality may reflect a lack of awareness of the events or experiences that did not meet their expectations. However, it was noted during focus group discussions that some schools did not have a specific day or time allocated for career day.

Several studies have emphasized the importance of career guidance and motivation for students' academic and career outcomes. The findings presented above are consistent with those of Maina and Kariuki (2021), who discovered that career guidance and counseling assisted students in making informed decisions about their career paths, thereby improving their retention in school. Similarly, Magero (2020) also discovered that career guidance programs involved multiple stakeholders and improved students' career readiness and retention. The current study finding also indicated that a sizable proportion of respondents were unsure whether to agree or disagree with the statement. That could be attributed to the fact that some schools do not have formally organized career days. These results resonate with Mwita (2021), who emphasized that engaging professional speakers can inspire students and enhance their educational commitment, aligning academic efforts with future career aspirations.

The school always supports life skills training to create an enabling environment for students to stay in school. The responses reveal that a substantial 38 (43.7%) principals and 130 (38.2%) teachers agree that life skills training is supported by the school.

However, the data also shows a notable segment of respondents who disagreed, with 2 (2.3%) principals and 16 (4.7%) teachers strongly disagreeing. Additionally, the neutral responses from 21 (24.1%) principals and 47 (13.8%) teachers suggest that some are uncertain about the extent of life skills support provided. Such neutrality may indicate that not all faculty members are aware of or involved in life skills initiatives, impacting their perceptions. The results are in line with those of Kanyi et al. (2019), Ongige, Ngala, et al. (2020), and Ongige, Tikoko, et al. (2020), who highlighted the importance of life skills in schools due to factors like poverty, early marriage, pregnancy, and a lack of parental support contributing to high secondary school dropout rates. They emphasized the significance of life skills training for students because it assists them in developing coping mechanisms and problem-solving skills that improve retention. The recognition of the benefits of life skills training by both principals and teachers could also be attributed to the trends in the responses. This is why the Kenyan government has prioritized life skills education in all school curricula, and the vast majority of teachers have received life skills training as teaching tools and as part of their secondary school course requirements (Poolos, 2019).

The findings indicated that there was support for life skills training in Nakuru County's public day secondary schools. Such training could be a potential government strategy for increasing student retention. The findings were contrary to a study by Mwangangi et al., (2022) where it was revealed that most of the secondary schools did not have any teaching resources for life skills education and it was not taught. This also correlates with Aoko (2022), who argued that implementing life skills training creates a conducive environment for students, emphasizing its role in their retention. The school ensures that students are equipped with skills to enable them to integrate into society

after completing their studies. Regarding the school's effectiveness in preparing students for societal integration, 37 (42.5%) principals and 120 (35.3%) teachers strongly agreed on the importance of equipping students with necessary skills, while 33 (37.9%) principals and 146 (42.9%) teachers agreed. The dissatisfaction is noted where 7 (8.0%) principals and 4 (1.2%) teachers strongly disagreed, indicating a small level of discontent. Neutral responses, which included 10 (11.5%) principals and 39 (11.5%) teachers, may suggest a sense of uncertainty about the actual skills training being conducted. This neutrality points to the need for clearer communication and awareness regarding the programs offered. These findings are consistent with Wekesa (2023), who discussed the importance of skill acquisition programs in promoting student retention through effective community integration post-graduation. This result was also in line with Musee (2018), who found that learners' societal integration helped them learn and understand the soft skills necessary to fit in with social life both inside and outside of school.

4.3.2 Descriptive Statistics for Principals Mentorship Practices

Descriptive statistics were computed for the statements made by principals regarding their mentoring practices using a five-point Likert scale. The scale appeared as follows: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Strongly Agree, and Agree are the four possible responses. The results are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics on Principal’s Student Mentorship Practices

	Principals Responses			Teachers Responses		
	N	Mean	Std. Dev	N	Mean	Std. Dev
The school always conducts orientation for new students to familiarize with the school routine.	87	4.69	0.62	340	4.50	0.77
The school always introduces staff from various departments who guide the students on the expectations of the department	87	4.51	0.53	340	4.22	0.98
The school supports orientation for subject selection to guide students on career choices	87	4.54	0.55	340	4.23	0.95
Professional speakers are always invited during career days to motivate students to pursue their career choices.	87	3.92	0.91	340	3.94	1.11
The School always supports life skills training to create an enabling environment for students to stay in school.	87	3.99	0.87	340	3.95	1.09
The School ensures that students are equipped with skills to enable them integrate into the society after completing their studies.	87	4.15	0.92	340	4.02	0.97
Valid N (listwise)	87			340		

N = 87 Principals and 340 Teachers

Source: Researcher 2023

The responses provided in table 9 indicates that both principals and teachers concerning various aspects of school support and student orientation, with ratings on a scale of 1 to 5, where higher mean scores signify more positive perceptions. Both principals and teachers are in general agreement that the school consistently conducted orientation for new students to familiarize them with the school routine. The relatively high mean scores from both groups, with principals had a mean of 4.690 (Std. Dev: 0.616) and teachers with a mean of 4.50 (Std. Dev: 0.77383), suggesting that this practice was well-established within the school, underscoring the school's commitment to ensuring that new students felt at ease and were well-informed. These findings were consistent with those of Kamundi (2021); Blanson (2005); Thoonen et al. (2012) and Poolos' (2019).

The responses indicate that both principals and teachers agreed that the school routinely introduced staff from various departments to guide students on departmental expectations. Although the mean scores were slightly lower compared to the first statement, they were still notably positive, with principals having a mean of 4.506 (Std. Dev: 0.525) and teachers reporting a mean of 4.2235 (Std. Dev: 0.97613). This implied that the school had a common practice of providing students with a clear understanding of departmental roles. This result was in line with the findings of Onyango et al. (2018), who discovered that providing students with information about the department's expectations was essential to the learning process.

Both groups expressed a general consensus that the school supported orientation for subject selection to assist students in making informed career choices. This demonstrated that the school's commitment to helping students in their academic

decisions, with principals registered a mean of 4.540 (Std. Dev: 0.546) and teachers reported a mean of 4.2324 (Std. Dev: 0.95418), which was consistent with the earlier statements. This outcome was consistent with that of Mbindyo et al. (2021) and Karanja and Gikungu (2014). Both principals and teachers provided almost similar mean scores, indicating that professional speakers were not consistently invited during career days to motivate students in their career choices. The mean scores, while lower in comparison to the previous statements, reflected the need for potential improvement, with principals reporting a mean of 3.920 (Std. Dev: 0.905) and teachers recording a mean of 3.9353 (Std. Dev: 1.11119). The schools were positive about enhancing the frequency of such motivational sessions. This finding agreed with Maina and Kariuki (2021) who underlined the necessity of schools engaging in career advising programs that incorporate a varied range of stakeholders, including professional speakers, to increase student performance. It also agreed with the findings of Grande et al. (2018), who discovered that additional financing was needed to help schools bring in guest speakers to invigorate students. This is similar to McMullen and Eaton's (2021) findings, which stressed the relevance of numerous role models in affecting how students interacted with various subjects in the school curriculum.

Both groups, principals and teachers, concurred that the school generally supported life skills training to create conducive environment for students' retention. The mean scores were relatively consistent with prior statements, indicating that life skills training was an acknowledged component of the school's efforts to support students, with principals reporting a mean of 3.989 (Std. Dev: 0.869) and teachers revealing a mean of 3.9500 (Std. Dev: 1.09457). This finding was consistent with that of Schargel et al., (2007) and McMullen and Eaton's study (2021). Both principals and teachers were in agreement

that the school ensured that students were equipped with the skills needed for successful integration into society after completion. The relatively high mean scores, with principals having a mean of 4.149 (Std. Dev: 0.922) and teachers reporting a mean of 4.0206 (Std. Dev: 0.96983), underscored the shared belief in the significance of preparing students for life beyond their academic journey. This outcome was in line with that of Anachuna and Obi (2021) and Poolos (2019).

4.3.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions and interview schedules. The findings were as indicated Most students were well mentored during admission in form one as well as during subject selection. The students indicated that if it were not for proper orientations during admission and orientations probably some of them could not be in the same schools they were admitted to. Form one students received mentoring on various topics such as selecting and living with friends in school, drug and substance abuse, health issues such as communicable diseases, academic performance and excellence, self-direction, self-discipline and self-control, sexual education, viewing the school as a family unit, spiritual support, and time management.

Some of the students were assertive on how their teachers' mentorships programs enabled them to improve on their performance. For instance, one of the students stated:

Regardless of our KCPE results, our principal and teachers encouraged us to do better." They told us that our KCPE results were unimportant as long as we had positive interactions with our teachers and colleagues. This will keep us going, and we appreciate it." In some cases, we are told to avoid the idea that some subjects are difficult and that we cannot handle them. This mindset helped us believe that we could always succeed, and we did.

This finding was consistent with that of Owan and Agunwa (2019) over mentorship programs and how they helped students develop study habits and access resources that helped them succeed academically. It was also consistent with the findings of Kanyi, (2019) about importance of mentoring students on self-direction, self-discipline, and self-control.

In the focus group discussion one student said:

We are taught how to self-direct, self-discipline, and control ourselves. This allows us to avoid unnecessary conflicts with administration and teachers, making us feel more at ease at school. As sex education is critical to our coexistence, this has allowed boys and girls to learn together.

One girl also responded:

At first, I was terrified and hesitant to share classes with boys because I had heard boys are bad." I had always been opposed to a mix, but after consulting with the principal and receiving constant encouragement from teachers, I realized it was the best option. I have learned how to interact well with boys by participating in group discussions and extracurricular activities.

Several aspects of discipline such as time managements and language policies in school have been embraced by the students. Some students quipped:

We have been taught to enjoy discipline rather than being disciplined. We are now proud of our school and do not clash with my teachers. The mentorship has solidified a positive learning relationship between teachers and students, as well as between us and our parents back home. While at school, we are encouraged to live as a family.

Some schools had established family units within the school, headed by a group of teachers as parents and they met once a week to discuss a myriad of issues, including family issues affecting students' performance. One student appreciated:

I could not have made it to form four in the same school if it were not for the family units, and interactions and sharing during family meetings have greatly aided me. The teacher became aware of my problems and was of great assistance

to me." Spiritual matters are given a lot of attention, which has aided my emotional development.

The qualitative analysis results are consistent with those of Andiema and Manasi (2022); John et al. (2020); Arop et al. (2019); Owan and Agunwa (2019); Kanyi, 2019; Jepkoech, Muriel, and Ogoti (2015); Mbijiwe (2013); and Thoonen et al. (2012), who show that mentorship programs help students develop a sense of belonging and feel connected to the school community.

Mentoring senior teachers who in turn mentor other teachers and students was also identified as a crucial factor in enhancing student retention. One teacher stated:

Mentoring aids in the discovery of issues affecting students and the identification of those that require action or counseling." Teachers, for example, can identify issues such as rape, parental neglect, and other challenges that students may face and provide the necessary support.

This assertion is consistent with research findings of Grande et al., (2018) and Poolos (2019) which show that effective mentorship practices create a school environment in which teachers and students can engage in both formal and informal mentorship activities, thereby promoting student retention.

A rewarding system for students, such as monetary rewards and invitations to dinners with the principal, was also highlighted as a significant mentorship management practice that promotes student retention which is consistent with McMullen and Eaton, (2021) and Fulk (2020) findings.

One student stated:

Rewards encourage us to work harder and perform better, while also instilling a sense of accomplishment and belonging in the school environment." Inviting resource people to speak to students and improving

pastoral programs have always aided in the development of students' life skills and have been critical in students' social, emotional, and behavioral development.

Engaging with student alumnae in mentorship activities and inviting them to participate in reward schemes is another mentorship management practice that influences student retention. This practice provides an opportunity for former students to give back to the school community, while also providing support to current students who may be facing various challenges (Anachuna & Obi, 2021). Eradicating illegal levies in schools and implementing a female student reentry policy are other practices that promote student retention, as they ensure that students are not excluded from school due to financial or health reasons (Karanja & Gikungu, 2014; Maina & Kariuki, 2021).

Other practices highlighted include principals reaching out to donors to aid in funding lunch programs, enhancing communication channels with students to address their grievances, providing sanitary towels to girls, and investing in the general infrastructure and aesthetics of the school. The SCDE reported:

Donor aid in funding programs has created a conducive learning environment and has also promoted student retention by ensuring that students are healthy, safe, and comfortable in their school environment.

The statement is consistent with AFMLTA, (2019) and Ongige et al. (2020) findings on learners' retention in schools.

In conclusion, the interview with sub-county directors highlighted the importance of mentorship management practices in promoting student retention. By implementing practices that promote a supportive and nurturing school environment, schools can create a culture of mentorship that promotes student retention and contributes to their

academic and personal success. These practices are consistent with research findings that show the importance of effective mentorship practices in enhancing student retention.

One SCDE stated:

Principals in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County engage in mentorship practices through regular interaction with students, counseling sessions, and academic guidance. These practices have a positive influence on student retention by providing emotional and academic support.

This response suggested that mentorship practices involved various forms of support and guidance, both emotional and academic, which were perceived to have a positive impact on student retention.

Another SCDE indicated:

Examples of mentorship initiatives implemented by principals include peer mentoring programs, one-on-one counseling sessions, and academic progress tracking. These initiatives create a supportive and conducive learning environment.

The response provided specific examples of mentorship initiatives, indicating that principals were implementing structured programs to enhance student support and create conducive learning environment.

The interview findings revealed that mentorship practices in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County had a positive impact on student retention. Principals engaged in mentorship through regular interactions, counseling, and academic guidance, providing emotional and academic support, fostering conducive learning environment, and creating a culture of support. The students' responses and SCDE statements indicated that mentorship initiatives, motivational practices, and disciplinary

approaches had contributed to improved student retention rates. These findings aligned with existing research on the significance of effective mentorship practices in promoting student retention and enhancing their overall academic and personal development. The mentorship strategies mentioned in the interview supported students' emotional and academic needs, emphasizing the importance of a supportive and nurturing school environment in achieving student retention and success.

4.3.4 Correlations between Principals Mentorship Practices and Student Retention

Table 10 presents the findings regarding the Pearson correlations between principals' mentoring practices and student retention. The common method for interpreting correlation coefficients served as the basis for the interpretations of correlation coefficients (Schober et al., 2018).

Table 10: Correlations between Principals Mentorship Practices and Student Retention.

		Principals Mentorship Practices	Student Retention
Principals Mentorship Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	87	
Student Retention	Pearson Correlation	.359**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	87	87

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

Source: Researcher 2023

The influence of principal mentorship practices on student retention is shown in Table 10. The strength and direction of the association between the two variables are assessed

using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient varies from -1 to +1, with +1 denoting a perfect positive connection, 0 denoting no association, and -1 denoting a perfect negative correlation. The influence of principals' mentoring practices on student retention was investigated using a Pearson product-moment correlation. Student retention and principal mentorship practices had a moderate, statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.359^{**}$, $n = 87$, $p = 0.001$). The correlation coefficient between principal mentorship practices was moderate and implied that principal mentorship practices were applied, student retention also improved moderately.

4.3.5 Linear Regression Analysis of Principals Mentorship Practices on Student retention

Table 11 presents the Model Summary for the regression between principals' mentorship practices and student retention.

Table 11: Model Summary for Principals Mentorship Practices

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.359 ^a	.129	.118	.92240

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Mentorship Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

Table 11 presents the results of a regression analysis examining the influence of Principals Mentorship Practices on Student Retention. The model's summary indicates that Principals Mentorship Practices accounted for 12.9% of the variance in Student Retention, as indicated by the R-squared value. The adjusted R-squared value is 0.118,

suggesting that the model may not be an ideal fit. The standard error of the estimate is 0.92240.

Table 12: Analysis of Variance for Principals Mentorship Practices

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.669	1	10.669	12.540	.001 ^b
	Residual	72.319	85	.851		
	Total	82.989	86			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Mentorship Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) table demonstrated that the regression model was statistically significant at a significance level of 0.05, with an F-statistic of 12.540 and a p-value of .001. This implied that there was a significant influence of Principals Mentorship Practices on Student Retention.

Table 13: Beta Coefficient for Principals Mentorship Practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.895	.606		3.127	.002
Principals Mentorship Practices	.508	.143	.359	3.541	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

Source: Researcher 2023

The coefficients table provides more insights. The constant, representing the intercept, has a coefficient of 1.895 and is statistically significant ($p = 0.002$). The coefficient for

Principals Mentorship Practices was 0.359, and it was also statistically significant ($p = 0.001$). The standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.359, suggesting that for every one-unit increase in Principals Mentorship Practices, Student Retention increases by 0.359 standard deviations. The preceding statement discusses the findings of a study that sought to investigate the impact of principals' students' mentorship practices on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. The study developed a null hypothesis (H_0) stating that principals' students' mentorship practices had no statistically significant influence on student retention and an alternative hypothesis (H_1) stating that there is a statistically significant influence. The p-value related to principals' students' mentorship practices was 0.001, which was less than the test significance limit of 0.05. As a consequence, the null hypothesis was rejected, showing that principals' student mentorship methods have a statistically significant effect on the retention of students in Nakuru County's public-day secondary schools.

This means that there was strong statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_A), indicating that there was indeed a statistically significant influence of principals' students' mentorship practices on student retention in Nakuru County's public-day secondary schools. In simpler terms, the research had demonstrated that when school principals implement effective mentorship practices for students, it had a meaningful and positive impact on student retention rates, which was a crucial finding for educational institutions and policymakers seeking to improve student outcomes and reduce attrition. This finding was consistent to that of Wambugu and Mokoena (2017). This contradicts Okaya and Ayaga's (2020) assertion that a one-size-fits-all strategy may not be successful in employing mentorship to increase student retention rates in schools.

The findings of this study aligned with Tinto's theory of student retention (1993), which emphasizes the importance of various factors, including academic and social integration, in influencing student persistence. In the first hypothesis, the rejection of the null hypothesis, which suggested a statistically significant influence of principals' students' mentorship practices on student retention, resonates with Tinto's theory. Effective mentorship practices, as found in this study, facilitate students' social integration into the school community, creating a sense of belonging and support, which is vital for student retention.

4.4 Influence of Principals Motivational Practices on Students Retention

This section presents the findings from the second objective, which sought to determine the impact of principals' motivational practices on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools.

4.4.1 Responses on Principals Motivational Practices

Table 13 below presents the descriptive statistics on the responses from principals and teachers regarding student mentorship practices within the school context. It summarizes the perceptions of both groups concerning key statements related to the encouragement of co-curricular activities, the recognition of student achievements, the organization of academic advising sessions, public acknowledgment of good behavior, and the assignment of responsibilities to well-behaved students. The responses are categorized into four agreement levels: strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), neutral (N), agree (A), and strongly agree (SA), providing a comprehensive overview of the consensus on the effectiveness of these practices in promoting student engagement and retention.

Table 14: Principal's and Teachers' Responses on Student Mentorship Practices

Statement	Category	SD F(%)	D F(%)	N F(%)	A F(%)	SA F(%)
The school ensures that learners are encouraged to actively participate in co-curricular activities.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (5.7%)	34 (39.1%)	48 (55.2%)
	Teachers	1 (0.3%)	16 (4.7%)	35 (10.3%)	91 (26.8%)	197 (57.9%)
Students who excel in co-curricular activities are always rewarded.	Principal	2 (2.3%)	4 (4.6%)	14 (16.1%)	41 (47.1%)	26 (29.9%)
	Teachers	14 (4.1%)	52 (15.3%)	28 (8.2%)	123 (36.2%)	123 (36.2%)
The School always awards students with exemplary academic performance.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.1%)	5 (5.7%)	22 (25.3%)	59 (67.8%)
	Teachers	5 (1.5%)	13 (3.8%)	22 (6.5%)	103 (30.3%)	197 (57.9%)
The School regularly organizes sessions to advise students on academic performance.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.3%)	9 (10.3%)	37 (42.5%)	39 (44.8%)
	Teachers	1 (0.3%)	33 (9.7%)	24 (7.1%)	152 (44.7%)	130 (38.2%)
Students with good behavior are always acknowledged openly.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.1%)	7 (8.0%)	34 (39.1%)	45 (51.7%)
	Teachers	10 (2.9%)	28 (8.2%)	27 (7.9%)	139 (40.9%)	136 (40.0%)
The School always assigns responsibilities to students with good behavior.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (6.9%)	42 (48.3%)	39 (44.8%)
	Teachers	8 (2.4%)	21 (6.2%)	37 (10.9%)	157 (46.2%)	117 (34.4%)

N = 87 Principals and 340 Teachers

Source: Researcher 2023

Regarding the statement, "The school ensures that learners are encouraged to actively participate in co-curricular activities," findings show that 0 (0.0%) of principals and 1 (0.3%) of teachers strongly disagree, 0 (0.0%) of principals and 16 (4.7%) disagree, 5 (5.7%) of principals and 35 (10.3%) are neutral, while 34 (39.1%) of principals and 91 (26.8%) agree, and 48 (55.2%) of principals and 197 (57.9%) strongly agree. This indicates a high level of agreement among both groups regarding the importance of co-curricular activities in student engagement. The results suggest that schools actively promote such participation, a practice supported by Kimanzi (2022), who noted that involvement in co-curricular activities fosters a sense of belonging crucial for student retention.

For the statement, "Students who excel in co-curricular activities are always rewarded," 2 (2.3%) of principals and 14 (4.1%) of teachers strongly disagree, 4 (4.6%) of principals and 52 (15.3%) disagree, 14 (16.1%) of principals and 28 (8.2%) are neutral, while 41 (47.1%) of principals and 123 (36.2%) agree, and 26 (29.9%) of principals and 123 (36.2%) strongly agree. Here, the majority of respondents, especially among teachers, agree on the practice of rewarding excellence in co-curricular activities. Both principals and teachers agreed, according to the study's findings, that schools encouraged students to actively participate in extracurricular activities. However, there were some differences between the two groups with more teachers being undecided or disagreeing compared to principals. One possible reason for the differences could be their different levels of involvement and oversight in co-curricular activities, with principals having a more macro-level view of the school's programs and policies, while teachers had a more hands-on perspective of how these activities are implemented in the classroom. The findings are consistent with those of Gikonyo et al. (2022), who

discovered that co-curricular activities improved academic performance, social skills, and mental health among Kenyan secondary school students.

Furthermore, the study's emphasis on co-curricular activities matched the motivation provided to students, which included encouragement to participate in co-curricular activities as well as academic excellence and self-discipline. Emekako (2016) discovered that disciplinary measures such as co-curricular activities helped Nigerian secondary school students avoid unnecessary conflicts with administration and teachers, resulting in a more comfortable learning environment and higher retention rates. Reinforcement of this recognition correlates with findings by Muiruri (2019), which affirm that acknowledgment of achievements motivates students to stay engaged and increases their overall commitment to school. Therefore, to increase student retention, schools should promote student involvement in co-curricular activities, and principals should ensure that teachers understand the value of these activities for students' academic and social development. This can contribute to creating a positive learning environment and help students to develop the necessary skills and attitudes necessary for student retention.

The results for "The School always awards students with exemplary academic performance" reveal that 0 (0.0%) of principals and 5 (1.5%) of teachers strongly disagree, 1 (1.1%) of principals and 13 (3.8%) disagree, 5 (5.7%) of principals and 22 (6.5%) are neutral, with 22 (25.3%) of principals and 103 (30.3%) agreeing, and 59 (67.8%) of principals and 197 (57.9%) strongly agreeing. These high levels of support from both principals and teachers reflect the acknowledged significance of rewarding academic excellence. The findings suggest that a majority of both principals and

teachers agreed that students who excelled in co-curricular activities were rewarded. However, there was a significant difference in the level of agreement between the two groups, with principals agreeing more strongly than teachers. This finding was consistent with the findings of Malatji et al. (2022), who discovered that co-curricular activities increased student retention by improving students' overall well-being and engagement in school. The study also found that the recognition and rewards given to students for their participation in co-curricular activities increased their motivation and self-esteem, which could ultimately lead to improved retention. The findings also align with the study by Njihia and Mungai (2019) that suggests such awards significantly contribute to lowering dropout rates by motivating students towards academic achievement.

In terms of "The School regularly organizes sessions to advise students on academic performance," the responses indicate 0 (0.0%) of principals and 1 (0.3%) of teachers strongly disagree, 2 (2.3%) of principals and 33 (9.7%) disagree, 9 (10.3%) of principals and 24 (7.1%) are neutral, with 37 (42.5%) of principals agreeing and 152 (44.7%) of teachers agreeing, while 39 (44.8%) of principals and 130 (38.2%) of teachers strongly agree. The predominance of agreement underlines the perceived effectiveness of academic advising sessions, aligning with Kimanzi (2022) who found that schools with regular academic guidance facilitate better student retention by helping learners identify strengths and weaknesses. Schools that consistently outperform their peers attract and retain students. The findings have significantly increased student retention in public secondary schools. Academic performance has a large impact on a student's ability to progress from one school level to the next. Academic achievement and student retention have a strong positive relationship,

according to Kanyi et al. (2019), with high-achieving students more likely to continue their education and complete their studies at the same school. As a result, monthly sessions to advise students on academic performance were crucial in increasing student retention at Nakuru County's public secondary schools. Less than 50% of respondents in both groups indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that the school offers these sessions, which may indicate that more work needs to be done to increase the accessibility and efficacy of academic support services in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

When examining "Students with good behavior are always acknowledged openly," the results show 0 (0.0%) of principals and 10 (2.9%) of teachers strongly disagree, 1 (1.1%) of principals and 28 (8.2%) disagree, 7 (8.0%) of principals and 27 (7.9%) are neutral, whereas 34 (39.1%) of principals and 139 (40.9%) of teachers agree, and 45 (51.7%) of principals and 136 (40.0%) of teachers strongly agree. The consistent support for acknowledging good behavior suggests that such practices are instrumental in promoting a positive school climate, as suggested by Muiruri (2019), indicating that public recognition of good behavior can foster a conducive learning environment that enhances retention. Empirical reviews in Kenya have shown that student behavior and discipline are critical factors in academic success and completion rates (National Research Council, 2012). Schools that have implemented positive behavior management strategies and regularly acknowledged and rewarded good behavior had seen improvements in student behavior and academic outcomes (Adeli & Mbutitia, 2020). As a result, schools in Nakuru County and throughout Kenya must prioritize the recognition of good behavior and implement effective behavior management strategies to support student retention.

Finally, the Statement that read "The School always assigns responsibilities to students with good behavior" revealed 0 (0.0%) of principals and 8 (2.4%) of teachers strongly disagree, 0 (0.0%) of principals and 21 (6.2%) disagree, 6 (6.9%) of principals and 37 (10.9%) are neutral, while 42 (48.3%) of principals and 157 (46.2%) of teachers agree, and 39 (44.8%) of principals and 117 (34.4%) of teachers strongly agree. The results demonstrate a strong commitment to assigning roles to well-behaved students, reinforcing their value within the school community. According to the findings, students with good behavior were frequently assigned responsibilities in the majority of public secondary schools. This aligns with findings by Njihia and Mungai (2019) that suggest such practices contribute to higher retention rates by instilling a sense of responsibility among students.

In summary, these statistics illustrate a strong consensus among principals and teachers on the positive effects of mentorship practices on student retention, reinforcing their significance through established literature. The findings echo current educational theories that support the notion that engagement in various school activities—be it co-curricular, academic recognition, or behavioral endorsements—play a pivotal role in enhancing student satisfaction, boosting retention, and fulfilling the holistic educational mission of schools.

4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Motivational Practices

Descriptive statistics were computed for principals' motivational practices statements guided by a five-point Likert scale. The scale was as follows: (5) Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree and (1) Strongly disagree. The results were as presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Motivation Practices

	Principals Responses			Teachers Responses		
	N	Mean	Std. Dev	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
The school ensures that learners are encouraged to actively participate in co-curricular activities.	87	4.49	0.61	340	4.3735	.87165
Students who excel in co-curricular activities are always rewarded.	87	3.98	0.93	340	3.8500	1.18664
The school always awards students with exemplary academic performance.	87	4.60	0.66	340	4.3941	.88112
The school regularly organizes sessions to advise students on academic performance.	87	4.30	0.75	340	4.1088	.92646
Students with good behaviour are always acknowledged openly	87	4.41	0.69	340	4.0676	1.03543
The school always assigns responsibilities to students with good behaviour.	87	4.38	0.61	340	4.0412	.95538
Valid N (listwise)	87			340		

Source: Researcher 2023

Table 15 presents the descriptive statistics for principals' motivation practices as reported by both principals and teachers in the study. The table includes the mean (average) and standard deviation for each motivation practice, indicating the level of agreement or disagreement. For the statement on whether the school ensures that learners are encouraged to actively participate in co-curricular activities, principals reported a mean score of 4.49, with a standard deviation of 0.61, while teachers reported a slightly lower mean of 4.3735 and a standard deviation of 0.87165. This

suggested that both principals and teachers generally agreed that the school encourages active participation in co-curricular activities. This study's findings are in line with those of Suleiman et al. (2019) and Ajoke et al. (2015), which found that extracurricular services and activities impacted students' academic success positively although they did not examine the effect of these motivating factors on student retention. This study's findings are also in line with those of Suleiman et al. (2019) and Ajoke et al. (2015), which found that extracurricular services and activities impacted students' academic success positively but did not examine the effect of these motivating factors on student retention. Participating in these activities helps students develop the interpersonal, leadership, and teamwork skills that are so important for their future careers. Furthermore, it allows students the freedom to pursue their passions outside of the classroom, enhancing the educational experience.

Regarding the statement whether students who excelled in co-curricular activities were always rewarded, principals reported a mean score of 3.98, with a standard deviation of 0.93, while teachers reported a mean of 3.8500 and a standard deviation of 1.18664. Both groups indicated that while rewards for excelling in co-curricular activities were implemented, there were variations in the consistency of these rewards. This finding was consistent with previous research by Kelmendi and Nawar (2016) and Ongige et al. (2020), which found a link between intrinsic motivation and student retention. In the statement that the school always awarded students with exemplary academic performance, both principals and teachers reported high mean scores, with principals at 4.60 (standard deviation of 0.66) and teachers at 4.3941 (standard deviation of 0.88112). This indicated a strong consensus over students with exemplary academic performance who were consistently recognized and awarded. This finding was

consistent with that of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) research, which found that awarding students that excelled academically, encourages them to work harder.

For the statement, "The school regularly organized sessions to advise students on academic performance," principals reported a mean score of 4.30, with a standard deviation of 0.75, while teachers reported a slightly lower mean of 4.1088 and a standard deviation of 0.92646. Both groups agreed that such sessions were conducted regularly, although teachers' responses suggesting slightly more variability. This finding was consistent with previous research by Ongige et al. (2020) and Kirondo (2014), which emphasized the importance of academic counseling practices in improving student academic performance and increasing retention in public secondary schools.

In the statement, "Students with good behavior were always acknowledged openly," both groups reported fairly high mean scores. Principals had a mean of 4.41 (standard deviation of 0.69), while teachers had a mean of 4.0676 (standard deviation of 1.03543). This indicated that there was agreement that students with good behavior received public acknowledgment. This result was consistent with that of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) who established that the value of celebrating good behaviour fostered a sense of good behaviour among students.

Finally, for the statement, "The school always assigned responsibilities to students with good behavior," both principals and teachers reported high mean scores. Principals had a mean of 4.38 (standard deviation of 0.61), and teachers had a mean of 4.0412 (standard deviation of 0.95538). This suggested a consensus that students with good

behavior were consistently given responsibilities within the school. This finding was in line with the findings of the study by Okindo et al. (2020), which showed that principals in public secondary schools employ a transactional leadership style to improve students' adherence to school regulations by incentivizing behavior with rewards and penalties.

The responses from both principals and teachers indicated that there was a generally positive implementation of motivation practices in the schools, with a focus on recognizing and rewarding academic excellence and good behavior. The responses demonstrated that both groups perceived these practices as part of the school culture, and there was a relatively high level of agreement. However, it's worth noting that there was some variation in the responses, as indicated by the standard deviations. For example, when it comes to rewarding students who excelled in co-curricular activities, teachers' responses had a higher standard deviation, suggesting that there were more variability in the implementation of this practice. Similarly, the statement about organizing sessions to advise students on academic performance also showed slightly more variability in teachers' responses.

4.4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis on Student Motivation

On motivation, the students were asked to discuss how they were encouraged by the principal to participate in co-curricular activities and how rewarding systems including open acknowledgement of students for their good behavior or exemplary performance helped in students' retention.

On co-curricular activities, the one student stated:

The principal encourages participation by providing facilities and resources such as good fields, sporting facility renovations, training assistance, moral support, and physical motivational rewards. Students are encouraged to participate in co-curricular activity performance, such as Sports, wildlife, St. John's ambulance, scouts, music and drama, art, and young farmer clubs. Club days, PE lessons both indoors and outdoors, trips and seminars, competitions both internal (e.g., inter-house competitions) and external (e.g., inter-school or inter-county competitions). The outstanding performers are appropriately recognized, and the principal openly encourages students in our school.

On whether the motivational activities increased student retention; a student was very categorical:

If it were not for these activities I could not have been here. The principal has been supportive in purchasing sports gear and this has encouraged most students to stay in this school.

This suggests that motivational practices have had a great impact on student retention in this school. The findings are consistent with those of Kanyi (2019) and Mbijiwe (2013), as well as Tinto (1975, 1993), who discovered that the principal's support for co-curricular activities and the benefits of incentive programs as motivational practices improved academic performance and student retention. The researcher interaction with the students' in group discussions established that the principals encouragement of students' participation in co-curricular activities and respective rewarding systems, aided students retention

In an interview a Sub County Director stated:

Motivational practices are effective in enhancing student retention in schools. These practices include principals organizing student tours, strengthening the reward system, facilitating student-to-student motivational programs, fostering a friendly school environment, identifying and assisting needy learners, partnering with NGOs and other donors, and facilitating co-curricular activities. The supportive and friendly school environment created by principals fosters positive relationships between students and teachers, thereby increasing student confidence and love for the school.

This finding was consistent with that of Kirondo (2014), Ajoke et al. (2015), Okello et al (2017) and Suleiman et al. (2019 who found that a supportive environment, open exchange of ideas, and accepting mistakes were effective motivational strategies for students in the classroom. In addition, this confirms that poverty and lack of funds were among the leading causes of high dropout rates among students in Kenya.

The identified motivational practices, such as creating a supportive and friendly school environment, providing assistance for needy learners, and facilitating co-curricular activities, would help to increase student retention rates. This was in respect to the SCDE statement that:

The principal's motivational practices have a positive impact on student retention, particularly in terms of co-curricular activities and sports, which encourage students to stay in school because their abilities in co-curricular activities are recognized. In any case, students are motivated when they are involved in both class and extracurricular activities. Learners are greatly influenced by peer and other motivational programs, which boost their self-esteem and significantly contribute to student retention. Participation in co-curricular activities by students reduced absenteeism.

However, SCDE noted that there was minimal impact on retention from co-curricular activities due to inadequate facilities. However, participating, rewarding co-curricular activities motivated the learners to stay in school.

The SCDEs were asked to state what motivational practices principals commonly employed to encourage student retention.

One SCDE stated:

Motivational practices commonly employed by principals include recognition of student achievements, academic awards, and extracurricular activities that boost students' self-esteem and motivation to stay in school.

The response highlighted the use of recognition and extracurricular activities as motivational strategies that aimed to boost students' self-esteem and motivation to continue their education.

The SCDE were also asked whether there were specific motivational strategies that had been particularly effective in their sub-counties.

One SCDE answered:

Yes, specific motivational strategies have been particularly effective, such as "Student of the Month" awards and academic competitions. These strategies have significantly improved student retention rates.

The response indicated that certain motivational strategies, like awards and academic competitions, had demonstrated positive outcomes in terms of student retention within the sub-county. The findings from the interview and interaction with students indicated that motivational practices, particularly those related to co-curricular activities and rewarding systems, had played a crucial role in promoting student retention in the school. The students' testimonies highlighted how the principal's support and investment in facilities, resources, and recognition positively influenced students' motivation to stay in school and actively engage in co-curricular activities. The comments from students affirmed that these practices had been instrumental in retaining students in the school, emphasizing the pivotal role of motivational strategies in student retention. These findings align with previous research by Kanyi (2019) and Mbijiwe (2013), which demonstrated the positive impact of incentive programs and principal support for co-curricular activities on academic performance and student retention.

Additionally, the SCDE's statements emphasized the effectiveness of motivational practices such as recognizing student achievements, academic awards, and extracurricular activities in boosting students' self-esteem and motivation to continue their education. Specific strategies like "Student of the Month" awards and academic competitions were noted as particularly effective in improving student retention rates within the sub-county. Overall, these findings underscored the significance of motivational practices in enhancing student retention and their contribution to a supportive and nurturing school environment.

4.4.4 Correlation between Principals Motivational Practices and Average Student Retention

The results with respect to the Pearson Correlations between principal's motivational practices and student retention were as provided in Table 16.

Table 16: Correlations between Principals Motivational Practices and Student Retention

		Principals Monitoring Practices	Student Retention
Principals	Pearson Correlation	1	.482**
Motivation	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Practices	N	87	87
Student Retention	Pearson Correlation	.482**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	87	87

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

Source: Researcher 2023

The association between principals' student retention strategies and motivational activities was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation. The results showed a statistically significant association between principal motivational strategies

and student retention ($r = 0.482^{**}$, $n = 87$, $p = 0.000$). Table 16 shows a correlation analysis between principals' motivational practices and student retention rates, indicating that effective motivational practices by principals can contribute to higher student retention rates. The table above presents the correlation coefficients between principals' motivational practices and student retention in a school. The Pearson correlation value in this instance between principals' methods of motivating students and average student retention is 0.482^{**}), indicating a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. There is less than a 1% probability that this link occurred by accident because it is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This finding suggests that when principals engage in motivational practices, such as encouraging student participation in co-curricular activities, rewarding excellent participation in co-curricular activities, awarding excellent academic performance, advising students on academic performance, acknowledging students with good behavior, and assigning responsibilities to students with good behavior, students are more likely to stay in school. This is consistent with the idea that students are more likely to stay enrolled and engaged in their academic work when they feel supported and connected to school activities. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that these two variables have a weak positive relationship. This finding implies that the more frequently principals motivate student progress; the more likely students are to remain enrolled in school.

Effective motivational practices can help identify and address issues that may be contributing to low retention rates. For example, when principals advise students, they can quickly identify students who are academically weak and take action to address any

underlying issues that may be causing such weaknesses. Similarly, when principals monitor academic performance, they can identify students who are struggling and provide them with targeted support to improve their performance. This can create a more supportive and effective learning environment that encourages students to stay in school (Kanyi, 2019 & Mbijiwe, 2013). The correlation between motivational practices and retention rates is consistent with findings from previous studies on student retention in Kenya. In their empirical study on student retention in Kenya, Ongige et al. (2020) discovered that effective leadership and management practices, such as motivation and evaluation, can play a key role in improving student retention. The study emphasized the importance of addressing broader socioeconomic factors that can influence retention rates, such as poverty and inequality.

The findings also highlight the importance of leadership in improving student retention rates. Effective motivational practices are just one aspect of effective leadership, but they can contribute significantly to student retention rates. Principals who are actively engaged in motivating students and taking action to address issues can create a more supportive and effective learning environment that encourages students to stay in school (Kanyi, 2019). Students receive more praise when they behave appropriately, pay attention, show kindness to others, and sit quietly. Rewarding positive behavior is one of the best strategies for preventing, enhancing, and changing undesirable behavior. In comparison to negative reinforcement, positive reinforcement has a stronger effect on students. The value of a principal's leadership in raising student retention rates is made clear when pupils are given responsibilities like those of class representatives or school prefects because of their good behavior (McMullen & Eaton, 2021). The principals should make a statement expressing their happiness or pride in what the

students are accomplishing. This will demonstrate how important principal leadership can be in improving student retention rates, as students will feel more like part of the school community than they did previously.

However, it is important to note that correlation does not imply causation. While the correlation between motivational practices and retention rates suggests that there is a relationship between these variables, it does not necessarily mean that motivational practices are causing higher retention rates. Other factors, such as, family background, and socioeconomic status, may also play a role in student retention rates. Furthermore, when interpreting the results, it is critical to consider the quality of motivational practices. If principals are not effectively motivating students or are not taking action to address issues causing poor retention, the correlation between motivational practices and retention rates may be weaker. Therefore, it is important for principals to implement effective motivational practices and to take action to address any issues that may arise.

Finally, the correlation analysis between principals' motivational practices and student retention rates suggests that effective motivational practices by principals can contribute to higher student retention rates. The findings highlight the importance of effective leadership in improving student retention rates and the need to address broader socio-economic factors that can impact retention rates. However, more research is needed to understand the mechanisms that contribute to higher retention rates and to identify the most effective motivational practices for Kenyan schools.

4.4.5 Linear Regression analysis on Influence of Motivational Practices and Student Retention

In Table 17, the study presents the model summary for the analysis that examines the relationship between Principal's Motivational Practices and Student Retention.

Table 17: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.482 ^a	.232	.223	.86579

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Motivational Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The model's R-squared value was 0.232, indicating that approximately 23.2% of the variance in student retention were explained by the Principal's Motivational Practices. The adjusted R-squared value, at 0.223, accounted for the number of predictors in the model, showing a modest improvement. The standard error of the estimate was 0.86579, which represented the average error between the predicted and actual values. The significant predictor in this model was Principals Motivational Practices ($p < 0.05$). The results suggested that there was a statistically significant relationship between Principal's Motivational Practices and Student Retention. A higher R-squared value implied that additional unaccounted factors may influence student retention. The significant predictor, Principals Motivational Practices, implied that focusing on and enhancing these practices can positively impact student retention rates.

Table 18 presents the results of an analysis of the influence of Principals' Motivational Practices on Student Retention. The study used ANOVA to examine the significance of this influence and to understand how the variance in student retention was explained by the principals' motivational practices.

Table 18: ANOVA for Principals Motivational Practices

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.272	1	19.272	25.710	.000 ^b
	Residual	63.716	85	.750		
	Total	82.989	86			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Motivational Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The results of the analysis indicated a significant influence of Principals' Motivational Practices on student retention ($F = 25.710$, $p < 0.05$). The model's regression sums of squares (19.272) were statistically significant, suggesting that the variation in Student Retention could be explained by the principals' motivational practices. This implied that when school principals adopted motivational practices, there was a notable improvement in student retention rates. These findings had implications for educational leadership and policy, highlighting the importance of motivational leadership in enhancing student retention within educational institutions. Principals and administrators should consider the adoption of effective motivational strategies to support students in their academic journey and improve overall retention rates.

Table 19 presents the results of a regression analysis investigating the influence of principals' motivational practices on student retention. The table provides information on beta coefficients, which represent the change in the dependent variable (Student Retention) associated with a one-unit change in the independent variable (Principals Motivational Practices). Significance testing was performed at the 0.05 level ($\alpha = 0.05$) to assess the statistical significance.

Table 19: Beta Coefficients for Principals Motivational Practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.178	.762		.234	.815
Principals Motivational Practices	.883	.174	.482	5.071	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

Source: Researcher 2023

The results in Table 19 revealed that Principals Motivational Practices had a statistically significant influence on Student Retention ($\beta = 0.883$, $p < 0.001$). This implied that as principals' motivational practices increased by one unit, student retention increased by approximately 0.883 units. The positive beta coefficient (0.883) and its statistical significance ($p < 0.001$) suggested that effective motivational practices by principals were associated with higher student retention rates. In practical terms, this meant that school principals who employed motivational strategies contributed to better student retention outcomes, which had implications for school success and overall educational quality. These findings underscored the importance of leadership practices in fostering a positive learning environment and supporting students in their educational drives.

The p-value related to principals' student motivational practices was 0.001, which was less than the 0.05 at the 95% level of significance. Since the result was significant, the second null hypothesis was rejected, showing that principals' students' motivational methods had a statistically significant impact on student retention rate in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. Focusing on motivational practices, principals

could help to create a school culture that encourages students to strive for excellence, by taking ownership of their learning results in order for them to face future challenges with confidence. This finding is consistent with that of Sternberg (2013). Thus, the second hypothesis, where the null hypothesis was rejected, indicated a statistically significant influence of principals' students' motivational practices on student retention, and the finding was in line with Tinto's theory. Motivational practices, as demonstrated in the study, contributed to students' academic and social integration, encouraging them to take ownership of their learning and face future challenges with confidence, aligning with Tinto's concept of integration leading to student retention.

4.5 Influence of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Students Retention

This section of the chapter presents the findings from the third objective, which sought to determine the impact of principals' disciplinary practices on student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

4.5.1 Responses on Principals' Disciplinary Practices

This section presents the findings related to the third objective of the study, which aimed to assess the impact of principals' disciplinary practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County. The table below summarizes the responses from both principals and teachers regarding various disciplinary practices and their perceived influence on student retention.

Table 20: Descriptive Statistics for Principals' Disciplinary Practices

Statement	Category	SD F(%)	D F(%)	N F(%)	A F(%)	SA F(%)
Learners are always involved in setting of school rules and regulations	Principal	2 (2.3%)	9 (10.3%)	18 (20.7%)	37 (42.5%)	21 (24.1%)
	Teachers	23 (6.8%)	80 (23.5%)	61 (17.9%)	93 (27.4%)	83 (24.4%)
During admission students are always given copies of school rules and regulations	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (4.6%)	20 (23.0%)	63 (72.4%)
	Teachers	3 (0.9%)	8 (2.4%)	11 (3.2%)	98 (28.8%)	220 (64.7%)
The School always organizes guidance and counselling sessions for students with social problems.	Principal	1 (1.1%)	1 (1.1%)	5 (5.7%)	43 (49.4%)	37 (42.5%)
	Teachers	4 (1.2%)	23 (6.8%)	27 (7.9%)	129 (37.9%)	157 (46.2%)
The School supports peer counselling in helping to solve student issues all the time	Principal	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (10.3%)	37 (42.5%)	40 (46.0%)
	Teachers	3 (0.9%)	21 (6.2%)	27 (7.9%)	160 (47.1%)	129 (37.9%)
The School reports and informs parents and guardians on students disciplinary issues regularly	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (5.7%)	27 (31.0%)	55 (63.2%)
	Teachers	1 (0.3%)	8 (2.4%)	25 (7.4%)	139 (40.9%)	167 (49.1%)
Parents and guardians are always invited to school to discuss amicable solutions when a student is involved in a serious disciplinary issue.	Principal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (5.7%)	24 (27.6%)	58 (66.7%)
	Teachers	3 (0.9%)	5 (1.5%)	18 (5.3%)	123 (36.2%)	191 (56.2%)

N = 87 Principals and 340 Teachers

Source: Researcher 2023

The involvement of learners in setting school rules and regulations is crucial for fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility, which can significantly impact student retention. The results show that 2(2.3%) of principals and 23(6.8%) of teachers

strongly disagreed with this practice, while 9(10.3%) of principals and 80(23.5%) of teachers disagreed. Conversely, a majority of principals, 37(42.5%), and a significant portion of teachers, 93(27.4%), agreed that students are involved in this process, with 21(24.1%) of principals and 83(24.4%) of teachers strongly agreeing. Students have more ownership of the rules when they are involved in formulating them, which reduces student-teacher conflict. The findings were consistent with a study by Kiptanui & Kipkasi (2023), which determined that incorporating students in establishing rules and regulations had beneficial effects. The study showed that when learners are involved in the process, they have a better understanding of the rules and tend to adhere to them more. Additionally, it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among learners hence increasing student retention.

The findings imply that while there is a considerable acknowledgment of the importance of involving students in rule-setting, there is still a notable percentage of disagreement, particularly among teachers. This disparity could suggest that while the policy is in place, its implementation might be inconsistent. Kamau (2020) emphasized that involving learners in creating rules enhances their adherence and reduces disciplinary issues, which, in turn, supports higher retention rates. Thus, schools that effectively engage students in this process are likely to see a positive impact on student retention. Providing students with copies of school rules and regulations during admission is a practice that significantly contributes to managing student behavior and promoting retention. According to the results, none of the principals disagreed with this practice, and 63(72.4%) strongly agreed that it is consistently followed, with 220(64.7%) of teachers sharing this sentiment. Only 3(0.9%) of teachers strongly disagreed. This overwhelming agreement indicates a strong consensus on the

importance of clearly communicating rules at the outset of a student's school journey. The implication here is that schools that ensure students are well-informed about expectations from the beginning can prevent misunderstandings and behavioral issues, thereby reducing the likelihood of dropouts. The results suggest that in a majority of the public secondary schools, during admission students are always given copies of school rules and regulations. This indicates that there is a high level of awareness and adherence to the policy of providing students with the school rules and regulations.

Possible reasons for these results could be that schools have made it a mandatory requirement to provide students with copies of the rules and regulations. Also, the Ministry of Education in Kenya has emphasized the need for schools to have clear policies and guidelines, and this may have increased awareness and compliance with the policy. The results resonate with those in a study by Padayachee (2021) on the effectiveness of school rules and regulations in enhancing discipline in public secondary schools in Kenya, they found that clear rules and regulations were associated with better student behavior and improved academic performance. Therefore, the high level of agreement among the respondents in this study may reflect a positive attitude towards the importance of school rules and regulations in maintaining discipline and order in schools. Ndegwa (2019) supports this by noting that clear communication of rules is essential for maintaining discipline and promoting retention, as students who understand the rules are more likely to adhere to them.

The organization of guidance and counseling sessions for students with social problems is another key disciplinary practice that influences student retention. The data shows that 43(49.4%) of principals and 129(37.9%) of teachers agreed that their schools

regularly organize such sessions, with 37(42.5%) of principals and 157(46.2%) of teachers strongly agreeing. These high levels of agreement underscore the importance of guidance and counseling in addressing students' social and emotional needs. Only a small percentage of participants, 1(1.1%) of principals and 4(1.2%) of teachers, strongly disagreed with this practice. The results imply that schools recognize the vital role of guidance and counseling in helping students overcome personal challenges that could otherwise lead to dropout. With the help of guidance and counseling, students are better able to define and achieve realistic goals, resolve interpersonal conflicts that may weaken their mental fortitude, and maintain their enrollment (Thuranira et al., 2022). The conclusions are consistent with those of Warui (2018), who found that insufficient funding, a lack of training, and a lack of stakeholder knowledge and support frequently hamper the implementation of guidance and counseling programs in schools. On the same note, Muriithi (2021) found that schools offering regular guidance and counseling services tend to report higher retention rates, as these sessions provide critical support for students' well-being and academic performance.

Supporting peer counseling is another effective disciplinary practice that enhances student retention, as reflected in the results. The majority of principals, 40(46.0%), and a significant number of teachers, 160(47.1%), strongly agreed that their schools support peer counseling to help solve student issues. A further 37(42.5%) of principals and 129(37.9%) of teachers agreed with this practice. The low percentage of disagreement, with only 1(1.1%) of principals and 3(0.9%) of teachers strongly disagreeing, highlights the widespread recognition of the benefits of peer counseling. The results suggest that schools understand the power of peer influence and the importance of creating a supportive environment where students can help each other navigate

challenges. There were undecided respondents and those who disagreed and this is related to teachers who did not have first-hand experience with peer counseling or feel better equipped to handle student issues on their own, rather than relying on peer counseling (Mutua, 2018). This implies that those who agreed with the statement witness positive outcomes from peer counseling in their schools and therefore recognize its value as an additional support system for students' retention.

The results were consistent with a study by Kanus (2018) that discovered peer counseling programs in Kenyan schools increased students' self-esteem, coping mechanisms, and academic achievement, leading to high retention rates. Another study by Mutua (2018) also found that peer counseling was effective in reducing aggressive behavior and improving social skills among primary school students. These findings suggest that peer counseling was an important component of schools' support system, especially in a context where mental health services may be limited hence improving student retention. Wanjiku (2020) found that peer counseling programs contribute to lower dropout rates, as students are often more comfortable seeking help from their peers, which fosters a sense of belonging and contributes to retention.

Regularly reporting and informing parents and guardians about students' disciplinary issues is a practice that is crucial for student retention. The results indicate strong agreement with this practice, with 55(63.2%) of principals and 167(49.1%) of teachers strongly agreeing that schools regularly report disciplinary issues to parents, and 27(31.0%) of principals and 139(40.9%) of teachers agreeing. The minimal disagreement, with only 1(0.3%) of teachers strongly disagreeing, suggests that this practice is well-established in most schools. The implication is that effective

communication between the school and parents helps address behavioral concerns early, preventing them from escalating into issues that could lead to student withdrawal. This suggested that there was a high level of communication between the schools and parents/guardians in the county. This level of interactions and engagement with parents fosters good working environment hence making parents to strive to retain their children in the same school. Similarly, cases of indiscipline greatly drop increasing student retention as less or no student misses school for any disciplinary case.

Regular communication on disciplinary issues between schools and parents or guardians is critical to improving student retention. When parents or guardians are made aware of their child's disciplinary issues, they may become more involved in their child's education and provide assistance in addressing any issues that may be affecting their child's academic performance. This may result in improved academic performance, lower dropout rates, and higher completion rates (Owan& Agunwa, 2019; Apondi, 2014). Mutua (2018) emphasized that regular communication with parents regarding disciplinary matters positively impacts retention, as it creates a stronger support system for students, both at home and in school.

Inviting parents and guardians to discuss amicable solutions when a student is involved in a serious disciplinary issue is another essential practice that supports student retention. The findings show that 58(66.7%) of principals and 191(56.2%) of teachers strongly agreed that their schools engage parents in such discussions, with 24(27.6%) of principals and 123(36.2%) of teachers agreeing. No principals and only 3(0.9%) of teachers strongly disagreed. These results imply that schools in Nakuru County recognize the importance of parental involvement in resolving serious disciplinary

issues, which is crucial for retaining students. Schools that actively involve parents in finding solutions tend to create a collaborative environment that supports student retention by addressing issues in a constructive manner. This suggested that there was a high level of communication between the schools and parents/guardians in the county. This level of interactions and engagement with parents fosters good working environment hence making parents to strive to retain their children in the same school. Similarly cases of indiscipline greatly drop increasing student retention as less or no student misses school for any disciplinary case.

The findings are consistent with those of Opondo and Aloka (2020), who discovered that parental involvement in education was associated with improved academic performance and retention. Regular communication between schools and parents/guardians on disciplinary issues was found to be effective in improving student retention. They contend that parental involvement improved implementation of policies on disciplinary issues, increased awareness of the education issues, and collaborative relationship between schools and parents/guardians. This approach aligns with Mutua's (2018) findings, which highlight the positive impact of parental involvement on student retention.

4.5.2 Descriptive Statistics for Principals Disciplinary Practices

Descriptive statistics were computed for principals' statements about disciplinary practices using a five-point Likert scale. The scale was as follows: (5) Agree strongly, (4) Agree, (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly disagree. Table 4.31 summarizes the findings.

Table 21: Descriptive Statistics for Principals Disciplinary Practices

	Principals Responses			Teachers Responses		
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Learners are always involved in setting of school rules and regulations	87	3.76	1.01	340	3.39	1.27
During admission students are always given copies of school rules and regulations	87	4.68	0.56	340	4.54	0.75
The school always organizes guidance and counseling sessions for students with social problems.	87	4.31	0.74	340	4.21	0.94
The school supports peer counseling in helping to solve student issues all the time	87	4.32	0.75	340	4.15	0.87
The school reports and informs parents and guardians on students' disciplinary issues regularly	87	4.57	0.60	340	4.36	0.75
Parents and guardians are invited to school to discuss amicable solutions when a student is involved in a serious disciplinary issue.	87	4.61	0.60	340	4.45	0.74
Valid N (listwise)	87			340		

Source: Researcher 2023

Table 21 presents the descriptive statistics for principals' and teachers' responses regarding disciplinary practices in schools. The table provides information on various aspects of disciplinary practices and the corresponding mean and standard deviation scores for both groups.

Regarding the involvement of learners in the formulation of school rules and regulations, the findings revealed that, on average, principals rated this aspect at 3.76, with a standard deviation of 1.01. This suggested that students were engaged in the process of setting these rules. In comparison, teachers held a slightly lower perception, with an average rating of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 1.27, indicating a similar view but with more variability among teacher responses. These statistics implied that there was a potential for improvement by actively involving students in shaping school rules and regulations, aligning them with the principle of participatory disciplinary practices. This finding was in line with that of Nthiga (2014) and Apondi (2014). Regarding the distribution of school rules and regulations during admission, both principals and teachers demonstrated favorable perceptions. Principals, on average, assigned a high mean score of 4.68, with a standard deviation of 0.56, indicating that the practice of providing copies of rules and regulations to students upon admission was effective. Teachers similarly viewed this practice positively, with an average score of 4.54 and a standard deviation of 0.75. These statistics collectively suggested that there existed a well-established practice of distributing school rules to students upon entry. The results are in line with those in a study by Apondi (2014) who reached similar conclusions.

The evaluation of guidance and counseling sessions within the school environment also presented a positive picture. Principals rated the organization of these sessions for students with social problems at an average of 4.31, with a standard deviation of 0.74. While teachers, slightly presented a lower mean score at 4.21, demonstrating a general consensus on the reasonably well-organized nature of these sessions, albeit with some variations in teacher responses. This implied that both principals and teachers perceived

the provision of guidance and counseling sessions as a valuable component of the school's disciplinary practices, reinforcing the importance of student support. The findings are consistent with that of Prasetyarini et al. (2020) and Ilyasin (2019) who found the principals are much involved in counseling students with social problems.

The findings concerning support for peer counseling indicated a shared positive perception from both principals and teachers. Principals reported an average score of 4.32, with a standard deviation of 0.75, while teachers' mean score was 4.15, with a standard deviation of 0.87. These statistics collectively suggested the existence of an established practice that encouraged peer counseling to address student issues within the school community. Such support contributed to a holistic approach in managing student concerns and conflicts. This finding is similar to Uzoechina et al. (2015)'s findings, which underlined the role of empathy and peer support in maintaining discipline.

Examining the communication and reporting aspect, principals assigned a mean score of 4.57, with a standard deviation of 0.60, indicating a high level of consistency in reporting and informing parents and guardians about students' disciplinary issues. Teachers also expressed a positive view, albeit with a slightly lower mean of 4.36 and a standard deviation of 0.75. These statistics highlight the effective practice of keeping parents and guardians well-informed about disciplinary matters within the school environment, which reflected an essential aspect of maintaining transparency and collaboration. This finding indicated that the majority of respondents agreed, and it was consistent with the findings of Nthiga (2014), who emphasized the importance of parental involvement in disciplinary issues.

The last practice was that of involving parents and guardians in addressing serious disciplinary issues which were perceived positively by both principals and teachers. Principals' average score was 4.61, with a standard deviation of 0.60, and teachers held a similar perspective with a mean score of 4.45 and a standard deviation of 0.74. These findings collectively indicated a robust practice of engaging parents and guardians in finding solutions to significant disciplinary matters, underscoring the collaborative approach in handling complex student issues. This finding is consistent with the findings of Owan and Agunwa (2019), who highlighted the importance of parent and school collaboration in dealing with disciplinary issues and discovered that this practice was effective. Similarly, Apondi (2014) also established the significance of involving students in the processes of creating rules and enforcing them while emphasizing the importance of open lines of communication.

In summary, the descriptive statistics showed that, in general, both principals and teachers perceived positively disciplinary practices within the schools. However, there were variations in their responses, indicating the need for consistent implementation and possibly further improvement in some areas, such as learners' involvement in setting rules and regulations. Overall, the data suggested that schools were actively working on matters of maintaining a conducive disciplinary environment that involved stakeholders.

4.5.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

The study sought to explore discipline management practices in secondary schools through student interviews. The students were asked about how the principal ensured adherence to rules and regulations, how they supported guidance and counseling

sessions, the relationships between the principal's discipline management practices and student retention, and how peer counseling was supported.

Regarding adherence to rules and regulations, the student representative reported:

During admission, they are given written copies of the rules and regulations, which are displayed throughout the school, including classrooms and noticeboards. The school recognizes and rewards discipline, recognizes and rewards exemplary performers, tracks individual performance, and encourages those who perform poorly. Principals work with parents on discipline issues, and the schools' installed CCTV is used to prevent theft and bullying. Disciplinary committees are effective, and student family meetings are always held. The school supports prefects and peer counselors, as well as prefects, and a suggestion box where complaints and suggestions are posted.

Another student had this to say:

Noise making, bullying, absenteeism, boy-girl relationships, bringing foodstuffs and electronics to school, exam malpractice, fighting, drug and substance abuse, failure to complete assignments, absconding classes, and lateness are all common disciplinary cases. The principal ensures that rules and regulations are followed by providing guidance, counseling, and utilizing peer counselors. Every year, the school's guidance and counseling department organizes counseling sessions for students and invites guest speakers. Weekly mass counseling sessions are always held, as are individual counseling sessions, with individual and collective follow-ups.

Where the counseling department was established, it was found to be an important institution in promoting good discipline in schools. One student had this to say:

Confidentiality is always maintained during peer counseling, and external counselors are brought in on a regular basis. Following counseling sessions, family unit meetings are used to discuss issues affecting students. Peer counseling is always used to maintain discipline, and peer counselors emphasize honesty and integrity in exams as extremely important issues. They teach us how to deal with family and school issues, as well as current societal issues and how to overcome them. They ask that we support one another in academics and extracurricular activities. Peer counselors meet with students individually or in groups and serve as a liaison between the student body and the guidance and counseling departments, with the assistance of the principal's office.

One student had the following confession on the issue of disciplinary management practices which he used to attest helps in student retention:

I was dealing with very serious family issues and did not know what to do. I used to be a slacker in class until one of my teachers noticed and encouraged me to speak up. I was then connected to guidance and counseling staff, who listened and understood me. I was rescued from severe psychological torture and felt loved, which made me appreciate my school. Some students view disciplinary measures and punishments as punitive, but they eventually come to value them. They later realize that strict adherence to school rules and regulations is so critical if they want to stay in school and complete their studies because those who understand and appreciate school rules and regulations are more likely to be retained than others.

During the interviews with the sub-county directors, the disciplinary practices critical in student retention were reported by one staff as follows:

Collaboration among teachers, parents, administrators, guidance and counseling departments, and peer counseling is critical to retaining students in schools because it assists in addressing many disciplinary issues that may arise. The participation of motivational speakers in discussions about medical and mental health issues and how students can manage them is also important in improving student retention. This is because students' mental and physical well-being is critical to their motivation to stay in school.

The above statement is consistent with that of Ilyasin (2019) and Dimovet al., (2017) findings on student retention and creation of a learner-friendly environment where teachers pay close attention to learners. The input from a sub-county director during the interviews provided valuable insights into the crucial disciplinary practices that contributed to student retention within educational institutions. The director emphasized the significance of collaboration among various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, administrators, guidance and counseling departments, and peer counseling. This collaborative approach was identified as essential for retaining students in schools because it effectively addressed a wide range of disciplinary issues that may arise. By working together, these parties could create a supportive and nurturing environment that assists students in overcoming challenges and obstacles, ultimately promoting their continued presence in the educational setting. The above

statement was consistent with that of Ilyasin (2019) findings on student retention and creation of a learner-friendly environment where teachers pay close attention to learners.

4.6.8 Correlations between Principals Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention

Table 22 shows the Pearson correlations between the principal's disciplinary practices and student retention.

Table 22: Correlations between Principals Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention

		Principals Disciplinary Practices	Student Retention
Principals Disciplinary Practices	Pearson	1	
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	87	
Student Retention	Pearson	.480**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	87	87

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

Source: Researcher 2023

The relationship between Principals' disciplinary practices and student retention was investigated using a Pearson product-moment correlation. Student retention and Principals' disciplinary practices had a moderately positive, statistically significant correlation ($r = 0.480^{**}$, $n = 87$, $p = 0.000$). The correlation between the two variables was significant and moderately positive ($r = 0.480^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). The correlation

coefficient of 0.480** indicates a moderately positive relationship between the two variables, implying that as the effectiveness of disciplinary practices improves, so does the student retention rate. This finding is consistent with the findings of Kaluku et al. (2020), who found that effective disciplinary practices are critical for promoting a positive school culture and lowering student dropout rates in Kenya. As a result, school principals must prioritize effective disciplinary practices in order to promote student retention and academic success. Further, several strategies can be used by Principals to improve disciplinary practices and promote student retention as established by Phiri (2022); Prasetyarini et al., (2020); Njangi (2019); Poolos (2019) and Awuor (2018).

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that effective disciplinary practices are critical for promoting student retention and academic success. By implementing fair and consistent policies that prioritize student support and positive reinforcement, schools can create a positive learning environment that encourages students to stay in school and succeed academically. School principals should prioritize effective disciplinary practices as a means of promoting student retention and academic success, and work closely with teachers, parents and other stakeholders to develop effective strategies for dealing with disruptive behavior.

4.5.4 Linear Regression analysis of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Student Retention

Table 23 provides the Model Summary for the examination of the influence of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Student Retention. The table outlines the key statistical parameters, including R (correlation coefficient), R Square (coefficient of determination), Adjusted R Square (adjusted coefficient of determination), and the

Standard Error of the Estimate. In this analysis, the predictor variable is Principals Disciplinary Practices. A significance level of 0.05 was used to assess the statistical significance of the relationship.

Table 23 : Model Summary for Principals Disciplinary Practices

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.480 ^a	.231	.222	.86657

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Disciplinary Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The Model Summary in Table 23 shows that the R Square value is 0.231, indicating that approximately 23.1% of the variance in Student Retention was explained by Principals Disciplinary Practices. The Adjusted R Square value, adjusted for the number of predictors, was slightly lower at 0.222, suggesting that while the model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance, there were some additional unexplained factors. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.480 indicated a moderately positive relationship between Principals Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention. This relationship was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), as implied by the R Square value and the given significance level. Therefore, the results suggested that there was a meaningful connection between the disciplinary practices of principals and the retention of students within the educational context being studied.

Table 24 presents the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to examine the impact of Principals' Disciplinary Practices on Student Retention. The

ANOVA is used to assess whether there is a statistically significant relationship between these variables. The test significance level was set at 0.05.

Table 24: ANOVA for Principals Disciplinary Practices

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.159	1	19.159	25.513	.000 ^b
	Residual	63.830	85	.751		
	Total	82.989	86			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Disciplinary Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The ANOVA results revealed a significant effect of Principals' Disciplinary Practices on student retention ($F = 25.513$, $p < 0.05$). The regression model explained a substantial portion of the variation in student retention ($R\text{-squared} = 0.230$). This implied that the Principals' Disciplinary Practices had a statistically significant impact on student retention. Principals with different disciplinary approaches were associated with varying levels of student retention, and this finding suggested that administrators should carefully consider their disciplinary methods to improve overall student retention rates. It is advisable to further explore the nature of these disciplinary practices and their specific influence on student outcomes.

Table 25 presents the beta coefficients for principal's disciplinary practices in the context of their impact on Student Retention. In this analysis, a regression model was used to examine the relationship between Principal's Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention. The table provides information on unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients (Beta), t-values, and their significance level (Sig.) to determine the

statistical significance of the relationship. A significance level of 0.05 was employed to test the results.

Table 25: Beta Coefficients for Principals Disciplinary Practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.073	.814		-.090	.929
Principals Disciplinary Practices	.936	.185	.480	5.051	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

Source: Researcher 2023

Table 25 shows that the Principals' Disciplinary Practices had a statistically significant impact on Student Retention ($p < 0.001$). The unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.936, and the standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.480. The positive Beta value indicated a positive relationship between the Principals' Disciplinary Practices and Student Retention. This meant that as Principals employed more effective disciplinary practices, there was a corresponding increase in Student Retention within the educational institution. The t-value of 5.051 suggested that this relationship was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, confirming the importance of disciplinary practices in influencing Student Retention. In practical terms, these results implied that educational institutions should focus on developing and implementing effective disciplinary strategies under the leadership of the principal to improve Student Retention rates.

The p-value for the disciplinary procedures of principals' students was 0.000, which was less than the 0.05 at the 95% level of significance. As a result, the third null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the disciplinary procedures of principals' students had a statistically significant impact on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. This finding was consistent with that of Urban et al. (2020); Owan and Agunwa (2019); and Liguluka and Onyango (2020). The third hypothesis, which rejected the null hypothesis related to principals' students' disciplinary practices, underscored the significance of maintaining a conducive and disciplined learning environment. Disciplinary practices, when applied effectively, contribute to social integration by promoting a sense of order and respect within the school, an essential aspect of Tinto's theory

4.6 Influence of Principals Financial Management Practices on Students Retention

In this section of the chapter, the results of the fourth objective, which examined the impact of principals' financial management practices on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya, are reported.

4.6.1 Responses on Principals' Financial Management Practices

This table presents the survey results on how various financial management practices of principals influence student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The data reflects the perceptions of both principals and teachers regarding several financial management strategies, including income-generating projects, community fund mobilization, awareness of bursaries and scholarships, collaboration with organizations for financial aid, and payment options for feeding programs. The following paragraphs interpret and discuss the results for each

statement, linking them to relevant literature on the impact of these practices on student retention.

Table 26: Descriptive statistics on Principals' Financial Management Practices

Statement	Category	SD F(%)	D F(%)	N F(%)	A F(%)	SA F(%)
The School has initiated income-generating projects to help needy students.	Principals	16 (18.4%)	17 (19.5%)	27 (31.0%)	15 (17.2%)	12 (13.8%)
	Teachers	59 (17.4%)	71 (20.9%)	94 (27.6%)	57 (16.8%)	59 (17.4%)
The School always organizes for mobilization of funds from the school community to support needy students.	Principals	6 (6.9%)	14 (16.1%)	18 (20.7%)	31 (35.6%)	18 (20.7%)
	Teachers	38 (11.2%)	75 (22.1%)	78 (22.9%)	85 (25.0%)	64 (18.8%)
The school ensures that parents and students are made aware of bursaries and scholarship opportunities.	Principals	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.1%)	5 (5.7%)	40 (46.0%)	41 (47.1%)
	Teachers	5 (1.5%)	7 (2.1%)	36 (10.6%)	149 (43.8%)	143 (42.1%)
The School liaises with various organizations and government agents for bursaries and scholarships.	Principals	1 (1.1%)	3 (3.4%)	7 (8.0%)	45 (51.7%)	31 (35.6%)
	Teachers	13 (3.8%)	20 (5.9%)	61 (17.9%)	122 (35.9%)	124 (36.5%)
The School always accepts payment for feeding programs in installments.	Principals	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.4%)	4 (4.6%)	24 (27.6%)	56 (64.4%)
	Teachers	4 (1.2%)	4 (1.2%)	35 (10.3%)	108 (31.8%)	189 (55.6%)
The School always accepts payment of feeding programs in kind.	Principals	0 (0.0%)	5 (5.7%)	9 (10.3%)	31 (35.6%)	42 (48.3%)
	Teachers	21 (6.2%)	20 (5.9%)	34 (10.0%)	123 (36.2%)	142 (41.8%)

N = 87 Principals and 340 Teachers

Source: Researcher 2023

The survey results show that 16 (18.4%) of principals and 59 (17.4%) of teachers strongly disagree that their schools have initiated income-generating projects. In contrast, 27 (31.0%) of principals and 94 (27.6%) of teachers agree that such projects have been started, while 15 (17.2%) of principals and 57 (16.8%) of teachers strongly agree. The remaining 12 (13.8%) of principals and 59 (17.4%) of teachers are neutral on this matter. These results suggest a mixed perception of the presence and effectiveness of income-generating projects. Mutuku (2020) supports that schools with active income-generating projects can significantly enhance student retention by addressing financial barriers, indicating that schools in Nakuru County may benefit from further development and implementation of these initiatives to improve student retention.

Empirical studies in Kenya have found that income-generating projects in schools can improve student retention rates, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This finding was consistent with Jepkoech and Ogoti's (2015) discovery that income-generating activities in schools could improve students' socioeconomic status while decreasing dropouts and absenteeism. Similarly, Kanyi et al. (2019) discovered that school-based income-generating projects could boost school retention rates, improve student learning outcomes, and promote community engagement and support. These studies suggested that initiatives to assist needy students in public secondary schools, such as income-generating projects, were critical for promoting equitable and inclusive education in Kenya.

According to the results, 6 (6.9%) of principals and 38 (11.2%) of teachers strongly disagree that their schools organize community fund mobilization. Conversely, 31

(35.6%) of principals and 85 (25.0%) of teachers agree that such mobilization occurs, while 18 (20.7%) of principals and 64 (18.8%) of teachers strongly agree. The rest, 14 (16.1%) of principals and 75 (22.1%) of teachers, are neutral. The high percentage of undecided responses also indicated that respondents lacked information about whether mobilization of funds from the school community indeed supported the needy students. The findings were in conformity with those of Ayegba (2020) which highlighted the need for innovative financing strategies that involved local communities. Another study by Kanyi et al. (2019) on the effect of bursaries on student retention in Kenyan secondary schools found that bursaries could greatly increase retention rates, but it also stressed the need for openness and accountability in the allocation of funding. Waweru (2019) highlights that schools engaging in community fund mobilization see improved student retention. This evidence suggests that while some schools actively involve the community, there may be a need for increased efforts and consistency in these activities to further support student retention.

The results reveal that no principals (0.0%) and 5 (1.5%) of teachers strongly disagree with the idea that schools ensure awareness of bursaries and scholarships. However, 40 (46.0%) of principals and 149 (43.8%) of teachers agree, with 41 (47.1%) of principals and 143 (42.1%) of teachers strongly agreeing. Only 1 (1.1%) of principals and 7 (2.1%) of teachers are neutral. That suggested that there was high level of awareness creation in the schools, which could potentially have contributed to retention rates for students. However, it is notable that a proportion of respondents (10.6% of teachers and 5.7% of principals) were undecided on the matter. That could indicate the respondents felt undecided about the schools' approach to communicating bursary and scholarship information. Additionally, a small percentage of respondents (1.1% of principals and

2.1% of teachers) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, which could imply a gap in the schools' efforts to address fee payment challenges.

While there was some level of awareness creation about bursaries and scholarships in the public day secondary schools in Nakuru County, the findings indicated that there was room for improvement in ensuring that all stakeholders were adequately informed. Given the link between financial constraints and student retention in secondary school, it was important for schools to prioritize and streamline their efforts in communicating available opportunities for financial support. The findings were consistent with those of Magero (2020), who emphasized the importance of making parents aware of bursaries and scholarships in the pursuit of increasing access to education and lowering dropout rates, particularly for vulnerable groups such as girls and students from low-income families. Njoroge (2021) underscores the importance of schools effectively communicating available financial aid opportunities to prevent dropouts due to financial constraints. The high agreement percentages indicate that schools in Nakuru County are generally successful in this aspect, contributing positively to student retention.

For this statement, 1 (1.1%) of principals and 13 (3.8%) of teachers strongly disagree, while 3 (3.4%) of principals and 20 (5.9%) of teachers disagree. On the other hand, 45 (51.7%) of principals and 122 (35.9%) of teachers agree, and 31 (35.6%) of principals and 124 (36.5%) of teachers strongly agree. The remaining responses are distributed among 7 (8.0%) of principals and 61 (17.9%) of teachers who are neutral. Bursaries and scholarships are important financial resources that enable students to be retained in school, especially those from humble background, and those with low income.

Therefore, schools that do not make an effort to inform parents and students about these opportunities may be contributing to lower rates of student retention.

In Kenya, empirical studies have demonstrated that having access to financial aid, such as bursaries and scholarships, can improve student retention rates. For instance, a 2019 study by Kipsang and Kibet discovered that bursaries significantly improved student retention in Kenyan secondary schools. Therefore, it is crucial that schools give priority to informing parents and students about grants and scholarships. Mwangi (2018) found that partnerships with organizations and government bodies significantly improve student retention by providing essential financial support. The results suggest that while many schools effectively collaborate with external entities, there is room for enhancement in these partnerships to maximize their impact on student retention.

The results indicate that 0 (0.0%) of principals and 4 (1.2%) of teachers strongly disagree with accepting installment payments for feeding programs. However, 24 (27.6%) of principals and 35 (10.3%) of teachers agree, with a significant 56 (64.4%) of principals and 108 (31.8%) of teachers strongly agreeing. The remaining respondents, 3 (3.4%) of principals and 4 (1.2%) of teachers, are neutral. Payment in installments may have an impact on student retention rates in Nakuru County's public day secondary schools. The availability of feeding programs is a critical factor influencing students' learning outcomes, retention rates, and completion rates. Payment in installments may alleviate the financial burden of school fees on parents, allowing more students to stay in school and complete their education. The findings were consistent with those of Bekidusa and Kisimbii (2020), who discovered that providing feeding programs in Kenyan schools had a positive impact on students' academic

performance, attendance, and retention rates. However, the authors noted that many schools face significant challenges due to a lack of funds to sustain the programs and inadequate infrastructure to support them.

In conclusion, while the majority of respondents agreed that their schools accepted installment payments for feeding programs. This could have aided in improving student retention rates in the county's public secondary schools. This practice likely played a positive role in enhancing student retention rates in public secondary schools within the county. By providing students and their families with the flexibility to pay for meal programs in installments, schools alleviated financial burdens and ensured that students had consistent access to nutritious meals. This, in turn, contributed to an environment conducive to learning and may have positively influenced student retention. Kimani (2019) found that installment payments for feeding programs effectively enhance student retention by reducing financial strain. The high percentages of agreement and strong agreement suggest that schools in Nakuru County are successfully implementing this flexible payment approach, which contributes positively to student retention.

Results show that 0 (0.0%) of principals and 21 (6.2%) of teachers strongly disagree with accepting in-kind payments for feeding programs. Additionally, 5 (5.7%) of principals and 20 (5.9%) of teachers disagree. In contrast, 31 (35.6%) of principals and 34 (10.0%) of teachers agree, while 42 (48.3%) of principals and 123 (36.2%) of teachers strongly agree. The remaining 9 (10.3%) of principals and 34 (10.0%) of teachers are neutral. Njuguna (2020) highlights that accepting in-kind payments for feeding programs helps improve student retention by accommodating families with limited cash resources. The high levels of agreement and strong agreement reflect a

positive approach among schools in Nakuru County towards including alternative payment methods, which supports the continued education of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Empirical studies in Kenya have found that income-generating projects in schools can improve student retention rates, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This finding was consistent with Jepkoech and Ogoti's (2015) discovery that income-generating activities in schools could improve students' socioeconomic status while decreasing dropouts and absenteeism. Similarly, Kanyi et al. (2019) discovered that school-based income-generating projects could boost school retention rates, improve student learning outcomes, and promote community engagement and support. These studies suggested that initiatives to assist needy students in public secondary schools, such as income-generating projects, were critical for promoting equitable and inclusive education in Kenya.

4.6.2 Descriptive Statistics for Principals Financial Management Practices

Using a five-point Likert scale, descriptive statistics were calculated for financial management practices-related statements made by principals. The scale was as follows: (1) Strongly agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly disagree. The findings are summarized in Table 27.

Table 27: Descriptive Statistics for Principals Financial Management Practices

	Principals Responses			Teachers Responses		
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
The school has initiated income generating projects to help the needy students.	87	2.89	1.29	340	2.96	1.33
The school always organizes for mobilization of funds from the school community to support the needy students to complete their studies.	87	3.47	1.19	340	3.18	1.28
The school ensures that parents and students are a made aware of bursaries and scholarship opportunities to support in fee payment.	87	4.39	0.65	340	4.23	0.83
The school liaises with the various organizations and government agents for provision of bursaries and scholarships to support students to complete their studies.	87	4.17	0.81	340	3.95	1.06
The school always accepts payment for feeding programmes in installments to enable students to stay in school.	87	4.53	0.74	340	4.39	0.81
The school always accepts payment of feeding programmes in kind to enable students to stay in school.	87	4.2644	.86884	340	4.01	1.15
Valid N (listwise)	87			340		

Source: Author, 2023

Table 27 provides a comprehensive overview of the descriptive statistics pertaining to the financial management practices in schools, as reported by both principals and

teachers. The table delves into various aspects of financial management, with a specific emphasis on initiatives aimed at supporting economically disadvantaged students and the responsible utilization of financial resources. One crucial aspect examined in the table was the initiation of income-generating projects to assist needy students. Principals, with a mean of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 1.29, demonstrate a moderate level of variability in their responses, indicating that, on average, such projects were indeed initiated to support underprivileged students. Teachers, on the other hand, reported a slightly higher mean of 2.9588 with a standard deviation of 1.32974, signifying a consensus regarding the presence of these projects, albeit with a somewhat wider range of responses.

Furthermore, the study investigated the school's efforts in organizing fundraising activities within the school community to aid needy students. Principals exhibited a higher mean of 3.47, with a standard deviation of 1.19, underscoring a moderate level of agreement on schools' commitment to organizing such fundraising efforts. In contrast, teachers, with a mean of 3.1824 and a standard deviation of 1.28147, also acknowledged these efforts, albeit with responses displaying slightly more variation. This finding contradicts Beatty Guenter's (1994) and AFMLTA's (2019) findings, which emphasized the importance of developing student support mechanisms for addressing students' needs and retaining them in schools.

Another critical practice explored was the school's communication with parents and students about available bursaries and scholarship opportunities to alleviate fee payments. Both principals and teachers reported high mean scores, with principals at 4.42 and a low standard deviation of 0.65, while teachers scored slightly lower with a

mean of 4.2294 and a standard deviation of 0.83101. These responses reflected a strong consensus within the school community that educational institutions actively informed stakeholders about financial aid options, thus facilitating the payment of fees. The findings also indicate that principals do a good job of informing parents and students about scholarships and bursaries, which is consistent with Musee's (2013) discovery of a significant correlation between bursary allocation and student performance, highlighting the importance of financial aid in education.

Moreover, the study also investigated the engagement of schools with external organizations and government agencies to secure bursaries and scholarships for students. Here, both principals and teachers indicated this as a positive practice, with principals scoring an average of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.81, while teachers average 3.9529 with a standard deviation of 1.06048. These responses underscored the active involvement of schools in seeking external financial support for their students. Awuor (2015) discovered that income-generating activities had a positive effect on school retention rates, emphasizing the importance of such actions. This study finding is also consistent with Mbuva (2011), who emphasized the value of involving stakeholders in supplying the necessary support for student success and retention.

The table also assessed the school's flexibility in accepting payment for feeding programs, both in installments and in kind, to ensure that financial constraints do not hinder students' ability to stay in school. On this front, both principals and teachers expressed a high level of agreement. Principals reported a mean of 4.53 and a standard deviation of 0.74, while teachers reported a mean of 4.3941 and a standard deviation of 0.81140. These findings emphasized that schools were accommodating students by

allowing payment in installments and in kind for feeding programs, further removing barriers to student retention. According to this finding, the majority of respondents agreed with the assertion. This finding agreed with that of Bekidusa and Kisimbii (2020), who discovered that payments for feeding programs made in kind by parents helped students stay in school longer.

The collective responses from both principals and teachers reflected a shared commitment to financial management practices geared toward supporting economically disadvantaged students and eliminating financial obstacles to their education. These practices encompassed income generation, fundraising efforts, transparent communication about financial aid opportunities, and flexibility in fee and feeding program payments. Such student-centric financial management practices contributed to the creation of a conducive learning environment that promoted student retention.

4.6.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

During interviews with students, financial management practices were explored, specifically with regard to other financial projects sponsored by donors besides parents, how the principal ensured needy students were retained in school, whether feeding programs helped retain needy students, and if financial management practices increased student retention. Various financial projects were identified, including Child Care, which pays school fees for needy students, provides uniforms, and personal effects for needy students. However, it was noted that few students were aware of such programs.

Family units exist in secondary schools purposely to help students share their issues and in some cases with individual teachers who sometimes provide financial and material assistance to needy students. This includes sanitary pads which are provided

for free to girls in nearly all day secondary schools, and which helps keep them in school and increased retention.

On whether the students were aware of any project that provided help to needy students, one student had this to say:

I am aware of the Young Life Project, which assists low-income students with lunch, books, and uniforms. There are also orphanages in Nakuru that sponsor students from various secondary schools. I am aware of government-sponsored programs such as constituency development funds and ward development funds, as well as corporate social responsibility programs such as Wings to Fly, Menengai Crater, Hells Gate, and Kenya Wildlife.

One student provided the following information:

The school assists needy students in a variety of ways, including retaining top performers with large school balances, offering flexible payment models such as installment payments, providing uniforms and stationery, and occasionally waiving lunch fees or providing food for needy students to take home.

When asked about the impact of feeding programs, one student noted:

Food in school was plenty and well-balanced compared to what I have at home and this increases my morale to attend classes on daily basis.

However, one student retorted that:

I am always demoralized because I cannot be allowed to eat lunch due to lack of payment as this school is too rigid on lunch fee payment.

Overall, the principals' management practices greatly influenced student retention in school, as evidenced by students' reasons for preferring their school, such as good food, good advice, good discipline, high performance, sacrifice by teachers, emphasis on spiritual growth, integrity, and leadership skills, moral support from teachers, a good and understanding principal, access to facilities not found in other schools, and financial support and nurturing of talents.

This result was in line with that of Maina and Kariuki (2021), who found that one of the main causes of students quitting school is parents' financial difficulties. It was also consistent with Ongige and Tikoko (2020) findings on sanitary pads, Wambugu and Oyugi's (2016) findings on flexible payment models, Bekidusa and Kisimbii's (2020) findings on feeding program management, and Mbiijiwe's (2013) findings on financial and material assistance to Isiolo students. Proper financial resource budgeting is critical to ensuring that resources are used for class and co-curricular activities, motivating learners to participate, and increasing retention. Adequate furniture and other teaching and learning resources are also required (Slanger et al., 2015). Principals can occasionally finance and support students' academic trips, enhancing their learning experience (Mbuva, 2011).

Maintenance of effective financial records is critical for ensuring school financial stability and encouraging stakeholder engagement in the school (Richard et al., 2019). Investing in school security and the security of learners, including protecting them against theft, is also important (Richard et al., 2019). Some schools have achieved this by installing CCTV surveillance cameras. Finally, having a flexible payment regime, including allowing parents to pay in installments or in kind, can also help students remain in school. When students were asked in what ways did the school's principal or administration provides financial support or assistance to students. They were asked to indicate how the financial support affected their decision to stay in school.

One student indicated:

The school offers scholarships to students who face financial difficulties, and I was fortunate to receive one. This financial support relieved the burden on my family, and it was a significant factor in my decision to stay in school.

Another student responded:

Our principal initiated a school-based work-study program that allowed students to work part-time within the school premises, earning a stipend to cover some of our expenses. This financial support has made it more feasible for me to continue my education.

The first student highlighted the provision of scholarships by the school to students facing financial difficulties, which significantly eased the financial burden on their family and played a crucial role in their ability to remain in school. The second student mentioned a school-based work-study program initiated by the principal, enabling students to work part-time on campus and earn a stipend to cover expenses, ultimately making it more feasible for them to pursue their education. These accounts underscored the importance of financial support in enhancing students' access to education and their decision to stay in school.

The SCDEs were asked to indicate to what extent principals provide financial support to students in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County. One SCDE stated;

Principals provide financial support to students through bursaries, scholarships, and sponsorship programs for needy students. This support significantly eases the financial burden on students and contributes to higher retention rates.

The response underscored the provision of financial support through various programs, acknowledging its positive impact on reducing financial barriers to education and, consequently, on student retention. The SCDEs were also asked to share examples of financial support initiatives that have positively influenced student retention in your sub-county. One SCDE stated:

Examples of financial support initiatives that have positively influenced student retention include sponsorship by local businesses, which cover school fees and additional resources for students in need.

The response provided specific examples of financial support initiatives, indicating that external sponsorships by local businesses have a positive influence on student retention by reducing financial barriers. The results highlight the significance of financial management practices and the impact they have on student retention. Various financial projects and support mechanisms were identified, such as scholarships, bursaries, sponsorship programs, work-study opportunities, and external sponsorships by local businesses. These practices significantly eased the financial burden on students, making education more accessible and ultimately contributing to higher student retention rates. The provision of school facilities, quality food, and flexible payment models also played a vital role in motivating students to stay in school. Notably, the availability of sanitary pads for girls was found to be an important factor in retaining female students.

These findings aligned with previous research demonstrating the importance of addressing financial barriers to education to enhance student retention. Adequate financial resource budgeting, effective financial record-keeping, and investment in school security and learners' security were identified as essential elements of financial management practices. The responses from both students and Sub County Directors of Education (SCDEs) collectively emphasize that well-implemented financial management practices significantly influence student retention, enabling them to access quality education with reduced financial obstacles.

4.6.4 Correlations between Principals Financial Management Practices and Average Student Retention

The results for the Pearson Correlations between Principals Financial Management practices and student retention were as provided in Table 28.

Table 28: Correlations between Principals Financial Management Practices and Student Retention

		Principals Financial Management Practices	Student Retention
Principals Financial Management Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	87	
Student Retention	Pearson Correlation	.360**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	87	87

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

Source: Researcher 2023

The correlation coefficient between Principals financial management practices and student retention is as indicated in Table 4.43. To investigate the relationship between Principals' financial management practices and student retention, a Pearson product-moment correlation was used. Student retention and Principals' financial management practices had a weak, positive correlation that was statistically insignificant ($r = 0.360^{**}$, $n = 87$, $p = 0.001$) at the 99% confidence level. This means that when principal finance management practices are applied, the student retention also positively improved.

4.6.5 Linear Regression analysis of Principals Financial Management Practices and Student Retention

Table 29 presents the model summary for the influence of Principals' Financial Management Practices on Student Retention. This table provides an overview of the statistical model used to examine the influence, including the coefficient of determination (R-squared) and related statistics.

Table 29: Model Summary for Principals Financial Management Practices

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.360 ^a	.130	.120	.92173

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Financial Management Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The R-squared value, which is 0.130, indicated that approximately 13% of the variance in student retention can be explained by Principals' Financial Management Practices. The adjusted R-squared value (0.120) adjusts for the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of the estimate (0.92173) reflects the variability in the data points around the regression line. The predictor in this model is Principals' Financial Management Practices. The results of this model suggested that there was a statistically significant influence of Principals' Financial Management Practices on Student Retention. However, the R-squared value of 0.130 indicated that these practices explain only a small proportion of the variance in student retention. Therefore, while financial management practices implemented by principals had an influence on student retention, other factors not accounted for in this model were likely to be influencing retention rates to a greater extent.

Table 30 presents the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to examine the influence of Principals' Financial Management Practices on Student Retention in an educational context. The table displays the model's sum of squares, degrees of freedom (df), mean square, F-statistic, and significance level (Sig.), which was set at 0.05. In this analysis, the dependent variable is Student Retention, and the predictor examined is Principals' Financial Management Practices. The table provides key statistical information to determine the significance of this relationship and its implications.

Table 30: ANOVA for Principals Financial Management Practices

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.774	1	10.774	12.681	.001 ^b
	Residual	72.215	85	.850		
	Total	82.989	86			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Financial Management Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The results from the ANOVA indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship ($F(1, 85) = 12.681, p = 0.001$) between Principals' Financial Management Practices and Student Retention. The regression model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in student retention ($R\text{-squared} = 0.130$). This implied that the financial management practices implemented by school principals had a meaningful influence on student retention rates. Principals who demonstrated effective financial management practices contributed to a higher likelihood of students staying in school, potentially through resource allocation, program development, or other strategies. These findings

suggested that educational institutions should consider the financial competence of their leadership when striving to improve student retention rates.

Table 31 presents the results of a study examining the influence of principals' financial management practices on student retention. The table displays the beta coefficients, which reflect the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent variable, "Principals Financial Management Practices," and the dependent variable, "Student Retention." The significance level for this analysis is set at 0.05.

Table 31: Beta Coefficients for Principals Financial Management Practices

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.051	.559		3.665	.000
	Principals Financial Management Practices	.505	.142	.360	3.561	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

Source: Researcher 2023

The results in Table 31 indicate a statistically significant relationship between principals' financial management practices and student retention. The unstandardized coefficient for "Principals Financial Management Practices" is 0.505 ($p = 0.001$), which suggests that for every one-unit increase in financial management practices, there is a 0.505 unit increase in student retention, holding all other variables constant. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.360 indicated that financial management practices had a moderate positive effect on student retention. This result implied that schools

with principals who exhibited strong financial management practices were more likely to experience higher student retention rates. Principals and school administrators should consider the importance of sound financial management in their decision-making processes to improve student outcomes and promote educational success.

The p-value associated with principals' students' financial support practices was 0.000, which was less than the test significance level of 0.05, at 95% level of significance. As a result, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected, implying that principals' student financial support practices had a statistically significant influence on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. In conclusion, the significant correlation between Principals financial management practices and student retention in Table 31 suggests that financial management practices alone may be sufficient to improve student retention rates. Future studies should consider a more comprehensive approach that considers a broader range of variables that could influence student retention rates in Kenyan schools. This resonates with a study by Mbiyiwe (2013) that found that while principals had programs in place to enhance retention, factors such as financial constraints and tribal animosity negatively influenced retention.

4.6.6 Summary of Descriptive and Correlations Analyses

Summaries of descriptive and correlations are indicated in Table 32 and figure 3 respectively.

Table 32: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Principals Mentorship Practices	87	4.1667	.69327	.481
Principals Motivation Practices	87	4.3410	.53610	.287
Principals Disciplinary Practices	87	4.3659	.50448	.254
Principals Financial Management Practices	87	3.8819	.70069	.491
Student Retention	87	4.0115	.98234	.965
Valid N (listwise)	87			

Source Researcher 2023

Table 32 above shows the extent to which the respondents agreed on the extent to which different principals' management practices contributed to student retention. In order of agreement, principals' disciplinary practices had the highest mean followed by principals motivational practices, principals mentorship practices and lastly by principals management practices respectively. A summary of the correlations between the independent and dependent variables was as provided in Figure 3.

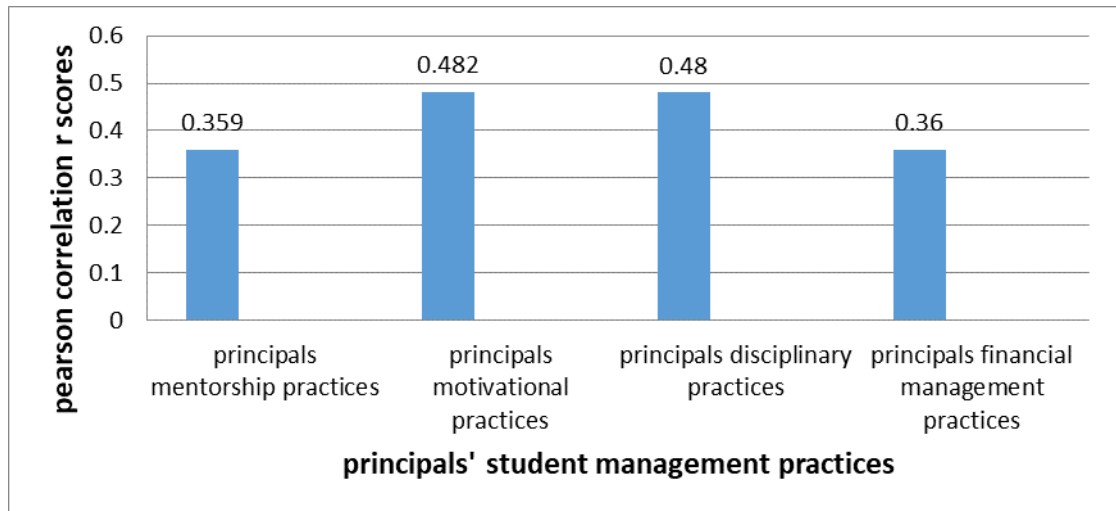


Figure 3: A comparison of Correlations between Principals' Student Management Practices, and Student Retention

Source: Researcher 2023

The graph shows the summary of the correlations between the principal management practices and student retention. The results showed that principal management practices were positively correlated with student retention. However, principals' disciplinary practices had the highest correlation with student retention followed by motivational practices, principals financial and mentorship practices respectively. In summary, these findings supported Tinto's theory by demonstrating that various practices employed by principals, such as mentorship, motivation, discipline, and financial support, played a significant role in enhancing both social and academic integration, thereby positively impacting student retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

4.8 Multiple Regression Analyses

In order to ascertain the correlation between the independent and dependent variables, multiple regression analysis was employed. The results are reported in this section on Principals' mentorship practices, motivational practices, disciplinary practices, financial management practices, on student retention were all investigated variables; they were all independent variables.

4.8.1 Model Summary

This section presents the model summary for the multiple regressions.

Table 33: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.554a	.307	.274	.83723

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Financial Management Practices, Principals Mentorship Practices, Principals Disciplinary Practices, Principals Monitoring Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The multiple regression analysis yielded several results that are relevant to this study. The correlation coefficient or R-value of 0.554 indicates a moderately positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The independent variables explain 30.7% of the variance in student retention, according to the R-squared value of 0.307. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.274 indicates that the model has been adjusted for the number of independent variables and that the independent variables explain 27.4% of the variance in student retention. The standard

error of the estimate was 0.83723, which means that the actual values of student retention are likely to be within +/- 0.83723 of the predicted values.

The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between the independent variables and student retention, as evidenced by the p-value of less than 0.05. The findings suggest that effective mentorship, monitoring, disciplinary, and financial management practices by principals can create conducive environment for students to learn and thrive. The positive school culture created through effective leadership practices can promote student retention. The findings of this study are in line with earlier studies that established a beneficial relationship between principals' effective leadership techniques and students' academic progress. The analysis also revealed the value of sound financial management procedures in assuring the availability of materials for instruction and learning, which can enhance student retention.

This study used multiple regression analysis to investigate the association between a variety of independent variables and student retention. The capacity of the independent variables to influence the dependent variable was used to choose them. The data demonstrated a significant positive link between the independent variables and student retention, suggesting that good leadership strategies can help in this quest. The findings are consistent with previous research and emphasize the importance of effective leadership in creating a positive school culture that promotes student retention. The findings of this study were consistent with those of an empirical study conducted in Kenya by Ongige et al. (2020), which discovered that effective principal leadership practices such as mentorship, monitoring, and disciplinary practices were positively associated with student academic achievement. The study also revealed that financial

management practices were crucial in ensuring the availability of resources for teaching and learning, which could ultimately lead to improved student retention.

These findings imply that effective principal mentoring, monitoring, disciplinary, and financial management practices can help students learn and thrive. When principals provide guidance and support to their staff, monitor student progress, enforce discipline when necessary, and manage resources effectively, they can create a positive school culture that promotes student retention. These findings provide a relevant context for the regression analysis carried out in this study, which sought to establish the relationship between the independent variables, such as principals' mentorship practices, monitoring practices, disciplinary practices, and financial management practices, and the dependent variable, student retention.

4.8.2 Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)

The findings concerning the analysis of variances are provided in Table 34.

Table 34: Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	25.510	4	6.378	9.098	.000 ^b
	Residual	57.478	82	.701		
	Total	82.988	86			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals Financial Management Practices, Principals Mentorship Practices, Principals Disciplinary Practices, Principals Monitoring Practices

Source: Researcher 2023.

The provided ANOVA table displays the variance analysis for a linear regression model used to predict day secondary school student retention based on four predictor variables: Principals' Financial Management Practices, Principals' Mentorship Practices, Principals' Disciplinary Practices, and Principals' Motivational Practices. The ANOVA table displays the sums of squares, degrees of freedom, mean squares, F statistic, and significance level. The one-way ANOVA was used as an omnibus test of significance in the linear regression analysis, testing the null hypothesis that all of the regression coefficients in the model are equal to zero, indicating that the predictors were useful in predicting the dependent variable (Maina, 2021). The null hypothesis is that all of the regression coefficients in the model are equal to zero, while the alternative hypothesis is that at least one of the regression coefficients in the model is not equal to zero. The level of significance for this hypothesis is 5%.

The F statistic obtained from the ANOVA table is 9.098, while the appropriate F critical value at 5% level of significance for the numerator degrees of freedom of 4 and denominator degrees of freedom of 82. The null hypothesis was rejected because the F statistic was greater than the F critical value, and it was concluded that there was a significant linear relationship between the dependent variable and at least one predictor variable. The p-value for the F statistic was .000, which was less than the 5% level of significance and this, provided strong evidence that the predictors had a significant linear relationship with the dependent variable as a whole. The findings suggest that the quality of school principals' financial management practices, mentorship practices, disciplinary practices, and motivational practices are important factors in determining student retention rates. Further analysis can be conducted to identify the specific

predictors that are most influential in predicting student retention rates, and to investigate the direction and magnitude of these relationships. The results suggest that the identified practices of the school principals can have a positive impact on student retention rates. For example, effective financial management practices could ensure that the school has the necessary resources to support student needs and address any challenges that may arise. Mentorship practices can help students develop a sense of belonging and provide support for academic and personal growth. Disciplinary practices can ensure that students adhere to school rules and regulations, leading to a safer and more productive learning environment. Motivational practices can help identify potential issues and provide timely interventions to address them.

In the Kenyan context, there have been concerns about high dropout rates and low student retention in schools (Orodho et al., 2013). This study delves into the factors that can help improve student retention rates, which can have a big impact on academic outcomes and individual success. Future research could look into the effectiveness of specific practices in different school settings, as well as ways to support and improve their implementation.

4.3 Beta Coefficients

The Beta Coefficients concerning regression outputs are presented in Table 35.

Table 35: Beta Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.187	.871		-1.363	.177
	Principals Mentorship Practices	.111	.157	.079	.711	.479
	Principals Motivational Practices	.477	.236	.260	2.023	.046
	Principals Disciplinary Practices	.534	.228	.274	2.337	.022
	Principals Financial Management Practices	.085	.165	.061	.518	.606

a. Dependent Variable: Student Retention

b. Independent Variable: Selected Principal's Student Management Practices

Source: Researcher 2023

The following are the values for regression weight

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where,

Y = Student retention

β_0 = Constant term (predicted value of dependent variable if the composite of independent variable (principals' management practices) is zero

β_1 = Contributions of principals' mentorship practices on retention of students

β_2 = Contributions of principals' motivational practices on retention of students

β_3 = Contributions of principals' disciplinary practices on retention of students

β_4 = Contributions of principals' financial support practices on retention

X_1 = Principals' mentorship practices

X_2 = Principals' motivational practices

X_3 = Principals' disciplinary practices

X_4 = Principals' financial support practices

ϵ = Standard error (other variables that may affect retention of students but are not included in the model and was assumed not to interfere with student retention e.g. Government Policies)

Based on the regression model, the estimation model can be stated as follows

$$Y = 1.187 + 0.111X_1 + 0.477X_2 + 0.534X_3 + 0.085X_4 + \epsilon$$

Since the constant value in the model was significant and standardized coefficients beta scores rather than unstandardized B-coefficients are utilized, and all independent variables had identical (Likert) scales. The regression results are shown in Table 4.52, together with the beta coefficients for each independent variable. The beta coefficient estimates the variation in the dependent variable linked to a one-unit increase in the independent variable while correcting for the other independent variables in the equation.

The results indicated that principals' motivational and disciplinary practices were significantly related to student retention. The beta coefficient for principals' motivational practices was 0.477, indicating that for each one-unit increase in principals' motivational practices; there was a 0.477 unit increase in student retention. Similarly, the beta coefficient for principals' disciplinary practices was 0.534, suggesting that for each one-unit increase in principals' disciplinary practices, there was

a 0.534 unit increase in student retention. The beta coefficient for principals' mentorship practices, on the other hand, was insignificant ($p = 0.479$), indicating that there was no significant relationship between this variable and student retention. The beta coefficient for principals' financial management practices was also non-significant ($p = 0.606$), indicating that this variable had no effect on student retention.

It is worth noting that the model's constant value (-1.187) was significant. This means that even if none of the independent variables were present, there would be a significant prediction of the dependent variable. The standardized coefficients (beta) were used in the analysis because all independent variables had identical (Likert) scales, allowing for a comparison of the relative importance of the independent variables in predicting the dependent variable. The findings show that principals' motivational and disciplinary practices are significantly related to student retention. Specifically, for each one-unit increase in principals' motivational practices, there is a 0.477 unit increase in student retention, while for each one-unit increase in principals' disciplinary practices, there is a 0.534 unit increase in student retention.

These findings are consistent with previous research conducted in Kenya, such as Philemon and Mkulu (2020) revealed that principals' motivational and disciplinary practices are important predictors of student retention. Similarly, Kamundi (2021) explored the factors impacting the retention of students in Nakuru County, Kenya secondary schools. The author found that disciplinary practices were one of the factors that significantly influenced student retention. The author recommended that school administrators should ensure that disciplinary practices are enforced effectively to improve student retention.

These findings suggest that the importance of motivational and disciplinary practices in promoting student retention is not limited to a specific location or context but is applicable in different settings. The fact that motivational practices help to create a positive school climate, which has been linked to higher levels of student engagement and achievement, explains the positive relationship between principals' motivational practices and student retention. Motivational practices may also help to identify at-risk students early and provide appropriate interventions to help them complete their education. Similarly, the positive relationship between principals' disciplinary practices and student retention can be explained by effective disciplinary practices contributing to the creation of a safe learning environment for all students. Disciplinary practices also help to reinforce school rules and expectations, which can help to reduce disruptive behavior (Mudanyi et al., 2022).



The study findings suggest that school principals should focus on improving their motivational and disciplinary practices in order to increase student retention rates. This could involve strategies such as providing regular feedback to teachers, setting clear expectations for student behavior, and implementing effective disciplinary procedures. School leaders should also ensure that these practices are consistently enforced to create a positive school climate and promote student engagement and achievement. The findings of the regression evaluation also demonstrate that principals' motivating and disciplinary policies are important predictors of student retention. The results suggest that school leaders should prioritize improving their motivational and disciplinary practices to enhance student retention rates and promote a positive schooling climate.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the study's summary, conclusions, and recommendations. The purpose of the study was to see how principals' student management practices affected learner retention in Nakuru County public day secondary schools. The chapter also contains suggestions, and recommendations for future research.

The objectives of this study were to:

- i) Determine the influence of principals' student mentorship practices on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.
- ii) Establish the influence of principals' student motivational practices on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.
- iii) Determine the influence of principals' student disciplinary practices on students' retention in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County.
- iv) Establish the influence of principals' student financial support practices on students' retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County.

5.2 Summary of the Result Findings

This section presents the summary of the findings analyzed, presented and discussed in chapter four. The summary is presented systematically according to the order of the study purposes.

5.2.1 Influence of Principals' Student Mentorship Practices on Students' Retention

The first objective sought to determine the influence of Principals mentorship practices on student retention on public day secondary schools in Nakuru county-Kenya. The findings of the study reveal a statistically significant positive influence of principals' mentorship practices on student retention in public secondary schools in Nakuru County. Specifically, orientation management practices received strong support, with majority of the principals and teachers agreeing that student orientation aids in acclimatization to school routines. Additionally, the respondents affirmed that the introduction of departmental staff during student orientation assisted in meeting departmental expectations. Regarding career guidance, majority of the principals and teachers supported the orientation for subject selection, indicating its importance in guiding career choices. Furthermore, both groups agreed significantly on the necessity of life skills training and mentorship practices, with majority of the respondents endorsing these initiatives as vital for creating a supportive educational environment.

Overall, the study underscored that effective mentorship practices implemented by principals significantly enhance student retention rates, emphasizing the necessity for structured mentoring initiatives within educational institutions as a vital strategy for supporting students both academically and socially. The correlation coefficient between Principals' mentorship methods and student retention was statistically significant ($p = 0.001$); thus the null hypothesis was rejected.

5.2.2 Influence of Principals' Motivational Practices on Students' Retention

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of principals' motivational practices on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. The findings from the study indicate a strong consensus among principals and teachers regarding the effectiveness of various motivational practices in enhancing student retention in Nakuru County's public-day secondary schools. These included ensuring that learners are encouraged to actively participate in co-curricular activities, acknowledgment of students who excel in co-curricular activities, academic performance awards, academic advising, public acknowledgment of good behavior and the assignment of responsibilities to well-behaved students. The $r = 0.482$ correlation coefficient between Principals' motivational activities and student retention demonstrated a significant link with a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) at the 95% level of significance. The positive beta value (0.482) and its statistical significance ($p = 0.001$) indicated that principal motivational practices were related with improved student retention rates; thus the null hypothesis was rejected.

5.2.3 Influence of Principals' Students' Disciplinary Practices on Students' Retention

The third objective was to look into the influence of principals' disciplinary practices and student retention. The analysis of principals' disciplinary practices in relation to student retention in Nakuru County's public-day secondary schools reveals notable insights. Regarding the involvement of learners in setting school rules, majority of the respondents did not agree with this practice. The distribution of school rules during admission saw strong support, with both groups of respondents strongly agreeing. Regular guidance and counseling sessions were also affirmed by majority of the

respondents. Support for peer counseling, effective communication with parents about disciplinary issues, and involving parents in serious disciplinary matters were equally endorsed by majority of the respondents.

These findings indicate that while most disciplinary practices are positively viewed and contribute to student retention, there is variability in implementation and perception, especially concerning student involvement in rule-setting. The p-value for the correlation coefficient between Principals' disciplinary practices and student retention was 0.000 ($p < 0.01$), indicating a significant link at the 99% level of significance. The third null hypothesis, which indicated that there was no significant association between principals' disciplinary practices and student retention, was thus rejected.

5.2.4 Influence of Principals' Students Financial Support Practices on Students' Retention

The fourth objective investigated the influence of Principals' financial management practices on student retention. Both Principals' and Teachers disagreed that the schools had initiated income-generating projects to help needy students. However, if there were activities to mobilize funds from the school community to assist needy students in completing their studies, both the Principals and Teachers were neutral. However, both principals' and teachers' agreed that parents and students were made aware of the existence of bursaries and scholarship opportunities to support fee payment; schools liaised with the various organizations and government agents for the provision of bursaries and scholarships to support students to complete their studies; fee for school feeding programs could be paid in kind to enable students to stay in school; and payment for school feeding programs could be in installments.

When all other variables were held constant, the correlation between principals' financial management practices and student retention produced an unstandardized coefficient of 0.505 ($p = 0.001$). As a consequence, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that principals' practices regarding student financial support had a statistically significant influence on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools.

5.3 Conclusions

The study found that principals' student mentorship practices influenced student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. This meant that mentorship programmes were effective in increasing student retention rates, highlighting the need for additional research to identify more effective mentorship practices that address specific student needs, such as life skills, orientation, and career development guidance, in order to improve student retention rates. According to the findings of the study, principals' student motivational practices had a positive and statistically significant influence on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. The majority of principals, on the other hand, had implemented effective student motivational practices in their schools.

The study also indicates in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County, principals' management practices, including their use of disciplinary measures, had a statistically significant and positive influence on student retention. Principals at most schools routinely involve parents and students in disciplinary matters, which is the most notable reason. The study shows that the financial practices of principals' students'

management practices had a positive relationship and statistically significant influence on student retention in Nakuru County public-day secondary schools. This was despite the majority of public secondary schools not having income-generating projects to assist poor students. In some schools, parents and students were not made aware of bursaries and scholarship opportunities to support in fee payment. A majority of the public schools always accepted payment for feeding programmes in installments to enable students to stay in school.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations were made.

5.4.1 Recommendations for practice

- i. School principals and teachers should implement targeted mentorship programs that address specific student needs, including life skills, orientation, and career development guidance, tailored specifically to enhance student retention rates.
- ii. To foster a supportive and motivating learning environment, principals and teachers should continue to employ effective motivational strategies, such as recognizing and rewarding students for their achievements in both co-curricular activities and academics, thereby encouraging sustained student engagement and retention.
- iii. It is essential for principals and teachers to uphold effective disciplinary practices, actively involving students and parents in the process to create a positive school culture that supports student retention through shared accountability.

- iv. School principals should seek to initiate income-generating projects, increase awareness of available bursaries and scholarships, and offer flexible payment options for school feeding programs to alleviate financial barriers and promote student retention.

5.4.2 Recommendations for policy

- i. Given the significant influence of mentorship practices on student retention, school authorities should consider revising mentorship programs in public-day secondary schools in Nakuru County. This revision should focus on creating more effective mentorship programs that address students' specific needs, such as life skills, orientation, and career development guidance, which can contribute to improving student retention rates.
- ii. The study revealed that motivational practices significantly influence student retention. Therefore, school authorities should encourage and support principals in implementing effective motivational practices in schools, such as rewarding students for good behavior and co-curricular achievements. This can help create a more supportive and motivating learning environment, ultimately enhancing student retention.
- iii. Disciplinary practices, including involving students and parents in disciplinary issues, showed a significant impact on student retention. Educational authorities should promote these practices and encourage schools to maintain open communication channels with parents and guardians to address disciplinary matters effectively. This will foster a positive learning environment and support student retention.

- iv. With financial management practices showing a significant effect on student retention, it is crucial for authorities to advocate for initiatives that financially support needy students, including encouraging schools to start income-generating projects, disseminating information about bursaries and scholarships, and offering flexible payment options for essential programs, thereby reducing financial barriers to education and enhancing retention.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

The following are some researchable ideas based on the findings of this study:

- i) A study comparing the impact of principal mentorship practices on student retention in private and public secondary schools.
- ii) Examination into the aspects that can help principals' motivational strategies in improving secondary school student retention.
- iii) An examination into the relationship between guidance and counseling in schools and secondary school student retention.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I:

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Elsie Njambi, a post graduate (PhD) student in Mount Kenya University. I am conducting a research study to **assess the influence of principals' management practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County**. Through the random sampling method, you have been selected to participate in this study. The information you will provide was strictly used only for the academic purposes of this study and your identity will not be disclosed anywhere whatsoever. The responses you will provide was analyzed, used in study reports and publications as part of the research requirement. If you require any clarifications about any of the contents in this letter kindly feel free to ask.

I thank you in advance for participating in this research.

Yours faithfully,

Elsie Nyaga

Telephone Number -0721656265

Email: enyaga@gmail.com

APPENDIX II:

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND SUB-COUNTY DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION

Please read and complete this form carefully. If you are willing to participate in this study, tick the appropriate responses and sign and date the declaration at the end. If you do not understand anything and would like more information, please ask.

1. I have had the research satisfactorily explained to me in verbal and/or written form by the researcher. YES / NO
2. I have understood the purpose of the study YES/ NO
3. I understand that I may withdraw from this study at any time without having to give an explanation. YES / NO
4. I understand that all information about me was treated in strict confidence and that I will not be named in any written work arising from this study. YES / NO
5. I understand that any responses and confidential information I give was used solely for research purposes. YES / NO

If you wish to ask questions pertaining, the study or the findings of the study contact the researcher through enyaga97@yahoo.com or cell phone: 0721656265. Should you want to make any complain freely contact;

The Chairman Ethical Review Committee,
P. O. BOX 342-1000 Thika.

I freely give my consent to participate in this research study and have been given a copy of this form for my own information.

Participant's signature..... Date.....

Researcher' signature Date.....

APPENDIX III:

CHILDS' CONSENT

Researcher's name: Elsie NjambiNyaga

Title of the Study: "Influence of Principals' Student Management Practices on Students' Retention in Public Day Secondary Schools in Nakuru County".

Kindly read the consent form to be well informed and tick the appropriate choice before you confirm your participation by signing.

1. The researcher has fully explained to me about the research both verbally and in written.
Yes () No ()
2. I understand that the study is on "Influence of Principals' Student Management Practices on Students' Retention in Public Day Secondary Schools in Nakuru County." Yes () No ()
3. I do acknowledge that the researcher will keep the information I will give confidential and my name will not be associated with the results of this study.
Yes () No ()
4. I understand that I have the freedom to refuse to attend to any questions asked if not comfortable.
Yes () No ()
5. I also understand that my contribution in this study is completely voluntary, and thus I have the freedom to withdraw from this study at any time I feel so.
Your child's

I therefore append my signature to give the researcher my consent to take part in this study and acknowledge the issuance of this copy for my personal record.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX IV:

PARENT'S / GUARDIAN'S CONSENT FORM

My name is Elsie Njambi and I am a PhD student at Mount Kenya University. This form is seeking permission to allow your child participate in the research to be conducted for my PhD at Mount Kenya University on the title **“Influence of Principals’ Student Management Practices on Students’ Retention in Public Day Secondary Schools in Nakuru County”**. Data obtained was given the utmost confidentiality and computed data was securely stored. Your child’s responses was made anonymous and no part of the findings of this study was linked to him/her, but was used purposely for the researcher’s thesis. Your child will also have the freedom to refuse to attend any questions asked if not comfortable.

Your child’s contribution in this study is completely voluntary, and thus he/she has freedom to withdraw from this study at any time he/she feel so.

If you wish to ask questions pertaining, the study or the findings of the study contact the researcher through enyaga97@yahoo.com or cell phone: 0721656265. Should you want to make any complain freely contact;

The Chairman Ethical Review Committee,
P. O. BOX 342-1000 Thika.

Thank you.

Signing here therefore, is your consent to allow your child participate in the study, but she / he have the right to withdraw at any time.

Parent’s / Guardian’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’ signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX V:

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

This questionnaire is developed to help in obtaining data for the study on” **Influence of Principal’s Student Management Practices on Student Retention in Public Day Secondary Schools in Nakuru County**”. The information you will provide shall be treated with the highest-level of confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose other than for the research study only. You are not required to indicate your name anywhere in this questionnaire

Kindly respond to the questions in this questionnaire with as much openness as possible by ticking where applicable and provide requested information appropriately as instructed.

SECTION A

Part I: Demographic Information

Please tick appropriately

1. How many years have served as principal in your current school?

- (a) 4-5 () (b) 6-10 ()
(c) 11-15 () (d) 16 and above ()

SECTION B

2. How would you rate the average student retention in your school?

NB: Retention will involve the students who enrolled in form one and completed form four in your school without disruption.

Below 20%	21%-40%	41%-60%	61%-80%	81% and above
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SECTION C

Influence of Principals Mentorship Practices on Students Retention

3. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on student mentorship practices in your school using the following scale

- Strongly Agree 5
Agree 4
Undecided 3
Disagree 2
Strongly disagree 1

Aspects of students mentorship practices		5	4	3	2	1
a	The School always conducts orientation for new students to familiarize with the school routine.					
b	The school always introduces staff from various departments who guide the students on the expectations of the department					
c	The school supports orientation for subject selection to guide students on career choices					
d	Professional speakers are always invited during career days to motivate students to pursue their career choices.					
e	The School always supports life skills training to create an enabling environment for students to stay in school.					
f	The School ensures that students are equipped with skills to enable them integrate into the society after completing their studies.					

SECTION D

Influence of Principals Motivation Practices on Students Retention

4. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on student motivation practices in your school using the following scale

- Strongly Agree 5
 Agree 4
 Undecided 3
 Disagree 2
 Strongly disagree 1

Aspects of principals' students motivation practices		5	4	3	2	1
A	The school ensures that learners are encouraged to actively participate in co-curricular activities.					
B	Students who excel in co-curricular activities are always rewarded.					
C	The School always awards students with exemplary academic performance.					
D	The School regularly organizes sessions to advise students on academic performance.					
F	Students with good behaviour are always acknowledged openly					
G	The School always assigns responsibilities to students with good behaviour.					

SECTION E

Influence of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Students Retention

5. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on student discipline practices in your school using the following scale

- Strongly Agree 5
 Agree 4
 Undecided 3
 Disagree 2
 Strongly disagree 1

Aspects of principals' students discipline practices		5	4	3	2	1
a	Learners are always involved in setting of school rules and regulations					
b	During admission students are always given copies of school rules and regulations					
c	The School always organizes guidance and counselling sessions for students with social problems.					
d	The School supports peer counselling in helping to solve student issues all the time					
e	The School reports and informs parents and guardians on students disciplinary issues regularly					
f	Parents and guardians are always invited to school to discuss amicable solutions when a student is involved in a serious disciplinary issue.					

SECTION F

Influence of Principals Financial Management Practices on Students Retention

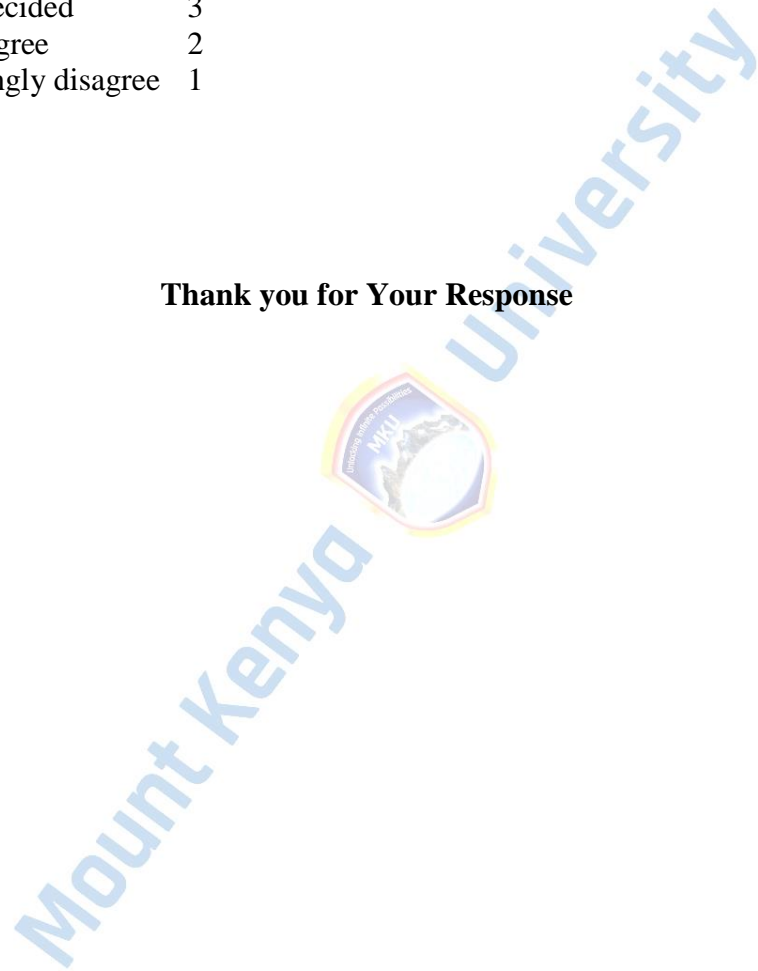
6. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on student financial practices in your school using the following scale

Aspects of principals' financial management practices		5	4	3	2	1
a	The School has initiated income generating projects to help the needy students.					
b	The School always organizes for mobilization of funds from the school community to support the needy students to complete their studies.					
c	The school ensures that parents and students are a made aware of bursaries and scholarship opportunities to support in fee payment.					

d	The School liases with the various organizations and government agents for provision of bursaries and scholarships to support students to complete their studies.					
e	The School always accepts payment for feeding programmes in installments to enable students to stay in school					
f	The School always accepts payment of feeding programmes in kind to enable students to stay in school.					

Strongly Agree 5
 Agree 4
 Undecided 3
 Disagree 2
 Strongly disagree 1

Thank you for Your Response



**APPENDIX VI:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

This questionnaire is developed to help in obtaining data for the study on” **Influence of Principal’s Student Management Practices on Student Retention in Public Day Secondary Schools in Nakuru County**”. The information you will provide shall be treated with the highest-level of confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose other than for the research study only. You are not required to indicate your name anywhere in this questionnaire

Kindly respond to the questions in this questionnaire with as much openness as possible by ticking where applicable and provide requested information appropriately as instructed.

SECTION A

Part 1; Demographic Information

Please tick appropriately

1. How many years have served as teacher in your current school?

- (a) 4-5 () (b) 6-10 ()
(c) 11-15 () (d) 16 and above ()

2. At what level do students select subjects?

- Form 1 () Form 2 () Form 3 () Form 4()

SECTION B

Principal’s management practices on students’ retention Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on influence of principals’ student mentorship practices on student retention using the following scale

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Strongly Agree | 5 |
| Agree | 4 |
| Undecided | 3 |
| Disagree | 2 |
| Strongly disagree | 1 |

Aspects of principals' students mentorship practices		5	4	3	2	1
a	The Principal ensures orientation is conducted for new students to familiarize with the school routine.					
b	The principal always introduces staff from various departments who guide the students on the expectations of the department					
c	The principal always supports orientation for subject selection to guide students on career choices					
d	The Principal invites professional speakers always during career to motivate students to pursue certain careers					
e	The Principal always supports life skills training to create an enabling environment for students to stay in school.					
f	The principal ensures that students are equipped with skills to enable them integrate into the society.					

SECTION C

Influence of Principals Motivation Practices on Students Retention

4. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on influence of principals' student motivation practices on student retention using the following scale

Strongly Agree 5

Agree 4

Undecided 3

Disagree 2

Strongly disagree 1

Aspects of principals' students motivation practices		5	4	3	2	1
A	The Principal always encourages learners to actively participate in co-curricular activities.					
B	Students who excel in co-curricular activities are always rewarded in this school.					
C	The Principal always awards students with exemplary academic performance.					
D	The Principal regularly organizes sessions to advise students on academic performance.					

F	The Principal ensures that students with good behaviour are openly acknowledged					
G	The Principal always assigns responsibilities to students with good behaviour.					

SECTION D

Influence of Principals Disciplinary Practices on Students Retention

5. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on influence of principals' student discipline practices on student retention using the following scale

- Strongly Agree 5
 Agree 4
 Undecided 3
 Disagree 2
 Strongly disagree 1

Aspects of principals' students discipline practices		5	4	3	2	1
a	The principal always involves learners in setting school rules and regulations in this school					
b	The Principal ensures that students are given copies of school rules and regulations during admission					
c	The Principal always organizes guidance and counselling sessions for students with social problems.					
d	The Principal supports peer counselling in helping to solve student issues all the time					
e	The Principal reports and informs parents and guardians on students disciplinary issues regularly					
f	The Principal always invites parents and guardians to school to discuss amicable solutions when a student is involved in a serious disciplinary issue.					

SECTION E

Influence of Principals Financial Management Practices on Students Retention

6. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on influence of principals' student financial practices on student retention using the following scale

Strongly Agree	5
Agree	4
Undecided	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Aspects of principals' financial management practices		5	4	3	2	1
A	The Principal has initiated income generating projects to help the needy students.					
B	The Principal always organizes for mobilization of funds from the school community to support the needy students to complete their studies.					
C	The Principal ensures that parents and students are made aware of bursaries and scholarship opportunities to support in fee payment.					
D	The Principal liaises with the various organizations and government agents for provision of bursaries and scholarships to support students to complete their studies.					
E	The Principal always accepts payment for feeding programmes in installments to enable students to stay in school					
F	The principal always accepts payment of feeding programmes in kind to enable students to stay in school.					

Thank you for Your Response

APPENDIX VII:
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SUB-COUNTY DIRECTORS OF
EDUCATION

My name is Elsie Njambi, a post graduate (PhD) student in Mount Kenya University. I am conducting a research study to assess the **influence of principals' management practices on student retention in public day secondary schools in Nakuru County**. This study will generate useful information to schools and the ministry of education in policy formulation for enhanced student retention and management practices in public day secondary schools. I kindly request you to answer the questions in this interview as open as possible. The information you present was transcribed and used for the purposes of this study only.

Interview schedule on principal's student management practices on student retention

- 1) How long have you served in the current sub-county?
- 2) What is the state of student retention in your sub-county?
- 3) What are the main factors contributing to the student retention in public day secondary schools in your sub-county?
- 4) In your experience how do principals' student mentorship practices influence student retention in public day secondary schools in your sub-county?
- 5) Based on your observation how do principals' student motivation practices influence student retention in public day secondary schools in your sub-county?
- 6) Since the abolition of the cane, how does principals' student disciplinary practices influence student retention in public day secondary schools in your sub-county?
- 7) Would principals' student financial support practices influence student retention in public day secondary schools in your sub-county?

Thank you for participating

APPENDIX VIII:


FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FOR STUDENTS

- 1) What makes students not to complete a four year course in your school?
- 2) What makes students to be able to complete a four year course in your school?
- 3) Has the school ever invited professional career counsellors in you school?
- 4) How was your experience during admission in form one?
- 5) How does the school with students who abuse drugs?
- 6) How has the teachers' mentorship program improve the performance in your school?
- 7) How do teachers help students in subject selection in this school?
- 8) How does students get rewarded in your school
- 9) Do former students come to support with financial problems in school?
- 10) How does the principal help students who have financial problems in school?
- 11) Does the school give students a platform to air their grievances?



APPENDIX IX:

MKU ETHICAL REVIEW PERMIT



Mount Kenya University

REF: **MKU/ERC/2166** Date: 21 April 2022

TO: **ELSIE NJAMBI NYAGA**

REG: **PHDED/2015/32117**

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' STUDENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON STUDENT RETENTION IN PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA


This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **1239**. The approval period is **21/04/2022 - 20/04/2023**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,



The Chairman
Mount Kenya University
Ethics Review Committee
P. O. Box 342 - 0100, Thika

Dr. Peter G. Kirira
Chairman, Mount Kenya University IERC

Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika. Tel: +254 67 2820 000,
Cell: +254 720 790 796, 0709 153 000
Email: info@mku.ac.ke, Web: www.mku.ac.ke

APPENDIX X:

MKU INTRODUCTION LETTER



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

PHDED/2015/32117

17th August, 2022

*The Director, Research Coordination Division
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
Utalii House, 8th & 9th Floor
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI*

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: ELSIE NJAMBI NYAGA - REGISTRATION NO. PHDED/2015/32117


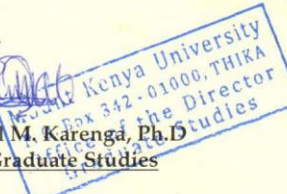
The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Doctor of Philosophy in Education** in the **Department of Educational Psychology and Technology** in the **School of Education**.

The title of her research is *"Influence of Principals Student Management Practices on Student Retention in Public Day Secondary School in Nakuru County."*

She has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data for her research between **August, 2022 and February, 2023**.


Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.


Thank you.

For 

Dr. Samuel M. Karenga, Ph.D
Director, Graduate Studies
Enc.

APPENDIX XI:


NACOSTI RESEARCH LICENSE


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **819208** Date of Issue: **25/August/2022**


RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Ms.. ELSIE NJAMBI NYAGA of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nakuru on the topic: INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' STUDENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON STUDENT RETENTION IN PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 25/August/2023.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/22/19860**

819208
Applicant Identification Number


Director General
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION**

Verification QR Code



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APPENDIX XII:

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LETTER

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Basic Education

Telegrams: "EDUCATION",
Telephone: 051-2216917
Fax: 051-2217308
Email: cdenakurucounty@gmail.com
When replying please quote



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU COUNTY
P. O. BOX 259,
NAKURU.

Ref. NO. CDE/NKU/GEN/4/1/21/VOL.IV

14th October, 2022

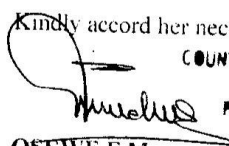
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION - ELSIE NJAMBI NYAGA
NACOSTI/P/22/19860

Reference is made to the above-mentioned permit dated 25th August, 2022

Authority is hereby granted to the above-named individual to carry out research on
"Influence of Principals' Student Management Practices on Student Retention in
Public Day Secondary Schools in Nakuru County, Kenya" for the period ending 25th
August, 2023.

Kindly accord her necessary assistance.


COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU
P. O. Box 259 - 20100,
NAKURU

OSEWE F.M

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU

Copy to:

-Mount Kenya University

**APPENDIX XIII:
TURN IT IN REPORT**

ELSIE NYAGA
**INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' STUDENT MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES ON STUDENT RETENTION IN PUBLIC DAY SECON...**

-  Masters Class
-  EEEBE
-  Mount Kenya University

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APPENDIX XIV:

MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

Nakuru County

